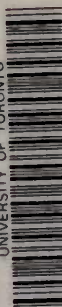
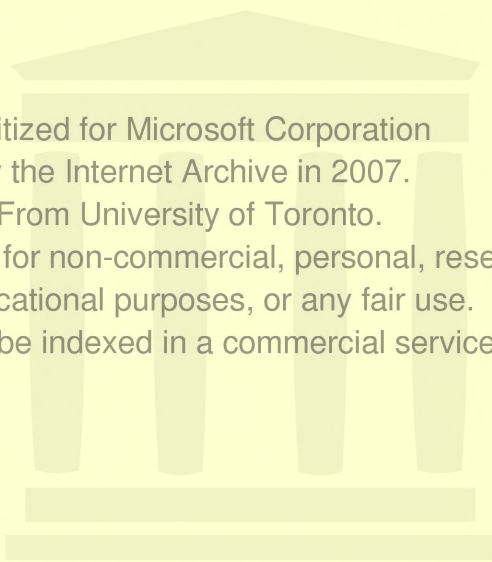

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
3 1761 01664319 9

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®


Digitized for Microsoft Corporation
by the Internet Archive in 2007.
From University of Toronto.
May be used for non-commercial, personal, research,
or educational purposes, or any fair use.
May not be indexed in a commercial service.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

THE MEMOIRS OF
JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Altera nunc rerum facies. me quero, nec adsum
Non sum qui fueram non putor esse: fui.

JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT.

a l'âge de 63 ans

[*Frontispiece.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

335m

THE MEMOIRS OF JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

THE PRINCE OF ADVENTURERS

A New and Abridged Edition, with Introduction, Two Portraits, Notes, and Appendices

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

59624
20/6/03

LONDON
CHAPMAN AND HALL
LIMITED
1902

Digitized by Microsoft®

D
285
.8
C32
1902
V.1

Digitized by Microsoft®

CONTENTS

FRONTISPIECE—JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT
at the age of 63 years

CHAP.		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION,	vii
	AUTHOR'S PREFACE,	1
I.	HIS EARLY LIFE,	7
II.	LUCY OF PASÉAN,	15
III.	CLERICAL ASPIRATIONS,.	22
IV.	THE BISHOP OF MARTORANO,	35
V.	THE FALSE BELLINO,	45
VI.	CONSTANTINOPLE AND CORFU,	57
VII.	WILD LIFE IN VENICE,	75
VIII.	CRISTINA,	85
IX.	HENRIETTE,	100
X.	FIRST VISIT TO PARIS,	125
XI.	MADEMOISELLE C. C.,	147
XII.	M. M.,	159
XIII.	M. M.,	170

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CHAP. PAGE

XIV. THE FALSE M. M., ... 201

XV. A VENETIAN STATE PRISON, . . . 214

XVI. 'THE LEADS,' 226

XVII. THE ESCAPE, ... 251

XVIII. MADEMOISELLE DE LA MEURE, . . 268

XIX. MADEMOISELLE X. V. C., . . . 298

XX. THE POLICE OF PARIS, ... 318

XXI. THE WIFE OF THE BURGOMASTER, . . 339

XXII. THE INN AT ZURICH, ... 359

XXIII. THE MALICIOUS WIDOW, . . . 377

XXIV. A MEMORY OF HENRIETTE, . . . 390

XXV. VOLTAIRE, ... 397

XXVI. THE SECOND M. M., ... 412

XXVII. MADEMOISELLE DE ROMAN, . . . 427

XXVIII. INTERVIEWS WITH THE POPE, . . 435

XXIX. TO BOLOGNA, MODENA, PARMA, TURIN, AND CHAMBERY, ... 459

APPENDIX I.—

Aventuros, ... 477

APPENDIX II.—

Extracts from the 'Memoirs of the Prince de Ligne,' . 479

Digitized by Microsoft®

INTRODUCTION

La Piste Casanovérienne, as it is fondly called, has long held a quite reasonable fascination for all students of social history and psychology. These famous *Mémoires* furnish an unique tableau of the eighteenth century, painted for us by a man whose personality was itself unique. The trail has been carefully followed by Englishmen and Frenchmen alike. Mr. Arthur Symons and Mr. Havelock Ellis in our own country have displayed a passionate interest in the wonderful Venetian; while Messieurs Armand Baschet and Octave Uzanne have foraged in the lockers of the Maison Brockhaus at Leipzig, in the Archives of the Venetian Senate, and have given us the results of their researches. Mr. Symons has in person turned over the papers lying mouldering in the white library at Dux, where the restless old adventurer spent the last tame years of his life, and relieved his solitude *en broyant du noir sur le papier*. Thus does he, in a fit of depression, deprecatingly characterise his own excellent piece of work. It is to these writers that we owe the discovery that Casanova was not a mere retailer of impossibly indelicate stories, but a memoirist of the first order, and the author of one of the most vivacious and artistically faithful pictures of the romantic age in which he moved, that we are lucky enough to possess. This 'passionist,' as the French love to call him, this prince of adventurers, was a man of action, who cared to analyse the springs of that action, and posed to himself, and to all his friends, as a philosopher. The list of his philosophical and metaphysical works would startle and weary. The *Mémoires* alone survive. Here he was his

Digitized by Microsoft®

own subject, and he gloated on it! *Les choses vues* were with him also *les choses vécues.* He was an author-actor who actually lived the scenes he described, and his strong histrionic instinct points and modifies every incident. That is how he saw life—not steadily, not whole, but dramatically. In one of the many unused prefaces to the *Mémoires* found among his papers, he tells us that 'life is a stage, where the great author, God, sets the piece, in whose presentment audience and company change places, and a man is now actor, and now spectator.' Casanova may be said to have been both at one and the same time, so deeply developed always was his dual consciousness.

The stage of Casanova—the field of his vital operations—has been razed and abolished by the tremendous upheaval and alteration worked by the Revolution, but the world before the flood, of Madame de Pompadour's lurid prediction, lives again in the Venetian's pages. Though he survived the Revolution, watching its wild progress from his lonely home in Bohemia, his day was over before it broke out. From the circumstances of his life and training, he was an aristocrat at heart, a monarchist indeed, as his wordy contention with Voltaire shows, and the narrow spirit of his generation and the short-sighted political outlook of those with whom he ranged himself are evidenced by his absurd view of the causes of 'the outbreak.' We come across these views in the *Mémoires* and in a short essay of his entitled *Causes of the French Revolution.* He attributes the fall of the monarchy to the untoward existence of the Duc d'Orléans—Egalité—whose presence on this planet was the unfortunate result of cabbalistic experiments on the complexion of Egalité's mother, the Duchesse de Chartres!

But indeed the abuses of the old *régime* prevalent in all countries did not affect Casanova's welfare in the least. On the contrary, the careless, reckless whirlpool of society, the survival of the feudal instinct, made the world, as it was then, a happy hunting-ground for the adventurer. For fully half a century did he range at will over Europe; a *débonnaire* free-lance, taking

Digitized by Microsoft®

to himself a most unfair proportion of the good things of this world, interviewing Popes and Sovereigns on equal terms, cheating men and betraying women. Only one woman, according to his own showing, betrayed him, and, curiously enough, the self-assigned date of the reflux of his fortunes, and the failure and decay of his wonderful vitality, is coincident with his English visit, and his acquaintance with the London lady who led him literally through the Maze, and befooled him as he had befooled others. Here the *Mémoires* do indeed begin to drag a little and he to write regretfully of the period —*nel mestro camin nostra vita.* He practically gave up the game. Yet, according to contemporary accounts, he seems to have reversed the process of the modern man: he looked young and felt old, or said he did. As to his youthful appearance there is no doubt; at no time did he look within ten years of his age. Here is a description of him as he appeared at the age of forty-seven, after his disgrace, drawn up by the official pen of the Venetian agent at Ancona:—

'I saw him with my own eyes. Some one told me it was he, for I had never seen the man before. He comes and goes freely, holds his head high, and looks every man in the face. He is received in several good houses. He does not look more than forty. He is tall and handsome and well made, his skin is very dark, and his eyes very bright. He wears a short chestnut *perruque.* From what they tell me, I gather him to be of a bold disposition and a disdainful. He has plenty to say for himself, and he says it well too.'

He was forty-seven then, and considered that he had already lived his life and was longing to be received into the favour of the mighty potentates who had banished him from his beloved native city, for he was a Venetian born, with a dash of Spanish blood in him. The details of his parentage and childhood as retailed by himself are interesting. 'I was an idiot till I was eight and a half,' he says somewhere, and a medical diagnosis founded on his own account of his symptoms would suggest that the boy suffered from the now fashionable childish com-

Digitized by Microsoft®

plaint of adenoids. But at that age his health became established, and he was able to start on his career with a perfect physical equipment—a veritable constitution of iron. His wonderfully executed and planned escape from prison proves him a man of prodigious nervous strength and staying power. But, like the lilies of the field, he toiled not, neither did he spin, but lived freely at the world's expense. His attitude towards gambling-tables, and the amount of support and sustenance to be fairly derived thence, is sufficiently indicated in a casual remark of his. He called his successes there 'getting the better of fortune.' This feat 'was to be accomplished by some happy stroke of calculation, some touch of dexterity *independent of* luck.' 'I consider,' he continued, 'that a prudent player can make use of either or both of these means, without incurring blame or being taxed with cheating.' But all Casanova's lucky *coups* were not made at the tables, for instance the treasure of gold and silver and jewels wrung from poor old *Semiramis*, whose leaden substitutes were thrown into the sea near Marseilles, to propitiate *Selenis*, the cabbalistic spirit he had evoked for her ruin.

Though Casanova is 'damned to everlasting fame' for his treatment of the crack-brained 'Egeria' of the Regent, he shares the obloquy of exploitation with two other adventurers, Saint Germain and Cagliostro. The memoirs of the time are full of the tragi-comic history of the doting old marquise—her alembics, her retorts, and absurd processes of the science of alchemy, the fashionable sport of a superstitious age. Casanova is credited with dragging in the mire one of the noblest names in France; but we may point out that the marquise was only the widow of the last of the d'Urfés, and that only by the insistence of the Regent, who wished to establish Mlle. Jeanne Camus de Pontcarré, a member of his '*plus étroit intrinsèque*,' creditably. In the scene where the old lady of seventy-three flings her lace cap up to the ceiling on receipt of some good occult news from Casanova, we are irresistibly reminded of Barnave's cynical saying, when

Digitized by Microsoft®

her like went in scores to the scaffold, '*Le sang qui coule, est-il donc si pur?*' and there is a ribald French song current still in Paris, '*Ah, quel malheur, Madame Camus!*'

These volumes show Casanova to us a great lover, a great eater, a great talker; he was not a coward, but he disliked fighting according to the rules, and a diplomatic evasion of the laws of 'honour' often stood him in stead. He was a normal rather than an abnormal subject; the healthy materialism of these pages prove it. He would have us believe him a metaphysician and even an idealist, but he only used metaphysics to justify his actions, and idealism to add poignancy to his amours. He had no heart, according to the modern acceptation of the word, but he was benevolent and liked to see people happy about him. Greedy as he was in pursuit of the gratification of all his senses, and remorseless when thwarted in that pursuit, he was not actually averse to the sight of the enjoyment of others.

In one of the several prefaces he wrote for the *Mémoires*, of which that one definitely selected by him or his literary executors is the least characteristic, he enters into a very subtle form of *apologia pro vita sua.* He wishes to 'demonstrate in these very *Mémoires* the fact that the chain of events is independent of method, *i.e.* conduct.' If, as he owns, he has 'sometimes been led into altruistic courses, the result unfortunately has not always been for the best,' as, for instance, in the case of the moderation shown to Lucy of Paséan, whose grey, ruined ghost appears three times in the *Mémoires*, with a sort of rhythmical reminder. On the other hand, good has often been the result of evil, so far as he has been concerned. To sum up, he attributes all his vices and follies to the *survenance* of a 'moment of madness, an oscillation of the pulses, when a man is not himself,' but the blind puppet of 'something not himself' that makes for evil. 'Virtue,' he declares, 'consists, practically, in a man's keeping control of himself, and being able to suspend action till the vibration is over-past.'

This useful philosophy, so well adapted to the degree of

Digitized by Microsoft®

moral stress suffered by a man like Casanova, though it would not cover the deliberate and long-sustained trickery of poor old Madame d'Urfé, which eventually led to her death, in a state of mind that would have made her a fit inmate of the Paris Bedlam, might account for his other actual crime—the cold-blooded murder of the lay sister, in furtherance of his amour with the artless nun of Chambéry.

His betrayal of the Spaniard, Manucci, caused him some actual remorse, but that was because it implied a public reflection on his honour. His sins of omission, such as the neglect of his old benefactor, M. de Bragadin, his ingratitude to the kind little actress, La Binetti, who saved his life at Stuttgart, to be cruelly insulted by him at Petersburg, did not distress him. Jules Sandeau has called him 'the most moral of Don Juans.' That must have been because, though he loved many women, he broke few hearts or none. He loved and he rode away indeed, but he always paid the bill. He found a husband for Cristina, and though Mlle. de La Meure was fascinated by him, he allowed her to see clearly the kind of man with whom she was dealing, so that although she flirted outrageously with the brilliant Casanova, she took care to secure the plain, complaisant merchant from Dunkirk. C. C. consoled herself with the Cardinal de Bernis, and the prudent Dubois (who 'read and enjoyed Locke,' and who reminds one a little of George Sand) took as a *pis aller* the *maître d'hôtel*, Lebel.

His relations with the freethinking nun and her weaker sister in religion—that *partie carrée* in the Venetian casino—form at once the blot and the curiosity, psychologically speaking, of the *Mémoires*. To abate the pure cynicism of the episode is to coarsen it. Love was a game in the eighteenth century, and women played it as skilfully as men. The two nuns of Murano, M. M. and C. C.—Matilda and Caterina—it is easy to reconstruct their names from the hints which their lover lets slip—are the best pair of portraits in the book, the blue ribbon of his gallantries. Matilda with her philosophy and

Digitized by Microsoft®

her wicked books, and the sweet, weakly imitative Caterina, would make a novel by themselves. But what a gallery of charming persons he gives us! His early love Bettina; and the ill-fated Lucy of Paséan; Cristina, the naïve peasant girl of Mestre; Esther Hope, the banker's daughter of Cologne, who loved him, but who would only admit an honourable courtship; the sagacious Marcolina; Clementina, the dreamy *bas bleu*; the naïve English Miss and the sprightly housekeeper; the fair Amazon lady to whom he played butler at Zurich; the ladylike Pauline; the astute Madam Cornelys; the proud little Spanish countess who studies revenge; and last, sweetest and most complete portrait of all, Henriette, the French spy, for whom Casanova really cared, if he ever cared for any one.

With male portraits Casanova is naturally not so happy. He was not interested in men, they were mostly merely husbands to deceive, or victims to defraud. His descriptions of Voltaire and of the great Frederick are perfunctory and marred by the intrusion of his own vanity. The only man that really dominated him was the Cardinal de Bernis, who, though a fribble and a courtier, was his equal in brains and perversity. The 'flower of abbés'—*Suzon la Bouquetière*, as Madame de Pompadour called him—from whose breviary, scurrilous *vers de société* used to fall as he fared, powdered and scented, and pink as a girl, to Mass—was a match for the Venetian, and adroitly contrived to leave his deserted mistress on the hands of the latter when summoned home from Venice. Oddly enough, he chose to give a very different colour to his life there from that suggested by Casanova. He says in his own memoirs that 'the air of Venice did not suit' him. He was bored there—'*Je n'avais pas de maîtresses, et les soirées étaient longues.*' He left Venice in 1755. Casanova's date differs as usual.

This wonderful processional novel, to give it its lowest claim to consideration, was conceived and written by the worn-out old *roué* to combat the deadly *ennui* that must necessarily over-

Digitized by Microsoft®

take a whilom man of action, self-condemned to vegetate in inactivity. By its means he fondly hoped to 'cheat his grief' and 'cheer his old soul' in those dreary last ten years of his life, spent in the castle of Dux in Bohemia, where he fulfilled the nominal post of librarian to Count Waldstein at a thousand florins a year. His master, *ce grand moderne*, understood him and loved him, but he was a continual prey to indigestion, and the stupid malice of stolid German servants, unable to sympathise with his hasty Italian temperament.

Waldstein, who had come across Casanova in Paris, during a period of dejection, took a violent fancy to him, and carried him off to Bohemia. Count Waldstein's *esprit Cabalon* was obviously the link between the adventurer and himself. Casanova never dropped his mystic pretensions, of which he had made so much use in his days of action. Cabbalism was the social weapon of the day, and alchemy its serious amusement. The old Prince de Ligne, the count's father-in-law, living at his neighbouring castle of Toeplitz with his daughter, the Princess Clary d'Aldringhen, was captivated by the fascinating adventurer on more literary grounds, and 'believed him as he did the Credo.' 'Amiable, celebrated man, and profound thinker!' he says in one of his letters, 'you are logical as an iceberg and hot as a volcano.' 'You are finer than Montaigne.' 'I am Atticus to your Cicero.' The prince himself was an author, but is not particular about the laws of composition and spelling. He advises his friend not to try to 'eliminate his Italianisms, or to trouble over the stupid French grammar.' He was heart and soul interested in the progress of the *Mémoires*, which were sent to him volume by volume, and pored over—'eagerly devoured'—by himself and General Souvaroff and Count Salmond and others. Moreover they were read aloud by the foolish, vain old man to the family circles at Dux and at Toeplitz in the evenings. It is plain that Casanova reaped the harvest of vanity in his lifetime.

The prince is anxious that the *Mémoires* should be given

Digitized by Microsoft®

to the world in their entirety. He would not have posterity lose a word of *ces caractères de feu.* 'All the people you write about will be dead by the time you are published,' he says. Casanova appears, in an access of prudery, to have proposed to burn the *Mémoires.* 'Nothing of the kind,' says the prince. 'Follow my example, go to my publisher, Walter, and stipulate for a hundred ducats' annuity on the book. Then go to bed, send for a priest, and let him throw a few reams of paper on to the fire, to represent your works, which you offer as a sacrifice to the Holy Virgin. Walter will not tell. He will give you two hundred copies for yourself, and the rest to be printed after your death. This is my own arrangement with him; perhaps in the place where we shall be by then, we can afford to laugh at the faces of the people on earth who are reading us!'

A further piece of advice bears on the lost last volume.

'Don't talk of dying. Reserve a volume for the account of what may yet befall you of an agreeable nature.'

Perhaps the wily Italian himself demurred at the publication of details which would doubtless concern the persons in whose company he was then living, and though he declared his intention of carrying the *Mémoires* on to 1797, they stop abruptly in 1774. That he actually wrote at least a volume more is proved by the *Mémoires* of this very Prince de Ligne, who gives a *résumé*, careless and inaccurate, of some of the more salient facts in that volume, including certain incidents that do not appear in the *Mémoires* so far as we have them.

It is impossible to doubt the fact that Giacomo Casanova, or Jacques as he preferred to be styled, with the territorial addition of Seingalt, which self-applied name held a vague reminiscence of the canton of St. Gall, where he once made a long stay, did himself compose a manuscript of six hundred in-folio pages, which he entitled *Histoire de ma vie, jusqu'à l'an 1797*. He declares, in the preface to a little volume, *The Flight*, written and published in his lifetime (because he got so tired of telling the story!), that he would not call his book

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Confessions' because '*un extravagant* had sullied the glory of the title.' This was Rousseau, the man of thought, whom, for obvious reasons, the man of action detested.

The fact that Casanova wrote his own *Mémoires* has actually been questioned! M. Paul Lacroix (*Le Bibliophile Jacob*) says that 'Casanova was incapable of writing French, or of producing a work of any imagination of style whatever. . . . It is certain the celebrated Chevalier d'Industrie left notes, and a clever man, no less a personage than Beyle himself, put them together.'

The style of Casanova is at times intensely dramatic and always flowing; his imaginative power is undeniable. That he was quite aware that he could not write good French is evidenced by the Prince of Ligne's advice to him, but this goes to prove the authenticity of the *Mémoires*. And let the reader turn to a paragraph in the original work, quoted by M. Baschet, before it was shaped by M. Laforgue at the instance of M. Brockhaus of the publishing house of Leipzig, and he will see that though Casanova's French was by no means perfect, a very slight 'derangement' of the turn of the sentences gives us a practically unaltered version of the *Mémoires* as originally written.

His veracity is very much more difficult to establish, though in the collation of his arrangement of public events with the actual happening of them, as shown by dates and the testimony of contemporary chronicles, Casanova does not come off badly. It has been contended, with regard to his escape from the Venetian State prison, that the State Inquisitors were in the habit of opening doors to certain prisoners and winking at their escape. This is to make Casanova truly ridiculous, as a person of so little account politically that his treason was a negligible quantity. But as a matter of fact, his minute description of the various stages of his flight and the material checks he met with tallies exactly with the *locale*. An ardent Casanoverian even went carefully over the scene of the flight *backwards*, beginning at the *Scala d'oro*, and ending in the attics of the Chancellery, and the cell whose ceiling the fugitive

Digitized by Microsoft®

spoiled. The bill for its reparation, amounting to six hundred and eighty-nine livres, is still extant. To disbelieve Casanova is to believe in the ridiculous collaboration of the terrible Three in his flight, and their theatrical arrangement of its details!

On the other hand, an exhaustive search has failed to discover the famous paragraph in the *St. James's Chronicle* mocking the placard which appeared in the window of Casanova's house in Pall Mall, and which resulted in his acquaintance with the mysterious and dignified Pauline, whose own history, reported by Casanova to be absolutely consonant with contemporary events in Portugal, is not to be collated therewith. The tale of the Talking Parrot receives no confirmation, as Casanova says it does, in the pages of *The Daily Advertizer.* The memoirs of the time are strikingly innocent of allusion to this man, who, by his own showing, made such a hole in the world. Sir Horace Mann, with whom he dined in Florence, never advises Sir Horace Walpole of the fact; and the record of the famous Madam Cornelys is clear of any mention of that old lover of her salad days whom she exploited so heartily in London.

The fact is that Casanova was by nature extremely untidy and inaccurate. But a quality inherent to a superb memory like his is that accuracy in detail often predominates over the recollection of the broader facts of time and space. He remembers, for instance, that the candles were of tallow, not wax, at the hotel at Chambéry, and that there were four at the cardinal's *petite maison* at Murano; he forgets to tell us what became of that famous blue diamond, commonly supposed to have been the 'Regent,' that his partner in *escroquerie*, the Count of Saint Germain, was sent into Holland to pawn, and which came into the hands of Casanova's friend, M. d'O—— (otherwise Hope). The name suggests a connection with another famous diamond, whose late possessors bear that of the diamond merchant of Amsterdam. Casanova could perhaps have told us something about it, but here he allows his usual vagueness to prevail and obscure history.

Digitized by Microsoft®

As Mr. Havelock Ellis says somewhere, 'There is reason to believe that an organisation like Casanova's, for whom the external world is so vivid, is associated with memory power of a high order,' and the presumption is that the actor-author did as well as he could. He wrote a rough synopsis of every chapter, as his papers found at Dux prove, and filled in the details afterwards. He had no wish to throw dust in the eyes of posterity. He is candid enough about the many checks incidental to the adventurous life. Indeed, the latter half of the *Mémoires* is more or less a record of the snubs the *Chevalier d'industrie* received in the exercise of his profession from different governments. His relations with the authorities were always pleasant enough, on condition that he 'moved on' when asked to do so. He describes the scenes fully. We seem to see the smile of Prince Kaunitz, as he shows the amusing, garrulous fellow the door. 'Go and sin the more—but not in Vienna!' The great Frederick toyed with his pretty wit, and praised him for his true qualification. 'You are a very fine-looking man!' The great Catherine flirted with him a little, but Panin was always watching. With regard to his relations with women he was not so sincere. His dramatic instinct led him to 'arrange' life pictorially and sympathetically, to trim off the raw edges of reality, to bring his best characters 'on' again, as, for instance, Henriette's several effective and pointed re-appearances. The same may be said of the story of the renewal of his relations with Teresa at Florence, with the addition of her accommodating husband, which is so amusing. We may or may not believe the stories of that sleep in the very jaws of danger which arrested the Flight for two hours, the three meetings with Lucy of Paséan, the episode of Mlle. de Roman-Couppier, and his cabbalistic influence in her fortunes, which is not borne out, nay, is contradicted, by contemporary accounts, but they certainly add intensely to the *rondeur* and pointedness of his narrative.

There are actually no contemporary records to corroborate

Digitized by Microsoft®

the statements of Casanova, till we come to the causes of his condemnation in 1755, when his *dossier* begins to form part of the Venetian archives. With the Flight, and his own verbal account of it, Casanova became a famous man; before this he was, in the eyes of the State at least, a mere commonplace roysterer, a dangerous subverter of authority, a plausible dabbler in forbidden arts of necromancy. He was actually bred up for the Church, and was made Doctor of Civil Law at the age of sixteen. The *Mémoires* tell how he filled the part with cleverness and *aplomb*, till his natural bent came uppermost, and he made a fool of himself. We realise the vanity which bore him up, and admire the *bonhomie* with which he explained the dangers and advantages of his temperament to the good Bishop of Martorano—all the future Casanova lies revealed in these first few flippant pages. Vanity, which impelled him as an abbé to bestride a horse for the first time in his life, made him fling away his cassock and don the uniform. As a soldier he meets Teresa, and sets the note of all his dealings with women in his treatment of her. Fully disillusioned as she must have been, she meets him again with open arms at Florence. So did all Casanova's loves, in response to his indestructible charm. On his return to Venice, the loosely poised pendulum of an adventurer's life has swung to the other extreme—he is a humble fiddler in the orchestra of a Venetian theatre.

It is in this capacity, when his fortunes were at the lowest ebb, that the great opportunity of his life comes to him. He is able to be of use to the noble senator, de Bragadin, and the cabbalistic leaning of the fond old man is the basis of the *entente* between them, as it is later in his friendship with Waldstein.

Casanova gives his own version of his relations with the credulous senator, the evolution of the spirit *Paralis*, whom he makes responsible for the devilish suggestions that he does not like to father on himself. *Paralis* and de Bragadin find a husband for Cristina. Enriched by the old man, whose gondola he uses and whose liveried servants he orders about, Casanova leaves him to visit Italy, France, Germany and

Digitized by Microsoft®

Austria. When he returns to Venice in 1753, on the day of the Feast of the Ascension, he is being watched, and memoranda concerning him and his doings begin to appear in the archives.

He was then in his prime, twenty-eight years old, a brilliant satirist, verbal fencer and conversationalist. It is said of him about this period, 'He goes about among lords and ladies, making money out of them and living at their expense. He always selects for his subjects credulous persons and those disposed to dissipation, whose evil passions he takes care to foster. . . . Just now he is exploiting the noble Bernardo Memo to the best of his ability.' Lorenzo da Ponte, Mozart's librettist, met him at the houses of the Zaguri and the Memi, 'who were delighted with what was good about him, and forgave him what was not.'

In 1754 the first *riferta* of the inquisitor G. B. Manuzzi appears. It gives in brief the material of several of Casanova's own chapters. The zealous and acrimonious spy grants him 'cultivated but intriguing.' . . . 'He has insinuated himself into the good graces of the noble Zuan Bragadino at Santa Marina, and has fleeced him grievously.' 'A certain Benedetto Pisano tells me that Casanova is by way of being a cabbalistic philosopher, and by means of false reasoning, cleverly adapted to the minds he works on, contrives to get his livelihood. . . . He has made the noble Zuan Bragadino believe that he can evoke the angel of light for his benefit. It is strange that such an intelligent man as the senator, and such a figure in the State, should be so gullible. . . . This Casanova frequents the café Menegazzo on the Merceria, and Philip, the landlord of it, tells me that he consorts with Marc Antonio Zorzi, Bernardo Memo, and Antonio Braida there.' Don Zini, a friend of Casanova's, admits, when pressed, that these gentlemen are 'Epicureans.' Manuzzi 'actually believes' that they meet to compose a satire against a certain Abbé Chiari. This 'terrible satire' is, according to Casanova, the chief ground of his arrest.

But his defence of Goldoni, for that was the ostensible object

Digitized by Microsoft®

of these satires, was probably only a stalking-horse for more serious griefs. A man of Casanova's character was a danger not so much to the State as to the citizens, and a paternal government like that of Venice was likely to take cognisance of it. He was a corrupter of youth, a professed atheist. 'He read, on Monday, at the Rinaldo Triomphante, a most impious composition in Venetian. I know of nothing so erroneous.' The righteous Manuzzi, in order to obtain a copy of this production, visits Casanova at his lodgings and plays on his vanity. The wily Venetian refuses to lend him a copy of the composition in question, admitting that it verges on 'the stupendous, on the startling,' and that his life would be imperilled if he were to show it. But he wants to read Manuzzi something else, and searches for it in vain in his coffers, and thus discloses to the zealous eyes of the inquisitor 'a white skin cut in the shape of a girdle or apron.' Manuzzi connects it with the rites of Freemasonry, on whose advantages Casanova has previously been enlarging.

The mischief was done. That very day the spy writes a description of the dwelling of the victim with great exactitude, so that Messer Grande, the chief inquisitor, has no difficulty in finding it.

'Behind the Cavalerizza, in the street called di Mezzo, the fourth door on the right-hand side. . . . I am told that the house belongs to the widow of Leopold del Pozzo, a worker in mosaic. Casanova's door is the one with a table beside it. The table is exactly opposite the head of the stairs; on it there lies a casket in lapis-lazuli and other coloured stones. I fancy there is another door in his room, masked and hung with pictures.'

The old Merceria is there, but the houses have been refaced. Messer Grande found him there on the 27th of July 1756, with the unedifying books that the nun Matilda had given him, and impounded both man and seditious literature. The record of the trial is not discoverable, but Domenico Cavalli, the secretary who registered the condemnation to five years' imprisonment, set the guilty man's crime down as 'irreligion.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Witnesses were called—the landlord of a certain café, La Malvasia, in the Frezzeria—and Casanova got his five years. In fifteen months he made his escape.

From 1756 to 1763 his name disappears from the State records.

He went to Paris and lived on the reputation of his marvellous adventure, writing and publishing a long account of it, at the instance of de Bernis, to save himself the pleasant annoyance of retailing the incidents of his escape. The minister's version does not appear. The edition we have was published in 1787 at Prague, where he himself presided over the printing. He makes several attempts to fleece the confiding Parisians. His memorandum concerning his famous lottery bureau is said to exist; there is among the Papers of France an unsigned document of that description. His shop in the quarter of the Temple for the production of stamped patterned material was another business undertaking of his, not quite so happy. His master-stroke was his getting hold of the Marquise d'Urfé. He combined all these industries with the trade of espionage, in which he was never very proficient. He went to Dunkirk, at the instance of the Abbé de la Ville, to reconnoitre the English Fleet at a fee of five hundred louis. He went twice to Holland to try to raise a loan for the French king. The second visit was not so successful, socially, as the first. The members of the various embassies had had time to make inquiries and examine his letters of introduction more carefully. Private official letters preserved in the Paris archives enable us to collate Casanova's own story with the facts. It is amusing reading. He was never in quite such good odour as he fancied, and gives us to understand. For instance, M. D'Affry, the French minister to Holland, notifies de Choiseul of the advent of M. de Casanova, and hints at some discreditable incidents of his previous visit to The Hague. He will be civil to M. de Casanova, but would like to know how far the duke would like him to go, and wonders if the letter of introduction was not obtained by an intermediary while the

Digitized by Microsoft®

Venetian remained unknown to the duke? He complains of Casanova's notable indiscretion. 'He seemed to me terribly irresponsible, with no sense of the seriousness of his mission, or else *he has great powers of dissimulation.*' He has heard that 'the man is the son of an actress,' and is distressed 'to hear him abuse his own countrymen.'

The duke, in reply, informs M. D'Affry that his surmises are correct, that the introduction was obtained second-hand through the duke's brother, and he advises the minister to have nothing to do with the Venetian. Casanova, who at all times seems to have had a secret sense that warned him when it was time to decamp, left for Bonn and Cologne, and tells us so, but nothing more.

The minister at Bonn notifies to his Government that an unknown Venetian has arrived, who spends money, flaunts diamonds, and plays high, speaks of Versailles as if he were an intimate there; a banker of Cologne [the credulous, upright Hope?] answers for him.' Later on he got into trouble again. The minister, who has by now discovered his name, mentions his having 'an adventure which made some noise.' Casanova relates this adventure, but from his own point of view. The minister's curt relation is that Casanova owed a certain Baron de Vidau some money, and was arrested as he was coming away from the Comte de Torcy's house, where he had dined. He disclaimed the debt, but he paid in a ring, a box, and watch and some money, 'to avoid prison.'

This differs somewhat from the spirited, dashing account vouchsafed us by the man himself. In these official documents we come across the good Baron Kettler, whom Casanova plagued so adroitly. Kettler submits that Casanova is a traitor, a plotter, and bears about with him the proofs of his treason in a certain casket. But, as usual, the Duc de Choiseul takes a lenient and uncomplimentary view of the extent of the peril, and bids Kettler to ignore the harmless spendthrift. He had probably learned from Madame de Rumain that her gallant friend was not politically dangerous. Casanova, as

Digitized by Microsoft®

usual, departs appositely, and hies him to Switzerland, to incur the idyllic adventure of Soleure, to argue literature and politics with Voltaire, and to trifle with an abortive conversion at the altar of our Lady of Einsiedel.

Three years later he is at Marseilles preparing for the comic martyrdom of that fine old piece of credulity and folly, Madame d'Urfé, whose dignity survives all the affronts which the adventurer puts on her, and who is most truly *grande dame* when most grotesque.

The adventurer all through these his wanderings is swayed by what we may call most intense love of country. He leaves no stone unturned to induce the inquisitors to grant him a safe-conduct, and eventually a pardon. From London, in 1763, he unfolds to them a commercial scheme. It is his own secret of dyeing cotton Turkey red, which he offers to the Government, and will test his method in the presence of Zucatto, the Venetian ambassador in London. Patterns he will send from London, and, for ten sous, he can make a handsome bandanna handkerchief, that Venetians buy for ten livres (ten shillings), and—here is the thin end of the wedge—he offers to escort a company of workmen to Venice!

To this proposal he probably received no reply.

The London visit is of extreme interest to English people. He sees our customs with his naïve, foreign eyes, and describes them in his frank, outspoken, Italian fashion. *Le boxe* and its eccentric laws impressed him deeply. Madam Cornelys takes care that her old admirer purchases a seven-guinea ticket for her series of balls in Soho Square. London taverns, *Le Canon* and *Le Star*, knew him. He treated a new conquest in true British fashion to cakes and ale at Marylebone Gardens. He infests the British Museum, and Milady Harrington's card-parties. He joins in a queer dance called the *rhompaipe* [horn-pipe?], and a queer game called a *rober* [rubber?]. He sees a disturbance at Drury Lane Theatre, and Garrick on his knees to the audience; he hobnobs with 'Kety' Fisher and 'Miss' Charpillon and Lady Betty 'Germen,' Sir Augustus Hervey,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and Lord Pembroke. Miss 'Chodeleig,' from the window of her house at Kingston, sees him fall from his horse, and succours him. He abuses the puritanical British Sunday, but indemnifies himself for its dulness by driving out to 'Harwich' [Hackney ?] and 'Bames' [Barnes ?] after dinner.

Then he forged a bill of exchange—backed a friend's bill, he says—and had to leave the country. He had, he admits, been living at the rate of four hundred guineas a fortnight.

Belgium, Brunswick, Berlin, Warsaw, and Petersburg are next on his list. At Petersburg he met the Empress Catherine walking in the Summer Gardens. She asked 'who the tall, remarkable man was?' At Moscow he fought a duel with that heroic personage Branecki—not the famous marshal of that name. Dresden, Prague, and Vienna next had the honour of his sojourn. At Aix he came across Cagliostro, 'sewing cockles on to his cloak.' He and his wife were pilgrims to Turin and the relic of St. Veronica. (Cagliostro, says a contemporary, had been included by the heirs of Madame d'Urfé, long since dead, with Casanova in their prosecution of her betrayers.)

In Spain, where he passed the greater part of the year 1768, he behaved disloyally, and has the grace to admit it. He betrayed the confidence of a certain Manucci. A foolish intrigue with the mistress of one in power—Casanova was always colliding with the authorities in this way—resulted in his close acquaintance with the donjon of Barcelona, where he was shut up forty-three days. From these prison shades he wrote his refutation of Amelot de la Houssaye's indictment of the Venetian Republic. This was another attempt to conciliate the Most Serene Prince, which was the polite way of addressing the ruling body of Venice. Casanova knew all the forms of diplomacy. He went to Turin to get the *Refutation* printed, and presented himself to Giovanni Berlendis, the Venetian minister at Sardinia, who harboured him pending the result of his application to the Three. The result was not what Casanova anticipated. Flamineo Corner, Barbarigo, and Alvise Renier

Digitized by Microsoft®

recommended Berlendis to have an eye on the author of the *Refutation*, and to show him no special courtesy, as one still under the ban of the Tribunal.

Presently Berlendis informed the Three that his subject has gone to Leghorn to join the Russian Fleet there, and to solicit the good offices of his friend Orloff. Casanova had actually offered his services to the Russians, with the reservation that in the event of a Russian incursion on Venetian territory, he was to be 'counted out.' The *entente* between the Russian and the Venetian was, however, not complete—Orloff would not give Casanova an official position, but treated him as an amusing guest—and the disappointed adventurer went to Rome, where he met his old friend, de Bernis.

De Bernis was fifty-five, and in disgrace. The Pompadour had ruined him. Like his friend Casanova, he had been obliged to *subir du temps l'irréparable outrage*, and he was sad and lack-lustre. 'I look all right,' he said, 'but the truth is, I am not what I was. I am still the slave of the ladies, but the humblest slave of all!'

Casanova was then only forty-seven, and counted his life over. The *Mémoires* are not carried far beyond this date, 1774; but the history of this period of his life is continued in his other book, *The Flight*.

'On the 12th September of the year 1774, Signor de Monti, Consul of the Venetian Republic at Trieste, gave me a note from the State Inquisitors, in which they ordered me to present myself within a month to the *circospetto*, Marc Antonio Businello, their secretary, to learn their good will and pleasure. I went within the twenty-four hours!'

After nineteen years of exile, he was permitted to re-enter Venice, 'and I began to enjoy the pleasure of showing myself openly in the great city, where I had become the talk of the day. I went to thank the Three. They received me graciously, and invited me to dinner, eager to hear from my own lips the story of my escape. This I told them, keeping nothing back.'

Had Casanova only realised the insulting indifference, so

Digitized by Microsoft®

like De Choiseul's and Maria Theresa's, as to his capabilities for good or evil, implied by the good-humoured tolerance of these gentlemen! But he had all the obtuseness of vanity, and considered himself a very big man indeed. 'Whether it was self-love, or love of my country,' he says ingenuously, 'I do not know, but the first moments of my return were the happiest of my life. . . . The extraordinary plenitude of my pardon proclaimed me innocent in the eyes of all Europe. . . . Every one expected to see me provided with some suitable employment which would enable me to live at my ease. Every one was mistaken, except myself.'

A post was given him: it was that of a spy in the service of the Government, and he did not prove a very good spy. He has even been accused of treason to Venice, and took, it was said, pay from both sides. But it is a fact that the inquisitors had to complain that his reports contained too much philosophy, and too little information. There are even contemptuous marginal annotations in their own hand discoverable. 'Read, and judged of no importance,' or else 'Wait for better and more practical information.' In a very short while he was virtually dismissed, but continued to send in unofficial communications. Socially his facile and libellous pen got him into more trouble: he perpetrated an insulting satire on a patrician, Grimani, and was 'advised to leave Venice.'

He did so in 1782. We have his own reasons for the step—

'"I am not made for Venice," I said, "or Venice is not made for me, either one or the other!" . . . I left my country as one leaves a house which one likes, but which has grown insupportable because of an unpleasant fellow-visitor. . . . At the age of forty-seven, which was mine then, I realised thoroughly that Fortune had no more to say to me. She is merciless towards men of a certain age.'

From Vienna, where he took refuge, an anonymous letter, predicting an earthquake, threw all Venice into a panic, and is confidently attributed to the firebrand Venetian. At Spa he met Pachiarotti, Browning's famous musician, and in Paris

Digitized by Microsoft®

Count Waldstein. His last fourteen years were spent at Dux, whence he dated his other serious production, the *Iocosameron*, a 'strange and indigestible' work of the nature of *Gulliver's Travels*, and of which the scene is laid in England. He also published *The Dream, a metaphysical Dialogue between God and Me*, in which we recognise our Casanova, whose more salient characteristics, indeed, survived his living death at Dux.

The Italian Da Ponte, Mozart's librettist, several times mentions Casanova in his memoirs. Finding himself one day in the neighbourhood of Dresden and Dux, he remembered that the count's librarian owed him some hundred florins. So he visits Casanova and received, naturally, a warm welcome but no money. Casanova was always poor, in spite of his salary of a thousand florins. He moreover offered to accompany Da Ponte as far as Toeplitz, where the latter sold his chaise and horse for sixty piastres, considering it, for some reason or other, unsafe for travelling. Casanova kindly conducted the negotiations, and two sequins were retained by him for his homeward journey.

'As I can never repay you these, any more than the others I owe you, I will give you three pieces of advice which will be of more use to you than all the treasures of this earth. My dear Da Ponte, if you want to make a fortune, don't go to Paris but to London. But when you are there, never enter the doors of the *Café des Italiens* in that city, and, lastly, never give your signature.'

Da Ponte admits that the advice was good, and that he had cause to rue his infringement of the two last prohibitions. That he did not grudge his lost money is a proof of the influence exerted over every one by the extraordinary old man. It is the wife of Da Ponte who speaks for Casanova and extols 'his sincerity, eloquence, and knowledge of the world.'

The reader will remember Costa, Casanova's rascally secretary, who ran off with the diamonds, jewels, and money, with which Madame d'Urfé had charged him for Casanova, who did not, in this case, secure the wages of sin. In the *Mémoires* is the

Digitized by Microsoft®

phrase with regard to this Costa, 'I met the rogue again at Vienna in 1785,' and Da Ponte actually gives an account of the meeting, the assurance of the one thief, and the delightful *bonhomie* of the other:

'I was one day walking on the Graben with Casanova, when I suddenly saw him knit his brows, grind his teeth, and twist himself about. Flinging his hands into the air, he rushed up to a man, and catching hold of him, cried out, "Assassin! I have got you at last!" A crowd gathered. I took Casanova by the hand and led him away. He then told me with many ejaculations and gestures the story of the old lady and this man. Costa was then valet to the Comte de Hardegg. While I was walking about with Casanova, Costa went into a café, and wrote these lines in Italian and sent them to him by a small boy. Their significance is as follows:—

"Casanova, don't make a scene!
We are both rogues together,
Thou the master, I the man.
I learned the trade from thee.
Thou hast given me bread, I gave thee cake.[1]
Thy best course is to keep silence."

'Casanova began to laugh, and whispered in my ear. "The scoundrel is right." He went into the café, and I made a sign to Costa, who came out, and they walked up and down together as if nothing had happened, and parted after shaking hands several times. When Casanova came back he showed me a ring, a cameo cut in the likeness of Mercury, the protecting god of thieves. This was all that remained of the immense plunder of the poor old dead marquise.'

The admiring Da Ponte gives another instance of the mother-wit that inspired Casanova to repartees that either made or marred him in the minds of his hearers. His retort to the swashbuckler at La Haye in defence of the Venetian Republic, his really dignified rebuke of De la Tour d'Auvergne, who pays his debts with a non-negotiable security—his word

[1] Italian proverb.

Digitized by Microsoft®

of honour—are all instances of the little gems of verbal *riposte* scattered through his book.

The object of his blunt impertinence was as often as not a crowned head, if we are to believe his version of his famous retort to Joseph II. 'I have no opinion of those who are ready to buy honours,' says the king. 'And what about those who are willing to sell them, sire?' Da Ponte says this retort could never in the nature of things have been made. But the monarch was not averse from trifling amiably with the witty conversationalist. On one occasion, when the emperor was in immediate need of money, Casanova suggested an expedient analogous to that which he had proposed with success to the advisers of the French king—a Lottery. This project was a Chinese fête, which was to amuse the Viennese and profit the promoter. His memorandum on the subject ended with the phrase: *Cur, quia, quomodo, quando?*

'After the presentation of this memorandum,' says Da Ponte, 'he paid me a visit, and putting a pen in my hand, said—

'"Da Ponte, are we friends?"

'"Certainly."

'"I admit your strict sense of honour, you admit mine."

'Here I was discreetly silent, and he continued—

'"I have done everything in the world except deceive a friend."

'I smiled. The Abbé Della Lena and young Foscari were great friends of Casanova, and yet——

'"For the execution of my project," he went on, "I only need one thousand piastres. Sign a bill for me for this sum, payable two months from date, and I will see that it is duly met."

'I laid down the pen, excused myself as well as I could, and went out of the room. In the course of a few days I heard that Foscari, who had already lost heavily to him, had given him a bill by which he hoped to raise the money necessary for his Chinese fête.

'One morning when I was with the emperor, Giacomo requested an audience. He came in, bowed low, and presented the memorandum. The emperor took it, but on seeing its length, folded it up again, and asked him what he wanted. He exposed his project, and Joseph asked his name. "Giacomo Casanova is the humble person who asks this favour from your Majesty," he answered.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'After a moment's silence, the emperor said with his accustomed affability that Vienna did not care for such spectacles, then turning his back he began to write. Casanova withdrew with a crestfallen air, and I should have followed him, but the emperor retained me, and after repeating three times the name "Casanova," he began to talk about the theatre to me.

'I met my friend shortly afterwards; he was perfectly furious; it is impossible to imagine all the things he said of the sovereign!'

Casanova was of a highly irascible, but yet placable, disposition. The grounds of the long quarrel with the steward Faulkircher which embittered his last years is set forth in his letters to that gentleman found among his papers, and never sent or intended to be sent. It was a mere expenditure of gall on paper that gave relief. He was very miserable. He resented affronts where none were intended, and even the sincere regard of the Prince de Ligne and others could not dissipate the clouds of melancholy that came over him latterly. Yet it would seem that some of the glamour cast by dazzled posterity over legendary heroes had gathered round his name, like Holger Dansk or Barbarossa. It is asserted that he lived till 1811. The matter-of-fact reason for this misapprehension is the confusion between him and his more legitimately famous brother, François, the painter. He really expired, as the register of Oberlestendorp, in the diocese of Leineritz, where lies the seignory of Dux, proves, on the 4th of June 1798, at the age of seventy-eight.

He died in the odour of sanctity, in the presence of several witnesses, with, it would seem, a faint attempt at epigram. This characteristic utterance, according to the Prince de Ligne, who was present at this strange deathbed, ran as follows—

'I have lived, a philosopher, and I die, a Christian!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

After a moment's silence, the emperor said with his accustomed affability that Vienna did not care for such spectacles, then turning his back he began to write. Casanova withdrew with a crestfallen air, and I should have followed him, but the emperor retained me, and after repeating three times the name "Casanova," he began to talk about the theatre to me.

"I met my friend shortly afterwards; he was perfectly furious; it is impossible to imagine all the things he said of the sovereign!"

Casanova was of a highly irascible, but yet placable disposition. The grounds of the long quarrel with the steward Feldkircher which embittered his last years is set forth in his letters to that gentleman found among his papers, and never sent or intended to be sent. It was a mere expenditure of gall on paper that gave relief. He was very miserable. He resented affronts where none were intended, and even the sincere regard of the Prince de Ligne and others could not dissipate the clouds of melancholy that came over him latterly. Yet it would seem that some of the glamour cast by dazzled posterity over legendary heroes had gathered round his name, like Holger Dansk or Barbarossa. It is asserted that he lived till 1811. The matter-of-fact reason for this misapprehension is the confusion between him and his more legitimately famous brother, François, the painter. He really expired, as the register of Oberleutensdorf, in the diocese of Leitmeritz, where lies the seigneury of Dux, proves, on the 4th of June 1798, at the age of seventy-eight.

He died in the odour of sanctity, in the presence of several witnesses, with, it would seem, a faint attempt at epigram. This characteristic utterance, according to the Prince de Ligne, who was present at this strange deathbed, ran as follows—

"I have lived, a philosopher, and I die, a Christian!"

Digitized by Microsoft ®

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I TAKE some pride in stating, at the very outset of these Memoirs, that throughout the whole course of my life I have been my own master, and a free agent.

The doctrine of the power of destiny, as taught by the Stoics and some other sects, is a mere figment of the imagination, smacking of atheism. I am not an atheist, but a monotheist, and a Christian. My Christianity, however, is fortified by philosophy, for which no man is the worse. I believe in the existence of a spiritual God, Lord and Creator of all forms of matter. I have never doubted His existence, and that is proven by the fact that I have always counted on His providence, have always turned to Him in prayer in my troubles, and have always been heard. Despair kills, but religion banishes despair; fervent prayer restores confidence, and the power of action. As for the means which the Supreme Being employs to avert the misfortunes hanging over those who implore His help, the knowledge of these is beyond our understanding. Man, musing on the inscrutability of Divine Providence, is impelled to worship it. Our ignorance is our only refuge; happy are they who cherish it. We must pray, and believe that our prayer is granted, even when appearances are against it. Man is free, but he ceases to be so when he ceases to believe in his liberty; when he comes to look on himself as a mere tool in the hands of fate, he abnegates the divine gift of reason. If that great gift tends to make us submissive and reasonable, we surely please Him who has bestowed on us this intelligence. God

Digitized by Microsoft®

only ceases to be God to those who deny His existence, and this is the greatest punishment He can inflict on them.

My readers will see that, having no particular object in view, I have let myself drift in the preparing of these Memoirs. My successes and my reverses, the good and evil fortune which has befallen me alternately, go to prove that in this world good can come out of evil and evil out of good,—moral good as well as physical good. My deviations may perhaps serve to show others how to keep in the straight and narrow path. Courage is the one thing needful, strength without confidence is useless. I have often thriven after some most imprudent proceeding which ought by rights to have pushed me over the brink of disaster, and, while acknowledging my error, I have thanked God for averting its just consequences from me. On the other hand, I have sometimes suffered most when actuated by the most virtuous motives.

In spite of my basis of moral principle, I have all my life been victim of my senses. I enjoyed going astray, knowing that I *was* astray. You must not, reader, set me down as an empty boaster, but as one who is making a full and general confession. Do not expect me to put on the airs of a penitent, or affect to blush for my misdemeanours. I can laugh at the follies of my youth, and if you are kind you will laugh with me.

You will laugh to see how little I scrupled to cheat empty-headed people, scoundrels, and fools, if I could do it to my own advantage. So far as women are concerned, the inevitable mutual deception must be considered a matter of give and take: of two lovers one or the other must needs be dupe. As to the fools, I congratulate myself on the recollection of every opportunity I had of ensnaring such, for a fool is insolent, presumptuous, and sets wisdom at defiance. To take in a fool is to avenge oneself: a fool is armour-clad in his folly, and the wise man knows not where to have him;

Digitized by Microsoft®

in short, to dupe a fool is a worthy exploit. I hate them so that I feel myself degraded in a fool's company. But a fool must not be confounded with a stupid man : the latter is only stupid from lack of education, is often well meaning enough, and in spite of his stupidity has a native intelligence and a common sense which the fool lacks.

If you will enter carefully into the spirit of this preface, dear reader, you will understand the object I have in view. I want you to know me before reading the story of my life. It is only at a *café* or a *table d'hôte* that one talks to strangers.

One of the ancients has said, 'If thou hast done nothing worthy of being written, at least write something worthy of being read.' This is a fine saying, but not, I fear, applicable to me. I am not writing a romance, or the biography of an illustrious person, and, worthy or unworthy, my life is my material, and my material is my life.

At the age of seventy-two, in the year 1797, when I can say *vixi*, although I am still living, I can find no such satisfactory entertainment as recalling my past adventures, and in setting them down I furnish subject for amusement to my listeners. I have lived in good society, I hope to find readers among the same. As for the vulgar, I am not writing for them. I have enjoyed every variety of temperament successively—I was phlegmatic in my childhood, sanguine in my youth, bilious in mid-life, and melancholy in my old age, in which last state I shall probably continue to the end. I have always had good health, principally, I think, because I suited my diet to my circumstances. At an early age I learned that what is most harmful is excess, either of food or fasting, and I must admit that the excess of too little is more dangerous than the excess of too much, for if one brings indigestion, the other brings death. Another reason for my excellent health—I have always been my own doctor!

The cultivation of the pleasures of the senses was ever my

Digitized by Microsoft®

principal aim in life. Knowing that I was personally calculated to please the fair sex, I always strove to make myself agreeable to it. To the last years of my life I have taken an active interest in whatever came under my notice or aroused my curiosity. I have had many friends who have been good to me, and to whom I have been able to prove my gratitude. I have also had enemies, and if I have not exterminated them it is because it was not in my power to do so. I have never forgiven an injury, though I have often forgotten one; but the man who forgets does not necessarily forgive; forgiveness is a heroic and generous sentiment, whereas forgetfulness is due merely to weakness of memory, or the mere necessity for peace and quietness, for hatred implies energy, and in the long-run wears out the man who indulges in it.

I have always loved good cheer. I like highly-spiced dishes, maccaroni made by a Neapolitan cook, the *olla podrida* of Spain, fine, white salt cod from Newfoundland, high game, and strong cheese; the latter I consider perfect when the little creatures which form in it become visible.

I have always been an ardent lover of truth; and my readers will forgive my emptying my friends' purses to gratify my own caprices, when they learn that these friends were mostly full of some wild scheme or other, which by seeming to encourage I have often frustated, thus showing them the folly of their ways. I only employed money for my own pleasure, which they destined to purposes quite impossible of realisation. Had I profited by that money, and become rich, I might to-day feel guilty, but I am penniless. I have thrown away everything, and this consoles and justifies me. All my adventures are not written down here. I have omitted some which might displease certain persons who took part in them. If wisdom comes to me before my death, and while I still have strength to act, I shall burn every page. At present I have not the courage to destroy what has given me so much pleasure to write.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The device which I have adopted justifies my digressions and my too frequent comments on my own acts—

'Ne quidquam sapit qui sibi non sapit.'

I prefer to consider myself the principal cause of all, good or evil, which has befallen me; I have considered it a pleasure to be thus my own pupil, and a duty to love my preceptor.

JACQUES CASANOVA.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

MEMOIRS OF
JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

CHAPTER I

HIS EARLY LIFE

Don Jacopo Casanova, born at Saragossa, illegitimate son of Don Francisco, carried off Donna Anna Palafox from her convent in the year 1428, the very day after she had taken the perpetual vows. He was King Alfonso's secretary. The lovers went to Rome, where they were imprisoned for a year, before Pope Martin the Third would grant a dispensation, and give the young couple the nuptial benediction. All the children born of this marriage died in infancy, except Don Juan, who joined Christopher Columbus, and died during his travels in 1493. He left one son, Mark Antony, a satirical poet, who was carried off by the plague during the sack of Rome by the Imperialists in 1536. Three months after his death his wife gave birth to a son, Jacques Casanova, who emigrated to France and there lived to be very old. He fought with Farnese against Henry of Navarre, and was my great-great-grandfather. Thus far I can establish my pedigree by aid of my father's papers, the rest I learnt from my mother.

His ancestry.

Gaëtan Joseph Jacques fell in love with an actress named Fragoletta, and joined her troupe, first as dancer, then as comedian. After living together five years they parted, and he married a beautiful young Venetian, Zanetta, daughter of Jerome Farusi, a shoemaker opposite the theatre of Saint Samuel. This was in spite of the opposition of her family,

Digitized by Microsoft®

in whose pious eyes an actor was an abomination. Nine months after the marriage I was born, on the 2nd of April 1725.

My mother adopted her husband's profession and became an actress. When I was a year old, my parents left me in charge of my maternal grandmother, and went to London to play, where two years later my brother François was born: it was he who afterwards became the celebrated painter of battle scenes. My brother Jean was also born in London; he too had a talent for art, and was appointed Director of the Academy of Painting of Dresden. My youngest brother was a posthumous child: he took holy orders, and died in Rome about fifteen years ago.

His earliest recollections.

The earliest fact my memory can furnish occurred in the year 1733. I was eight years old, and until then my mind is blank. I have a distinct recollection of standing in a corner of the room holding my head in my hands, while blood flowed abundantly from my nose and splashed in a pool on the floor. Marzia Farusi, my grandmother, whose pet I was, came to me and washed my face with cold water; then she took me with her in a gondola to Murano, a densely populated island about half a league from Venice. Here we landed, and walked some distance till we came to a miserable hut, in which was an old woman seated on a stool. She held a black cat in her arms, and five or six others purred round her. She was, I suppose, a witch. After a long discussion in Forliote patois, my grandmother gave her a silver ducat, whereupon the witch took me up and carried me across the room, depositing me in a huge chest which stood in a corner. She closed the lid and told me not to be frightened. I lay still, holding my handkerchief to my nose, which had not ceased bleeding. I could hear laughter, weeping, singing, screams, and cries, going on outside, but loss of blood and stupidity made me indifferent to the uproar. By and by the old woman lifted me out of the box, undressed me, and put me into her bed: she burnt drugs and muttered spells over

Digitized by Microsoft®

me, rubbed my temples and the back of my neck with a sweet-smelling ointment, and gave me five sugar-plums to eat. She told me I should get well, but only if I was careful not to tell any one what she had done to cure me; if I spoke of what had taken place, she said, I should most surely bleed to death. Moreover, a beautiful lady would come to see me on the following night, but I must not mention her visit. When we got home I was put to bed, where I soon fell asleep, thinking no more of the promised visitor, but on awaking some hours later I saw, or thought I saw, a lovely woman wearing a crown on her head, who spoke to me kindly, kissed me, and disappeared.

When my grandmother came to dress me in the morning she threatened me with all sorts of penalties, of which death was the least, if I dared to tell any one of the lady. As I was accustomed to obey her orders blindly, I kept my counsel; besides, there was really no one to whom I could have spoken, for I was a dull, uninteresting child, whom people pitied and left alone.

After the voyage to Murano and the nocturnal visit, my nose continued to bleed, but less and less violently every day, my faculties began to develop, and in a month I learned to read.

The next thing I remember is being with my brother François in my father's room. A large crystal lying on the table attracted my fancy, and I put it in my pocket. By and by my father got up to look for the crystal, and not finding it, he naturally accused us of taking it. My brother denied this, and so did I, whereupon my father said we should be searched, and the one in whose possession it was found should have a good beating. While pretending to hunt for the crystal in all the corners of the room, I slipped it adroitly into my brother's pocket. I regretted having done so, for I might have pretended to find it on the floor, but it was too late. The fatal ball was found on the innocent boy, and he got the punishment. Three or four years later I was

His first crime.

Digitized by Microsoft®

fool enough to boast to François of the trick I had played him. He never forgave me, and never missed an opportunity of revenging himself. But my Jesuitical confessor told me that in this action I had been true to my name, for in the Hebrew language Jacob means 'supplanter.'

Jacob the Supplanter.

Some few weeks after this my father died of an abscess in the head: he was only thirty-six, and was an especial favourite with the aristocracy. Two days before his death he gathered his children round his bed to say farewell. My mother was there, and three Venetian noblemen named Grimani; the latter promised solemnly to be our protectors and patrons. Having given us his blessing, my father made my mother swear that none of us should be brought up to the stage. The three patricians witnessed her vow, and undertook to see that she kept it. She was still young and beautiful, and after her husband's death had many offers of marriage, but she refused them all, trusting to Providence and her own resources to bring us up.

The Abbé Grimani takes him to Padua.

It was decided that I should be put to school at Padua, so my mother and the Abbé Grimani took me, aged seven, to that town in a *burchiello*, by the Brenta canal. A *burchiello* is like a little floating house. There is a dining-room, with a small cabin at each end, a kitchen, and rooms for the servants. We embarked at ten o'clock at night, and were eight hours on the water. At Padua, I was handed over, with my trunk and all it contained, to an old woman, who, for a sequin[1] a month, agreed to board and lodge me, keep me clean, and send me to school. She grumbled at the sum, though she accepted it, and said it was not enough, at the same time eagerly pocketing her six months' pay in advance. I was kissed and told to be a good boy, and that is how they got rid of me.

My bed was in a garret, with those of three other boys, and the servant who looked after us. The old woman was as big and bony as a grenadier. My new companions received

[1] About twenty-two francs present French money.

Digitized by Microsoft®

me kindly. When we sat down to dinner a wooden spoon was given me which I refused, calling out loudly for my pretty silver one, but I was told that at school I must do as the others did, and as they had wooden spoons I must be content with the like. The soup was not bad, but it was served in a big bowl into which we all dipped, and he who dipped quickest got most. After the soup we had a bit of salt cod and an apple. We had no glasses or goblets, but drank from an earthenware pitcher a miserable beverage called *graspia*, which is made by boiling the stalks from which grapes have been stripped in water with a little sugar. After dinner the servant took me to see a young priest, Dr. Gozzi, who agreed to teach me in return for forty sous a month, the eleventh part of a sequin.

After school came supper, which was worse than dinner, and after supper I was put to bed, when the three best-known kinds of vermin prevented me from closing my eyes, while night was made additionally hideous by quantities of huge rats which ran about the floor and turned my blood cold with terror. Such was my first experience of misery, and my first lesson in fortitude and patience.

The next day I was so drowsy that I could not hold up my head, and kept dozing in school. The good priest wanted to know what was the matter with me, and on my telling him, he put on his cloak, took me by the hand, and led me back to the house, where he severely reprimanded my hostess. The result of his sermon was clean linen and a better bed for me.

My master was very kind. I sat by him in school, and tried hard to deserve his approbation.

His life at school.

It was a new life for me, who until then had known nothing outside my own home, where cleanliness and abundance reigned. Nevertheless, I grew and flourished, and had it not been for hunger I should have been fairly happy. To satisfy the gnawing I thieved right and left, and laid hands on whatever I could find. Some fifty red herrings in the kitchen cupboard disappeared one by one, and all the smoked sausages

Digitized by Microsoft®

which hung in the chimney followed them. An egg was no sooner dropped in the poultry-yard than I seized and devoured it.

My progress at school was so rapid that in a few months it was my task to examine the lessons of my thirty companions and to point out their faults to the master. I was very severe at first, but the lazy ones soon found means to soften my rigour; when their themes were full of faults they propitiated me with cold cutlets and pieces of chicken; they even gave me money. This excited my cupidity, or rather my gluttony, and I became tyrannical, with the result that they rebelled against me, and complained to the master, who convicted me of extortion, and deprived me of my functions.

The doctor, however, still continued to like me, and one day asked if I would care to leave the old woman and live with him. I was delighted at the proposition, and he told me to write to my grandmother and the Abbé Grimani for permission. Some time after this, just as we were sitting down to table, my good grandmother unexpectedly appeared. I flung myself into her arms, sobbing and crying, and at sight of the poor little skeleton I was, she mingled her tears with mine. In her presence my courage returned to me, and I told her all my grievances, pointing at the horrible food set before us, and taking her to see my miserable bed. The old woman declared she did the best she could for the money, and my grandmother only told her very quietly to pack my trunk. We went to the inn, and for the first time for many a day I had a real dinner. My grandmother hardly ate anything, she was so busy watching me.

His first love.

Dr. Gozzi was a handsome young priest, about twenty-six years old. The family consisted of his mother, who looked on him as a prodigy, his father, a shoemaker who worked all day long, and never spoke even at meals, excepting on fête-days, when he conscientiously got drunk and came home at midnight singing songs from Tasso; and a sister, Bettina, a pretty girl of thirteen, a great reader of romances. Her

Digitized by Microsoft®

father and mother scolded her continually because she spent all her time at the window, and her brother teased her for reading frivolous books. She was my first love. To her I owe the fact that I am slightly pitted with smallpox. I have three marks. I nursed her through the complaint, so they are honourable scars enough. Six months after my *entrée* into the house the other scholars left, because the doctor devoted all his attention to me. He then determined to start a small school, but it was two years before it became a success; during these years he taught me all he knew, among other things to play the violin.

In the Lent of 1736, my mother sent for me, as she was going to Saint Petersburg, and wanted to see me. She invited the doctor to accompany me. This perturbed him greatly, as he had never been to Venice, and had never been in good company; however, he decided to go.

My mother received him most kindly, but as she was as beautiful as the day, my poor master was sorely embarrassed, not daring to look her in the face, and yet obliged to talk to her. She noticed his embarrassment and maliciously took pleasure in adding to it. As for me, I attracted the attention of the whole *coterie*, for as they had always considered me half an idiot, they could hardly believe in the change that had come over me in two years. Then my mother left for Saint Petersburg, and we returned to Padua, where I continued my studies. At sixteen I was received Doctor of Law. I wanted to study medicine with a view to practising, but was not allowed to. I was forced to study Law, which I hated, because my mother was determined I should be an advocate, and what was worse still, an ecclesiastical advocate. It would have been wiser to let me follow my own taste, and become a doctor, for in Medicine charlatanism is more useful than it is in Law. It ended in my being neither one nor the other, and moreover, I never made any use of one or the other. Law ruins more families than it helps, and more people perish at the hands of the doctors than are cured by them.

He is received Doctor of Law at the age of sixteen.

Digitized by Microsoft®

In my time the students of Padua enjoyed many privileges, the way of the Venetian Government was to pay well-known professors very highly and to leave the students absolute liberty to follow their lessons and lectures or not as they liked. The students were governed by a syndic, who was responsible to the Government for their conduct. It was his duty to deliver them up to justice when they violated the laws, and the students submitted to his sentences, because whenever they had a show of reason on their side he was sure to defend them vigorously.

Not wishing to appear less rich than my comrades, I incurred all sorts of expenses which I could not meet. I sold or pawned everything I possessed, but was still unable to pay my debts. Not knowing what to do, I wrote to my good grandmother and asked for help, but instead of sending it me she came herself to Padua, and after thanking the doctor for his care of me, took me back with her to Venice. The doctor, with many tears, gave me his blessing, and the most precious thing he possessed, a relic of I forget what saint: perhaps I should have it now, only it happened to be set in gold. It got me out of a sore strait once, and that was the miracle it performed.

I have been to Padua many times since those days, and always lodged at the house of the good priest. My first love, the pretty Bettina, married a shoemaker, with whom she led such a miserable life of poverty and ill treatment that after two years of matrimony her brother took her back to live with him. The last time I went to Padua, which was a few years ago, I found her old, ill, and poor, and she died in my arms.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER II

LUCY OF PASÉAN

'He comes from Padua, where he has been studying,' was the formula with which I was announced wherever I went, and which gained me the tacit admiration of my equals in age and condition, the compliments of the elders and the caresses of the old women. The curé of Saint Samuel, named Josello, presented me to the patriarch of Venice, who bestowed the tonsure on me, and four months later, by special graces, the four minor orders. My grandmother's joy knew no bounds.

M. de Malipiero, a retired senator.

Although the Abbé Grimani was my chief protector, I saw him but rarely, and I attached myself most particularly to a M. de Malipiero, a retired senator, who, in spite of his seventy years, led a merry life in his palace. Every evening a selection of all the best society in the town assembled there. He was rich, handsome, and a bachelor, but crippled by gout, his head, lungs, and stomach alone were free from this cruel malady. He made but one meal a day, and as he had no teeth and ate very slowly, he always ate alone, not wishing to hasten out of regard for his guests, or compel them to wait for him. The first time the curé presented me to him, we had a lively argument on the subject of his solitary dinners. I told him he ought to invite people with extra large appetites, which would keep them busy till he had finished.

'Where can I find them?' said he.

'It is a delicate matter,' I replied, 'but your excellency ought to try several people, and ask again those whom you find suitable, without telling them the reason, for of course

Digitized by Microsoft ®

no one would care to have it known that your excellency does him the honour to invite him to your table on account of his appetite being twice as big as any one's else.'

The senator, struck by the force of my argument, bid the curé take me to dine with him next day, and having proved that my practice was still better than my precept, I became his constant guest.

Thérèse Imer.

This old man adored a girl called Thérèse Imer, a queer, pretty, coquettish creature. She knew Malipiero loved her and mocked him. Her mother brought her to see him every day after dinner. She used to refuse him a kiss, whereupon his gallantry turned to rage, and he had much ado to prevent himself throwing dishes at her head. She actually refused to marry him!

One day the Senator surprised me by telling me that he wished me to preach, or rather to pronounce a special panegyric, which was spoken once every year, on a certain feast-day. In his quality as President of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament, it was his duty to select a preacher, and he had chosen me.

'They will not dare to refuse you,' he said, 'and this is a fine chance for you.'

I had never thought of preaching, and at first I thought he was joking, but he soon persuaded me that I was destined to be one of the finest orators of the century!

On the appointed day I read my panegyric in the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, before a most select audience. I was generously applauded, and every one declared I was a born preacher, certainly no boy of fifteen had ever spoken so well before. In the alms bag, in which it was customary to deposit offerings for the preacher, the sacristan found more than fifty sequins, and several *billets doux*, which latter scandalised him greatly. This rich harvest, coming when I was sorely in need of money, made me think seriously of taking up preaching as a profession, and I spoke of this to the curé, asking him to help me. The curé, who appreciated

Digitized by Microsoft®

my maiden effort, commissioned me to write a sermon for the feast of Saint Joseph, but it was ordained that I should only preach once in my life. My ambition was nipped in the bud.

I was puffed up with the pride of my first success, and I imagined that it was unnecessary to learn my sermon by heart. I had all the ideas in my head, and it seemed impossible for me to forget the order in which they were to be presented; even if I forgot a phrase, I was sure I could easily substitute another of equal value. I never lacked words even when talking in a numerous company, so I imagined it would be impossible for me to remain mute before a congregation of people, who, after all, would be obliged to listen to whatever I said.

His first sermon.

I was to preach at four o'clock in the afternoon of the nineteenth of March, but unfortunately I had not the strength of mind to refuse an invitation to dine with the Count of Mont-Réal, who lodged in our house. I was still at table with him and his five friends when the clerk came running to tell me that they were waiting for me in the sacristry. With my stomach full, and my head also, I ran off to church, and ascended the pulpit. I got through the exordium very well, then paused for breath. I had hardly started again, when I began to stumble, lost the thread of my discourse, wandered, caught myself up, repeated myself, went back to the beginning, used a wrong word, and so on. What disconcerted me was a confused murmur, which began to rise audibly from the congregation, who saw only too plainly what was the matter with me. Several persons left the church; I heard suppressed laughter; I lost my head altogether, and I cannot say whether I really fainted or whether I only pretended to, anyhow I let myself fall on the floor of the pulpit, striking my head heavily against the wall. I wished then that the blow had killed me.

Two clerks carried me to the sacristry. As soon as I came to myself I caught up my cloak and hat and ran home, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

locked myself into my own room. There I speedily exchanged cassock and bands for breeches and short coat, such as an abbé wears in the country, and putting some things in a bag, I started for Padua, with the intention of passing my third examination.

When I returned to Venice some months later, my disgraceful performance was forgotten. The unfortunate affair had faded from people's minds, but there was no longer any question of my becoming a preacher.

In the autumn I received an invitation from the Countess of Mont-Réal to pass some time at a country place of hers called Paséan, where I was to meet a numerous and brilliant company, including her daughter, a Venetian lady, who had wit and beauty, but only one eye.

A charming room on the ground floor was allotted to me; it looked into the garden. The morning after my arrival, when I opened my eyes, they rested with delight on a beautiful girl who brought me my coffee. She seemed to be about seventeen, but in reality was three years younger. Her skin was as white as alabaster, and her hair and eyes as black as ebony; she wore nothing but a chemise and a short petticoat, showing a well-turned leg and the prettiest little foot imaginable.

'Was your bed comfortable?' she asked.

'Yes; and I am sure it was you who made it. Who are you?'

Lucy.

'I am Lucy. My father is the *concierge* here. I have no brothers nor sisters, and I am fourteen years old. I am glad you have not brought a servant with you, as I shall wait on you, and I hope you will be pleased with me.'

She helped me to put on my dressing-gown, and while I took my coffee she sat on the bed and chattered to me. By and by her father and mother came in; they scolded her gently for being so forward, and begged me to excuse her. When she left the room, they broke into praises of her goodness and gentleness. 'She is,' they said, 'our only child, and the

Digitized by Microsoft®

hope of our old age. She loves and obeys us, and fears God. She is as healthy as a fish, and has only one fault; she is very young.'

While they were still talking of her, she returned, as gay as a linnet, neatly dressed, with her hair arranged and her shoes and stockings on.

Every morning and evening she came to wait on me, and I was soon convinced from what she said that she was justly the idol of her parents, and that the freedom of her manner came from her innocence and the purity of her soul. Her naïveté, her vivacity, her curiosity, the modest blush which covered her face when the amusing things that she said, the full meaning of which she was far from understanding, made me laugh, all showed me that she was an angel of candour, but an angel who would most likely fall a victim to the first libertine who should attack her.

I felt myself strong enough to avoid anything which could afterwards give me cause for reproach; indeed, the thought of such villainy made me shudder. My *amour-propre* was sufficient guarantee for the honour of Lucy and of her worthy parents, who so confidingly trusted her to me. It seemed to me that I should have been contemptible in my own eyes if I had betrayed this confidence. I determined to struggle against all warmer feelings, and let her mere presence be my reward. I remained at Paséan all September, and the eleven last nights of my sojourn there I passed tranquilly and quietly in Lucy's society. As soon as her mother was asleep she would come to me, and talk to me, in all honour.

When I left I promised to return in the spring. Our parting was sad and tender; indeed, her perturbed and excited state of mind, due to my departure, was perhaps the cause of her misfortune, for which, twenty years later in Holland, I had reason to bitterly reproach myself.

When I returned to Paséan, after Easter, everything was changed; the guests were strangers to me, and the supper the first night seemed interminable. I was given my old room,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and I hastened to it, eagerly expecting to see Lucy. As she did not appear, I consoled myself by saying, 'She will surely come in the morning.' But in the morning my coffee was brought by a stout, ugly old servant, who, when I asked for news of the family, answered in a *patois* I did not understand.

By and by the *concierge* himself appeared. I asked after his wife and his daughter, but at this last word his eyes filled with tears.

'What,' cried I, 'is she dead?'

'Would to God she were!'

'Why do you speak so? What has happened to her?'

Her elopement.

'She has eloped with Count Daniel's courier, and we do not even know where she is.'

His wife came in at that moment and joined her lamentations to his, and seeing that I sincerely shared in their grief, they told me it was but eight days since she had left them.

'I know the courier, l'Aigle,' said I; 'he is a scoundrel. Did he ask your permission to marry her?'

'Not he, for he knew we should never grant it.'

'But I cannot understand Lucy's caring for him!'

'He must have bewitched her. She first met him about a month after your departure.'

'Does no one know where they are?'

'No one; and God knows what the villain will do with her.'

Feeling every bit as sad as these honest folk could feel, I went out into the woods and spent a long morning in reflections, which all, good and bad alike, began with 'if.' 'If' I had arrived a week earlier, Lucy would have confided in me; 'if' I had not trifled with her she would have been less susceptible; 'if' she had never known me——! I was wretched, for I felt that I had been the agent of her misfortune. Had I known in what direction to look for her, I would have set off at once, but I had no clue to her whereabouts.

Before Lucy's fate was made known to me I was proud to think that I had had such control over myself, but now I was

Digitized by Microsoft®

ashamed and repentant. I saw in my mind's-eye the unhappy girl falling into misery, perhaps shame, hating my memory as the primary cause of her trouble. This incident it was which led me to adopt a new system, which I diligently pursued in after-life. I have never, since Paséan, had occasion to reproach myself with leaving victories behind me for others to reap, and, in some instances, I may have carried this new system too far. My readers will judge.

I joined the rest of the party. They flattered me, and made so much of me, that I felt cheerful again, and kept the whole table in a roar. I had to put my grief quite aside, or leave the place. I stayed.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER III

CLERICAL ASPIRATIONS

On my return to Venice I found my grandmother very ill. I loved her, and I did not leave her for a single moment until she had breathed her last. It was not possible for her to leave me anything; she had given me all that she could during her lifetime. A month after her death my mother wrote saying that as there was no probability of her returning to Venice, she had decided to give up her house there. She had told the Abbé Grimani so, and I must conform to his will in everything. He was bidden to sell the furniture, and put me to some good school. I went at once to Grimani to assure him of my submission to his orders.

The rent of the house was paid up to the end of the year; but knowing that henceforward I should be homeless, and that the furniture would be sold, I did as I liked. I began by selling the linen, the hangings, and the china. I went on to the mirrors and beds. I knew I should get into trouble for this, but I also knew that these things were inherited from my father, and that my mother had no right to them. As far as my brothers and sisters were concerned, there was plenty of time for us to make arrangements. Four months later my mother wrote to me again, this time from Warsaw.

'I have, my dear son,' she wrote, 'made the acquaintance of a learned minor friar, a Calabrian, whose great qualities remind me of you each time he honours me with a visit. I told him about a year ago that I had a son destined for holy orders, but that I had not the necessary means to

Digitized by Microsoft®

devote him to the Church. He said that if I would ask the queen to appoint him to a certain bishopric, my son should become as his own. I must ask the queen, he said, to recommend him to her daughter, the Queen of Naples. The queen has deigned to listen to me, and to write to her daughter, and this most worthy ecclesiastic has now been raised to the see of Martorano;[1] and faithful to his promise, he will take you with him to his diocese. He must pass through Venice to go to Calabria. He has written you the enclosed letter, to which reply at once. By his help you may arrive at the highest dignities of the Church. Think what my joy will be if in twenty or thirty years' time I see you a bishop! The Abbé Grimani will take care of you until the bishop fetches you.'

He leaves Venice for Martorano.

The bishop's letter was in Latin, and was practically a repetition of my mother's.

These letters completely turned my head. Adieu, Venice! I saw before me a most brilliant perspective of years. I burned to start at once on my career. I felt no regret at the thought of leaving my country. 'The time for vanities is past,' said I, 'a stable and dignified future lies ahead of me.' The Abbé Grimani complimented me on my future grandeur, and assured me he would find me a good boarding-house, into which I could go at the beginning of the year, and wait until the coming of the bishop.

One fine morning, a man, about forty, appeared at my house with a black wig, a scarlet cloak, and a sunburnt face. He gave me a note from M. Grimani bidding me hand over to bearer all the furniture in the house, according to his inventory, a duplicate copy of which was in my possession. I showed him what was left of the furniture, and when anything was missing I told him, in an indifferent manner, that I knew where it was. But the blockhead insisted on knowing what I had done with the things. His tone displeased me,

[1] Martorano is situated in the wilds of Calabria, and was the seat of the Suffragan Bishop of Cosenza.

Digitized by Microsoft®

and I told him I owed him no explanation. As he continued to bluster I advised him to get out as quickly as he could, or I would show him I was still master in my own house.

His furniture is sold for debt.

I went to M. Grimani, and told him all that had happened, but the man had been there before me, and I got a severe reprimand, and was asked what had become of the missing furniture. I had sold it, I said, so as not to run into debt. M. Grimani told me I was a scamp, that it was not mine to sell, that he should know how to deal with me, and ordered me out of the house. I ran off in a boiling rage, and bargained with a Jew to buy all that was left in the house, but when I got to my door I found the sheriff was there before me. Seals had been put on everything, and I was not even allowed to go into my own room. I went to a lawyer and laid the case before him.

'It is sharp practice,' said he, 'and I think you can make them pay dearly for it; the seals will be taken off to-morrow, and in the meantime you must sleep at a friend's house.'

As a matter of fact the seals were taken off the next morning. Two days after M. Grimani ordered me to wait on him immediately. When I presented myself he asked me brusquely what I intended to do.

'Put myself under the protection of the law,' I said, 'and defend myself against a man who has used violence, and forced me to spend the night in a disreputable house.'

'A disreputable house?'

'Certainly, there was none other open to me, and I was turned out of my own.'

'You are back again now. Go and tell your lawyer to stop all proceedings; the sheriff, Razzetta, was only acting by my orders. You were going to sell the rest of the furniture, we were obliged to prevent you. There is a room ready for you in a house which belongs to me, near Saint John Chrysostom; the first floor is occupied by La Tintoretta, the dancer. Send your baggage there, and come and dine with me every day.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

He takes a lodging in the house of La Tintoretta.

My lawyer advised me to do as M. Grimani said; it was an honour for me to be admitted to his table, and I was curious to see my new lodgings in La Tintoretta's house, for she was a great deal talked about on account of the Prince of Waldeck, who spent large sums of money on her.

The bishop was expected during the summer, so I had only six months to wait before starting on the road to the Pontificate. Everything looked rose-coloured, my castles in the air were very magnificent structures.

La Tintoretta was a mediocre dancer, neither pretty nor ugly, but very intelligent. When I went to pay her my respects she received me like a princess, took off her glove and gave me her hand to kiss. The prince arrived while I was there, and was very gracious indeed. He was most kind to me all the time I remained in the house, and gave me a gold snuff-box as a reward for a very bad sonnet I made in honour of his Grizellini—this was her family name; Tintoretta was only a nickname bestowed on her because her father was a dyer.

Towards the end of the carnival my mother wrote to the Abbé Grimani, saying it would be a disgrace if the bishop found me lodging in the same house with a dancer, and that he must get me some more decent dwelling at once. He consulted with the curé Josello, and these two good gentlemen decided that a seminary was the very thing for me. It was an absurd idea, for at the age of seventeen a boy such as myself is out of place in a seminary; but as I was always eager for new sensations, I consented gladly. I was not destined to remain there long.

He enters a seminary.

The students all slept in an immense dormitory divided into cells. A lay-brother, called the prefect, slept at the end of the dormitory, and it was his business to keep order, and above all to see that we did not enter one another's cells. This was a capital offence, and in consequence nothing delighted the *mauvais sujets* so much as to pay one another

Digitized by Microsoft®

nocturnal visits. Returning in haste one night I was surprised to find another boy, not only in my cell, but in my bed. I kicked him out promptly, but the unfortunate wretch fell over a pail and made a terrible clatter. The prefect appeared, our names were taken, and there was a great to-do. It transpired the next day that the unlucky boy had been cruising about in the dormitory, when he heard, or thought he heard, the prefect. Laying his hands on my bed he found it empty, and jumped to the conclusion that he was safe in his own cell. But his explanations and mine were of no avail; we were haled before the rector, and then, with our hands tied behind our backs, four domestics took us into the large hall, where we were told to kneel in front of the crucifix; and each received seven or eight blows from a stick.

He is dismissed.

Four days after, the curé Josello came with orders to take me back to Venice. He told me that the Abbé Grimani had given orders to his servant not to admit me if I presented myself at his palace; and he left me at the Jesuits' College without a sou in my pocket, and nothing but the clothes I stood up in. The next day as I was coming out of the library of Saint Mark a soldier accosted me, and said there was some one in a gondola who wished to speak to me. I stepped into the gondola, the curtain was drawn back, and I saw my evil genius the Sheriff Razzetta! The soldier sat down in the prow with a companion. I recognised the gondola as that belonging to Signor Grimani. No one spoke; for half an hour we maintained profound silence, then the gondola stopped at the small door of the Fort of Saint André at the mouth of the Adriatic, the very spot where the *Bucentaur* is brought to a standstill when the Doge goes in state to espouse the sea on the Feast of the Ascension.

The sentinel at the fort called a corporal, who took me to the officer in command, giving him at the same time a letter. I was led to the guard-room, where shortly after the adjutant appeared, and giving me three francs and a half told me he

Digitized by Microsoft®

had orders to pay me that sum weekly: it was the exact amount received by a soldier of the lowest grade. I was too indignant to be angry. In the evening I sent for something to eat, then lying down on a camp bed I passed the night in the midst of the guard, without closing my eyes. They did nothing but sing, eat garlic, smoke bad tobacco, and drink wine as thick and as black as ink.

Next day the commandant summoned me, and said that in making me pass the night in the guard-room he had only obeyed the orders of the Minister of War. 'But now,' he said, 'I am simply told to keep you under arrest in the fortress, therefore I can give you a good room and a bed. Go wherever you like within bounds, but remember if you escape, it will be the ruin of me. I am sorry to be only able to give you ten sous a day, but if you have friends in Venice write to them for money, and I will see that your letters reach their destination.'

He is imprisoned in the Fort of St. André.

I was then taken to a fine room on the first story, the windows of which commanded a superb view. I found a bed, and my trunk which had not been opened. A soldier came and told me politely that he would wait upon me, and that I was to pay him whenever I could; every one knew I had but ten sous a day. I sent him to bring me some soup, and after having eaten it went to bed and slept for nine hours. When I awoke I found an invitation to sup with the commandant, and I began to think that things were not so bad after all.

When the hot weather came I was obliged to write to Signor Grimani for summer clothes, telling him where he would find them, provided Razzetta had not sold them. Eight days after, when I was with the commandant, this infamous creature walked in accompanied by an individual whom he presented as Petrillo, a celebrated favourite of the Empress of Russia. Taking a packet from the hands of a gondolier, he gave it to me, saying, 'Here are your rags, which I bring you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I answered, 'The day will come when I shall give *you* your *rigano*.'[1]

Hereupon Petrillo struck in, saying he was sorry not to have seen me in Venice, as I could have shown him the way to all the low haunts in the city.

'We should doubtless have met your wife in one of them,' I replied.

I was beside myself with passion, and after they had left I considered my revenge.

The fort was entirely surrounded by water, and no sentinel could see me from the windows. The thing was to find a boatman who, for the sake of money, would risk the galleys. I chose one among those who brought provisions to the fort every morning, and offered him a sequin if he would help me to put a certain plan of mine into execution, at the same time assuring him I had no intention of escaping. He asked me to give him twenty-four hours to think over my proposition. During this delay he made inquiries about me, and ascertained that I was not in prison for any important misdemeanour, so he said I could count on him. The next night he was under my window, in a boat with a mast sufficiently long for me to slide down it. Wrapped in a boatman's cloak I went to Razzetta's house. I was told he was out. I sat down on a stone by the bridge, and just before midnight I saw him coming along the street. This was all I wanted to know; I went back to my boat, and at five o'clock next morning the whole garrison saw me walking on the ramparts.

He escapes.

Two or three days after this, when playing with the adjutant's son, I slipped and cried out that I had sprained my ankle: the surgeon examined it, and told me to keep quiet. So there I lay on my bed with my foot in a bandage, and every one came to see me. I had my servant to sleep in my room, and I made him dead drunk. At half-past ten I was in Venice, where I bought a thick stick, and then sat on

[1] Convict's dress.

Digitized by Microsoft®

a doorstep of a house by the Place Saint Paul, close to a very convenient little canal.

At a quarter to twelve I saw my man coming. Keeping in the shadow of the wall, I crept up behind him, and dealt him a violent blow on the head, another on the arm, and a third which knocked him into the canal; in falling he called out my name, a man came running up with a lantern, but I struck him on the hand and forced him to drop it; then taking to my heels I ran back to my boat, and in a quarter of an hour was in my room, and in bed. I awakened the soldier, and told him to fetch the doctor. I was dying of colic.

The next morning the commandant told me as a piece of good news that Razzetta had been attacked in the night, and tumbled into the canal; his nose was broken, three teeth were knocked out, and his arm severely bruised.

Three days after a police commissary came to the fort and accused me of being the aggressor, but my *alibi* was easily proved. The chaplain, the doctor, the soldier, and several others swore that at midnight I was in my bed with a sprained foot, and tormented with such terrible colic that drugs had to be administered to me.

A few days later M. Grimani sent to inform me of the bishop's arrival. He was a fine handsome monk, about thirty-four years old, but it was impossible, he said, for him to take me with him. I must meet him at Rome; he questioned me for over three hours, and I saw plainly that I did not please him, though he pleased me.

He starts for Rome.

A few days after this interview I embarked, with forty-two sequins in my purse, and plenty of courage in my heart. I was to go into quarantine at Ancona, and then a friend of the bishop's would give me his address in Rome, and money for my journey. At Chiozza, where we made a stoppage of two or three days, I had the misfortune to meet a one-eyed Jacobin monk whom I had known in Venice, and who introduced to me some friends of his as dishonest as himself.

Digitized by Microsoft®

We played at faro, and I lost every sol I possessed. I pawned the contents of my trunk to a money-lender for thirty sequins, on condition that if in three days I did not redeem them, they were to become his property; like the young fool that I was, I went about clamouring for revenge, flinging good money after bad. At last I lost the last of the thirty sequins, and should certainly have starved on the boat, had it not been for a young Franciscan friar, who persuaded me to go ashore with him at Orsara, and dine at the house of a pious lady of his acquaintance.

With Brother Stephano to Ancona.

Just before we started next morning he came aboard with an immense sack full of things which had been given him: bread, wine, cheese, sausage, jam, and chocolate, all the capacious pockets of his frock were crammed with provisions.

'Have you money too?' I asked.

'God forbid! To begin with, it is contrary to our blessed rule to possess money, and when I go begging, if I accepted coin, I should only get a sol here and there, whereas people give me food to ten times that value. Take my word for it, Saint Francis was no fool!'

We arrived at Ancona. At the old lazaretto we were obliged to go into quarantine for twenty-eight days. I was absolutely destitute, and had no idea how I was going to pay for my board and lodging during this month, but I had plenty of courage and audacity. I hired a room for myself and Brother Stephano, and got a bed, table, and chairs from a Jew dealer, promising to pay him for the use of the furniture at the expiration of the quarantine.

The monk would not share the bed with me; he would accept nothing but some straw in a corner, but the amusing part of it was that he counted on living at my expense, little thinking that I was relying on *him* to keep me from dying of hunger. He had provisions enough for eight days, but when these were exhausted what should we do?

After supper, I laid my unhappy situation before him, in language as pathetic as I could command. Judge my

Digitized by Microsoft®

surprise, when the thickheaded fellow beamed with joy over my misfortunes!

'I will take care of you till we get to Rome,' he said. 'Do you know how to write?' On my answering in the affirmative, he brightened up, and assured me all would be well. The next day we spent several hours writing letters to the charitable people of Ancona. I had to put down all the lies he dictated, and sign them, for he said if he signed people would see at once that he had not written the letters himself. 'And in this corrupt age,' he said, 'learning is the only thing people value.' He made me interlard my phrases with Latin quotations, and when I resisted threatened not to give me anything to eat.

Brother Stephano's dealings with the people of Ancona.

I thought he would be treated like a fool, and that no one would respond to his appeals. I was mistaken: provisions came in abundantly, with wine enough for six persons. So throughout the quarantine we lived like fighting-cocks. When at last we were set at liberty I presented my letter to the bishop's friend at the convent of minor friars, and received from him some money and an address in Rome. The Franciscan had attached himself to me, and we agreed to journey together. He was a big, vigorous, red-headed peasant about thirty years old, who had taken the vows for the sake of leading a lazy life. He told me he only meant to walk three miles a day, and to be two months going to Rome, which can easily be accomplished in eight days.

'I wish to arrive there fresh,' he said; 'there is no hurry. If you like to come with me you will see that Saint Francis will take care of us both.'

I said I was in too great a hurry to go at his pace, so he offered to do double distance if I would carry his cloak. I little knew what I was undertaking. It would have been a heavy load for a mule, there were twelve big pockets, without counting the one in the back which he called 'il batticulo,' and which held twice as much as the others.

On the way he told me his history, a very commonplace

Digitized by Microsoft®

one, full of lies and absurdities. He was a runaway, and so did not dare to present himself at the convents we passed. On the second morning we came within sight of a house where he intended to beg; he took the cloak from me, and entering the house blessed the inhabitants, who came up and kissed his hand. The mistress asked him if he would say Mass for them. On the way to the oratory I whispered to him, 'Have you forgotten that we have breakfasted?'

'Mind your own business,' he answered curtly.

I did not dare to reply, but while assisting at the Mass I was astonished to see that he did not know what he was about; it was evident he was no priest. After the service he installed himself in the confessional, where, having listened to the whole household in succession, he took it into his head to refuse absolution to our hostess's daughter, a pretty child of twelve. The refusal was made public, he scolded and threatened her with hell-fire. She issued from the oratory covered with confusion and weeping bitterly. I could not help telling Stephano in a loud voice that he was mad, and I went after the girl to console her, but she hid herself and refused to join us at table. In the presence of the assembled company I called Stephano an impostor, and the torturer of innocence, asking why he had refused her absolution. He shut my lips by replying calmly that he could not betray the secret of the confessional. I would not eat with him, and determined to part company, but on leaving I was obliged to accept a paolo for my share of the false Mass he had said, as it was my unenviable function to carry the purse.

When we were on the highroad again I told him we must separate, as if I stayed with him I should certainly find myself at the galleys. I told him he was an ignorant scoundrel, and he responded by saying I was a vagabond and a beggar. I boxed his ears, and he struck me with his stick, but I disarmed him and rolled him into the ditch, where I left him, and walked off towards Macerata. I soon tired; it was the first time in my life I had walked more than a mile. Children should be forced

Digitized by Microsoft®

to walk. I travelled alone for two days. When I was about three miles from Seraval I discovered I had lost my purse, and had only a little copper money left in my pocket; to add to my trouble I sprained my foot jumping over a hedge. In sore distress and pain I sat down by the roadside, hoping that help would come to me.

Incidents of the journey to Martorano.

By and by a peasant appeared with a donkey, and after a long palaver he permitted me to mount, and so I reached Seraval. I sent for a doctor, who told me I must not attempt to walk for three or four days. There was a good inn at Seraval, and I was well treated, but I dreaded the moment when I should be well enough to leave, for how could I pay my bill? On the morning of the fourth day I decided to ask the surgeon to sell my coat; the prospect was not a pleasing one, as the rainy season had set in, but I owed my host fifteen paoli, and four to the surgeon. Just as I was beginning to negotiate this painful bargain in walked Brother Stephano, laughing like a maniac, and asked me if I had got over the blow from his staff?

In view of such a strange coincidence as this, can one help being superstitious? This fatal monk was my guardian angel—but what an angel! His re-appearance seemed more of a curse than a blessing, yet I never doubted for a moment but that he would get me out of my difficulties.

'*Qui va piano va sano*,' said he; 'I have been five days covering the distance you did in one, but I am well and nothing has happened to me; while you have suffered pain and privation. Now, if your foot is all right, we will go on together. Let us forget everything and make haste to Rome.'

'I cannot leave here. I owe twenty paoli, and I have lost my purse.'

'I will get the money for you with the help of Saint Francis.'

He went out and returned in an hour with forty paoli borrowed from the commissioner of police, for which I gave him a bill payable when I reached Rome.

Digitized by Microsoft®

For two days we got along very well. At the village of Soma, the mistress of the inn gave us a good dinner and some excellent Cyprus wine, which she told us the couriers from Venice brought her in exchange for truffles, which they sold dear on their return. Imagine my indignation when two miles from Soma the infamous monk showed me a little sack of truffles which he had stolen from our hostess in return for her hospitality. The truffles were worth at least two sequins. I tore the sack out of his hands, telling him I would send it back. As he would not listen to this we again came to blows, and having knocked him down and taken away his stick, I left him. At the next village I wrote a letter of apology to the fair hostess, with whom I had left a portion of my heart, and sent back the truffles.

I arrived in the oldest capital in the world with seven paoli in my pocket. Thus sadly equipped, I cared nothing for the beauties of Rome, but I went straight towards Monti-Magnanopoli, where I was to find my bishop. I was told he had gone away ten days before my arrival, leaving instructions and money for me to follow him to Naples.

A coach left the next day. Not caring to do any sight-seeing I engaged a seat in it, and stayed in bed until the time for my departure. I arrived at Naples on the 6th of September, only to learn that my bishop had proceeded to Martorano. He had left no instructions for me, no one knew anything about me. I was alone in the immense city, with no acquaintances, and very little money. No matter, my destiny called me to Martorano, and to Martorano I would go; it was only two hundred miles! The coaches would not take me as I had no luggage, unless I paid in advance, so I determined to set off on foot, begging my food and lodging like Brother Stephano. My first halt was at Portici, where I came after walking an hour and a half. My legs and my head were tired; I determined to spend a quarter of my capital on a good dinner and a good bed. Then I would consider!

Naples, Sept. 6th.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER IV

THE BISHOP OF MARTORANO

THE next morning, having told my host I would be back to dinner, I set out to visit the royal palace. As I was standing at the entrance a pleasant-faced man in Eastern dress came up to me and said that, if I wanted to see the palace, he would show me over it, as he knew it well, and that by going with him I should save a guide's fee. In the course of conversation I told him I was a Venetian, and he said in that case he was my vassal, as he came from Zante.

'I have some excellent Levantine muscat I could sell you cheap,' he said.

'Perhaps I might buy some,' I answered as loftily as though my pockets were full of gold, 'but I am a connoisseur.'

'So much the better. I have some wines of Samos and Cephalonia also. Come and dine with me, and taste them. I have a quantity of minerals, vitriol, cinnabar, antimony, and a hundred quintals of mercury.'

'I might buy some mercury,' said I thoughtfully.

It is only natural that a young fellow unused to poverty should try to appear richer than he is by talking of his means; but while thus talking it had suddenly occurred to me that the amalgamation of mercury with lead and bismuth produces an increase of one-quarter in bulk. I wondered if the Greek merchant knew this secret.

His experiments in chemistry.

He took me to his inn, and in his private room I saw four bottles of mercury, each weighing about ten pounds. I was ready with my scheme. I bought a bottle of mercury, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

took it away. The Greek had business to transact, and went out, after saying we would meet at dinner. I ran at once to a druggist and bought two pounds and a half of lead, and as much bismuth. We dined gaily, and while drinking his excellent muscat, he asked me why I had bought the mercury.

'You shall see,' I replied.

I showed him his mercury divided into two bottles. I begged a chamois-skin, and having filtered it, filled the original bottle, while he stood open-mouthed at sight of what amounted to a quarter of a bottle of fine mercury remaining over and above the original amount. I called in the servant, and sent him to sell the surplus mercury to the druggist, and he returned with fifteen carlins. The Greek could not get over his surprise.

He bargains with the Greek merchant.

We supped together, and he said laughingly that I ought to stay over the next day to make forty-five carlins out of the remaining mercury. I replied in an offhand way that I had no need of money, and had only increased the bulk of the mercury to surprise and amuse him.

'You must be very rich.'

'No, for I am working with a view to increase gold in the same way, and it entails very costly experiments.' I saw I had piqued his curiosity and cupidity. He came to my room at break of day. I received him cordially, and invited him to take his coffee with me.

'Tell me,' said he, 'will you sell your secret?'

'I will consider it; and when we meet at Naples——'

'Why not here, to-day?'

'I am expected at Salerno, and besides, the secret is a costly one, and I do not know you.'

'That is no reason—I can pay ready money. How much do you want?'

'Two thousand ounces.'[1]

'I will give them you, on condition that you teach me

[1] An ounce is worth about thirteen francs French money.

Digitized by Microsoft®

to multiply the bulk of the thirty pounds of mercury I have here.'

After some discussion he drew up a written agreement, in which it was stipulated he should pay me two thousand ounces on learning from me the ingredients and the manner by which he could increase mercury one-quarter without deterioration, and that it should be equal in quality to that which I had sold in his presence at Portici.

He gave me a bill of exchange for the sum agreed upon, drawn at eight days on a well-known banker, and I told him the ingredients were lead and bismuth; the first has a natural affinity for mercury, and the second renders the mass fluid enough to pass through a chamois skin. The Greek went off to try the experiment, and I dined alone. In the evening he came back, saying, in a melancholy tone: 'The experiment is made, but the mercury is not perfect.'

'It is as perfect as that I sold you at Portici, which is what you demanded in the agreement.'

'But in the agreement it also says "*without deterioration.*"'

'Do you know the secret or not? Should I have told it you except on those terms? We will go to law about it, and if you win you can congratulate yourself on having got my secret for nothing. In the meantime here are the fifty ounces you gave me on account——'

I laid them on the table in a dignified manner, though I was dying with fear lest he should take me at my word, but he refused to touch them. That night we supped at separate tables; we were at open war, but I felt sure that we should become friends again.

The next morning he came in just as I was leaving. I once more offered him his money back, but he told me to keep it, and that he would give me fifty more ounces if I would return him his bill of exchange. After arguing for two hours I gave in, and we dined together and parted the best of friends. He gave me an order on his warehouse in Naples for a barrel of

Digitized by Microsoft®

muscat, and a superb case containing twelve silver-mounted razors.

I stopped two days at Salerno to set myself up with linen and other necessaries. I had a hundred sequins, I was in good health, my natural gaiety had returned; I was glad to be able to appear before the bishop in proper style. I left Salerno with two priests who were going to Cosenza, and we did the hundred and forty-two miles in twenty-two hours.

The Bishop, Bernard de Bernardis.

The day after my arrival in the capital of Calabria I took a little carriage, and drove out to Martorano. I was glad to find myself in glorious Greece, and was prepared to be enthusiastic over Pythagoras, who abode there twenty-four centuries ago. I found my bishop, Bernard de Bernardis, writing at a rickety table. I knelt down according to custom, but he raised me and gave me his benediction. He was sincerely grieved when I told him of my misfortunes, and delighted when I added that I was well, and indebted to no one. The *personnel* of the episcopal palace consisted of one man-servant who waited, and the most canonical of house-keepers. The house was large, but ill built and ill kept. The dinner was execrable; it was a fast day, and the oil was rancid. The bishop was a man of great intelligence; he seemed mortified at the poorness of his establishment, and was probably painfully conscious of the doubtful benefit he had conferred on me in taking me into his household. He told me his only cause for satisfaction was his escape from the clutches of the monks, whose persecutions had kept him in purgatory for fifteen years.

The next day he officiated at Pontifical High Mass, at which were assembled all the clergy and the notabilities of the town. I have never seen such a troop of brutes, such hideous women, such stupid and vulgar men. On returning to the palace I told the bishop that I had no desire to die here, in his melancholy see, a martyr to *ennui*. 'Give me,' I added, 'your blessing and my *congé*, and let me go; or rather come with me, and I promise you we will make our fortunes elsewhere.'

He tells the bishop that it will not do.

Digitized by Microsoft®

This proposition amused him so that he laughed at it at intervals throughout the day. Had he accepted it he would not have died two years later in the prime of his age. He owned that he had made a mistake in sending for me; as he had no money (his revenue was about two thousand francs a year), and not aware that I had any, he gave me a letter to a friend at Naples, who was to pay me sixty ducats. I accepted this with gratitude, and taking from my trunk the case of razors the Greek had given me, I begged him to accept them as a souvenir.

Thus I left Martorano three days after my arrival. I had five travelling companions, whom, from their appearance, I judged to be corsairs, or professional thieves, so I took good care not to let them know my purse was well lined. I also always slept fully dressed, which is a precaution every young man should take when travelling in that very unsatisfactory country.

He comes to Naples, September 16, 1743.

I arrived at Naples on the 16th September 1743, and at once delivered the letter of introduction the bishop had given me. Gennaro Polo, to whom the letter was addressed, not only paid the money, but kept me with him as companion to his son. After some weeks' sojourn with this charming family I travelled with them to Rome. They paid all my expenses, and I arrived in the Eternal City well dressed, with a tolerably well-filled pocket, some fine jewels, a certain amount of experience, and good letters of introduction, perfectly free, and at an age when a bold man can count on fortune if he has a personal appearance calculated to dispose others to regard him with favour. I possessed a something which is better than looks, a certain *je ne sais quoi* which gains attention and civility. I knew that Rome is the only city in the world where a man who starts with nothing may arrive at everything.

I had a letter for Father Georgi, a learned monk, esteemed by all Rome, even by the Pope himself, perhaps on account of his dislike for the Jesuits. I had also a letter for Cardinal Acquaviva, who was then all-powerful. His Eminence received me kindly, and asked if I had paid my homage to the Holy

Digitized by Microsoft®

He travels to Rome with the family of Gennaro Polo.

Father: on my replying that I had not yet had an opportunity of doing so, he promised to obtain an audience for me. In a few days I was notified that I might present myself to the Pope. I went to Monte-Cavallo, and was taken straight to the room where his Holiness was. He was alone, I prostrated myself and kissed the cross on his slipper. The Holy Father asked me who I was, and when I told him my name, he said he had heard of me. He congratulated me on being protected by such an important cardinal as Acquaviva, and questioned me as to my adventures; he laughed heartily when I told him about the poor good Bishop of Martorano. I felt perfectly at ease with him, and told him many things which amused him so much that he was pleased to say he should always be glad to see me. I asked his permission to read all the forbidden books, and he accorded it to me, promising that he would send it me in writing, which he forgot to do.

He prostrates himself before the Holy Father.

Benedict the Fourteenth[1] was amiable, and loved a joke. I saw him a second time at the Villa Médicis. He called me to him, and while walking about, spoke to me of many things of no importance. I asked him to dispense me from abstinence, which he did, at the same time giving me a special benediction. Having had the good luck to write some verses that pleased the Cardinal S. C., I became a frequent visitor at his palace, and he gave me a superb snuffbox in gold enamel, and several other costly presents. My friends, seeing that I had gained such protectors, predicted the highest fortunes for me. In a short time my position in Rome became truly brilliant, but I was not destined to enjoy it long. One morning, it was Christmas Day, I remember, a friend of mine, a young doctor, came into my room, and flinging himself on the couch told me he had come to bid me farewell, but that, before parting from me for ever, he wished me to give him one last piece of

[1] Benedict XIV. was of so mild and conciliatory a disposition that his bitterest enemies were forced to admire and respect him. Voltaire condescended to dedicate to him his tragedy of *Mahomet*. Horace Walpole erected a monument to his memory in England.

Digitized by Microsoft®

advice. He drew a letter from his pocket and told me to read it. It was from his mistress, a young girl of good family, whose father was sternly opposed to their union. In it the unfortunate girl told him that it had now grown impossible for her to conceal their intercourse longer, and that rather than brave her father's wrath she was determined to fly from Rome, out into the cold world, alone and on foot.

Barbara Dalacqua.

'If you are an honourable man,' said I, 'you will not abandon her; you must marry her in spite of her father and yours; Providence will take care of you.' I talked and reasoned with him for a long time, and by and by he grew calmer. He left me saying he would never desert his sweetheart. One evening in the beginning of January, as I was preparing for bed, the door of my room was flung open, and a young abbé, breathless and flushed, rushed in. In spite of the disguise I immediately recognised Barbara Dalacqua, the doctor's sweetheart. She threw herself at my feet and begged me to have pity on her. What heart so hard as to remain untouched by the prayers and tears of a pretty and unfortunate woman!

'Where is your lover the doctor?'

'The police have taken him. I was on my way to join him, dressed as you see, when I saw them thrusting him into a carriage. I felt that my turn would come next, and that I was surely lost unless I could find some safe hiding-place. I obeyed my first impulse and came to you.'

'My poor girl,' I said, 'it is now midnight; when morning breaks what do you propose to do?'

'I will leave the house,' she sobbed. 'In these clothes no one will recognise me; I will leave Rome, and I will walk straight before me until I fall dead of fatigue.'

I made her lie down on my bed, and early in the morning I went out, intending to go to her father and beseech him to forgive her; but I saw that I was followed, and I turned into the café, and, as calmly as I could, ordered some chocolate. As I was staying in Cardinal Acquaviva's house, I foresaw the trouble and disgrace which would come on me if the

Digitized by Microsoft®

police should institute a search. On returning to my room I induced the poor prisoner to swallow a biscuit and a little wine, and then advised her to write to the cardinal and intreat him to grant her an interview. She wrote, in French, the following words :—

'I am an honest girl, Monseigneur, although masquerading in the disguise of an abbé. I implore your Eminence to let me tell you my name in person. I hope that in the greatness of your soul you will come to my assistance, and save my honour.'

'Tell him all, keep back nothing,' said I. 'I am sure he will devise some means of helping you.'

Cardinal Acquaviva.

As soon as the letter was despatched, I left her to go to the barber's. I was only absent an hour, but when I returned to my room she had disappeared. I dined with the cardinal, but though I maintained a discreet silence I gathered from the remarks made at table, that his Eminence had taken poor Barbara under his protection. For two days I was without news of her, then I learnt that Acquaviva had placed her, at his expense, in a convent, where she was to remain until she could leave it to become my friend's wife. Unfortunately for me, the affair did not end here, the actors in the drama were too well known for it to escape attention. In a few days it became the talk of Rome, and there were not wanting malicious tongues to insinuate that I had motives of my own in coming to Barbara's aid. I took small notice of this gossip, but what troubled me was that the cardinal became less cordial to me.

At the beginning of Lent he sent for me, and said in a very grave voice : 'My dear friend, the Dalacqua affair is becoming exceedingly tiresome. People are saying that you and I have profited by her folly and her lover's lack of experience. In spite of my contempt for scandal, I cannot brave it too openly, and I feel myself obliged to ask you to leave Rome. I will find you an honourable pretext, and will continue to show you all

Digitized by Microsoft®

possible marks of my interest and esteem. You are young, and should travel. Think what country you would most like to visit. I have friends all over the world, and will give you letters which will insure your employment wherever you may decide to go. Get ready to leave Rome in a week. Think matters over seriously, come and see me to-morrow, and tell me what you determine to do.'

I left him, troubled and sore at heart. I could think of no course to pursue, and when I saw him next day, at the Villa Negroni, had made no definite plan.

He was walking in the gardens with one of his secretaries, whom he dismissed on seeing me.

I told him in the strongest terms the grief I felt at leaving him. He listened kindly, but repeated his question as to what part of Europe I wanted to go to. At last, in temper and despair, I answered: 'Constantinople.'

He is inspired to ask for letters for Constantinople.

'Constantinople!' he exclaimed.

'Yes, Monseigneur,' I repeated, wiping my eyes.

After a little silence he said with a smile: 'I must thank you for not saying Ispahan, it might have been embarrassing; I will give you a full passport, and I think you can safely tell people I am sending you to Constantinople; no one will believe you.'

When I returned to the hotel I said to myself: 'Either I am mad, or in the power of some occult genius who controls my destiny; I do not know what I shall do at Constantinople—but to Constantinople I mean to go.'

Two days after the Cardinal gave me a passport to Venice and a sealed letter addressed to Osman Bonneval,[1] Pasha of

[1] Claude Alexandre, Comte de Bonneval, 1675-1747. He was a spirited, original and most indiscreet man, as the catastrophe of his life showed. He served in Italy under Catinat, and gained and lost the friendship of Prince Eugène through his outspokenness. He chose to champion the honour of a daughter of France, and challenged her slanderer, though the Prince de Ligne says that it was only a pretext and a vent for his ill-humour. The result was a sentence of five years' imprisonment, which he evaded by flight to Turkey, where he embraced the Mussulman religion.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Caramania, at Constantinople. He also gave me a parcel containing seven hundred sequins. I already possessed three hundred, and I took my place in a berline with a lady and her daughter, who were going on a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Loretto. The girl was ugly, and I had a very tiresome journey.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CHAPTER V

THE FALSE BELLINO

I GOT safely to Ancona, and went to the best inn. When I told the host I wanted meat for supper, he replied it was Lent, and that in Lent all Christians fasted.

'The Holy Father has given me permission to eat meat.'

'Show it me.'

'He gave it me verbally.'

'I am not obliged to believe you.'

'You are an impudent fellow.'

'I am master in my own house, and if you are not satisfied I beg of you to go elsewhere.'

He sups with the purveyor to the Spanish Army.

This reply put me beside myself with rage. I swore, I cursed, I yelled, when suddenly a grave-looking personage entered the room and began to harangue me. After trying to convince me that I was in the wrong from beginning to end, he added, 'I will now go and appease the host, and I am sure he will give you an excellent supper.' He returned soon saying that everything was arranged. He told me his name, Sancio Pico, a Castilian, and purveyor to the Spanish army. I told him I was secretary to Cardinal Acquaviva, and we supped together.

'If you would like to hear some excellent music,' said he after supper, 'come into the next room, the principal actress in Ancona is lodging there.'

Pricking up my ears at the word actress, I followed him. A woman of a certain age was seated at a table with two young girls and two boys; one, the taller, was about seventeen

Digitized by Microsoft®

years old and wonderfully handsome. He doubtless played the leading lady, as was the custom in Rome. The younger son was handsome too, but more manly-looking. The girls, aged eleven and twelve, were both pretty; one was studying music and one dancing.

This family came from Bologna. They lived by their wits, and what was lacking them in wealth they made up in gaiety and good humour.

Bellino, as the elder boy was called, sat down to the harpsichord and sang like an angel. The Castilian closed his eyes with very enjoyment, but I kept mine open and watched those of Bellino flashing fire as he sang.

A theatrical family.

The next afternoon I went to pay my respects to the mother, and to ask the family to sup with me. She grew confidential, and told me that they were in a difficult position.

'We have spent all our money,' she said, 'and will have to return to Bologna on foot and begging our bread.'

I drew out of my purse a gold piece, and laid it on the table.

'I will give you another, madame,' I said, 'in return for a little piece of confidence. Tell me, is not Bellino a girl in disguise?'

'No, indeed—though I admit he has the look of one.'

'The look and the voice, madame, I know what I am talking about.'

'You are mistaken nevertheless.'

On the stairs I met Cecile, the youngest child. Catching her by the arm, I said. 'If you want to earn six sequins, tell me the truth: is not Bellino your sister and not your brother?'

'I cannot tell. But Bellino must be my brother, otherwise he would not be allowed to act here.'

Don Sancio invited us all to supper with him the following night, and gave us a magnificent repast. The table was covered with silver plate and the servants were in full livery. We had white truffles, shell-fish of many kinds, the best fish

Digitized by Microsoft®

from the Adriatic, still champagne, peralta, xeres, and pedro ximénès. After supper Bellino sang in a manner calculated to completely overthrow what little reason the wine of the magnificent Spaniard had left us. Expression, manner, gesture, physiognomy, voice, but above all my own instinct, made me feel I could not be mistaken as to the sex of the singer, besides, on this occasion, either from taste or caprice, Bellino chose to dress as a woman, and a more charming and beautiful woman I have never seen.

He falls in love with the false Bellino.

Reader, you have guessed what is coming, but you shall hear from Bellino's own lips the story, which he, or rather she, told me, when, after many days of torturing doubt and anxiety, she not only confided her sex to me, but made another, and far sweeter avowal, in return for my passionate protestations of love.

Her story.

'My name,' she said, 'is Teresa. My father was a poor employé at the Institute, in Bologna. He had as a lodger in his house the celebrated musician Salimberi, who was young and handsome, but maimed. He became attached to me. I was only twelve years old and was flattered by his attention. He proposed to teach me music, and as I had a fine voice he took trouble with me; in a year I could accompany him on the harpsichord. Affection ripened into love, we adored each other. No doubt a man, such as you are, Casanova, feels himself infinitely superior to such a poor creature as Salimberi, but he was exceptionally gifted. His beauty, his wit, his talents, and the eminent qualities of his heart rendered him in my eyes preferable to any one else. He was modest and discreet, besides being rich and generous. I doubt if many women could have resisted him. Yet I never heard him boast of his triumphs. Before he knew me he had adopted a boy about my age, and had placed him with a family at Rimini, where he was being educated for the musical profession. The boy's name was Bellino.

'The father of this boy fell ill, and when he saw that death was approaching, and as he had made no provision for his

Digitized by Microsoft®

other numerous children, he determined to cultivate this boy's voice so that he could support his brothers and sisters. The boy was called Bellino, the woman I live with now was his mother. About a year ago Salimberi told me, weeping, that he must leave me and go to Rome. The prospect of parting was the more terrible as my father had died and I was an orphan without resources. I implored Salimberi not to desert me, and moved by my sorrow he determined to take me to Rimini, and put me with the master who was bringing up his young protégé. Imagine his grief when on arriving at Rimini he heard Bellino was dead! Reflecting on what the loss of this boy would mean to his mother, the idea occurred to Salimberi to take me to Bologna in his place, the mother, being poor, would keep the secret. "I will give her," he said, "the means to complete your instruction, and in four years I will take you to Dresden" (he was in the service of the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland), "but you must not come as a girl. There we can live together without any one being the wiser. Bellino's mother will be the only one in the secret, for the other children, not having seen their brother since they were infants, will never guess. But if you love me you must renounce your sex for ever, and let no one know what you really are."

'He arranged matters with Bellino's mother. When I went to her house she embraced me and called me her dear son. The time had now come for Salimberi to leave me; people laugh at presentiments, but I tell you, when he bade me farewell I felt the shiver of death run through me. I fainted. Alas! my presentiment was but too true—he died a year ago in the Tyrol. My adopted mother advised me to continue my boyish *rôle*, hoping that in Rome I should get a good engagement. I consented. Her son Petronius is now dancing at Ancona as a girl, so we are verily the world turned upside-down. It rests with you to restore me to my feminine condition and to take from me the name of Bellino, which I detest and have no need for now that my protector is

Digitized by Microsoft®

dead. It is a source of endless embarrassment to me. I have only as yet sung at two theatres, where, fortunately for me, the censors were old priests, who contented themselves with summary inquiries, but another time I may not get off so easily. The tenderness you have inspired me with is genuine, that which I felt for Salimberi was the result of my extreme youth and my gratitude. You have made a woman of me.'

He offers marriage to Teresa Lanti.

'Give up,' said I, 'the engagement which you have at Rimini. We will stop two days in Bologna, and then you shall come to Venice with me, dressed as a girl and under another name. I defy the manager of the opera here to discover you.'

'Your will shall be mine. I give myself to you without reserve.'

The story she told me, her talent, her candour, her delicacy, her misfortunes, all increased my love for her. I decided to give our union the sanction of law and religion, and to make her my wife, for according to the theories I then upheld, I should by so doing increase our mutual tenderness and esteem, and gain the respect of society.

Teresa's talents would supply us with the means of existence until I could put my own to some account; and although I had no idea what pursuit I should follow, I felt confident of succeeding in any I might choose. But in the meantime she would have too great an advantage over me. Our mutual love might weaken, and certainly my *amour-propre* would suffer if we depended on her talent alone. In the long-run it might change the nature of our feeling for each other. My wife might come to consider herself the protector instead of the protected, in which case I felt that my love for her would change to contempt. I determined to sound her before taking the important step.

'My beloved Teresa,' I said, 'I must speak to you quite openly. You must understand the position we are in. I know you, but you do not know me. In the first place, you

Digitized by Microsoft®

think I am rich. I am not; as soon as my purse is empty I shall be at an end of my resources. You think, perhaps, that I am well born, but my position is no better, if not worse, than your own. I have no lucrative talent, no employment, no certainty of having anything to live on a few months hence. I have no relations, no friends, no claim on any one, and no solid prospects for the future. I have youth, health, courage, intelligence, and some small literary pretensions. I am afraid of nothing, and I am inclined to be extravagant. There's your man, beautiful Teresa. Now choose!'

Teresa starts with him for Bologna.

'First of all, my friend,' she replied, 'let me tell you that is no news to me. I made a tolerably accurate estimate of you when I first met you. But do not let the future trouble you. Love me and be true to me. Let us go to Venice where I can earn enough for both. Later on we will see what you can do.'

'But I must go to Constantinople.'

'We will go together, but let me go as your wife.'

'It shall be so. The day after to-morrow at latest, my beloved, I will pledge you my faith at the steps of the altar. I desire that you should be bound to me, that we should be bound one to another by the most indissoluble bonds.'

Alas, for the good resolutions of youth! We started for Bologna the next day, and stopped at Pesaro for breakfast. Just as we were stepping into the carriage an officer with two fusiliers presented himself and demanded our names and our passports. Teresa had hers, but I sought in vain for mine.

The officer ordered the postillion to wait while he made his report. Half an hour after he returned saying that Teresa might continue her journey, but that I must remain, he had orders to take me before the commandant.

'What have you done with your passport?' asked this personage.

'I have lost it.'

'One can't lose a passport!'

'One can, for I have lost mine.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You cannot go on without one.'

'I have come from Rome. I am going to Constantinople with despatches from Cardinal Acquaviva: here they are, sealed with his arms.'

'All that I can do is to put you under arrest until a fresh passport comes to you from Rome. Only careless people lose their passports, and this will teach the cardinal not to give them commissions.'

He is arrested at Pesaro.

I was taken back to the inn, where I wrote to the cardinal, begging him to send me a fresh passport at once. I sent the letter off by express. I kissed Teresa and told her to go on and wait for me at Rimini. I made her take a hundred sequins. My personal baggage was removed from the carriage, and I was led to the guard-house at Sainte Marie, outside the town. At such times the most determined optimism is at fault, though stoicism may wear an unmoved front in the face of reverses. The sight of Teresa's tears grieved me most, though she tried hard to restrain them. She would not have left me if I had not persuaded her that it was impossible for her to remain at Pesaro, and that in ten days at farthest I should rejoin her. But fate willed it otherwise.

The night that I spent on the straw in the guard-room at Pesaro taught me a lesson of prudence. The odds are a hundred to one that a young man who has lost his purse or his passport once will never again lose the one or the other. Both these misfortunes had now befallen me, they never happened again.

The officer who happened to be on guard that night was a sulky Castilian who did not even deign to answer when spoken to; he was relieved in the morning by a Frenchman of a totally different character. I must say here that the French have always had an attraction for me, the Spaniards never. The French are so polite, so obliging, one feels drawn towards them at once, while the Spaniards have an unbecoming pride which makes them repellent to strangers; yet I am bound in justice to add that I have more than once been

Digitized by Microsoft®

taken in by a Frenchman, but never by a Spaniard : it is not always safe to trust one's first impressions.

The French officer, having listened to the story of my adventures, procured me a bed, a table and chairs ; he also placed a soldier at my disposal, and the nine or ten succeeding days of my captivity I passed in tolerable comfort. I became acquainted with the whole corps, and I could walk about freely so long as I remained within sight of the sentinel ; then the most singular accident of my life happened to me. I was walking about outside the guard-room one fine morning, not more than a hundred paces or so from the sentinel, when an officer rode up. He dismounted, and throwing his bridle on the horse's neck, left it standing by me. I began to pat and admire the beast, then, without the slightest thought of consequences, I put my foot in the stirrup and vaulted on to its back. I had never been astride a horse before. I do not know if I touched it with my cane or my heels, but all of a sudden it started off at a round gallop, one foot was out of the stirrup, and I was clinging on for dear life. The sentinel shouted to me to stop ; I would have obeyed him willingly had I been able, but the fatal beast only went faster and faster. They fired after me, and I heard the balls whistle past my ears ; on and on he dashed till we reached the outposts of the Austrian army, then some one stopped my horse, and, thank God, I was able to alight !

He mounts a horse for the first time, and is carried into the Austrian lines.

An officer of hussars came up and asked me where I was going so quick. In speech as prompt as my thought I replied that I could only explain my conduct to Prince Lobkowitz, who was in command of the army, and whose headquarters were at Rimini, where my runaway horse had brought me.

His Royal Highness received me in his tent, and I told him quite simply what had happened. He laughed, but I could see he did not believe me. He called up one of his aides-de-camp and ordered him to conduct me outside the gates of Césena.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Once there, reverend sir, you can go where you like,' said he, 'but take care not to show yourself here again without a passport.'

I asked him to give me back the horse, but he said it did not belong to me.

On our way to the city gate we entered a café to take some chocolate. I told the officer my name and how I came to be at Rimini; he told me I could go to Bologna, get a passport there which would take me back to Pesaro, where I could get my trunk and pay the officer whose horse it was.

I had money and jewels on me, but I wanted my trunk. Teresa was at Rimini, and I was forbidden to set foot in that town.

It was raining. I was in silk stockings and a fine laced coat. I stopped to shelter in the porch of a church, and asked a peasant who was sheltering there also if he could get me a carriage, and he went off in search of one. Before he returned a string of mules came by on their way to Rimini; as they passed I mechanically laid my hand on the neck of one, and keeping step with the animal, I re-entered the town without any one paying the slightest attention to me. I presented myself at Teresa's door in a strange plight: a night-cap was pulled over my hair, my hat on the top of that, my gold-mounted stick hidden under my coat, which I had turned inside out. In spite of her joy at seeing me she was terrified at the risk I was running, and made me promise to leave for Bologna as soon as possible.

He decides to abandon the cassock in favour of the uniform.

I spent the day with my sweetheart. Having bribed the muleteer to let me pass as one of his men, I left with him at dusk, and arrived safely at Bologna, where I was obliged to wait until my passport came from Rome. I had to have some new linen and clothing made, and this led me to think seriously of the future. The calling of ecclesiastic had become so distasteful to me, that I decided to fling my cassock to the winds, and assume in its stead a military uniform. Such a decision was only natural at my age, and especially as

Digitized by Microsoft®

I had been living between two armies, where the military habit alone imposed respect. La Mort, a tailor, took my measure, and in two days I was transformed into a disciple of Mars. I furnished myself with a long sword, a black cockade, and a false pigtail. I remember now how agreeably myself impressed me as I stood before a looking-glass. My uniform was white with a blue vest, and a gold and silver shoulder knot. I was pleased with my own appearance, and I strutted about the town, read the gazette at the café, and replied in soldierly monosyllables to any one who dared address me.

Four days after my arrival at Bologna I received a long letter from Teresa. She told me that the Duke of Castropignano had offered her a thousand ounces a year, and all her expenses paid, if she would sing at his theatre at San Carlo. She had demanded a delay of eight days to consider, and wrote to ask what I wished her to do.

He has doubts with regard to Teresa.

For the first time in my life I had to ponder deeply before taking a resolution. Two powerful motives held the scales equal, love and pride. How could I part from my sweetheart? How could I return with her to Naples, where I was so well known, in the character of a coward living on his wife or his mistress? What would all my noble friends think of me? If I were to feel myself despised, even my love for Teresa would not have consoled me. I hit on an expedient which would at least give me time. I told her to accept the duke's offer, go to Naples, and wait for me there; I would join her in the month of July on my return from Constantinople. I advised her to hire a respectable waiting-maid, and to conduct herself so that on my return I could marry her without having to blush for her. I foresaw that her fortune would depend more on her beauty than on her talent, and I was sufficiently well acquainted with my own character to know that I was not good at playing the easy-going lover or complaisant husband. Three days later she wrote to me, saying she had signed the agreement, and engaged a maid

Digitized by Microsoft®

whom she could introduce as her mother, and that she was prepared to wait for me until I told her I no longer cared for her. Four days after the receipt of this letter, which was the last but one I received from her, I left for Venice.

I heard from the French officer at Pesaro that my passport had arrived from Rome, and that he would send it me with my baggage, if I would pay for the horse I had taken, or rather which had taken me; this point settled, I was at liberty to go where I would.

As soon as I reached Venice I went to the Bourse to take my passage to Constantinople, but there was no vessel leaving for that port for at least two months. So I took a cabin in a Venetian vessel sailing for Corfu in the course of a fortnight—*The Lady of the Rosary*, commanded by Captain Zane. Having thus prepared to fulfil my destiny, which, according to my superstitious imaginings, called me to Constantinople, I set out for the Square of Saint Mark, to see and to be seen, no longer an abbé, but a soldier. The first person I called on was the Abbé Grimani; he was at table with several guests, among them a Spanish officer, but that did not upset me at all. Grimani expressed some surprise at seeing me, and especially at my martial attire. I told him I was carrying despatches to Constantinople from Cardinal Acquaviva, and that I had come from the Spanish army. I had just made this statement when a voice exclaimed, 'That is a lie!'

'My position,' said I, 'does not permit me to accept an affront in silence.' Then bowing to the company I withdrew.

He is involved and successfully evades an affair of honour.

I knew that as I wore a uniform the assumption of excessive touchiness well became me; but I thought that now surely I should have a duel on my hands. The Abbé Grimani, however, persuaded the Spaniard to tender me an apology, so there the matter ended. The incident, however, served to show me what an invidious position mine was, and I made up my mind to enter the service of the State. For

Digitized by Microsoft®

a hundred sequins, I bought a commission from a young lieutenant whose health would not permit him to remain in the army.

On the fifth of May I embarked for Constantinople, well set up in clothes, jewels, and ready money. Our ship carried twenty-four cannon and two hundred soldiers. We stopped a night at Orsera, when I could not but compare my actual circumstances with those of my former visit to that town. What a difference in state and fortune! I was sure that, in my imposing costume, no one would recognise the sickly little abbé, who, but for Brother Stephano, would have become—God knows what!

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER VI

CONSTANTINOPLE AND CORFU

I AM of opinion that a stupid servant is worse than a wicked one, or at any rate more harassing; one can be on one's guard against a knave, but not against a fool. One can punish the former, but not the latter. This chapter and the two following it were finished; they contained in detail what I shall now have to write more generally, for the foolish girl who waits on me took them to light the fire. She said, by way of excuse that the paper had been used, it was covered with scrawls and erasures, and therefore she had used it in preference to the nice, clean paper which was beside it. I was very angry, which was wrong, for the poor girl meant no harm. Anger deprives a man of judgment, anger and reflection are not akin. Fortunately this passion is of very short duration with me. After having wasted some time telling her she was a fool and an idiot, she confuted all my arguments by silence. I had to make the best of it, and to begin over again. Being in a very bad temper, what I write now will not be equal to what I wrote in a pleasant frame of mind, but the reader must put up with it.

He arrives in Constantinople.

After passing a month at Corfu, favourable winds brought us in eight or ten days to the Dardanelles; from there a Turkish boat carried us on to Constantinople. We arrived at Pera in mid-July, and for a wonder there was no talk of plague.

The first thing I was told was never to go out without informing my host of my destination, and without being accompanied by a janissary. These instructions I obeyed to

Digitized by Microsoft®

the letter. In those days the Russians had not crushed Turkish impertinence. I am told that now foreigners can go and come in perfect security.

The Pasha of Caramania.

The day after my arrival I presented my letter to Osman, the pasha of Caramania. This was the name borne by the Count de Bonneval since his taking the turban. I was shown in to an apartment furnished in French fashion. A stout, elderly man, dressed in French clothes, came towards me laughing, and asked what he could do for the protégé of a cardinal of the Romish Church, now that he could no longer call that Church his mother.

I told him that in a moment of despair I had asked the cardinal for letters for Constantinople, and now superstitiously considered myself obliged to deliver them.

'Then you have really no need of me?'

'True, your excellency, but I am delighted to have the honour of meeting a man all Europe has talked of, still talks of, and will talk of for many years to come.'

The cardinal had announced me as a man of letters, so the count asked if I would like to see his library. He took me into a room full of cupboards with latticed doors, hung with curtains. When he unlocked one of these doors, I saw, instead of rows of folio volumes, many bottles of wine of the finest vintage.

'This,' said the pasha, 'is my library and my harem. I am old, dissipation would only shorten my life, while wine prolongs it, or at any rate makes it more agreeable.'

Bonneval was handsome, but was too stout. An old sabre-cut in the belly obliged him to wear a silver plate over the seat of the wound. He said that he was no stricter a Mussulman than he had been a Christian. 'I had to say God was God, and Mahomet was His prophet. Who knows whether I thought so? I wear the turban as I would wear an uniform. When I left Venice I was as poor as a rat, and if the Jews had offered me the command of fifty thousand men, I would have laid siege to Jerusalem.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

He invited me to dine with him next day. There were English and other guests. We had an excellent repast, *à la Française*, for his cook and his *maître d'hôtel* were two worthy French renegades. The person who most attracted me was a fine-looking man about sixty, who wore on his face an expression of wisdom and gentleness. Monsieur de Bonneval told me he was a rich and distinguished philosopher, renowned for integrity of conduct, purity of morals, and devotion to religion. He advised me to cultivate his acquaintance, should I have a chance of doing so. Later in the evening he presented me to this personage, whom he addressed as Josouff Ali, and who asked me many questions about my past and future life, and above all, why I had abandoned the peaceful condition of an ecclesiastic to take up the unsettled calling of a soldier.

He invited me to his palace, where I passed two hours admiring his flowers. His gardener was a Neapolitan sailor, who had been for thirty years a slave in Josouff's service.

Josouff, the noble Turk.

In five or six weeks I became exceedingly intimate with the noble Turk, and we discussed many points of religion and morals together. He asked me one day if I was married, and on my answering no, and adding that I fancied I should never feel called upon to contract this tie, he led the conversation to the subject of chastity, which, according to him, was far from being a virtue ; on the contrary, he maintained that it must be most offensive to God, as it violates the first precept He gave to man.

Zelmi, his daughter.

'I have,' he said, 'two sons and a daughter ; the sons have already received their share of my fortune, the rest will go to my daughter, who is now fifteen. Her name is Zelmi, she has beautiful black eyes, like her mother's, black hair, and a skin like alabaster. She is tall and well made, speaks Greek and Italian, sings and accompanies herself on the harp. There is no man in the world who can boast of having seen her face. This girl is a treasure, and I offer her to you, but you must first live for a year at Andrianople with one of my relations,

Digitized by Microsoft®

where you will learn our language and religion and our manners. As soon as you can declare yourself a Mussulman, my daughter shall be yours. I will give you a house, and slaves, and money in abundance. Think over my offer, fix no date for your answer, you shall reply when the voice of fate speaks to you.'

I passed four days without seeing Josouff, and when we met on the fifth day we talked gaily on various matters, without mentioning matrimony. It was only fifteen days later that we alluded to it.

'Although this matter occupies my mind morning and night, I can make no decision,' I said. 'I have abandoned myself to God, and I am sure, as I have full confidence in Him, that I shall do what is right. When I have decided, it is to you, and to you alone, that I will tell the news. If I decide as you desire, you will from that moment exercise over me the authority of a father.'

Some days later I was walking in Josouff's garden, when the rain drove me to seek shelter in the house. I went into a hall where we sometimes dined. A slave was seated by the window bending over a tambour frame, and by her stood a girl, who on my approach hastily pulled a thick veil over her face.

I excused myself, and was going away, when she begged me to remain, adding that Josouff had ordered her to entertain me during his absence. I thought it must be Zelmi, and that her father had purposely given me this opportunity of speaking with her. The beautiful veiled lady said: 'Dost thou know who I am?'

'No; nor can I guess.'

'I am the wife of thy friend. I was born at Scio, where I lived until he married me, five years ago; I am now eighteen.'

I was much surprised that a Mussulman should be so open-minded as to allow me to converse with his wife, but the fact of her being a married woman set me more at my ease.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I determined to push the adventure further; I wanted to see her face. A magnificent statue stood before me, but I could not see its soul; a thick gauze hid it from my eyes. A beautiful arm and a white hand, in which there was neither knot nor vein, rested on the back of a seat, and my active fancy imagined the rest to be in harmony. The graceful folds of her muslin robe displayed the contour of her figure in all its perfection, and only hid the living satin of the surface. I longed to gaze in her eyes and read her mind therein. The Oriental costume is like a fine glaze spread over a porcelain vase, to prevent one from touching the flowers and figures painted on it; it hardly, if at all, interferes with the pleasure of the eye.

Josouff's wife wore a skirt which did not hide the symmetry of her limbs, the roundness of her hips, the slender grace of her waist, which was encircled by a belt richly embroidered in silver and precious stones. She had a breast on which Apelles might have modelled that of his Venus.

Beside myself with admiration, I stretched out my arm with an almost involuntary movement, and my audacious hand would have lifted the veil, had she not prevented me by raising herself lightly on the point of her pretty feet: she then reproached me in a voice as imposing as her posture.

'Dost thou merit the friendship of Josouff,' she asked, 'and seekest to violate his hospitality by insulting his wife?'

'Madam, you must pardon me. In my country the meanest of men may look on the face of a queen.'

'Yes; but not tear off her veil when she is covered. Josouff shall avenge me.'

This threat frightened me. I flung myself at her feet, and after much persuasion succeeded in calming her.

I took her hand, which she allowed, and she was listening complacently to my compliments, when her husband entered. He embraced me, and thanked his wife for having kept me company, then giving her his arm, led her back to her apartments.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I related this adventure to M. de Bonneval, who smiled when I told him of the risk I had run in trying to raise her veil.

Advice from the pasha.

'This Greek,' said he, 'was only laughing at you. You ran no danger; believe me, she is simply vexed at having had to deal with such a novice. The most reserved Turkish woman is only modest so far as her face goes, as long as she has her veil on she blushes at nothing. I am sure that this one keeps her face covered even when alone with her husband.'

Josouff did not give me any more opportunities of being alone with his wife, and perhaps he was right. He came into a bazaar one day when I was turning over different stuffs, and praised the taste I showed in my selections. I did not buy anything, however, as I found the prices too high; he, on the contrary, declared them very reasonable, and purchased a quantity of things, which were delivered at my house the next day. It was a delicate attention on his part, and had I refused them I should have deeply offended him. He wrote to me at the same time telling me I should know how to dispose of the merchandise at Corfu. There were damask stuffs, embroidered in gold and silver, purses, pocket-books, sashes, scarves, handkerchiefs, and pipes —the whole to a value of four or five hundred piastres.

On the evening of my departure, the good man wept bitterly, and my tears were no less sincere. He said that in refusing his offer I had gained his esteem, since it proved my disinterestedness. On board the ship I found an immense case, containing more presents from him—coffee, tobacco, and spices, and a superb pipe stem in jasmine wood covered with gold filigree, which I sold for a hundred sequins. I sold the other things for a small fortune. M. de Bonneval also gave me some rare wines. I sold some, and I offered the rest to different people at Corfu. In this way I made several useful acquaintances.

The only foreigner I saw much of in Constantinople was

Digitized by Microsoft®

Lord Keith,[1] the celebrated Scottish marshal in the service of the King of Prussia. Six years later, in Paris, his friendship was of great use to me. We left in the beginning of September, and arrived at Corfu in fifteen days. I was well received by the Governor of the Galliasses, to whom I had an introduction. He asked me if I would care to accept the post of adjutant. This offer was a great honour, and I gladly accepted it. Without further ceremony he had me shown to the room I was to occupy.

He meets Marshal Keith.

I got a French soldier as servant, and as he dressed hair well, and was besides a good talker, I was well satisfied with him, for while he was arranging my beautiful hair I could exercise myself in speaking French. This soldier was a regular scamp, a drunkard, and a libertine. He was a peasant from Picardy, and could hardly write his own name, but he was amusing, and knew a quantity of anecdotes and songs.

I should like to give my readers some idea of life and society at Corfu in those days.

First and foremost came his eminence the *proveditor*,[2] who exercised sovereign authority, and lived magnificently. In my time the *proveditor* was M. Dolfin, a man of over seventy, severe, obstinate, and ignorant. He did not care for women, but he liked them to pay court to him. He received

[1] George Keith, son of William, Lord Keith and Altree, and Lady Mary Drummond, daughter of Lord Perth, was born in 1685, and died in 1778. He fought with distinction under Marlborough. He was, however, a devoted adherent of the Stuarts. After the proclamation at Edinburgh, Keith was attainted, deprived of his title, imprisoned, and condemned to death. He escaped to France, and after working hard for the lost cause, passed into the service of the King of Prussia. Frederick the Great held him in the highest esteem, not only as a soldier but as a counsellor and friend. He sent him as ambassador to Spain, and afterwards made him governor of Neufchâtel. It was here he became the patron and protector of J. J. Rousseau, who devoted several pages of his *Confessions* to a description of the noble old Scotsman. Through the influence of Frederick, Keith regained his estates in Scotland, but he preferred to live in Berlin, where the king had built him a house near Potsdam.

[2] The office of *proveditor* was peculiar to the Venetian Government; he was a sort of overseer attached to the general of an army.

Digitized by Microsoft®

every evening, and kept an open supper-table for twenty-four people.

There were three chief officers commanding the light troops especially destined for the galleys, and three others belonging to the troops of the line used on the heavy war-ships. Each galley, of which there were ten, had a governor, and each vessel of the line a commandant, including three chiefs or admirals. All these officers were Venetian noblemen. There were ten young noblemen studying for the navy, and about ten more in the Civil Service. Any one of them who had a pretty wife was sure to be run after.

About the middle of November, my soldier servant fell ill of inflammation of the lungs, and was taken to the hospital. He grew rapidly worse, and received the last sacraments. The priest who administered them brought to my captain a small packet which had been confided to him by the dying man. It contained a copper seal engraved with a ducal coat of arms, an extract from a baptismal register, and a sheet of paper covered with writing in the French language. As the captain only spoke Italian, he asked me to translate it.

I read the following deposition :—

His servant, the pretender to a dukedom.

'I wish this sheet of paper to be given to my captain when I am dead ; until then my confessor is to make no use of it. I beg my captain to have my body placed in a vault so that it can be exhumed if the duke, my father, desire it. I beg him to send to the French ambassador at Venice the extract from the register concerning my birth, and the seal with my coat of arms, that all may be sent to my father, as my hereditary rights will now pass to the prince, my brother.

'In support of which I now place here my signature.

'François vi., Charle-Philippe-Louis Foucaud,
'Prince de la Rochefoucauld.'

In the baptismal extract this name was repeated, with that

Digitized by Microsoft®

of his father, François, the fifth duke. The name of his mother was given as Gabrielle du Plessis.[1]

This queer document made me laugh, but seeing that my captain thought my hilarity misplaced, I left him, without explaining the reason of my mirth, though I was sure that this nonsense would soon become the standing joke of Corfu. I had known the Abbé de Liancourt in Rome. He was a great-grandson of Charles, Duc de Liancourt, whose sister, Gabrielle du Plessis, had married François, the fifth duke, but this marriage dated from the beginning of the last century. I had copied some documents for the Abbé de Liancourt, and was therefore familiar with the family history; the attempted imposition of my servant, La Valeur, seemed the more ridiculous, because the man being, as I supposed, dead, it could be of no advantage to him. I was still smiling at all this, when I received a summons from the *proveditor*.

'It seems,' began the old general, 'that your servant was a prince?'

'Monseigneur,' I replied, 'I never thought so while he was alive, and I have no reason to think so now he is dead.'

But the general would not listen to me. He maintained that no man on his deathbed would play such a joke; and besides, there was the seal with the ducal arms to support the claim.

When I suggested that I knew something of the families of Liancourt, du Plessis, and de la Rochefoucauld, he rudely told me I knew nothing at all: so I determined to hold my tongue.

The people around the general began to speak of the deceased with respect. One said he was handsome, another that he looked aristocratic, another that he was always

[1] Casanova probably means Jeanne Charlotte du Plessis Liancourt, heiress of the Ducs de Liancourt and Rocheguyon. She married Francis VII., Duc de la Rochefoucauld, and endowed that family with her enormous wealth and estates.

Digitized by Microsoft®

amiable, obliging, not haughty with his comrades, and that he sang like an angel. Some one having asked my opinion of him, I replied that he was certainly gay, for he was generally drunk; that he was dirty and quarrelsome, but a good hairdresser.

As we were discussing him that evening in rushed the captain. La Valeur, he said, was still breathing. The general, looking at me in a significant manner, said he would be glad if he recovered. The next day I heard he was better. The doctor said he was out of danger. They spoke of him at table, but I did not open my mouth. The next day after that the general gave orders for him to be taken to a better apartment, where he was to have a servant to wait on him. The credulous general actually paid him a visit, the other officers followed suit, and the newly-found prince became the rage. In eight days he was well and began to go out. He dined and supped at the general's table, where he regularly fell asleep because of his intemperance, but every one believed in him, for two reasons: one was that he calmly awaited news from Venice, and the other that he declared that the priest had violated the secret of the confessional in giving up the papers before his death, therefore he solicited his punishment; the unhappy priest was already in prison.

I met La Valeur one day on the esplanade, and he stopped and reproached me with not having been to see him. I laughed and told him the best thing he could do was to get away before the truth leaked out. To this he replied with the grossest insults.

The imposition would have been discovered from the beginning if any one had had a *Royal Almanack*, which contains the genealogy of all princely families, but no one possessed the book, not even the French Consul, who was a perfect fool and as ignorant as the rest.

In speaking of La Valeur to Madame Sagredo, I asked, 'Does he talk much of his family?'

'Of his mother—yes. He loved her tenderly. She was a du Plessis.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'If she were still alive she would be about a hundred and fifty years old.'

'What nonsense!'

'Yes, madame, she was married in the time of Marie de Médicis.'

'But she is named in his baptismal register—and then his seal——'

'Does he know his own coat of arms by sight?'

Just at that moment he was announced, and Madame Sagredo said: 'Prince, here is M. Casanova says you do not know your own coat of arms.'

At these words he came to me, called me coward, and struck me a blow on the side of my head which made me giddy. I took up my hat and stick and walked slowly to the door. As I went downstairs I heard a gentleman saying in a loud voice that the madman ought to be flung out of the window.

He beats his servant, and is ordered under arrest.

I posted myself on the esplanade, waiting for him to leave the house: as soon as I saw him I rushed at him and dealt him several violent strokes with a cane. He stepped back against the wall; a gentleman would have drawn his sword to defend himself, but the poltroon never thought of such a thing, and I beat him soundly and left him lying on the ground in a pool of blood.

I went into a café near by, and took a glass of lemonade without sugar. A crowd of young officers came round me, all saying I should have done well to have killed him. In about half an hour the general's adjutant appeared and said his excellency had given orders for me to be put under arrest at once. I was to go on board *La Bastarde*. This was the nickname for a certain galley, on which the discipline was very severe; any one under arrest on board her was obliged to wear ankle chains like a convict.

'Very good, sir,' said I, 'I shall make no resistance.' The adjutant went out and I followed him. But at the end of the street I slipped down a lane leading to the sea, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

He flies from Corfu.

I walked along till I found an empty boat beached with two oars lying in it. I jumped in and rowed with all my might after a six-oared *caych* which was going against the wind. As soon as I overtook it I asked the *carabouchiri* to put me aboard a big fishing-smack which was standing out to sea. I made a bargain with the skipper of the smack. He ran up three sails, and in two hours we were fifteen miles from Corfu; about midnight, the wind having gone down, they landed me without my even asking where. I did not want to arouse suspicion. I knew I was far from Corfu, that was enough. It was moonlight, and I could distinguish a church, with a house near by, a long barn open at each end, a wide plain, and some mountains. I entered the barn, and finding some straw, lay down, and slept pretty well. I awoke at daybreak. I was shivering with cold, for it was the first of December, and in spite of the mild climate the nights were fresh, and I had only a thin uniform on.

I heard the bell ringing and went towards the church. The *papa* or priest, who had a long beard, seemed surprised at my apparition. He asked me in Greek if I was *Romeo*, Greek. On my replying that I was *Fragico*, Italian, he turned his back on me, went into his house, and locked the door. Not knowing what step to take next, I began to walk back towards the sea, when I saw a man, a woman, and a boy about two years old, coming in my direction. I spoke to the man in Greek, and he replied to me in Italian, saying he had come from Cephalonia, and was going with his wife and child to Venice, but that he wished to hear Mass first, at the church of the Virgin of Casopo.

'Do you know the priest?' I asked.

'No.'

'Have you any good merchandise on your boat?'

'Yes; if you are thinking of buying anything, come and have breakfast with me, and I will show you what I have.'

I followed him on board his boat, where he gave me an

Digitized by Microsoft®

He lands at Casopo, and quarrels with the *papa*.

excellent breakfast. His cargo consisted of cotton, linen, raisins, oil, and some capital wine. Besides these things he had a stock of nightcaps, stockings, umbrellas, and ship-biscuit, of which I was then passionately fond. I possessed thirty sound teeth in those days, than which it would be difficult to find any finer or whiter. I have but two left now. I bought a little of everything without bargaining, including a good gun, with powder and shot. Covered with a warm cloak, my gun on my shoulder, and my purchases in a big sack, I returned to land, determined to lodge at the *papa's* house, whether he liked it or not. I was of a desperate calmness. I had three or four hundred sequins in my pocket, but I was sure to be discovered sooner or later, and as I had outlawed myself, I should be treated as an outlaw. I could only abandon myself to chance, and for the moment the essential was to find board and lodging. I knocked at the door of the priest's house. He showed himself at a window, but shut it again without listening to me. I kicked, I knocked, I cursed, I swore, but all to no avail. At last, furious, I pointed my gun at a poor sheep, who was grazing twenty paces from me with several others, and tumbled it over. The shepherd came running up; the *papa* rushed out, crying, 'Thief, thief!' and began to ring the tocsin. In a few minutes a crowd of peasants armed with guns, scythes, and staves came hurrying down the mountains. I retired into the barn and sat down on the sack. Eight or ten peasants came towards me, their guns levelled. I stopped them by throwing them a handful of copper money, which I had collected on the boat. The good creatures looked at each other in astonishment. They did not know what to make of a well-dressed young man who flung his money about so liberally. The *papa*, the beadle, and the shepherd tried to excite the populace against me, but I sat quietly on my sack. Presently one of them drew a little nearer and asked why I had killed the sheep.

'To eat, when I have paid for it.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'But what if his holiness should ask you to pay a sequin for it?'

'Here it is.'

The *papa* took the sequin and went off grumbling, and there, so far as the sheep was concerned, the matter ended.

He lodges in Casopo, and defends his house.

I asked the peasant who acted as spokesman if he could get me a lodging; he said he could get me a whole house if I liked, and that he himself was a capital cook and would be glad to serve me. He called up two big fellows, who laid hold, one of my bag, the other of my sheep.

'I wish I had twenty-four fine rascals like that in my service,' said I, as we walked along; 'and you as my lieutenant; I would pay you well.'

'I have been a soldier myself,' said my man, 'and served in the defence of Corfu. I will get a military guard together for you this very day if you wish.' After walking for twenty minutes or so we reached the house, which was a comfortable one, containing three rooms and a stable. My lieutenant went off to procure what I needed; among other things, a woman to make me some shirts. I acquired in the course of that day a bed, furniture, *batterie de cuisine*, a good dinner, twenty-four stout young peasants, well armed, and a superannuated sempstress, with three or four pretty apprentices. After supper I found myself in the best possible humour, and surrounded by some thirty people who treated me like a king. They did not understand why I had come to their little island. The only thing that troubled me was, that none of the girls spoke Italian, and I knew very little Greek.

The next morning when my lieutenant turned out the guard, I could not help laughing. They were like a flock of sheep; all fine men, well set up and alert; but without a uniform and discipline. Nevertheless their chief taught them to present arms and obey orders. I placed three sentinels, one in front of the house, one at the side, and one overlooking the beach: the last was to warn us if he saw any large boat appear. I led a pleasant life, my table was

Digitized by Microsoft®

covered with succulent dishes, excellent mutton and snipe such as I have never tasted except at Saint Petersburg. I drank Scopolo wine, and the best muscat in the Archipelago. I never went out without my lieutenant and two of my body-guard, for certain young men in the neighbourhood were furious with me for having taken their sweethearts into my establishment.

One day my lieutenant told me that the following Sunday the *papa* was going to pronounce the *cataramonachia* against me, and that if I did not prevent him I should fall ill of a slow fever, which would carry me off in six months.

The *cataramonachia*, it appears, is a curse uttered by the priest while holding aloft the Blessed Sacrament. I was not afraid of the curse, but I was afraid of poison, the effects of which are far more to be dreaded.

The next day I went to church, and said to the priest in a resolute voice: 'The moment I suffer from the slightest symptom of fever I shall blow out your brains; now you know what to do—lay a curse on me which will kill me instantly, for if you try a lingering one I will surely do as I say.'

An officer from Corfu lands and carries him back under arrest.

Early on Monday morning the *papa* came to see me. I had a slight headache, but he hastened to assure me that it was only the effect of a heaviness in the air peculiar to the island of Casopo. I had no fever, needless to say; and quietly pursued my usual routine, when one fine morning the sentinel gave a cry of alarm; an armed sloop had appeared in the bay, and an officer had landed. I called my troop to arms, ordered my lieutenant to receive the officer, who was accompanied only by a guide. Then buckling on my sword I awaited his coming.

It was the Adjutant Minolto, who had executed the order for my arrest.

'You are alone,' said I; 'do you come as a friend?'

'I am obliged to come as a friend, I have not the necessary force to come as an enemy. But the state in which I find you is like a fantastic dream!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Sit down, and dine with me.'

'With all my heart; after that we will leave together.'

'You will leave alone. I shall only leave here on the understanding that I am not to be arrested, and that I am to have full satisfaction from that maniac, whom the general ought to send to the galleys.'

'Be wise and come with me quietly. I am not able to take you to-day, but when I have returned and made my report I shall come back in such force that you will have to surrender.'

'But if I surrender I shall be treated more harshly than if I had in the first instance obeyed the general's unjust order.'

'I do not think so—but come with me and you will soon know your fate.'

Towards the end of dinner we heard a great noise outside, and my lieutenant came in to say that the peasants were ready to defend me against the armed force which they heard had come to carry me off to Corfu. I sent word to reassure the brave fellows, and to give them a barrel of wine, after which they went off, having first discharged their guns in the air as a sign of devotion.

'All this is very funny,' said the adjutant, 'but it will become tragic if you do not follow me; my duty compels me to report exactly all your proceedings.'

'I will follow you if you will promise to set me at liberty on disembarking at Corfu.'

'I have orders to consign you to M. Foscari in the *bastarde*.'

'You will not execute those orders. Not this time. With five hundred peasants I am not afraid of three thousand men.'

'One will be sufficient. All these men who seem so devoted to you cannot protect you against the one who will be bribed to blow out your brains for a few pieces of gold. I will even go further and say of all these Greeks there is not one who would not assassinate you for twenty sequins. Be-

Digitized by Microsoft®

lieve me, the best thing you can do is to return with me; at Corfu you will triumph, you will be applauded and fêted. You will yourself tell of your mad freak, and you will be laughed at and admired at one and the same time. Every one esteems you, the general himself must esteem you, for he cannot help remembering what you told him.'

'What has become of that wretched La Valeur?'

'Four days ago a frigate arrived; the despatches it brought contained, no doubt, the necessary information, for the false duke has disappeared; no one knows where he is, and no one dare ask, the general's mistake was too gross a one.'

'But after I thrashed him, was he received in the clubs?'

'How can you ask such a question? Do you not remember that he wore his sword, and never attempted to draw it. No one would speak to him. You punished him terribly. His arm was broken, and his jaw fractured, yet in spite of his deplorable state he has been removed, of course by orders of the governor. All Corfu is wondering at your flight; it was only yesterday that we learnt you were here, through a letter the *papa* wrote to the *protopapa*, complaining of an Italian officer who had taken possession of an island where he ruled by armed force, after debauching the girls, and threatening to blow out the reverend gentleman's brains if he laid the *cataramonachia* on him. This letter was read in the assembly, and the general nearly died of laughter, but nevertheless he told me to seize you, with twelve grenadiers if necessary.'

'I will go with you at midnight.'

'Why not now?'

'Because I will not expose myself to a night on the *bastarde*, I wish to arrive in Corfu in broad daylight.'

'But what shall we do here for eight mortal hours?'

'We will go and visit my nymphs, who are far prettier than any in Corfu, after which we will have supper.'

I ordered my lieutenant to prepare a splendid supper. I made him heir to all my provisions; and to my janissaries I presented a week's pay. They wished to accompany me, fully

Digitized by Microsoft®

armed, to the boat, and the deference they showed me amused my captor so that he laughed all night. We arrived at Corfu about eight in the morning, and I was consigned to the *bastarde*, where the commandant, M. Foscari, received me very ill. Had he possessed the slightest nobility of soul he would not have been in such a hurry to put me in chains. Without a word he sent me down below to receive these decorations; one chain was riveted round my right ankle, and they were just unbuckling my left shoe, when the adjutant arrived with the general's orders to return me my sword and set me at liberty.

The general orders him to be set at liberty.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER VII

WILD LIFE IN VENICE

A run of ill luck.

It was written that I should return to Venice as I left it, a mere ensign. The *proveditor* broke his word to me, and the bastard son of a Venetian nobleman was promoted over my head. From that moment military life became hateful to me, and I determined to abandon it. This chagrin was only an instance of the inconstancy of fortune; everything went against me, I never played but I lost, not at the tables only, but everywhere my luck seemed to have deserted me. When I first returned from Casopo I was the most fêted man in Corfu, rich, lucky at cards, beloved by every one, and the favourite of the most beautiful woman in the city. I led the fashion. Then I began to lose health, money, credit, and consideration. My good humour and intelligence, the very faculty of expressing myself seemed to leave me, to melt with my fortune. I chattered, but my words had no effect, for I was known to be down on my luck! The ascendency I had over Madame F—— went with the rest, the good lady became completely indifferent to me.

So I left the place almost penniless, after having sold or pawned everything I possessed of value. Twice I had gone to Corfu rich, and twice I had left it poor, and I contracted debts which I have never paid, more from carelessness than want of will. When I was rich and happy every one made much of me, when I was poor and lean no one showed me consideration. With a full purse and an air of confidence I was thought witty and amusing; with an empty

Digitized by Microsoft®

purse, and told in a different voice, my stories were stupid and insipid. Had I suddenly grown rich again, I should once more have been considered the eighth wonder of the world. O men! O fortune! I was avoided, as though the ill luck which pursued me had been infectious.

We left Corfu with part of the fleet at the end of September. There were five galleys, two galliasses and several small boats. Two months later the galliasses were suppressed by the Venetian government. These vessels dated from ancient times, they were a costly and useless combination of frigate and galley. There were benches, and on these benches sat five hundred slaves, who rowed the vessel when there was no wind to sail her; there were many debates in the Senate before sense prevailed, and these ancient carcasses abandoned. The principal reason alleged for preserving them was that we should respect and retain whatever is old. This reason, ridiculous though it be, is in great force in all republics, where they tremble at the word novelty, in small things or in great. One institution which I fear the Venetian government will never reform is that of those very galleys; firstly, because this kind of vessel can navigate in all weathers, in the narrow seas which are often becalmed; and secondly, because if there were no galleys, what would they do with their convicts?

He visits his guardian Grimani in Venice.

When I got to Venice my first visit was to my guardian, M. Grimani. He received me kindly, but told me that he had my brother François in safe keeping at the fort of Saint Andrew, where he had formerly imprisoned me.

'He is working hard,' he said, 'copying the battle-pieces of Simonetti, which he sells, so he manages to earn his living and study to become a good painter at one and the same time.'

On leaving M. Grimani I went to the fort, where I found my brother, brush in hand. He seemed neither happy nor unhappy, and was in excellent health. When I asked him for what crime he was shut up, he answered: 'Ask the

Digitized by Microsoft®

major, perhaps he can tell you; for my part I have not the least idea.'

The major came in just then, and after saluting him I asked by what right he kept my brother in confinement.

'I have no explanation to give you,' he answered curtly.

The next day I went to the war office, and laid a complaint before the minister, at the same time notifying him of my desire to resign my commission.

Shortly after, my brother was set at liberty, and the acceptance of my resignation was notified to me. I pocketed a hundred sequins for my commission, laid aside my uniform, and became once more my own master.

He becomes a fiddler at the Theatre of Saint Samuel.

I had to think seriously of some means of earning my living. I decided to become a professional gambler; but Dame Fortune did not favour me, and in eight days I found myself without a sol. What could I do? I had no desire to starve, but no one was willing to employ me. It was then that my humble musical talent stood me in good stead. Dr. Gozzi had taught me how to scrape a tune on a fiddle, and M. Grimani got me a place in his theatre of Saint Samuel, where I was paid a crown a day. On this I could manage till something better turned up.

I did not show my nose in any of the houses where I had once been so welcome. I judged that I had fallen too low to be received by the *beau-monde*. I knew I was considered a scapegrace, but I did not care. People despised me, but I knew that I had done nothing despicable. The position humiliated me, but so long as I did not expose myself to slights, I did not feel myself degraded. I had not given up all hopes of better fortune. I was still young, and the volatile goddess smiles on youth. I earned enough by my violin to keep me without asking help from any one. Happy is the man who can manage to keep himself. I tried to stifle my better nature, and threw myself heart and soul into the pursuits and habits of my low companions. After the play I would go with them to some *cabaret*, where we

Digitized by Microsoft®

would remain till we were drunk, and then depart to finish the night in still lower resorts. We would amuse ourselves with inventing and executing the wildest acts of bravado in different quarters of the town. One of our favourite pleasures was to unchain the private gondolas moored to the quays, and let them drift down the canal with the current, gloating at the thought of the curses and maledictions of the gondoliers in the morning. Sometimes we would knock up an honest midwife, imploring her to go at once to such and such a lady, who, not having the slightest need of her assistance, would be sure on her arrival to treat her as a mad woman. We played the same trick on the doctor, whom we would send half dressed to some great lord, supposed to be dying, but in reality perfectly well. The priests had their turn, and many a time have we sent them to administer extreme unction to some good husband snoring peacefully at his wife's side. We destroyed bell-ropes and knockers, and slipped in at open doors to awaken sleepers with hideous cries. One very dark night we plotted to overthrow the great marble table in the middle of the Square of Saint Angelo, but that scheme was frustrated. Sometimes we would get into a belfry and alarm a whole parish by ringing the tocsin; sometimes we would cut the bell-ropes so that in the morning it was impossible to summon the devout to Mass. The whole town rang with complaints of our exploits, and it is very likely that had we been discovered, we should have been sent to row for some time in the galley belonging to the Council of Ten.

There were seven or eight of us, for as I was very friendly with my brother François, I occasionally allowed him to join in our nocturnal rambles. However, bodily fear at last put a term to these abominations, which in those days I called 'follies of youth.'

In each of the seventy-two parishes of the city of Venice there is a large *cabaret* called 'the magazine': it is open all night, and wine is cheaper there than elsewhere; food can also be had, but it must be sent for to a certain shop

Digitized by Microsoft®

which alone has the privilege of supplying the magazine. It is, as a general rule, detestable, but as it is very cheap, poor people put up with it, and these establishments are supposed to be very convenient for the lower orders. No one belonging to the better classes, not even well-to-do artisans, go to them. One night, during the carnival of 1745, when we were roving about, all masked, and seeking some new diversion, we entered the magazine of the parish of the Holy Cross. In a small side room we discovered three men peacefully seated drinking with a young and pretty woman. Our chief, a young noble of the Balbi family, said, 'It would be a great joke to get rid of these men, and take the woman under our protection.' He hastily sketched out a plan. With Balbi at our head, and keeping our masks on, we pushed into the back room, when he, addressing the astonished company, said—

An escapade.

'Under pain of death, and by order of the Council of Ten, I command you to follow us instantly, without making the slightest noise. As for you, my good woman, you need fear nothing. You will be taken care of, and eventually conducted in safety to your home.'

Two of our company took hold of the woman, while the rest of us seized the poor trembling men, who had no thought of resistance. We conducted them on board a boat, and after a quarter of an hour's rowing, deposited them on the island of San Giorgio, and set them at liberty, and getting back into the boat made for a certain spot where we had agreed to meet the rest of the gang. We found them surrounding the crying woman. 'Cheer up, my pretty one,' said Balbi, 'we won't hurt you. We are just going to get something to drink, and then we will take you home. You will see your husband to-morrow morning.' Consoled by this promise she followed us to the inn known as The Two Swords, where we ordered a good supper to be served in a private room. We took off our masks, and the appearance of eight young and handsome faces seemed to tranquillise our captive somewhat. Further encouraged by the wine and good

Digitized by Microsoft®

cheer, and our gallant conversation, she was soon at her ease, and the rest of the night passed in gaiety. She submitted as meekly as a lamb to our mad caprices, and when at last we conducted her to her own door, thanked us with perfect sincerity.

Its consequences.

But next day there was a fine commotion in the city. The husband laid a complaint before the Council of Ten. He and his friends had not been able to leave the island before morning. Returning home he had found his wife in bed; she told him of all that had happened, but the only thing she complained of was the anxiety she had felt on his account.

The trick we had played, and the wife's innocent complaisance, were so comical that the whole town laughed; but though she refused to lay any complaint, the tribunal offered a reward of five hundred ducats to any one who should make known the authors of the outrage. There was no traitor among us, though we were all poor, but fear had a salutary effect upon us, and we became much quieter.

He befriends the dying senator.

In the month of April, the eldest son of the Cornaros married one of the daughters of the house of Saint Pol, and I was bidden to the wedding in my quality of musician. The third day of the feast, as I was going home about an hour before dawn, I saw a senator in his red robes going down the stairs in front of me; as he stepped into his gondola, he dropped a letter from his pocket; I hurried after him to return it. Having thanked me, he asked me where I lived, telling me to get into his gondola and he would take me home. We had hardly been seated a moment when he asked me to shake his left arm, for he felt a strange numbness in it. I worked it up and down vigorously, but he said, in an indistinct voice, that the numbness was spreading up his left side, and that he believed he was dying. I pulled back the curtain, and saw by the lamp-light that his mouth was drawn all awry. I knew that it was apoplexy. I called to the gondoliers to stop, while I ran for a doctor. I found one in a few minutes and hurried him away with me in his

Digitized by Microsoft®

dressing-gown. He bled the senator, while I tore up my shirt for bandages. This done, the gondoliers rowed in haste to their master's palace at San Marino, where we aroused the servants, and I carried him almost lifeless to bed.

Voting myself into the place of command, I sent for another doctor, and took my place at the bedside. By and by two noblemen, friends of the sick man, came in. They were in despair. They questioned me, and I told them what I could. They did not know who I was, and they did not dare to ask. For my part I thought it best to maintain a discreet silence. The sick man gave no sign of life. We remained with him throughout the day. A quiet little dinner was served to us, which we partook of in the sickroom.

In the evening the elder of the friends told me if I had business elsewhere I must not neglect it—they would pass the night with the invalid.

'And I, gentlemen,' said I, 'will pass the night in this armchair, for if I leave this poor man he will die, whereas so long as I remain he will live.'

This sententious reply struck them dumb with surprise; they exchanged glances. We sat down to supper, and in the course of conversation I learnt that the patient was M. de Bragadin, celebrated in Venice for his eloquence, his talents as a statesman, and the gallant adventures of his youth. He was handsome, learned, lively, kind-hearted, and about fifty years old. One of his friends belonged to the family of Dandolo;[1] the other was a Barbaro.[2] They were all three devotedly attached to each other, and lived in the closest intimacy.

[1] The Dandolo family, which is one of the oldest and most distinguished in the annals of the Venetian Republic, claimed to be of Roman origin. It furnished many renowned soldiers and citizens, among others the celebrated Doge who flourished in the first half of the fourteenth century.

[2] The person alluded to here was probably a member of the patrician family of the Barbaro or di Barberino which played an important part in Venetian history. Francesco di Barbaro defended Brescia when that city was besieged in the fifteenth century.

Digitized by Microsoft®

About midnight our patient became worse, the fever increased, and he seemed hardly able to breathe. I called up his two friends, and told them that I was certain he would die unless we removed a huge mercury plaster with which the doctor had covered his chest: without waiting for their sanction I tore it off and sponged him with warm water. In less than five minutes he began to breathe peacefully, and by and by fell into a quiet sleep. When the doctor came in the morning, M. de Bragadin was well enough to tell him himself what had happened, adding, 'Providence has sent me a physician who knows more of medicine than you do.'

'In that case I will retire, and leave you in his charge,' replied the doctor, and bowing coldly to me, he departed.

I saw that I had bewitched the three worthy friends, and I began to give myself airs, lay down the law, and quote authors whom I had never read.

He finds in De Bragadin his benefactor and victim.

M. de Bragadin had a weakness for abstract science, and one day he told me he was sure I possessed a superhuman knowledge, I was too learned for a young man. I did not want to shock his vanity by contradicting him, and then and there, in the presence of his friends made a most extravagant statement. I told him an old hermit had taught me how to make certain numerical calculations, by means of which I could obtain an answer to any question if I wrote it down according to a system he had also imparted to me, the words of the question must be represented by numbers, and pyramidal numbers, the answers were given in the same form.

'The answers are sometimes very obscure,' I said, 'yet if I had not consulted my oracle the other night, I should not now have the pleasure of knowing your excellencies. When I asked if I should meet any one at the ball whose encounter would be disagreeable to me, I was told, "You must leave the ball one hour before dawn." I obeyed, and your excellency knows the rest.'

'It is the clavicula of Solomon which you possess,' said M. de Bragadin, 'which the vulgar call the *cabbala*. It is a

Digitized by Microsoft®

veritable treasure. You can, if you like, make your fortune with it.'

He shows the *cabbala* to Senators De Bragadin, Dandolo, and Barbaro.

'I got it,' I said, 'from a hermit on Mount Carpegna, when I was under arrest in the Spanish army.'

I saw I had produced a good effect on my listeners; the difficulty was not to destroy it. M. Dandolo said he would write a question the meaning of which could only be understood by himself. He handed me a slip of paper couched in such obscure language I could make neither head nor tail of it; but it was too late to draw back. I could but trust to effrontery to carry me through. I put down four lines in ordinary figures, and handed them to him with an indifferent air. He read them, re-read them, and then pronounced the reply to have been inspired by more than mortal intelligence. I was saved.

It was now the turn of the others. They questioned me on all sorts of subjects. My answers, perfectly incomprehensible to myself as they were, enchanted them. They found in each the solution they chose to find, and they asked me in how short a time I could teach them the rules of my sublime science.

'In a few hours,' I said, 'and I shall be very glad to do so. Although the hermit assured me that if I communicated the secret to any one, I should die suddenly within three days—this may, however, have been merely a threat.'

On hearing this, M. de Bragadin looked very grave, and said I must believe what the hermit had told me, and obey him implicitly, and from this time forth there was no further question of their learning the secret.

In this way I became the hierophant of the three friends, who, in spite of their education and literary ability, were perfectly infatuated about the occult sciences, and believed in the possibility of all sorts of things contrary to moral and physical laws. These noblemen were not only good Christians, they were devout and scrupulous in the exercise of their religion. They were none of them married, and they had for ever renounced the society of women, whose implacable foes they now were.

Digitized by Microsoft®

They maintained that it was the necessary condition of communication and intimate intercourse with spirits.

It was not very commendable of me to deceive them in this way, but I was only twenty, and had been earning my bread in the orchestra of a theatre, and it was none of my business to point out to them the folly of their illusions. I did but add one to the number when I constituted myself their apostle. I procured for them a great deal of innocent pleasure, and for myself some pleasure which was not so innocent, but, as I said before, I was twenty years old and had a fine constitution. What man, given these advantages, does not seek by every possible means to get all the good he can out of life?

No one in Venice could understand how men of their character could associate with a man of mine. They were all heavenly, I was all earthly; they were severe and strict in their lives, I was entirely given up to pleasure. No one guessed the secret, and I daily strengthened the hold I had on them. By the beginning of summer M. de Bragadin was well enough to appear at the Senate. The day before he resumed his seat there he sent for me.

De Bragadin's noble speech of gratitude.

'Whatever you may be,' he said, 'I owe you my life. Your former protectors who tried to make you a priest, a doctor, a lawyer, or a soldier, only succeeded in making a fiddler of you; they were fools who did not understand you. Your guardian angel has brought you to me; I understand and appreciate you. I shall treat you as my son to the day of my death. Your place will be always laid at my table, your room is ready for you in my palace. You will have a servant to wait entirely on you, a private gondola, and ten sequins a month for pocket money; it is what my father gave me when I was your age. You need have no thought for the future; you have nothing to do but to amuse yourself, and whatever may happen be sure I shall always be your father and friend.'

Such, my dear reader, is the history of my metamorphosis; from the rank of a poor violinist, I was suddenly raised to that of the rich and powerful.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER VIII

CRISTINA

I now began to live an independent life, recognising no law save inclination. I was rich, endowed by nature with an agreeable and somewhat imposing exterior; I was an inveterate gambler, a great talker, a sworn worshipper of beauty, and I cared only for such society as amused me, so it is not to be wondered at if I made many enemies. I respected the law, but at the same time, I considered myself above all vulgar prejudices. I fancied that on these terms I should be allowed to live in perfect freedom under an aristocratic government, such as that of Venice. But it was not to be. The Venetian republic, for reasons of self-preservation, must herself bow before imperative state considerations. I only touch on this subject, so as to somewhat justify my policy as a citizen, whose tendency that year inevitably led to a state prison.

My conduct was not calculated to please the three worthy gentlemen whose oracle I had become, but they were too fond of me to remonstrate severely with me.

About this time I became attached to the most celebrated courtesan in Venice. Her name was Ancilla. She afterwards married the dancer Campioni, and went with him to London. We played cards every night at her house, and the stakes were often extravagantly high. The young Count Medini, whom I met there, was as reckless a gamester as myself, but more favoured by fortune, and he won large sums from me. I bore my bad luck as cheerfully as I

Digitized by Microsoft®

could, never doubting him, until one evening he cheated me in so flagrant a manner that, easy dupe though I had been up to that moment, my eyes were opened. I drew a pistol from my pocket, and, turning the barrel against his breast, I threatened to kill him if he did not instantly give me back what he had stolen from me. We had a stormy scene, during which Ancilla fainted. Medini finally returned my money, but challenged me to leave the house and cross swords with him.

A duel, and temporary refuge in Padua.

I accepted, and laying my pistols on the table followed him to a convenient place outside the city, where we fought by the light of the moon. I had the good luck to run him through the shoulder, so that he could not hold his sword, and was obliged to ask for quarter. After this episode I went home and slept the sleep of the just; but when next morning, I gave an account of the affair to my adopted father, he advised me to leave Venice immediately and take refuge at Padua. Count Medini was my enemy for the rest of my life; the reader will hear of him again.

After a few months spent at Padua, I returned to Venice, where I should have been perfectly happy if I could have abstained from punting at basset. My infatuation for this game often led me into trouble. I had not the prudence to leave off when I was losing, or the strength of mind to leave off when I had won moderately, consequently I was always in need of money.

Once, when I was very hard pressed, I tried to borrow two hundred sequins from my old friend, Madame Manzoni. She was not able to procure the money for me, but she persuaded a woman friend to intrust a very fine diamond to me, worth treble the amount I required. I was to take it to Treviso and pawn it, for there were no pawnbrokers in Venice; the Jews always found means to prevent the Republic from opening one of these useful establishments, so as to keep the trade of money-lending in their own hands.

As I was passing along the quay of Saint Job, I noticed a

Digitized by Microsoft®

richly-dressed village-girl seated in a gondola. I stopped to look more closely at her, and the man in the prow called out and asked me if I wanted to go to Mestre; for if so, he would take me for half price. But I replied that I would give him twice what he asked if he would promise not to embark any more passengers. Having concluded this bargain, I jumped in, and seated myself beside the pretty little peasant, who was chatting and laughing with a pleasant-faced old priest.

The village-girl in the gondola on the Quay of Saint Job.

'The gondoliers,' said the latter, by way of opening the conversation, 'are in luck; they are taking us to Mestre for thirty sols apiece, with the right to carry other passengers if they can find any, and they are sure to. You see they have already one.'

'When I am in a gondola, reverend father,' said I, 'there is no room for any one else'; here I ostentatiously drew out my purse and gave some extra money to the boatman, who then gave me the title of 'Excellency.' The good priest naïvely thought I had a right to this distinction, and continued to address me as 'Excellency,' until I explained to him I was no nobleman, only a lawyer's clerk.

'Ah!' exclaimed the young girl, 'I am glad to hear that.'

'And may I ask why, signorina?'

'Because I am too shy to speak to a gentleman. I like to be with people who do not think themselves any better than I am. My father, the brother of my uncle,' pointing to the priest, 'was a farmer. I am his only child, and his heiress. I think there is not much difference between a lawyer's clerk and the daughter of a rich farmer. I need not feel shy with you, and now that we know all about each other we shall get on better, shall we not, uncle?'

'Yes, my dear Cristina, though you must own that the gentleman was very friendly before he knew who or what we were.'

'Perhaps I should not have been so friendly, my reverend father, if I had not been attracted by the beauty of your charming niece.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

At these words they both burst out laughing, and as I could not see that I had said anything very comical, I concluded that they must be stupid as well as rustic.

'Why do you laugh, my pretty one?' I asked. 'Is it to show me your beautiful teeth? I must own that I have never seen finer ones even in Venice.'

'Oh, it was not for that, sir, though in Venice every one complimented me on them. In our village all the girls have as white teeth as I have. I was laughing at something I would rather die than tell you.'

In the gondola with Cristina.

'I will tell you,' said her uncle: 'when she saw you coming along the quay, she said, "There's a handsome fellow! I wish he was in the boat with us," and when you got in she was delighted.'

'Do not look so cross,' said I, 'and thump your uncle on the shoulder. I am glad my appearance pleases you. I do not conceal from you that I find you charming.'

'You say so now, but I know you Venetians, you all tell me I am charming, but when it comes to the point not one of you will declare himself.'

'What sort of a declaration do you want?'

'The only one that I care for, the one which is followed by a good business-like marriage in church, in the presence of witnesses.'

'This girl,' interposed the uncle, 'such as you see her, is a good match for any man. She has a dowry of three thousand crowns. She declares she will only marry a Venetian, so I took her to Venice to find a husband. We stayed there for a fortnight with some friends of ours, but though she went to several houses where there were likely young men, it was no use; those she liked did not seem to care for her, and those who cared for her were not to her taste.'

'But do you think,' said I, 'that a marriage is made like an omelette? Fifteen days in Venice is not enough; you must stay there at least six months. For instance, I think your niece is as pretty as a flower, and I shall be thankful if

Digitized by Microsoft®

the wife God means for me is like her; nevertheless, if you were to give me fifty thousand crowns down to marry her this moment I would not do it. A sensible man wants to know the character of a woman before he marries her, for it is neither money nor beauty which makes for happiness.'

'What do you mean by character?' asked Cristina. 'A good handwriting?'

'No, my angel, and your question makes me laugh. I mean qualities of the heart and mind. I must marry some day, and have been looking for a wife these last three years. I know many girls as pretty as you, and with good dowries, but after I have studied them a short time, I see they will not do for me.'

'What ailed them?'

'Well one, whom I should certainly have married, for I was very fond of her, was excessively vain, though it took me two months to find it out. She would have ruined me in fine clothes; just fancy, she spent a sequin a month on the hairdresser, and as much again in pomades and essences.'

'She was a fool; I spend ten sols a year in wax, which I mix with goat's grease, and it makes an excellent pomade.'

'Another, I discovered, could never have children; that would be terrible, for if I marry I want to have a family.'

'As for that, 'tis as God wills; but I have always been healthy, have I not, uncle?'

'Another was too pious; she went to confession every three days, and stayed at least an hour.'

'She must have been a great sinner, or a great fool. I go to confession every month, and say everything in two minutes —don't I, uncle?—and what 's more, if you did not question me I should not know what to say.'

'Another thought herself wiser than I, though every minute she said something silly. Another was melancholy, and I want a lively wife.'

'Think of that, uncle! and my mother is always telling me I am too lively!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Another was afraid to be left alone with me, and when I kissed her ran and told her mother.'

'She was a goose. I have never had a sweetheart, but I know if I had one there are certain things I should never tell, even my mother.'

'Then there is another thing, I want my wife to have black eyes, and every girl now knows how to dye hers; but they won't catch me. I have learnt the secret.'

'Are mine black?'

'They look black, but they are not so really. Still, you are very charming.'

'How funny! You think you know everything, and you say my eyes are made up. Such as they are, sir, they are as God made them. Don't you believe me?'

'No, they are too handsome to be natural.'

'Well, I declare!'

'Forgive me; I see I have been too outspoken.'

A long silence followed this dispute. The priest smiled to himself from time to time, but the girl had great difficulty in hiding her vexation.

She was quite adorable; her head was dressed in the fashion of a rich peasant, with at least a hundred sequins' worth of gold pins and arrows holding up her ebony hair. She wore long massive ear-rings, and a gold chain twisted twenty times round her slim white throat.

He offers Cristina and her uncle a seat in his carriage.

When the gondola entered the long canal of Marghera I asked the priest if he had a carriage to take him to Treviso, which was the coaching station for their village, and if not would he accept two places in the chaise I intended to hire, but his niece interrupted him and declared she would not travel with me. I saw I had offended her, and hastened to make my peace by saying that I could tell if her eyes were really black by washing them with rose water, or if she shed tears I should know at once.

'Cry then, my child,' said her uncle, 'and the gentleman will do justice to you and your eyes.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

At this she began to laugh, and laughed so heartily that tears actually rolled down her cheeks, and so we were all good friends again.

I ordered breakfast and a post-chaise, but first of all the good priest said he must say Mass.

He hears Mass with Cristina.

'Yes,' I said, 'you shall say a prayer for me, and we will come and hear it!'

On the way to church I offered my arm to his niece.

'What would your mistress say,' she asked, 'if she saw us walking like this?'

'I have no mistress, and I shall never have one again, for I shall never find such a pretty girl as you—no, not in Venice!'

'That is a pity, for your sake: we shall never go back to Venice; even if we did we could not stay six months, which is the time you say it takes you to make acquaintance with a girl.'

'I would gladly pay your expenses there.'

'Tell that to my uncle then; perhaps he will think over it, for I could not go alone.'

'And in six months *you* would know *me*?'

'I know you already.'

'And do you think you would love me?'

'Yes, very much, if you were my husband.'

I stared at this girl in astonishment; she looked like a princess disguised as a peasant. Her thick silk gown was braided with gold, and must have cost twice as much as any fashionable dress. It was buttoned high up to the neck, but as the town fashion of capes had not got as far as the country I could see how beautifully made she was. She wore bracelets to match the necklace, and her richly trimmed petticoat, which only reached to her ankles, showed the neatest foot in the world.

After breakfast we drove to Treviso, and there I had no difficulty in persuading the priest to accept dinner and supper, after which it was arranged he was to take the chaise and go on to his village by moonlight.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The priest undertakes to pawn a brilliant for him.

During dinner it occurred to me that perhaps he would take my brilliant to the pawnbroker for me, and this he readily agreed to do. He went off leaving me alone with Cristina, but returned in an hour to say that the diamond could not be pledged for two days, as there was a fête in the town and the shops were closed, but that he had seen the cashier at the pawnbroker's who had promised to give him twice the amount I asked.

'You would do me a service, father,' said I, 'if you would come back here the day after to-morrow, and pawn the diamond for me, as you have been about it once; it might look strange if I were to go. I would gladly pay your expenses.'

He promised to do so, and I secretly hoped, though I did not dare to suggest it, that his niece would come with him; but when we were seated round the fire after dinner I grew bolder.

'Reverend father,' I said, 'if you would take your niece back to Venice I would find you some lodgings in the house of a most respectable woman, and I would defray the cost of your living there. I wish to become better acquainted with the signorina before I ask for her hand in marriage.'

During this speech I was watching Cristina out of the tail of my eye, and I saw her smile with pleasure.

'If you will only consent,' I said, 'in eight days everything can be arranged, and during that time I will write to you, dear Cristina, and I hope you will answer my letters.'

'My uncle will answer for me; I can't write.'

'My dear child! how can you hope to become the wife of a Venetian if you cannot write?'

'Is it necessary for a woman? I know how to read.'

'That is not enough; and you must learn before coming to Venice, or you will be laughed at.'

'But none of the girls at home can write, and I cannot possibly learn in eight days.'

'I undertake to teach you in fifteen,' said her uncle, 'if you will try with all your might to learn.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'It is a great undertaking, but I promise you to study day and night. I will begin to-morrow.'

After supper I suggested to the priest that he should remain all night at the inn, and leave very early in the morning. As he saw his niece was terribly tired, and would be glad of the rest, he acquiesced. I called up the landlady and ordered her to light a fire in another room, and prepare a bed for me; but here the holy father interposed and said it was not necessary; there were two large beds in the room where we were. I could have one, and the other would do for himself and his niece.

'We shall not undress,' said he, 'but you may, as you do not leave with us in the morning. You can remain in bed as long as you please.'

'Oh,' said Cristina, 'I must undress, or I shall not sleep; but I shall not keep you waiting, I shall be ready in a quarter of an hour.'

I said nothing, but I could hardly hide my surprise at the charming Cristina's complaisance. My carnal mind was shocked; yet not only did the priest see no harm in it, but he never for one moment imagined that any one else could. I was not so hardened then, but as I have advanced in age and experience I have seen like customs current in many countries among good simple people, without detriment to their excellent morality. Still I must repeat, these customs obtained among good simple people only, and I do not pretend to be of their number.

'Do you know,' said he, 'what my niece wants to persuade me to do? To go home by myself to-morrow, and leave her here until the day after, when I shall come back for the diamond. She says that you are like a brother to her, only I fear she will be in your way.'

This unexpected proposition had such an effect on me, my nose began to bleed violently, and bled for a quarter of an hour, so that the good priest was scared out of his wits.

I was very discreet after the priest left us. I told Cristina

Digitized by Microsoft®

little naughty stories, carefully modifying them so as not to startle her, but I was amused to see that when she did not understand, she pretended she did, so as not to appear too naïve.

We went to our beds about midnight; I did not awake until broad daylight, the priest had slipped away so quietly I had not heard him.

I called out 'good morning' to Cristina, who awoke, and, leaning on her elbow, smiled.

'I did not hear my uncle go,' she said.

'My dear child, you look as pretty as an angel; I am dying to give you a kiss.'

'Come and give me one!' Then, after a pause, she said softly, 'What will my uncle say?'

'He will know nothing about it until he has given us the nuptial blessing in his parish church.'

'But we cannot be married in Lent?'

'I will get a dispensation.'

'How long will it be before we can be married?'

He promises to marry Cristina.

'About a month.' This seemed to reassure her, and she was soon smiling again.

But although the bond into which we had entered was not altogether displeasing to me, I could have wished for just a little more time. The little hint of remorse that had leaped up in my soul, full of love and good intentions as that soul was, went twisting and twining about there like a serpent, and saddened me. But yet I felt sure that this sweet woman would never repent having met me.

After breakfast we went to Mass, and the morning passed by very rapidly. In the evening I took her to the play, and to the Casino, after having provided her with a domino and mask. She had never seen a gaming-table before. I gave her ten sequins, telling her how to stake them. In less than an hour she had won over a hundred, then I made her come away. She could hardly believe that all that money belonged to her. 'What will my uncle say?' she kept repeating.

When he returned next morning she showed him her

Digitized by Microsoft®

treasure, and he was profuse in his exclamations of delight and surprise. He thanked God, for what he called a miracle, and concluded that we were destined for one another.

The time had come for us to separate. I promised to visit them at the beginning of Lent, but only on condition that they would not mention my name to any of their friends. When I had seen them off, I turned my steps towards Venice, very much in love, and determined not to break faith with my dear Cristina.

But alas! the very next day I decided she must be happy without me. I had intended to marry her when I loved her more than I loved myself, but as soon as I was away from her side I found that self-love was stronger than the affection with which she had inspired me. Still I felt sentimental about her. I trembled at the idea of abandoning this naïve and innocent creature, and shuddered to think that her confidence in me might be repaid with lifelong opprobrium and scorn. I would find her a husband at once—one who should be in every way preferable to myself.

He decides not to do so.

My three excellent friends had been somewhat anxious about me during my absence: they were all eager to consult me on divers matters. As soon as I was closeted with them, pen in hand, I put a question of my own to *Paralis*, as we called our oracle. The answer I received to my question ran in this wise: 'Confide in *Serenus*; tell him the whole story.' *Serenus* was the cabalistic name of M. de Bragadin. The worthy man was most obedient, and always did what *Paralis* told him.

'You must,' said *Paralis*, 'obtain a dispensation from the Holy Father in favour of a very good girl, so that she may publicly celebrate her marriage during Lent, and in her parish church. Here is her certificate of baptism.' I had brought it away with me, and now slipped it into M. de Bragadin's hand. 'The bridegroom is as yet unknown, but that does not matter, *Paralis* will point him out when the time comes.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Rely on me,' gravely replied my adopted father; 'I will write to-morrow to our ambassador at Rome. *Paralis* shall be obeyed, and I foresee that the husband is to be one of us four; we must dispose ourselves to fulfil his command.'

I could hardly help laughing when I saw that it was absolutely in my power to make Cristina a Venetian lady and wife of a nobleman and senator. But I resisted, and again consulted the oracle, as to who was to be the happy man. The reply came that M. Dandolo was to find him; that he must be young, handsome, sensible, and capable of serving the republic; that no engagements were to be made without consulting me. I added that the girl had a dowry of four thousand ducats, and that we had fifteen days to find the man.

I was now quite easy, for I was sure they would find a husband such as I desired for Cristina. I set about keeping the carnival with a light heart, and won over a thousand sequins at faro, with which I paid my debts, and the cost of the dispensation, which arrived ten days later from Rome.

He finds Cristina a husband.

It was all in form; nothing was wanting but a mere detail—the bridegroom. I wrote to the uncle to meet me at Treviso, and was not surprised to see him arrive accompanied by his niece. I gave him the Papal dispensation, and as I was sure of nothing, did not mention the proposed change of bridegroom. On this occasion we occupied separate rooms, and as I now looked on Cristina as belonging to some other man, I contented myself with discreetly embracing her in the presence of her uncle. He left us alone together for some time, as he had business to attend to, and I endured all the temptations of Saint Anthony, but I resisted them manfully. A week later M. Dandolo told me the husband was found, and that he was sure I would approve of his choice. As a matter of fact, when I met the young man I found him worthy of the senator's eulogiums. His name was Charles ——; he was very handsome, about twenty-two years of age, and a godson of Count Algarotti's, the friend and relative of M. Dandolo's.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I had now reached the most delicate and difficult part of the undertaking. I wrote to the priest, telling him that on a certain day I would pay him and his niece a visit, and would bring a friend with me. At the appointed time Charles and I set out. On the way I explained to him that I had met the young person and her uncle about a month before, and that I should have proposed to her myself, but that I did not consider my situation justified me in doing so. In this way I prepared his mind for the coming event. We arrived at the presbytery about two hours before midday. Cristina came smiling to meet us.

The introduction of Charles.

'I want to show you my handwriting,' she said, 'and after that we will go and see my mother.'

Charles asked her why she had waited till she was nineteen to learn to write. 'What is that to you?' she said tartly; 'and I am not nineteen, only seventeen.'

Then we two followed her to her own home. We found the doctor with her mother, who was bedridden, and, oddly enough, he knew Charles. They went out together, leaving me with the mother and daughter, and I spoke of Charles, praising his good conduct, morality, and intelligence, vaunting the happiness of the woman whom he should choose as his wife. They agreed with me that his face was a guarantee of all I alleged.

As there was no time to lose, I told Cristina that she must be on her guard at table, as it was possible that he might be the husband Heaven had destined for her.

'If it should be so,' I added, 'you will be very happy with him, happier than you would have been with me, and as the doctor knows him, he can tell you more about him than I have time to tell you now.'

It gave me much pain to make this declaration; but imagine my surprise! The young girl was calm, and in no wise disconcerted. The sight of her tranquillity checked the tears I was prepared to shed. After a pause she asked me if I was quite sure that that handsome young fellow really cared

Digitized by Microsoft®

to marry her. This question reassured me. I saw I had been as much mistaken in her as she had been in me.

We dined rather late, and I carefully refrained from talking, so as to give Charles a fair chance. I noticed with pleasure that Cristina replied to him with ease and interest. When they parted Charles said to her, 'You are worthy of a prince.'

'I shall consider myself lucky,' she replied, 'if you think me worthy of you.'

On our return journey Charles spoke of nothing but his good luck; he was over head and ears in love.

'I shall go,' said he, 'to Count Algarotti to-morrow, and you can write to her uncle to bring us over the documents to sign.'

Two days after, I went back to the village. This time I read the future bride a little lecture, at once paternal and sentimental, with regard to her conduct in her new state of life. I told her how to behave towards her husband, his aunt, and her sister-in-law, so as to win their affection and friendship. The end of my discourse was somewhat pathetic and a little humiliating for myself, for in recommending her to be faithful to Charles I had to ask her to forgive my own betrayal of her.

'When you asked me to marry you, did you not intend to do so?' she said.

'Yes, certainly.'

'You have not deceived me, then, and I ought to be grateful to you for being strong enough to decide that as there might have been difficulties about our union, it was better to find me another husband. Now, you may kiss me if you like.'

'No, I dare not!'

'Very well, my friend, really I don't care about it!'

This naïve reasoning made me smile, and an hour or two later we all three left for Venice, Cristina wearing her grandest toilette; the marriage-contract was signed, and the

Digitized by Microsoft®

wedding-day fixed. The marriage feast was spread at the uncle's house; Count Algarotti sent his servants and cook from Venice, so that everything might be done as was fitting. Cristina, though dressed as a peasant, looked beautiful as a star; her uncle and husband had tried in vain to induce her to wear the costume of a Venetian lady.

'When I am your wife,' she told Charles, 'I will dress as you wish, but till then I will wear what I have always worn. I do not want the girls with whom I have been brought up to laugh at me, or think I am giving myself airs.'

The wedding of Cristina.

We went to the church about eleven, and were surprised to find it so crowded we could with difficulty get places. The whole village and many of the Trevisan nobility were there, to see the peasant girl whose wedding was celebrated in mid-Lent; every one was loud in the praise of both bride and bridegroom, and certainly they made a handsome couple.

At the banquet which followed the ceremony Cristina proved an admirable hostess; she glanced from time to time at her husband to see if what she said and did met with his approbation, and needless to say, these glances were always met with a reassuring smile.

The next morning I was talking with Count Algarotti and some of his friends when Charles came in, looking happy and radiant. He replied with much wit, and *à propos* to the jokes with which he was greeted, and I must own I felt considerably relieved when he came up to me and embraced me heartily; he begged me to henceforth consider him as a brother, and to treat his house as my own; but, though I knew the invitation was sincere, I avoided accepting it. About a year after their marriage a son was born to them; they had two other children, and lived in happiness and comfort for many years.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER IX

HENRIETTE

A disquisition on surnames.

Among my most intimate friends at this period was a young man who was studying mathematics under the celebrated Professor Succi. His name was Tognolo, but he had changed this ill-sounding appellation for that of de Fabris: it was he who afterwards became Count de Fabris, lieutenant-general to Joseph the Second.

His talents would doubtless have availed him little, had he preserved his original name. I think that people who are afflicted with an ugly name, or one capable of an indecent or ridiculous interpretation, should change it if they aspire to honours, military or civil. Voltaire, in spite of his genius, would never have gone down to posterity as Arouet; would any one have admitted any claim to greatness in an author publicly proclaimed '*à rouer*'? Would d'Alembert have attained celebrity if he had been content to be known as M. *Le Rond*? What glory would Metastasio have acquired under his own name, *Trapasso*? What impression would Melanchthon have made as Schwarzerdt? And M. de Beauharnais would certainly have caused some to laugh, and others to blush, if he had maintained his original title. Finally, would the *Bourbeux* have figured as brilliantly on the throne of France as the *Bourbons*?

I used to go with my friend de Fabris to stay at a country house near Zero, where everything was arranged for the amusement of body and mind. We gambled, we made love, but above all, we played practical jokes of the most terrible

Digitized by Microsoft®

description on one another. A man must never lose his temper, but take everything as a jest, or be dubbed a fool and a disagreeable fellow. It was a series of practical jokes: apple-pie beds, turnip-lanthorns, ghosts, and other things still harder to bear. I had to run the gauntlet with the others, but one day they played a trick on me which was really too bad, and its regrettable consequences put an end to this mania for horse-play. We used to walk every day to a farm, about half a mile distant from the chateau, and as a short-cut we generally passed over a deep muddy ditch crossed by a single plank. I always chose this way for the sake of watching the simulated terror of the women, and the pleasure of handing them across. One day when I was standing in the middle of the plank, encouraging them to follow me, the plank broke, and I was flung into the stinking mud, up to my chin. In spite of my mortification I had to laugh with the others. I was helped out by the farmer, and a pitiable object I must have presented: my beautiful new suit embroidered with spangles, my lace, my silk stockings, all were spoilt. The next day I had to go to town to get new things, and returned in twenty-four hours; but de Fabris told me that the author of the trick had not come forward.

A sequin given adroitly here and there put me in possession of the secret. My tormentor was a Greek merchant, named Demetrio, a man of about forty-five, a good amiable fellow, who owed me a grudge for cutting him out in the affections of a pretty waiting-maid. I meditated revenge, and a funeral which occurred just then in the village prompted me.

A practical joke.

Armed with my hunting-knife, I went alone to the cemetery at midnight; I disinterred the corpse, cut off one of its arms, rearranged the grave, and went off to my room with the severed arm.

Next night I retired early, and hid myself under Demetrio's bed. Presently he came in, undressed, put out his light, and disposed himself to slumber.

By and by I began to pull at the bedclothes; gently he

Digitized by Microsoft®

recovered them, saying laughingly: 'Whoever you are, go away, and leave me to sleep, I do not believe in ghosts. You will get no fun out of me.'

I waited five or six minutes, and then began again, but this time, when he attempted to pull the coverings into place, I tugged them in the opposite direction.

He sat up and tried to seize hold of the hand which was pulling the blanket; as he grabbed for it I substituted the dead hand for mine. Thinking he had caught the man or woman who was teasing him, he drew it towards him. I held tight for a minute or two, then suddenly let go, and the Greek fell back on his pillow, grasping the ice-cold hand; he did not say a word.

The farce was played, I walked softly to the door, regained my own room, and got into bed.

Its results.

Next morning I was awakened by the sound of people running up and down the corridor. On going to my door, I met the mistress of the house, who told me that I had gone a bit too far this time.

'What is the matter?'

'M. Demetrio is dying.'

'I am sorry, but I did not kill him.'

She left me without answering, and I dressed myself hurriedly, feeling somewhat scared. I went to the Greek's room; the whole household was assembled there, and they greeted me with violent reproaches. I feigned innocence, but no one believed me; the priest, who had been fetched in haste, told me I had committed a crime.

'There is no one else here,' said he, 'capable of such an abomination. No one else would have dared to do it. I must warn you that action will be taken against you at once.'

The same day the arm was re-inhumed, and I was formally denounced to the Episcopal court at Treviso for having violated a tomb.

I was so bored by their reproaches that I went back to

Digitized by Microsoft®

Venice, and after being there a short time I learnt that the unfortunate Greek had recovered sufficiently to be able to open and shut his eyes, but that he had entirely lost the use of his limbs, and could only speak in a spasmodic and semi-idiotic manner. In this sad condition he passed the rest of his life. His unhappy fate pained me deeply, but I had not meant to injure him, and the trick he played on me might easily have cost me my life, so I consoled myself. There was no proof against me, they only surmised that it was I who had opened the grave. But I was not at the end of my troubles.

He goes to Milan and on to Cesena.

Just at this time a woman lodged a complaint against me for assaulting her daughter, and though I was blameless, it was difficult for me to prove my innocence. It was one of those cases which are got up to cause expense and annoyance to the victim; the harpy's evident intention was to blackmail me, and her accusations were difficult to refute. These, coming on the top of the charge for profanation of the dead, made matters very serious. M. de Bragadin, whose advice was always worth listening to, counselled me to lose no time in leaving Venice; at the same time he assured me that in a year at most I should be able to return, for by then the scandal would be forgotten.

I left at nightfall, and next day I slept at Verona; two days afterwards I arrived at Milan. I was alone, but well supplied with everything; no letters of introduction, but plenty of handsome jewellery, a well-filled purse, good health, and the burden of twenty-three years.

I passed some time agreeably at Milan, where I met several old acquaintances; I was lucky at cards, and had many adventures, one of which led me to Cesena, whence I intended going on to Naples.

While staying at Cesena, I was awakened one morning by a terrific noise outside my room.

I opened my door and looked out, and saw a posse of policemen standing round an open door, through which I

Digitized by Microsoft®

could discern a bed, with a man sitting up in it, vociferating loudly in Latin.

I asked the host what was the matter.

'This gentleman,' he answered, 'has a girl with him, and the bishop's archers have come to know if it is his wife. It is simple enough, if she is his wife he has only to produce his marriage certificate; if not, he must make up his mind to go to prison with her. But I would settle the whole thing for three sequins; I need only speak to the chief, and he would withdraw his men. If you know Latin, go in and explain matters to him.'

'Who forced the door of the room?'

'It was not forced, I opened it; it was my duty to do so.'

The Hungarian captain and his companion.

I determined to interfere. I went in in my night-cap and explained to the man why these people were annoying him; he answered me, laughing the while, that it was impossible for any one to know if the person who was with him was a man or a woman, as his companion wore, like himself, an officer's uniform. Saying this, he drew out a passport and presented it to me; it was signed by Cardinal Albani, and made out in the name of an officer, captain in the Empress of Austria's Hungarian regiment; he said he came from Rome, and was going on to Parma with despatches.

'Captain,' said I in Latin, 'I beg you to let me settle this affair for you; I will go to the bishop and tell him how vilely his people have behaved to you.'

I was furious at the way in which an infamous and mercenary police had dared to treat an honourable stranger, and I must also own that I was burning with curiosity to see the fair cause of all the disturbance.

As I could get no satisfaction from the bishop, I presented myself to General Spada, who was in command of the town. The worthy soldier, who preferred that priests should busy themselves with the affairs of heaven and not of this world, was indignant, and promised me that in a few hours justice

Digitized by Microsoft®

should be done. In the meanwhile he sent his adjutant back to the hotel with me, with orders to dismiss the police immediately.

Through the open door of the room I conversed with the captain, and asked him if I might breakfast with him.

'Ask my friend,' he said.

'Charming person, whom I have not the honour of knowing,' I said in French, 'may I make a third at your table?'

The sweetest, freshest, smiling face, with untidy locks under a man's cap, showed itself and replied gaily that I should be welcome. I went away to order breakfast. An hour later I followed the waiter into the room, and we breakfasted.

The mysterious companion was an exceedingly pretty French woman, whose natural charms were hardly obscured by the elegant blue uniform she wore. Her protector was over sixty, whereas I was only twenty-three, and I could not help thinking they were a rather ill-assorted couple, the more so that she spoke neither German, Hungarian, nor Latin, and he did not know a word of French.

He offers to take Henriette and the captain in his carriage to Parma.

Determined to push the adventure further, I asked the captain if he meant to post to Parma. On his replying in the affirmative I begged him to accept two places in my travelling carriage.

'I should be delighted,' he said, 'but you must first ask Henriette.'

'Will you, madame, do me the honour of travelling with me to Parma?'

'With the greatest pleasure, for at least we shall be able to converse, and I have been deprived of that pleasure for some time.'

My carriage, so far, existed only in my imagination, but after supper I went out to see what I could do. I found a superb English carriage, which must have cost at least two hundred guineas, and before dinner next day I had concluded a bargain with its owner. The honest captain

Digitized by Microsoft®

insisted on paying me the price of a postchaise to Parma, and this settled we started on our journey.

The one drawback to my satisfaction was that the poor Hungarian could take no part in our conversation. Whenever the charming Frenchwoman said anything amusing I tried to translate it to him in Latin, but I saw that his face grew longer and longer. I concluded that I did not speak Latin as well as she spoke French. In every language the last thing one learns is humour. I could not laugh at the jokes in Terence, Plautius, and Martial until I was thirty.

She was the first Frenchwoman I had ever spoken to, and she spoke very gracefully, and like a lady, and yet I knew she must be an adventuress! I hoped so, for my ambition was now to steal her from the old gentleman—with all possible regard for his feelings, true; for I had a great respect for the fine old soldier that he was. She was certainly a very odd woman. She wore men's clothes, she had no luggage, no feminine fripperies, not even a chemise—she wore the captain's shirts. The whole situation was enigmatical enough, and that is what charmed me.

At Bologna we had a capital supper, and they lighted a large wood fire for us. When we were seated round it I plucked up courage to ask her how she had become the companion of the good fellow who seemed more suited to be her father than her lover.

'If you want to know,' she answered laughing, 'get him to tell you the story himself, but be sure that he leaves nothing out.'

The story of Henriette told by the captain.

When the captain was convinced that she did not mind his speaking freely, he spoke as follows:—

'I had six months' leave, and I went with a friend to pass them in Rome, thinking that every one in decent society there would speak Latin. I was disagreeably surprised, for even the ecclesiastics could only write it passably, and not speak it at all. I had been boring myself thus for a month, when Cardinal Albani gave me some despatches for Parma.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I made an excursion to Civita Vecchia before leaving for Parma, and as I was walking on the quay I saw an old officer and this young lady, dressed as you see her now, step out of a boat. Her appearance pleased me, but I should not have thought of her a second time if she and her companion had not taken rooms in my hotel. Our windows faced each other, and I could see them at supper, one on each side of the table, eating in perfect silence. By and by she got up and left the room; the officer remained reading a letter which appeared to interest him deeply. The next day I saw him go out, and the girl remained alone in the room. I sent my servant to her with a message, telling her that if she would grant me a *rendezvous*, I would give her ten sequins. She sent back word that she was leaving after breakfast for Rome, but that it would be easy for me to speak to her there, if I still wished it.

'I returned to Rome and thought no more of the fair adventuress, when, two days before leaving the city, my servant told me he had seen her again, and had found out where she was lodging, always with the same old officer. I told him to try and get speech of her, and tell her I was leaving Rome the next day. She replied that if I would let her know the hour of my departure, she would meet me outside the city, and would get into the carriage with me. I told her, through my servant, the day and hour I was leaving, and the gate through which I should pass. She was there to the moment, got into my carriage, and we have never left each other since. She gave me to understand that she wanted to go to Parma with me, that she had business there, and that she would never go back to Rome. You may imagine what difficulty we had in explaining ourselves. I could not even tell her that if she was followed and taken from me by violence, I could not protect her. I have not the slightest idea who or what she is. She says her name is Henriette; she may or may not be French; she is as gentle as a lamb, and seems to have had a good education; she is strong and

Digitized by Microsoft®

healthy; she is witty and courageous both, as she has testified. If she will tell you her story, and let you translate it to me in French, it will please me immensely, for I am sincerely her friend, and shall be very sorry when we part at Parma. Tell her, I beg you, that I shall make her a present of thirty sequins, and that if I were rich I would give her more.'

When I translated the captain's speech to Henriette she blushed, but frankly confirmed what he had said.

He is mystified by Henriette.

'Tell him,' she said, 'that the same principle which prevents me from lying prevents me from speaking the truth. As to the thirty sequins, please to assure him that I shall not accept one, that he will only distress me if he insists. When we get to Parma, I want him to bid me good-bye, and let me go where it seems best to me, without inquiring where that may be, and if he should meet me by chance, let him add to his kindness by not appearing to recognise me.'

The poor captain was somewhat mortified by this little speech, and asked me to tell her that before he could agree to her request he must be certain that she had all she wanted.

'You can say,' said she, 'that he need have no uneasiness on my account.'

After this conversation we remained silent for a time, and then I rose and wished them good night. Henriette blushed crimson.

'Who can this girl be,' I spoke aloud in my room, 'who combines the purest sentiments with all the appearances of the most cynical freedom? Has she a lover or a husband waiting for her at Parma? Does she belong to some honourable family there? Did she confide herself to the captain only to escape from the officer at Rome? She must know my reason for travelling with them, and if she tries to play the prude I will not be her dupe.'

The next day, the accommodating captain having by my desire given us an opportunity for *tête-à-tête*, I asked her if the order she had imposed on him applied to me equally.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'It was not a command,' she replied; 'I have no right to command. It is a request. I merely asked him to do me this service, and if you have any friendship for me you will do as I know he will do.'

He makes her a declaration.

'Madame,' I said, 'what you ask might be possible to a Frenchman, but not to an Italian. I could not live in the same town with you and not speak to you. It remains for you to say whether I shall go on with you or remain here. If you say I may travel with you I warn you I shall not be content till I have wrested from you an avowal of something warmer than friendship. Do not be afraid of hurting the feelings of your friend; he knows what I feel for you, and he will be thankful to leave you in such safe hands as mine. Why do you smile?'

'Fancy making any woman such a declaration as this, at the point of the sword as it were, instead of softly, tenderly, insinuatingly—— Ah! ah!' She laughed.

'Yes, I know I am neither tender, nor gallant, nor pathetic; I am passionate. Come, there is no time to lose!'

'Travel with us to Parma,' she said.

Henriette bids the captain farewell and goes with him to Parma.

I was kissing her hand when the captain came in. He congratulated us with a good grace. Later in the day we arrived at Reggio; he took me aside and told me he thought it better that he should go on to Parma alone, we could follow in a day or two. He left us to our mutual happiness. It was not until a week or so later that I ventured to ask Henriette what she would have done in Parma, without money and without friends. She owned that she would have been much embarrassed, but added that she knew I cared for her, and would see that she came to no harm. She added that I must not think ill of her, for all that had happened to her was the fault of her husband and her father-in-law, both of whom she declared to be monsters.

I passed at Parma as Farussi—it was my mother's maiden name—and Henriette wrote herself down as Anne d'Arci, Frenchwoman. We took rooms at d'Andremont's hotel, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

I engaged a young French servant to wait on us. Parma was then under the ferule of a new government. I felt as if I were no longer in Italy, there was an ultramontane air over everything. French and Spanish were spoken in the streets, while people whispered in Italian.

I entered a mercer's shop at haphazard, and addressed myself to the stout lady behind the counter.

'Madam,' I said, 'I want to make some purchases.'

'I will send some one to you who speaks French,' she answered.

'No need of that, I am an Italian.'

'God be praised! It is a rare thing to meet one in these days.'

'Why rare?'

'Do you not know that Don Philip is here, and that his wife, Madame de France, is on the way?'

'I congratulate you, it must be good for trade.'

'That is true, but everything is dear, and we cannot accustom ourselves to the new ways, which are a bad mixture of French liberty and Spanish tyranny. What do you wish to purchase?'

He buys clothes and hires servants.

'Let me first tell you I never bargain, but if you overcharge me I shall not come back. I want some fine linen to make twenty-four chemises, some dimity for petticoats and stays, some muslin and batiste for handkerchiefs, and many other things which I shall not find in your shop, but which I wish you kept, for, being a stranger, God knows into whose hands I shall fall.'

'If you trust me, you will fall into good hands.'

'Well then, tell me where to find sempstresses who will make up these materials, and where I can buy dresses, caps, and mantles; everything, in short, that a lady requires.'

'If she has money you will have no difficulty. Is she young?'

'She is four years younger than I am, and she is my wife.' I took the best of everything she had, paid for it, gave her

Digitized by Microsoft®

my address, and begged her to send me the dressmaker and milliner at once. On the way back to the hotel I bought some silk and thread stockings, and ordered a shoemaker to follow me.

What a delicious moment! I had told Henriette nothing about my intended purchases, and she surveyed them with an air of perfect satisfaction, but without excessive demonstration, though she proved her gratitude by the delicate manner in which she praised the beauty of the stuff I had bought. There was no increase of gaiety on her part, but an air of tenderness which was better than all.

The valet whom I hired came in with the dressmakers, and Henriette told him quietly to wait in the hall until he was called; a quarter of an hour after, he followed the shoemaker into the room, and stood about familiarly listening to our conversation; she asked him again what he wanted.

'I want to know which of you two I am to obey?' he answered.

'Neither of us,' I said, laughing. 'There is your day's wages, and begone!'

The dressmaker then proposed her own son as our valet. His name was Caudagna.

My father was a native of Parma, and one of his sisters married a Caudagna. 'It would be amusing,' I said to myself, 'if the dressmaker turns out to be my aunt, and my valet to be my first cousin! I will keep my own counsel.'

Just as we were sitting down to table, the good Hungarian captain came in, and Henriette, running up to him, called him her 'dear papa.' We dined delicately. I saw that Henriette was dainty, and that the captain was a *fin gourmet*; I was both. The captain was overjoyed at having placed his little adventuress so well.

In the evening, while we were supping *en tête-à-tête*, I thought I saw just a shade of sadness come over Henriette's pretty face: when I asked the reason, she replied in a voice which went straight to my heart—

Digitized by Microsoft®

Henriette fears for their mutual happiness.

'My friend, you are spending a great deal of money for me. I hope it is not with the intention of making me care more for you? I love you no better than I did yesterday, but I love you with all my heart; whatever you get for me beyond the strictly necessary only pleases me inasmuch as it proves you think of me, but if you are not very rich, think how bitterly I shall have to reproach myself by and by!'

'Ah, my angel!' I answered, 'let me for the moment believe that I am rich, and believe yourself that it is impossible for you to ruin me. Think of nothing, except that you will never leave me, promise me that.'

'I would that I could, but who can count on the future? Are you free? Are you dependent on any one?'

'I am free in every sense of the word.'

'I congratulate you, and I rejoice for you, but alas! I cannot say as much; I know that at any moment I may be discovered, and torn from your arms.'

'You frighten me! Do you think this misfortune will come to us here?'

'No, unless I am seen by some one who knows me.'

'Are you afraid of being overtaken by the officer whom you abandoned at Rome?'

'Not in the least, he is my father-in-law, and I am sure he has not taken any steps to find out where I am; he is only too thankful to be rid of me. I acted in the mad manner you know of because he was going to put me into a convent, which would not have been to my taste. As for the rest, dear friend, do not ask me to tell it you; my history is, and must remain, a mysterious one.'

'I will respect your desire for secrecy, my angel; only love me, and let me love you, without any fear of the future troubling our present happiness.'

We spent three months at Parma in perfect felicity. Henriette had an Italian master, and while she was having her lessons, I had a conversation with the dressmaker, which convinced me that she was indeed my blood relation. I

Digitized by Microsoft®

gossiped with her concerning politics. 'Do the Parmesans like their new Spanish ruler?'

'Everything is upside down,' she said. 'Listen: last night Harlequin at the play was making us all die of laughing. Well, but our new Duke Philip had to hide his merriment behind his hat, for they say that an infant of Spain must not laugh on pain of being dishonoured at Madrid. Why, for three months no one has known in Parma what o'clock it is! The sun has gone mad, and goes to bed every day at a different hour. That is the result of a government regulation! I wish we had our Farnese back again, who let us eat when we were hungry.'

I agreed with her that a new government did wrong to interfere with old established customs.

Henriette's master was an Italian, one Valentin de la Haye. He said he was an engineer and professor of mathematics. I shall have occasion to speak of him again in these memoirs.

'I could,' he said to me once, 'have taught madame heraldry, geography, history, and the globes, but I find that she knows all these perfectly; she is most highly educated.'

The fatal hunchback.

One day while I was looking over some books in the French library, I made the acquaintance of a little hunchbacked French gentleman, whose conversation I found exceedingly witty and amusing. I may here remark that it is rare to meet a stupid hunchback; my experience of them has been the same in every country in the world. This particular one, whose name was Dubois-Chateleraux, was, as I have said, no exception to the rule; he was an expert engraver, and director of the Mint to the Infant Duke of Parma. I passed an hour with him, and invited him to visit us at our hotel, and from that day forth he became a frequent guest at our table.

My happiness was too perfect to last long, but I was, in a manner, the instrument of my own undoing, for if I had not

Digitized by Microsoft®

introduced the fatal hunchback to Henriette, our lot might have been different.

I wanted to take Henriette to the opera, for music was her passion. Yet she was afraid to be seen by people, so I took an out of the way box on the second row; but pretty women are soon found out everywhere. She looked over the visitors' list, and said she knew no one in it. She wore no rouge, and we had no light in the box. Dubois came in, but I did not present him. All the same, he came to see us next day. She offered him coffee, and refrained from sugar, though she always took it, *à la Française*. This was to put Dubois on a wrong scent. She made as if she enjoyed the bitter cup, and I laughed. The hunchback was very curious, and earnestly begged Henriette to go to court. She said she was too delicate to stand the fatigue. Then he asked us to supper at his house by ourselves. But when we arrived there the room was full. Henriette bit her lip, but all went off well.

Henriette and I were less careful after this; she really only feared the nobility. One day, outside the gate of Colorno, we met the duke and his spouse coming in. Their carriage was followed by another containing Dubois and M. Dutillot, the French minister, and our horses fell down just as we passed them, and he came to the side of our carriage and asked if madame had been much frightened. She merely inclined her head and we passed on, but the evil was done.

Threatenings of danger.

Next day Dubois came from the French minister with a request to be presented to the lady.

'Does he know me?' she said.

'No, madame,' said the hunchback, 'he does not.'

'Then what would he think of me if I received him? I am not an adventuress, and I cannot have the honour.' Dubois was silent.

The Court was now at Colorno, and was about to give a superb fête; the gardens of the palace were to be splendidly

Digitized by Microsoft®

illuminated and opened to the public, so that every one might promenade in them. Dubois had talked so much of this fête that the desire seized us to be present with the rest of the world. He went with us, and we took rooms at the inn at Colorno for a week. Towards the evening of the first day, as we were strolling in the gardens, we met the royal party, followed by their suite.

Henriette is saluted by the Minister of France at Colorno.

Madame de France, according to the usage of the Court at Versailles, saluted Henriette without stopping as we passed. Henriette courtesied. My eyes fell on a handsome young cavalier who was walking by the side of Don Louis, and who looked fixedly at my companion. By and by we met this same cavalier a second time; he bowed to us, and going up to Dubois spoke to him in a low voice; they stepped to one side and remained talking together for at least a quarter of an hour. As we were leaving the gardens this gentleman came up again, and after politely begging my pardon, asked Henriette if he had not the honour of her acquaintance.

'I do not remember ever having had the pleasure of seeing you,' she answered coldly.

'Enough, madame, I entreat you to forgive me.'

Dubois told us the gentleman, whose name was d'Antoine,[1] was an intimate friend of the Infant Don Louis, and that thinking he knew Henriette, he had begged Dubois to present him. The hunchback replied that Henriette's name was d'Arci, and that if he knew her he had no need of an introduction. This answer seemed to disconcert him a little.

Henriette seemed uneasy, and I asked her if her failure to recognise d'Antoine was not a pretence.

[1] The D'Antoine family came originally from Florence and settled in Marseilles, 1530. For five generations they were *conseillers de la cour des comptes.* Some members of the family were councillors to the Parliament of Provence, and it was probably in this capacity that this particular member possessed such an influence over Henriette, admitting that she was a spy, as has been supposed. She was possibly a native of Provence, at any rate she married and lived there after her parting from Casanova at Geneva.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'By no means,' she answered; 'I know his name, which is that of an illustrious family in Provence, but I have never seen him before to-day.'

I could see she was anxious, and we gave up our rooms and returned to Parma the next day. In the afternoon my servant brought me a letter, saying that the courier who delivered it was waiting for an answer in the antechamber.

'That letter troubles me,' I said to Henriette. She took it and read it. It ran as follows, and was addressed to M. de Farussi:—

M. d'Antoine.

'Will you grant me a few moments' interview, either at your house or at my house, or wherever it may please you to appoint? I must speak to you on a subject which will interest you deeply.—I have the honour to remain, Yours, etc. etc., D'ANTOINE.'

I sent back word that I would be in the ducal gardens at a certain hour, and there I found M. d'Antoine awaiting me.

'I was obliged,' said he, 'to ask you to meet me, as I could think of no other safe way of transmitting this letter to Madame d'Arci; it is of the greatest importance, and I beg you to forgive me for handing it you sealed. If you are really her friend the contents of the letter will interest you both. May I count on your giving it to her?'

'Yes, sir,' I answered, 'on my honour.'

With a heart full of misgiving I repeated to Henriette what M. d'Antoine had said; at the same time I gave her the letter. She read it attentively, but with visible emotion.

'My friend,' she said, 'you must not be hurt if I do not show you this letter; the honour of two families is at stake. I shall have to receive this M. d'Antoine, who says he is a relation of mine.'

'This then,' cried I, 'is the beginning of the end! Why did I ever let that wretched Dubois into the house?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You must trust me!' said she. 'M. d'Antoine knows all my affairs; he is an honest man, he will do nothing except by my consent. Still, my dearest, circumstances may occur, we may be forced to consider a separation as a prudential measure, and you must strengthen me in my resolve, if necessary. But trust me to take care of the portion of happiness fate has given me in you—to do my best to make it last.'

Henriette speaks of their approaching separation.

I obeyed her, but from that moment a touch of sadness began to enter into the quality of our love, and melancholy is fatal to love. Often we sat opposite each other for hours without speaking, and could not conceal the sighs that would come.

I followed her instructions exactly, and when M. d'Antoine arrived next day, withdrew to my room on the pretence of letters to write; but my door remained open, and I could see them both reflected in the mirror over my chimney-piece. They were together for six hours, writing and talking, but as I could not hear what they said, I suffered tortures!

As soon as the terrible d'Antoine had gone my beloved Henriette came to me.

'My friend, can we leave here to-morrow?'

'Good heavens! yes, we can do whatever you say we must; but where shall I take you?'

'Where you will, but we shall have to return here in fifteen days. I have given my word to be here to receive the reply to a letter I have written. It is not that I wish to leave from fear of violence, but because I cannot endure the place now.'

Farewells.

On the morrow we left, and went to Milan, where we remained for a fortnight, seeing no one but a tailor and a dressmaker. I made Henriette a farewell gift, and one which she valued highly: it was a cloth pelisse lined with beautiful lynx fur. She never questioned me as to the state of my exchequer, and I did not let her know how near it was to depletion. We had lived so extravagantly, that when we

Digitized by Microsoft®

returned to Parma I had only three or four hundred sequins[1] left.

The day after we got back she had another long conference with d'Antoine, during which our separation was definitely arranged; then she came to me, and told me we must part. For a long time we wept in silence.

'When must I leave you, O too dearly beloved one?'

'You must leave me as soon as we get to Geneva, where you will take me at once. Can you find me a trustworthy waiting-maid to-morrow, with whom I can travel till I reach my destination.'

They stay at Geneva, and Henriette leaves him.

We left Parma that night, and in five days arrived at Geneva, where we stayed at the Hôtel des Balances. The following day Henriette gave me a letter for M. Tronchin, the Genevese banker, who, when he had read it, handed me a thousand louis d'or, at the same time telling me he would furnish Henriette with a carriage and two responsible men. Word came to us in the evening that carriage and servants would be ready next day.

It was a terrible moment; we were rigid with grief, overcome by the most profound sorrow.

I broke the silence by telling her I would take Tronchin's carriage, and she must have mine, which was far more commodious.

'I consent,' she said, 'it will be a consolation to me to have something which was once yours.'

Saying this she put into my pocket five rolls of a hundred louis each, nor would she let me utter one word of protest.

'When once necessity has forced us apart, my only friend,' said she, 'do not seek for news of me, and if by chance we should ever meet, pretend not to know me.'

She departed at break of day with her maid, a lackey, and a courier. I followed her with my eyes until I could

[1] About three hundred and twenty pounds English money. A sequin was worth twenty-two francs.

Digitized by Microsoft®

no longer see the carriage, then I flung myself on my bed and wept till sleep mercifully came to my worn-out body.

Next day the postillion returned, bringing me a letter which contained the one sad word 'Adieu.'

On a window pane in my room I found these words, traced with the point of a diamond—

The writing on the pane.

'Thou wilt forget Henriette too.'

I received one more letter from her, while I was at Parma. It ran as follows:—

'I have been forced to leave you, my only friend, but do not add to your grief by thinking of mine. Let us not waste time deploring our fate, let us rather imagine we have had an agreeable dream, and surely never did dream so delicious last so long! We can boast that we were perfectly happy for three whole months; how many mortals can say as much? Let us not forget each other, though we must never meet again. I know it will please you to hear that I have put my affairs in order, and that for the rest of my life I shall be as happy as it is possible for me to be, away from you. I do not even know who you are, but there is no one in the world so familiar with your every thought as I am. I shall never have another lover in my life, but in this you must not imitate me. I hope that you will love again, and that your good genius will help you to find another Henriette. Adieu, adieu.'

I did see her again fifteen years after.

I should certainly have died of grief and inanition, for I could not touch food, had not Henriette's tutor, De la Haye, forced his way into my room. He was alarmed at my appearance, and with reason, and he succeeded in persuading me to take some broth. He spent the remainder of the evening with me, talking about the life to come, the vanity of this world, and the wickedness of shortening the life which God has allotted us. I listened without

Digitized by Microsoft®

replying, but I listened, and he was content with this small advantage.

From that moment he gained the most extraordinary ascendency over me; he never left me except for one hour in the morning, when he went to his devotions, and so strong was his influence that in a few weeks he had transformed me into almost as fervent a bigot as himself! I firmly believe that trouble and sickness had weakened my mind, and that I was incapable of reasoning. Be this as it may, in a few weeks I renounced all my former opinions, and firmly resolved to lead a totally different life.

He often spoke to me of a certain Baron Bavois of Lausanne, who was one of his converts, and to whom he was deeply attached.

This beloved proselyte, who was only twenty-five years old, had been abandoned by his family because of his change of religion: they were strict Calvinists. He had but seven sequins a month to live on, and without De la Haye's assistance would have been obliged to return to Lausanne. I was so touched by the virtue of this young martyr, who had given up everything to save his soul, that I wrote the most pathetic letters about my Tartufe and his pupil to my three good friends in Venice. I succeeded in communicating my enthusiasm to them, and M. de Bragadin bade me to return to Venice with De la Haye, who could live in his palace, saying at the same time that he would also undertake to find suitable employment for Bavois. This letter brought joy to the heart of De la Haye, and he then and there decided that he should go to Modena to meet his neophyte, and that I should return to Venice, where they would both join me as soon as possible.

My dear old friends received me with open arms. An apartment was arranged for De la Haye in the de Bragadin palace, and two nice rooms were taken for Bavois in the immediate neighbourhood; these preparations completed we waited impatiently the arrival of the two elect.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He leads an amended life for a time.

My friends were naturally vastly and agreeably surprised at the prodigious change which had taken place in me. Every day I went to Mass, often to other services. I was never seen at the Casinos, and only at such cafés as were frequented by pious and prudent personages. I paid all my debts without asking help from M. de Bragadin; in short, my whole mode of life was so edifying, they could only bless the mysterious ways of Providence.

At the beginning of May De la Haye arrived with the son of his soul, as he called him. The Baron Bavois was very different from what I had expected in character and appearance. He was of medium height, handsome, with beautiful teeth and long fair hair carefully dressed and highly scented. He spoke well and sensibly, and seemed to be of unalterable good humour. I took him to his rooms, where he embraced me, and thanked me for all my goodness to him. I asked him how he intended to pass his time at Venice until some occupation was found for him.

'I hope,' said he, 'that we shall amuse ourselves together, for I fancy we must have many tastes in common.'

It did not take me long to make his acquaintance, and find out what those said tastes were. In less than eight days I knew him thoroughly. He loved women, wine, and play: religion he had none, and as he was no hypocrite he made no secret of it.

'But how,' I asked him, 'being what you are, did you impose upon De la Haye?'

'God forbid that I should impose upon any one. De la Haye knows quite well what my opinions are, but he has fallen in love with my soul, and intends to save it *malgré moi*. He has certainly done me good, and I am grateful to him; for the rest he never worries me with doctrines or dissertations on my salvation, which I leave to God, who, like a kind, good Father, can manage that for me without his interference. We quite understand one another, and are very good friends.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

The Jesuit De la Haye.

The amusing part of it was, that while I was studying Bavois, he, unconsciously, was recalling me to my senses, and I was beginning to blush at having been the dupe of a Jesuit, who, in spite of his rôle of good Christian, was an out and out humbug. He cared but for his own ease, and having reached an age when dissipation had lost its charm, he fascinated my simple friends. He spoke to them but of God, angels, and eternal glory; they were convinced that he was the hermit who had taught me the cabbala, and were distressed because I forbade them through the oracle itself ever to speak of my science to De la Haye. In this I was well inspired, for in less than three weeks the wily fox had gained such an influence over them that he fancied he no longer needed my recommendations. He had frequent interviews with them from which I was excluded, and was presented to many families into which I was not admitted. He so far presumed on his importance as to actually reprimand me once for passing the night away from home. As soon as I was alone with him I told him that he must never permit himself such a liberty again, for I would punish him in a way he little expected. A few days after this the oracle warned my friends never to do anything which *Valentine* (the cabbalistic name of De la Haye) might suggest to them without first consulting me as to its expediency.

Bavois entered the service of the French ambassador, which put an end to our till then frequent intercourse. The patricians and their families are not allowed to have anything to do with the households of the ministers of other countries. At the beginning of the carnival of 1750, I won three thousand ducats in a lottery. Besides this I had been winning heavily all the winter, so I felt I could not choose a better moment for making my long-contemplated visit to France. My friend Baletti, the actor, had an engagement at the Italian theatre in Paris, where he was to dance, and play young lovers' parts. He left Venice before I did, but I was to join him at Reggio,

Digitized by Microsoft®

on the first of June. I was well equipped, with plenty of money, and my success in France only depended on my own conduct.

I arrived at Lyons without any striking adventures. There I made the acquaintance of M. de Rochebaron, and at his house I met a person who obtained for me the favour of admission into the Society of Freemasons. Some months later, in Paris, I became Companion, and then Master of the Order.

He becomes a member of the Order of Freemasons.

A young man of good family, who wishes to travel and know the world, especially what is called the 'great world,' and who would avoid ever being placed in a position of inferiority, should be initiated in Freemasonry, if only to know superficially what Freemasonry is. It is a benevolent institution, which in certain times and certain places has been made subversive to good order, and the pretext for criminal actions. But, good God! what system has not been abused and perverted? Every man of any importance, whose social existence is marked by merit, knowledge, or fortune, can be a mason, and many are. How can one suppose that such men meet to conspire and plot against the well-being of governments, especially as they are bound by oath not to discuss religion or politics? Yet sovereigns think they are justified in proscribing, and Popes in excommunicating, them!

Nothing pleased me so much in France as the fine roads, the cleanliness of the inns, the excellent beds, the good food, and the promptitude with which one was served. In my time no one in France knew how to overcharge; it was a paradise for foreigners. It is true that the most odious acts of despotism, such as *lettres de cachet*, were sometimes committed, but it was kingly despotism. France is now under the despotism of the people. Is she any happier, I wonder?

We left Lyons by diligence, and it took us eight days to get to Paris. Baletti, whose family lived there, had informed them of the probable time of our arrival. We dined at Fontainebleau, and when about two leagues from that city

Silvia Baletti, the virtuous actress.

Digitized by Microsoft®

we saw a berline coming towards us; it contained Baletti's mother, the celebrated Silvia.[1] She welcomed me warmly, and invited me to sup at her house that night; there I met her husband Mario. Mario and Silvia were the names Monsieur and Madame Baletti bore in their most celebrated rôles: it was the custom in France in those days to call Italian actors after their principal characters. 'Good morning, Mr. Harlequin; Good morning, Mr. Pantaloon'—that was the way to salute those who represented these personages.

Silvia was the idol of the French, and her talent ensured the success of the comedies which were written for her, particularly those of Marivaux. Without her these comedies would never have come down to posterity, and there has never been an actress capable of replacing her. No other actress united all the gifts which Silvia possessed, action, voice, wit, physiognomy, and knowledge of the human heart. Her life was blameless. She wished to have friends, not lovers. She was called *respectable*, a title which at that period would have rendered any other woman of her calling ridiculous.

[1] Gianetta Rosa Benozzi, better known as Silvia, was a popular actress, particularly esteemed by the Parisians. She was born at Toulouse about 1701; she married a second-rate actor, Baletti, by whom she had several children. She was distinguished among her contemporaries for her conjugal fidelity, and died universally regretted in 1758.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER X

FIRST VISIT TO PARIS

Like all foreigners of my time I was anxious to see the Palais Royal. I visited it the first morning after my arrival. The rather fine garden of this famous place was surrounded with high houses, the paths were bordered with tall trees, people walked about by the fountains, or stopped at the stalls to buy scent, tooth-picks, playthings, or the latest pamphlet. Men and women were taking their breakfast on the pavement before the cafés; I seated myself at a small table and ordered chocolate, which was abominable, although served in a superb silver cup. I asked the waiter if the coffee was better?

The Palais Royal.

'Excellent,' he answered. 'I made it myself yesterday.'

I was not surprised after this to find it worse than the chocolate.

I asked if there was any news. He replied that the dauphiness had given birth to a son, whereupon an abbé seated at the next table to me said, 'Nonsense, it is a daughter.' A third person came up and said, 'I have just come from Versailles, and it is neither son nor daughter.' He then observed that I must be a foreigner. I was Italian, I said, and he began to talk about the court, the town, and the theatres, and wound up by offering to show me over Paris.

I thanked him, and getting up walked away. The abbé joined me, and told me the names of the well-known people we met. We left the Palais Royal by the big gate, and came upon a crowd of people round a shop which bore the sign of 'The Civet Cat.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What is going on here?' I asked.

'All these people are waiting to have their snuff-boxes filled up.'

'Is it the only tobacconist's in the city?'

'Certainly not, but since the Duchesse de Chartres made it the fashion, no one will buy snuff anywhere else. She stopped her carriage here two or three times last week; that was enough to make it the rage. The good people of Paris are like that, the gods whom they adore are novelty and fashion. But it was really a ruse on her part. She wanted to make the fortune of this young bride, who sells the tobacco, and in whom she is interested. The king was coming back from hunting the other day, and suddenly fancied a glass of ratafia. He stopped at a little *cabaret* near the Neuilly barrier, and having taken one glass, asked for a second and a third, declaring it was the best ratafia he had ever tasted. Now the most brilliant equipages succeed each other at the door of that poor *cabaret*; the owner has grown rich, and is building a splendid house in the place of the old one.'

'It seems to me,' said I, 'that this appreciation of the king's judgment is a proof of the nation's affection.'

'Foreigners might be tempted to think so, those among us who reflect know it is only glitter and gilt. When the king comes to Paris every one cries out *Vive le roi!* because some one, a police agent probably, gives the signal, but the king himself knows what such cries are worth. He is not at his ease in Paris, and is far happier at Versailles surrounded by his five-and-twenty thousand soldiers, who would protect him against the fury of those same people should they one day take it into their heads to cry out *Meure le roi!* The French have never loved their kings, except Saint Louis, Louis Douze, and the great and good Henri Quatre.'

Chatting in this way, we arrived at Silvia's door, where we separated. I found the amiable actress in the midst of friends. She presented me to every one in turn.

The name of Crébillon struck me.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What, sir!' said I, 'I am indeed fortunate. For eight years you have charmed me, and I have longed to know you, will you deign to listen to me for a moment?' And I recited to him his beautiful tirade from *Zénobie et Radamiste*, which I had translated into Italian blank verse. He listened with evident delight, for he understood Italian as well as his own language, and when I had finished he recited the same scene in French. He was at this time eighty years old, a perfect Colossus, taller than I by three inches; he ate and drank well, talked amusingly, and was celebrated for his *bons mots*; yet he rarely went out, and received few people, as he was unhappy without his pipe, and the twenty odd cats who were his constant companions. Indeed he looked rather like a large cat himself, or a lion, which is much the same thing. He kept an old housekeeper, a cook, and a man-servant. His housekeeper managed everything for him, even his money, and gave him no account. He held the office of Royal Censor, and she read aloud the works submitted to him, stopping when she came to a passage which she thought merited his disapprobation; sometimes they disagreed on these passages, and then their disputes were most laughable. 'Come back next week, we have not had time to examine your manuscript,' I once heard her say to an author.

He meets Crébillon.

For a year I went to his house three times a week, and I learned from him all the French I know, but even he could not teach me to get rid of my Italian way of turning a phrase. I am quick enough to see this trick in others, but I cannot cure myself of it.

Crébillon had paid court to Louis Quinze for fifteen years, and he told me many a curious anecdote about him. He said the much talked of Siamese ambassadors were impostors subsidized by Madame de Maintenon; he also told me that he had never finished his tragedy of *Cromwell*, because the king had desired him not to employ his pen on such a scoundrel.

Catilina he considered the worst of his plays; he could only have made it good, he said, by showing Cæsar as a young man,

Digitized by Microsoft®

which would have been as ridiculous as to put Medea on the stage before she knew Jason. He praised Voltaire[1] highly, but accused him of plagiarism; he said he had stolen the entire scene of the Senate from him. Voltaire was, according to him, a born historian, but he falsified history by filling it with tales and anecdotes, so as to make it interesting. According to Crébillon, the man in the iron mask was a myth; he said that Louis Quatorze with his own lips had assured him of this.

Foreigners sometimes find Paris dull, for without letters and introductions one can go nowhere. I was fortunate in possessing good introductions, and in less than fifteen days I had the *entrée* to the most amusing society in the city.

Mademoiselle Le Fel and her children.

I was introduced to Mlle. Le Fel, the popular actress and member of the Royal Academy of Music. When I paid my respects to her at her house I found her playing with three charming children.

'I adore them,' she said.

'They deserve your affection,' said I, 'for they are very beautiful, though very much unlike each other.'

'No wonder,' she said calmly. 'The eldest is the son of the Duc d'Anneci, the second is the son of the Comte d'Egmont, and the third owes his being to M. de Maisonrouge, who has just married Mlle. de Romainville.'

'I beg your pardon,' said I; 'I thought that you were their mother.'

'So I am.'

I was vexed at having made such a stupid mistake. I was new to Paris and Parisian ways. But there was a great deal of this sort of thing in a certain class. Two great lords, Boufflers and Luxembourg, had changed wives in all good fellowship, and the little Boufflers were called Luxembourgs, and the little Luxembourgs bore the name of Boufflers. The descendants of these triplets are still so known in France.

[1] A deep and bitter rivalry existed between these two writers. Crébillon accused Voltaire of stealing his ideas; and as a matter of fact his tragedy *Les Enfants de Brutus* was written before Voltaire's *Brutus*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

People who knew the secret laughed, and the world went round the sun as usual.

I went to see *Les Fêtes Vénitiennes* at the opera. They had transposed the ducal palace and the clock tower, and this technical error made me laugh. But, being a Venetian, I laughed still more to see the Doge and twelve of the Council dance a *passecaille* in comic togas. Then came in a tall dancer, wearing a mask and an enormous black perruque which reached halfway down to his waist. My old friend who was with me murmured in tones of veneration, 'It is the inimitable Duprès.'[1] He advanced with measured steps to the middle of the stage, raised his arms, waved them about gracefully, moved his feet with lightness and precision, cut a few capers, pirouetted, and disappeared like a breath of wind. The whole performance lasted about a minute, and was greeted with a storm of applause. I asked my friend the reason of this enthusiasm.

'We applaud the grace of Duprès, and the divine harmony of his movements. He is over sixty, and those who saw him forty years ago say he is better now than then. What can you have more perfect than perfection? Duprès's dancing is perfect, he always does the same thing, and every day we think we see it for the first time.'

La Camargo.

Dupres was succeeded by the famous Camargo,[2] who was also, I was told, over sixty; yet they say Parisians are inconstant! She bounded on the stage like a fury, leaping from right to left, executing the most astounding movements. Of the two I preferred Duprès.

[1] Affectionately spoken of by his admirers as the great Duprès. He was one of the most celebrated dancers of the eighteenth century. He was very tall, handsome, and graceful. His most renowned pupil was Gaëtan Vestris.

[2] This is another of the many inaccuracies of Casanova, and is probably a piece of the spiteful gossip of the day. Marie Anne Cappi was born in Brussels in 1710, therefore at the time spoken of by Casanova she must have been under forty. Her father was a dancing and music master. Her grandfather had married into the noble Spanish family of Camargo, under which name she became renowned. She shone first at Brussels, then at Rouen, then at Paris. She left the stage in 1757, and died in 1777.

Digitized by Microsoft®

All the Italian actors then in Paris received me with kindness, and entertained me sumptuously. The richest of them was Pantaloon, who was known to be a usurer. He was the father of two charming daughters, Coraline and Camille. Coraline was the favourite of the Prince of Monaco, the son of the Duc de Valentinois; and Camille was in love with the Comte de Melfort,[1] the friend of the Duchesse de Chartres, since become Duchesse d'Orleans, by the death of her father-in-law.

Coraline was prettier than Camille, but not so lively. I paid my court to her at odd times, as became a man of no importance. Sometimes when I was there the prince would arrive. At first I used to withdraw discreetly when he appeared, but after a time I was asked to remain, and discovered that a prince is often much bored by a *tête-à-tête* with his mistress. We would sometimes sup together, and then his rôle was to listen, and mine to amuse.

The prince was always most amiable to me. One morning when I went in, he said: 'Ah! I am glad to see you, I promised the Duchesse de Rufé[2] to present you to her; come, we will go there at once.'

What, another duchess! I was in luck. We got into a *devil*, as the then fashionable carriage was called, and arrived at the duchess's house at eleven o'clock in the morning.

Reader, if I gave you a faithful picture of this terrible woman, you would be horrified. Imagine an old, old face, like a death's-head, plastered with rouge, set on a lean figure, all skin and bone, the result of the accumulation of sixty winters. The hideous hag bade me sit on the sofa beside her, and paid me the most outrageous compliments. The smell of musk nearly made me sick. The prince, pretending he had business elsewhere, left us alone, and then her attentions became so pressing, that, snatching up my hat, I incontinently fled, trembling lest the porter should refuse to open the door to me.

An exhibition was held at the Louvre in the month of

[1] Louis Hector Drummond of Melfort, generally supposed to be the lover of Madame de Chartres, was of English origin.

[2] Rufé is unknown as a title. There *was* a Duchesse de *Rufec.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

August, and all the painters of the Royal Academy exposed their pictures; as I saw no battle-piece among them, I thought of sending for my brother. Parosselli, the only painter of battle-pieces France possessed, was dead, and I thought there was a chance for François.[1] He did not come, however, till the beginning of the following year.

His brother the painter of battle-pieces.

I was wandering about the apartments at Fontainebleau one day, when I saw some ten or twelve women coming towards me. They walked so badly, leaning forward, as though at each step they must fall on their faces, that my curiosity was aroused. I asked who they were, and was told they were the queen's ladies-in-waiting, and that they walked in that manner because the heels of their shoes were six inches high. I followed them into a superb room, where several courtiers were assembled round an immense table, on which a place was laid for one person only. In a few minutes the Queen of France came in, very simply dressed, with no rouge on, her head covered with a great cap: she looked old and devout. She sat down to table, and two nuns presented to her a plate of fresh butter, for which she thanked them graciously. The courtiers ranged themselves in a semicircle ten steps away from the table, and I stood quietly among them. Her Majesty began to eat, keeping her eyes fixed on her plate; by and by, finding a dish to her taste, she asked for a second helping.

'M. de Löwendal!'[2] she said.

[1] The brother here alluded to is Francesco, better known as François Casanova, who obtained considerable renown as a painter. On his first visit to Paris he met with no recognition, but after studying with Dietrici in Dresden he returned to Paris to study under Parrocel, after which he was more successful. Madame Vanloo was exceedingly kind to him, and it was mainly owing to her that he obtained a footing. His pictures were of a certain merit, and sold quickly. The Prince de Condé purchased the principal ones, several of which eventually found their way into the Louvre. Catherine of Russia commissioned him to paint her representations of her victories over the Turks. He was very extravagant, and always in money difficulties. He died at Brühl in 1805 before finishing his last work, which was to represent the inauguration of the Hôtel des Invalides by Louis XIV.

[2] Ulric Frederick Woldemar, Comte de Löwendal, born at Hamburg, 1700. His grandfather was the natural son of Frederick III. of Denmark. He began

Digitized by Microsoft®

A superb-looking man advanced, and made a low bow.

'Madame?'

'I think that this is fricasseed chicken?'

'I also am of that opinion, madame.'

After this remark, made in all gravity, the marshal stepped backwards to his place, and the queen continued to eat in silence. Then she returned to her apartments. I thought that if that was a sample of her meals, I was thankful I was not her guest.

I was glad to have seen the famous victor of Berg-op-Zoom, but it pained me that a great man should be obliged to pronounce sentence on a fricasseed chicken, as if it had been a question of state.

He meets an old acquaintance at Fontainebleau.

One morning, when I was thus standing in the hedge of courtiers, I saw a Venetian acquaintance, Madame Querini. She was leaning on the arm of the Marquis of Saint Simon, first gentleman of the Prince of Condé's household.

'Madame Querini at Fontainebleau!' I said, surprised.

'You here, Casanova! One remembers Queen Elizabeth's saying, "The poor we have always with us!"'

Her insolence was repaid her in full. The king's remark about her, which she must have heard as he passed with Richelieu, was, 'We can do better than that here in the way of looks!'

Poor Juliette Querini! She very nearly got hold of Saint Simon, who admired her, but she deceived him with false references and he never forgave her.

About this time the dauphiness gave birth to the Duke of Burgundy, and the rejoicings which took place seem to me incredible, when I look back on them to-day and see what the

his career as a soldier at the age of thirteen, and distinguished himself in Sicily and in the service of the King of Poland. He then went to Russia, and fought against the Swedes in Finland. At the instigation of his friend, Maurice de Saxe, he accepted the grade of lieutenant-general in the French Army, was present at Fontenoy, and took the supposed impregnable town of Berg-op-Zoom. This valiant soldier, after gaining the admiration of the whole world by his brilliant feat of arms, died in 1755 of gangrene in the feet, from chilblains.

Digitized by Microsoft®

same nation has done with its king. The nation wishes to be free, and its ambition is a noble one, for man is not made to be a slave to the will of another man; but to what can this revolution tend, undertaken by such a frivolous, pleasure-seeking, excitable nation as the French? Time alone will show.

I had frequent occasion to see the king, sometimes on his way to or from Mass, sometimes in the corridors of one or other of his palaces. He had a fine head, and bore himself with dignity and grace. No painter has ever done justice to this magnificent head, or to its benevolent expression. The king's beauty and grace compelled admiration. When I first saw him I thought he was the very ideal of majesty, and I did not doubt but that Madame de Pompadour was really in love with him; perhaps I was mistaken. His haughtiness was unnatural, it had been instilled in him by education, and now he could not lay it aside. When an ambassador presented any one to him, he made not the slightest sign of recognition, and the person presented would withdraw feeling that it was probable the king had *seen him*, but that was all. He was exceedingly polite to women, even to his mistresses, in public, and would disgrace any one who was wanting in respect towards them. More strongly than any one else, he possessed that royal virtue, dissimulation. He could keep a secret faithfully, and was delighted when he thought he knew something that no one else knew. The Chevalier d'Eon [1] was an example of this, for the king alone knew, and always had known, that she was a woman: the whole quarrel which the pretended Chevalier

[1] For years this strange person excited the curiosity of the French and English Courts on account of the mystery of his sex. He had written several works on politics and finance which gained him the goodwill of the Prince de Conti, who sent him on a mission to Russia. He was then dressed as a woman, and became reader to the Empress Elizabeth. He returned to France in the character of a captain of dragoons, and served with distinction in several actions. He was then appointed secretary to the Duc de Nivernois, ambassador to London in 1762, but offended the powers of the Foreign Office, who accused him of being a spy, and insisted on his withdrawal. He was replaced by the Comte de Guerchy, his avowed enemy, and was arrested on suspicion of poisoning him. The king found him guilty, and exiled him, though he granted him a

Digitized by Microsoft®

had with the Foreign Office was a comedy, which the King encouraged for his own amusement. Louis Quinze was a good man, and would have been a good king, had he not been surrounded by flatterers; as it was, he grew to consider himself a kind of god, with the saddest results for himself and his people.

Paris acquaintances.

I met at the Duchesse de Fulvie's Mlle. Gaussin, who was generally called Lolotte.[1] She was the mistress of Lord Albemarle, the English ambassador, a noble, generous, and learned man. It was he who begged his mistress not to praise the beauty of the stars, as it was impossible for him to give her one. If Lord Albemarle had been ambassador at the time of the rupture between France and England, he would have arranged matters so that the unfortunate war which lost Canada to France would not have taken place.

As for his mistress, Lolotte, there was only one opinion about her, and that was favourable. The first houses in France were open to her. She was received on a footing of equality by the greatest ladies in the land. She had left her mother, at the age of thirteen, to live with Lord Albemarle; she had children by him, whom he recognised as his, and she died Countess d'Erouville.

I also made the acquaintance of a Venetian lady, widow of the English knight, Sir Thomas Winne. She had just returned from London, where she had been to assure the inheritance of her children, who would have lost their rights had they not declared themselves to be of the Anglican religion. She was

pension. On the accession of Louis XVI., d'Eon returned to France, and presented himself at Versailles in the uniform of an officer of dragoons. The queen, however, requested him to dress as a woman, and from that time he always signed himself '*la chevalière.*' In 1784 he went back to London. George III. granted him a pension, which seems to lend colour to the allegation that he served both countries impartially. Several portraits of him are extant, some representing him as a comely young woman in cap and furbelows, others as a martial youth in armour. It was only at his death the secret of his sex was discovered. He was a man.

[1] Walpole says that 'she sold him to the French Court.' Bauchamont says that 'she earned thereby a pension of 12,000 francs.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

returning to Venice with her eldest daughter, a lovely girl of twelve, who afterwards married Comte de Rosenburg, ambassador to Venice from the court of Maria Theresa. This lady still lives at Venice, and is renowned for her social virtues.

He meets d'Alembert in Paris.

I met d'Alembert at Madame de Graffigny's.[1] The great philosopher's social secret was never to appear more learned than the society in which he found himself, and of making those he talked with seem as witty as himself. He was the most modest man I ever knew. Old M. de Fontenelle, whom I also knew, passed for having been the lover of Madame de Tencin; scandal said that d'Alembert was the result of their intimacy, and that le Rond[2] was only his foster father. On the occasion of my second visit to Paris, I looked forward to visiting de Fontenelle, but he died fifteen days after my arrival, in the beginning of the year 1757. On my third visit I was counting on the pleasure of seeing d'Alembert, but he also died fifteen days after my arrival, in 1783. To-day I feel that I have seen Paris and France for the last time. The popular effervescence there has disgusted me, and I am too old to hope to see it calm down.

One morning I was told that the room next to mine had been taken by two young Italians, brother and sister, newly arrived in Paris, very handsome, but badly equipped, and apparently poor. I thought, being a fellow-countryman, I would see if I could be of any use to them, so I went to their door and knocked. A youth of about eighteen appeared in answer to my summons.

[1] Madame de Graffigny, authoress of *Lettres d'une Péruvienne.*

[2] As regards the parentage of d'Alembert, Casanova is curiously confused, and with his usual fervent imagination creates a father for him out of the place where he was found, and from which he took his surname (which he afterwards changed to d'Alembert), the steps of the Chapel of St. Jean le Rond near Notre Dame. He was a son of a commissioner of artillery named Destouches and the nun Tencin. It was his mother who abandoned him, for which he never forgave her, and always considered the good woman who picked him up as his real parent. She was the wife of a glazier, and Destouches, who was not so hard-hearted as Madame de Tencin, made his son a good allowance, which enabled him to be decently educated.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I come,' said I, 'in the quality of neighbour and compatriot to offer you my services.'

There was a mattress on the floor, on which probably the youth slept, and at the end of the room a curtained alcove, in which I imagined his sister to be. A voice from behind the curtain replied to my repeated excuses, that if I would allow her to dress she would return my visit in my room. A quarter of an hour after a very beautiful girl appeared, and made her explanations in a naïve and dignified manner.

'I must find a cheaper lodging,' she said, 'for I have only six francs left.'

I asked her what letters of recommendation she had. She showed me seven or eight certificates of morality and indigence, and a passport.

'Do you know any one in Paris, any influential person?'

'No one. You are the first person I have spoken to in France.'

'Give me your papers, I will see what I can do. In the meantime do me the favour of borrowing these two louis.'

Mademoiselle Vesian.

Mlle. Vesian was a brunette, about sixteen years old; she had beautiful eyes, a beautiful figure, a fresh complexion, and withal an air of simplicity and dignity which inspired respect. I thought it my duty to give her some advice, telling her to be on her guard against persons who would assuredly try to insinuate themselves in her good graces. The following day, she and her brother dined with me, and after dinner I took her to the Italian theatre. As I was engaged to supper with Silvia, I was forced to leave them after the play, but we arranged to meet at my rooms at eleven o'clock. When I got home, I saw an elegant carriage waiting at the door. I asked who it belonged to. I was told it belonged to a young man of fashion who had supped with Mlle. Vesian.

'She has lost no time,' I thought, and retired, somewhat dispiritedly, to bed.

The next morning the brother came to me and told me that

Digitized by Microsoft®

he had been turned out of his sister's room, for the young lord who had supped with her on the night before was paying her a visit.

'Quite so!' I said.

'He is rich and handsome,' he said. 'He wants to take us to Versailles, and he has promised to find me employment.'

Later in the day I received a note from the sister, returning me the money I had lent her, and telling me that the Comte de Narbonne was interested in her, and would see that she and her brother were well provided for.

'A second Lucy of Paséan,' I said to myself. 'I need not have been so careful; and I foresee this count won't make her happy.'

I asked about Narbonne at the theatre where I went, and heard he was a libertine, heavily in debt. I tried to make his acquaintance, but failed, and in a week or so was beginning to forget her, when a message came to me asking me to go to her at once. I found her much cast down; she had evidently been weeping.

He becomes her friend and adviser.

'Oh, why did I not rely upon you!' she exclaimed. 'Had I only consulted you I should not now be in this plight! After you left me at the theatre that night, a handsome young man came and sat beside me; he asked me a few questions, and I told him what I told you. I said you had promised to try and help us; he answered that *he* had no need to *try*, he could help us at once. I believed him, I trusted him, and the villain has deceived me. He told me he would take me to the house of a respectable woman at Versailles, but that it would be better for my brother to remain in Paris. He gave me two louis and a gold watch; I thought I could accept them as he showed so much interest in me, but I noticed that the woman to whose house he took me did not seem to be as respectable as he had given me to understand she was. I spent a week there, without anything being definitely arranged. He came to see me whenever he chose, and whenever I suggested a permanent arrangement he replied by saying, "To-morrow, to-morrow."

Digitized by Microsoft®

Finally, this morning the woman told me he had gone to the country, and that a *fiacre* would take me back to Paris, where he would see me on his return. She added that I must return her the watch, as the Comte de Narbonne had forgotten to pay for it. I returned it without a word, and making a packet of my belongings, I left the house.'

Narbonne's infamous behaviour made me so angry that, had I known where to find him, I would have gone there and then and punished him. I consoled the poor girl as well as I could, taking care not to ask any details as to what had taken place between them. I could guess that only too well. I promised to be her friend, and she suddenly asked me if I had anything particular to do that day.

'No, my dear,' I said, divining her intention. 'Where is your brother?'

'What does he matter?'

'He matters very much. Think, my dear Vesian! You want to make Narbonne ashamed of his conduct: if he knew that you went off, the very day he dismissed you, with another man he would justify his conduct. No, we will take your brother, and go and dine in the country at the Gros Cailloux. Here comes Baletti, we will take him too.'

After the repast, Baletti asked Mlle. Vesian if she had any talent for dancing, as he might perhaps persuade Lani to engage her in the *corps de ballet*. There seemed to be no other occupation open to her, unless she would go as a *femme de chambre* to some great lady.

'It will not be long before I see you covered with diamonds,' he hinted.

'He thinks I shall pick up some great lord,' she said, after he had left. 'May be, but I shall take care to choose the very oldest lord I can find.'

'Bravo, my dear; only take care you don't make the old lord jealous.'

It was decided at once, and the next day she began her lessons with Baletti. She was admitted to the opera, but only

Digitized by Microsoft®

remained there a few months. A wealthy man, the Comte de Tressan, or Tréan, became interested in her, and took her away from the theatre. She remained with him until his death, and I hear she is now living in Paris. I often met her, covered with diamonds and driving in a magnificent carriage, and if I have permitted myself to relate her somewhat insignificant history, it was with a view of showing how quickly in those days a pretty girl could turn her beauty to account.

The story of O-Morphi.

Another young woman whose story is interesting, and edifying at the same time, was Hélène O-Morphi,[1] sister of the Flemish actress of that name. When I first knew her she was an untidy little wretch, about thirteen, who ran errands and waited on her sister, and slept in a cupboard on a straw mattress covered with an old curtain. One day when waiting the return of her sister I amused myself talking to the child, and I then noticed for the first time that beneath the rags and the dirt and the tangled hair was the most beautiful face

[1] O'Morphi was a low-class actress, daughter of a secondhand-clothes' merchant and cobbler, of Irish extraction, as her name indicates. There were five sisters, who all led doubtful lives. Three of them succeeded each other in the king's affections. The third, Louise, not *Hélène*, was brought to the king's notice by Richelieu or St. Quintin, or it may have been Boucher, to whom she sat as a model, and who was *perhaps* the artist alluded to in the text. Louis was very devoted to her, and loaded her with jewels. A child was born in 1754, after which Louise, or, as she was generally called, 'la Morphise,' made her appearance in public. Aided by d'Argenson and the Maréchale d'Estrées, she tried to supplant the Pompadour, and spoke most imprudently of her to the king, who, divining that she had been prompted, asked who her instigators were. D'Estrées was exiled. It is possible that Madame de Valentinois was in the conspiracy. A husband was found for la Morphise in the person of Vincent de Beaufranchet d'Ayat. The king gave her a *dot* of 200,000 francs and a magnificent trousseau. In the *acte de mariage*, November 1755, the bride is described as Louise Morphy or Boisfailly, daughter of Lady Marguerite Igny, and *Messire* Daniel Morphy or Boisfailly, Irish gentleman. Madame de Beaufranchet had two children by her husband, who was killed in action. She afterwards married M. le Normand, a relation of the Pompadour's husband. During the Reign of Terror la Morphise was arrested and confined in Sainte Pélagie. On her release she married for the third time. The happy man was Louis Philip Dumont, deputy of Calvados, who was thirty-three and she sixty. She was divorced shortly afterwards, and died in 1815.

Digitized by Microsoft®

and body imaginable. She was fair, with perfect features and large blue eyes. I was so impressed with her appearance that I commissioned a German artist of my acquaintance to paint her portrait. The picture was charming; I wrote under it *O-Morphi*, a word not very musical, but none the less Greek, and signifying beautiful. Who can divine the secret ways of fate? I lent this portrait to a friend, who took it to Versailles; there it was seen by M. de Saint-Quintin, who showed it to His Most Christian Majesty. The king was, as every one knows, a connoisseur. He was so pleased with the portrait that he expressed a desire to compare it with the original. The complaisant Saint-Quintin undertook to arrange the meeting.

A proposition was made to the elder sister, who immediately set to work to wash and dress Hélène. Two or three days later they started for Versailles, where they were received by a valet, who conducted them to a small pavilion in the park. After waiting some time, the king appeared alone and unattended. He asked the little O-Morphi if she was Greek, drew the portrait from his pocket, and declared he was more than satisfied with the resemblance.

Hélène, who was watching his face attentively, began to smile. Thereupon Louis seated her on his knee, and asked: 'What are you laughing at, my child?'

'Because you are as like a six-franc piece as two drops of water.'

The naïveté of this remark amused the king, and he asked her if she would care to remain at Versailles.

'If my sister will let me.'

The good sister hastened to express her loyal acquiescence, and by and by Saint-Quintin appeared, and after giving the actress a thousand louis for herself, and fifty for the portrait-painter, took the little one away.

The young O-Morphi pleased the king as much with her simplicity and pretty ways as with her beauty. He placed her in the Parc-aux-Cerfs, where no one but a few privileged court

Digitized by Microsoft®

ladies were allowed to enter. At the end of a year Hélène presented him with a son.[1] What became of him I know not, he went the way of so many others; for as long as Queen Marie lived no one knew the fate of the natural children of Louis Quinze.

Hélène remained in the Parc-aux-Cerfs about three years, when she fell into disgrace owing to the spite of Madame de Valentinois, the sister-in-law of the Prince of Monaco. This lady told her that if she wanted to make the king laugh she must ask him how he treated his old wife. Too simple to see the trap, poor Hélène fell into it, and put this impertinent question to her royal lover, who glared at her angrily, and said, 'Who told you to ask me that?'

Her disgrace.

Poor O-Morphi flung herself at his feet and told him the whole truth. He left the room, and never saw her again. He gave her a dowry of a hundred thousand francs, and she married a Breton officer. Madame de Valentinois was dismissed from court, and not allowed to reappear for two years. Louis Quinze knew how deeply he wronged his wife, but he respected her as a queen, and woe to any one who was rude towards her.

About this time the Comte de Melfort, who was colonel of the Orleans regiment, asked me, through his mistress Camille, to answer two questions by means of my cabbalistic combination. I wrote out two very obscure answers, which might be taken to mean anything, sealed them up, and gave them to Camille.

The complexion of the Duchesse de Chartres.

Next day she begged me to accompany her to a place she was forbidden to name. The place turned out to be the Palais Royal. I was conducted up a small staircase to the private apartments of the Duchesse de Chartres. By and by the duchesse herself came in and thanked me most graciously for the answers I had furnished to her questions. She said she had many more things to consult the oracle about. I told her if she would write them down, and leave me alone, in three

[1] The child born of this *liaison* was a daughter, not a son, and married the Marquis de la Tour de Pin de la Charche.

Digitized by Microsoft®

hours the replies would be ready. She made me pledge my word of honour not to speak of the matter to living soul, told me to hand the replies only to herself or Madame de Polignac, and then left me. At the appointed time Madame de Polignac came, and I handed her a sealed packet.

The Duchesse de Chartres, daughter of the Prince de Conti, was then twenty-six years old. She was lively and gay, renowned for her wit and love of pleasure. 'A short life and a merry one' were words always on her lips. She was good, generous, patient, and tolerant of the failings of others. She was pretty, but held herself badly, and only laughed when Marcel, the dancing-master, tried to correct her. She danced with her head hanging down and her toes turned in. She was charming; but unfortunately her face was covered with blotches, the result of a disease of the blood that killed her.

All the questions she had asked me referred to her love affairs, and her complexion, which she was most anxious to cure.

I returned to the Palais Royal next day, and saw the charming princess again. In answering her first question, I had made a shot in the dark. As for the second, I had suffered from much the same indisposition myself, and I was doctor enough to know that one must not attempt to cure a cutaneous malady with strong drugs.

I told her that in a week, if she would follow my instructions, the marks would disappear, and that if she continued the same régime for a year, she would be radically cured.

She was to take medicine every day, diet herself, leave off all cosmetics, and wash her face morning and night with a decoction of plantain leaves.

Eight days later I met her walking in the Palais Royal gardens; her skin was quite smooth and free from blemish. She honoured me with a most gracious smile. But the next day the marks reappeared, and I was sent for in haste. An old *valet de chambre* took me into her boudoir, opening from a dressing-room, in which was a bath. I told her that according

Digitized by Microsoft®

to the oracle, she had broken the prescribed rule; and she owned to have taken some ham and some liqueur.

One of her women whispered something into her ear, and she turned to me saying: 'You will perhaps not mind seeing one of my friends here, whose discretion can be relied on?'

Enter the Comte de Melfort.

A man came in, whom I at first took for a groom. It was the Comte de Melfort. She showed him the answers she had received, and as he appeared sceptical, she declared he must be convinced.

Drawing a small ivory box from her pocket. 'Tell me,' she said, 'why this pomade no longer produces any effect?'

She drew up the chart of figures as I directed, and added and subtracted, obtaining results that were, however, only arbitrarily suggested by me. Then I left her, while she translated the numbers into letters, and when I came in—'Ah, sir, what a prescription!' she cried.

'What is it?'

'*It can only act on the skin of a woman who has never borne a child* was the answer.'

'What!' cried the count, 'is that the pomade the Abbé des Brosses gave you five years ago?'

'Precisely.'

'It is astounding!'

De Melfort and I left the palace together, and in the garden he explained the mystery of the pomade. The poor duchess's face was so disfigured, that her husband neglected her cruelly. She appealed to the Abbé des Brosses, who gave her some ointment which, for the time being, completely cured her. The Duc de Chartres saw her in her box at the theatre, and was so charmed with her smooth white face, that he at once made his peace with her. Nine months after, their child, the Duc de Montpensier, was born. When the count had finished his story, he handed me a tortoise-shell box containing the portrait of the duchess, and a rouleau of a hundred louis, to be spent in framing the miniature to my taste. I never had the portrait mounted, for I always wanted the money for something else!

Digitized by Microsoft®

The intrigue of Richelieu and La Popelinière.

The duchess often sent for me, but there was no longer any question of a cure, for she had not the patience to follow my régime. I would stay sometimes five or six hours with her, now in one corner of the palace, now in another. She would have dinner and supper served to me by the good old *valet de chambre*, who never opened his lips. I loved her, but I was too proud to let her know it. One day she asked if by means of the cabbala I could cure Madame de Popelinière,[1] who suffered from a cancer in the breast.

I answered at random, that the cancer was imaginary, and that the lady was perfectly well.

'But,' she exclaimed, 'all Paris knows that she consults doctor after doctor. Still I believe what you say.'

She told the Duc de Richelieu that she was sure Madame de Popelinière was quite well. The duke contradicted her, whereupon she offered to bet a hundred thousand francs, but he would not accept the wager.

A few days after, she told me with a triumphant air that M. de Richelieu had owned the pretended cancer was only a *ruse* to excite the pity of M. de la Popelinière, and make him forgive his wife and take her back. The maréchal had added that he would gladly pay the hundred thousand francs if Madame de Chartres would tell him how she had guessed the secret.

'If you care to earn the money,' she said, 'I will tell him.'

I was afraid of being found out, for I knew how clever M. de Richelieu was, and I thought it wiser to forgo the money. Besides, his relations with La Popelinière were

[1] Popelinière, a flourishing financier, was inveigled into a marriage with Mimi Dancourt, daughter of the comic author, after having lived twelve years with her. She was clever and beautiful, and drew the most distinguished people to her house. She was led away by the fascinations of the Duc de Richelieu: a scandal ensued, which set all Paris laughing, for the injured husband discovered a large hole in the wall of his wife's boudoir, through which her lover, who had *incognito* hired the apartment next door, had easy access to his mistress. Popelinière was glad of any excuse to break the tie. After a short while her lover tired of her, and she died neglected and miserable, of the disease which Casanova refused to believe in.

Digitized by Microsoft®

no secret. Madame de Chartres had herself composed some charming lampoons on the affair.

My brother François had now painted several fine pictures, and wanted to obtain the patronage of M. de Marigny,[1] so one morning we went to this gentleman's levée at his apartments in the Louvre. Taking with us a large battle-piece, we deposited it in a room near his, and sat down to wait. The first person who passed through the room stopped in front of the picture, looked at it, declared it to be badly painted, and walked on. Soon two more people arrived. They began to laugh, and one of them said, 'That must be the work of a schoolboy.' By and by the room filled with people, who all cut jokes at the expense of the picture. My poor brother said never a word, but I saw he was in agonies. After a while he jumped up, declaring he could bear it no longer, and we returned home, ordering our servant to fetch the picture. When he came back, my brother fell on the unlucky canvas and slashed it to pieces with his sword. He determined to leave Paris at once and go somewhere where he could study the art he loved. We decided on Dresden, and in mid-August we left Paris together. We passed by Metz, Mayence, and Frankfort, and arrived at Dresden by the end of the month. My mother, who was there, received us with joy, and declared that both of us did her credit.

He goes to Dresden.

My life at Dresden[2] was very peaceful. To please my mother

[1] Marquis de Marigny, brother of Madame de Pompadour, born in 1727, succeeded Lenormand de Tournhem as *directeur et ordonnateur général des bâtiments du Roi.* He devoted much of his energy to finishing and clearing the Louvre, which, neglected by Louis XIV. since 1680, had been invaded by a crowd of people who had obtained concessions of lodgings, and had established divisions and partitions of every description, even in the principal apartments. Outside and in the courtyard, sheds and outhouses had been built on to the walls. The Louvre was merely a ruin when Marigny undertook its restoration, and received permission to drive out these parasites. He was only able to execute part of his plan, as he could not obtain money even to roof in his constructions.

[2] It was probably on the occasion of this visit that the incident alluded to by the Prince de Ligne occurred, when Casanova, not appreciating his mother's talent as an actress, insisted on her abandoning the stage.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I wrote a tragi-comic play, in which were two harlequins. It was a parody on Racine's *Les Frères Ennemis.* The king was highly amused at it, and made me a superb present. He was a magnificently prodigal monarch, and was ably seconded in all his extravagances by the Comte de Brühl. I left Dresden some short time after the success of my piece. My mother, brother, and sister remained behind. The latter was married to Pierre Auguste, harpsichord master to the Court: he died, leaving a widow and numerous family in affluent circumstances, some two years before I began these Memoirs.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XI

MADEMOISELLE C. C.

From Dresden I went to Austria, and found myself in Vienna, for the first time in my life. I was short of money, and had but one letter of recommendation, which was to the illustrious Abbé Métastasio. I presented this letter the day after my arrival. The poet struck me as being even more erudite than his works had led me to imagine. He was so modest that at first I almost thought his modesty assumed, but I soon perceived it to be real, for when he recited some of his productions he pointed out their beauties as simply as he pointed out their defects. He repeated some stanzas he had made on the death of his tutor Gravino, which have never been published. When he had finished, his eyes were full of tears, and he said with touching naïveté: 'Tell me truly, is it possible to write better than that?'

I asked him if he wrote with ease, and he showed me five or six pages full of corrections and erasures, containing in all fourteen finished verses. He said he could never do more than that in one day.

One day when I was in the Imperial library I met De la Haye, and must own that I was pleased to see him. He was tutor to a young Venetian, and he told me that his friend Bavois was already lieutenant-colonel of a Venetian regiment. I was glad that both my old friend and my old enemy should be well provided for.

Vienna is a beautiful city: in my day, a rich city, and people lived luxuriously, but the bigotry and narrow-mindedness of

Digitized by Microsoft®

His opinion of the paternal legislation of the Empress Maria Theresa.

the empress made life difficult, especially for foreigners. A legion of vile spies, decorated with the high-sounding title of 'Commissioners of Chastity,' overran the place; for the sovereign, who lacked the sublime virtue of tolerance, had taken the register of the seven deadly sins into her own hand, and had decided that six of them could be overlooked, but that the seventh was unforgivable. 'One can,' said she, 'pardon pride, for it is nearly allied to dignity. Avarice is frightful, but closely resembles economy. Anger re-acts on those who give way to it, thus bringing its own punishment. Gluttony is but daintiness pushed to excess. Envy is a low passion which is never acknowledged. Sloth finds its penalty in *ennui*. But incontinence is a thing apart, a pure heart cannot tolerate it, and I declare open war on it. I know that at Rome much indulgence is shown to this crime, and that every cardinal has his mistress, but at Rome concessions are made to the climate which I have no need to make here, where the bottle and the pipe are the principal pleasures. As soon as I know that a woman is unfaithful to her husband I shall shut her up, whether the husband likes it or not. He should have looked after her better.'

Such was the reasoning of Maria Theresa, and in spite of the high morality which inspired it, it led to many abuses.

If a girl wished to pass unmolested while walking in the street by herself, she must keep her eyes bent down, and carry her rosary in her hand. Then she might possibly be going to church, so that if a commissioner should be so foolish as to arrest her, in that case the commissioner would have been hanged!

The Emperor Francis was handsome, and exceedingly deferential to his wife. The empress, who always called him 'Master,' pretended not to observe his gallantries. She did not want any one to know that her husband was unfaithful to her. Her daughters, with the exception of the eldest, were beautiful; of her sons, I only knew the Crown Prince, and I thought he looked strangely sad.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The Abbé Grosse-tête asked me once what I read in the face of this prince, and I replied, 'Arrogance and suicide.'

I was not far wrong, for Joseph the Second did kill himself, though by accident, and it was his vanity and self-sufficiency which prevented him from realising what he was doing.

He arrives in Venice for the Feast of the Ascension.

My stay in Vienna was unmarked by any exciting incident, and I left the city without regret. A desire to see my country and my old friends had taken hold of me. Four days after leaving Vienna I arrived at Trieste, where I took ship for Venice. I arrived there two days before the Feast of the Ascension, and after three years' absence had the good luck to find my kind patron, M. de Bragadin, in fair health and spirits, as were also his inseparable friends, Dandolo and Barbaro. They were not less pleased to see me than I was to see them, and to know that after my peregrinations I had returned, sound in body and in pocket.

The circumstances under which I returned this time were singularly felicitous. I had gained experience of men and manners. I was acquainted with the laws of honour and politeness. I felt that I was superior to my surroundings. I was longing to take up again my old life, but I was at the same time determined to behave with greater moderation and reserve.

I was pleased to find, on entering my rooms, that everything had been preserved in *statu quo*: dust an inch thick lay on my papers, and proved that no one had meddled with them.

A few days after my home-coming the annual fête occurred when the Doge espouses the Adriatic, beautiful widow of so many husbands, but as youthful now as on her first bridal morn. M. de Bragadin, who loved above all a quiet life, was accustomed to spend these fête-days at Padua, so as to escape the noise and tumult attendant on them. I accompanied him, and on the Saturday following, having dined with him, and affectionately taken leave of him, I got into a postchaise to return to Venice. Had I left Padua two minutes earlier or later, much that happened afterwards would have been avoided,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and my destiny, if it be true that destiny depends on trivial combinations, would have been different. The reader will see for himself. At Oriago I met a *cabriolet*, the two horses of which were coming along at a quick trot. In the *cabriolet* were seated a very pretty woman, and a man in a German officer's uniform.

He meets P. C.

A few paces from me, the *cabriolet* turned over; the woman was thrown violently to the ground, and, as they were on the banks of the Brenta at the moment of the accident, they were in danger of rolling into the river. I jumped out of my chaise and ran to their assistance. She was most profuse in her thanks, and, while her postillion and mine were raising the carriage, called me her saviour and her guardian angel. The damage repaired, they continued their route towards Padua, and I, mine towards Venice.

The next day I started, masked, to follow the *Bucentaur*, which was to be towed to the Lido for the imposing and somewhat ridiculous ceremony. This function, the marriage of the Doge and the sea, takes place at the risk of the Admiral of the Arsenal, who stakes his own head that the weather will be fine. The slightest contrary wind would upset the vessel and drown the Doge, with all the serene signors, the ambassadors, and the papal nuncio; furthermore, this tragic accident would make all Europe laugh and say that for once the Doge of Venice had really consummated his marriage!

I was taking my coffee, my mask drawn aside for the moment, in the Square of San Marco, when a masked woman touched me on the shoulder with her fan. I did not pay much heed to her, but by and by she touched me again. As I was walking along the quay of the Sepulchre I saw the same woman attentively staring at the picture of a monster which was being exhibited for ten sols. I approached her and asked her why she had struck me.

'I punished you,' she said, 'for not recognising me, after having saved my life.'

I guessed that this must be the beauty I had rescued on the

Digitized by Microsoft®

banks of the Brenta, and after the usual compliments I asked if she was going to follow the *Bucentaur.*

He follows the *Bucentaur.*

'I would,' she replied, 'if I had a gondola.'

I offered her mine, which was very large; and after having consulted her companion, who was also masked, she accepted. I begged them to unmask, but they said they had reasons for wishing to remain unrecognised. I asked if they belonged to any of the foreign embassies, as in that case I should be forced to deprive myself of the pleasure of their company;[1] but they assured me they were both Venetians.

I made love to the lady, but, without precisely repelling me, she hinted that we should first know each other better. I thought her prettier than ever, and offered to be her cavalier all through the carnival if she thought good. After the ceremony I returned with them to their hotel, where we dined together. I invited them to pass the evening with me at the opera.

The next day the officer paid me a visit, and after talking of the rain and the fine weather, I begged him to tell me to whom it was that I had the pleasure of speaking.

This is the story he related to me; (he spoke like an educated man, but I noticed that he did not look me frankly in the face):—

The story of C. C.'s brother.

'My name is P. C. My father is rich, and well known on the Bourse, but we have quarrelled. I live on the Quay of St. Mark. The lady whom you saw with me belongs to the family of O.; she is the wife of the well-known broker, C. She has quarrelled with her husband because of me, as I have quarrelled with my father because of her. I wear this uniform because I have a commission in the Austrian service, but at this moment I am engaged in buying cattle for the Venetians. I get the beasts from Hungary and Syria.

[1] It was contrary to Venetian laws for a nobleman to be seen abroad, or in any public place, with the members of foreign embassies, and Casanova, though not noble, was using the gondola, with the servants and liveries, of M. de Bragadin.

Digitized by Microsoft®

This enterprise brings me in a profit of ten thousand florins a year; but just at this moment I am in difficulties because of the fraudulent bankruptcy of one of my customers, and because of my extraordinary expenses. I heard a great deal about you four years ago, and I wanted then to make your acquaintance, but I really think it was Heaven that sent you to me yesterday. If you will help me you will run no risk. Will you back these three bills of exchange for me? I will give you three others which will be met before the first ones fall due. Furthermore, I will arrange that all the cattle landed during the year shall be shipped in your name, so that you can control the sale of them.'

I did not hesitate to tell him that I could not entertain the idea for a single moment. He tried to persuade me, but seeing that I was immovable he left me, saying he hoped we should meet again soon.

Had I been wise I should have dropped his acquaintance, for he was trying to dupe me; but considering that a mere visit of ceremony could not compromise me, I went to see him the following evening.

He tried once more to induce me to back the three bills, and I was about to take my leave disgusted, when he begged to be allowed to present me to his mother and sister.

The mother was an ingenuous and respectable-looking person, but the daughter was a perfect beauty. I was dazzled, and in half an hour completely captivated; her candour, her ingenuousness, her noble sentiments, her vivacity, all helped to make me her slave, for the union of beauty, intelligence, and innocence has always swayed me.

The daily life of Mademoiselle C. C.

Mademoiselle C. C. never went out without her mother. She only read the books her father chose for her, and among them were no romances. She knew nothing of Venetian society, for they received no one at their house. She questioned me closely about the places I had been to, and the people I had met. It was a pleasure to me to answer, but I paid her no compliments. I did not tell her she was beautiful,

Digitized by Microsoft®

or that she interested me, for I had lied so often on these points to others that I wished to treat her differently.

I left the house in a sad and thoughtful mood, almost prepared not to enter it again; for I knew, alas! that I was not made for the chains of matrimony, though I knew that she would make me as happy as any wife could possibly do. I met her brother a few days after, and he told me that his sister did nothing but talk about me, that she seemed to remember every word I had said, and that his mother was delighted to have made my acquaintance.

'She would be a good match for you,' he said, 'for she has a dowry of ten thousand ducats. Come and see me to-morrow, and we will take coffee with her and my mother.'

The scoundrel did not say any more about his bills of exchange; but seeing that I had abandoned the pursuit of his mistress in favour of his sister, he conceived the brilliant idea of selling her to me. I was sorry for the mother and sister of this ignominious creature, but I had not sufficient virtue to renounce my share of the proposed bargain. I even tried to persuade myself that, as I loved her, I ought to prevent her from falling into worse hands. We induced the too confident mother to allow her to go with us to the opera, P. C.'s mistress making a fourth. The next day P. C. told me with an air of triumph that his sister had told his mother that she would rather marry me than any man in the world, and that she was sure I cared for her.

'I adore her,' I answered; 'but do you think that your father would give her to me?'

'No, I do not think so, but he is very old, and in the meantime—make you hay while the sun shines! My mother says she may go to the opera with us again. But I want you to do me a service. I have an opportunity of buying some excellent Cyprus wine, which I could sell again at a large profit; the merchant will not take a bill with my name only, will you add yours?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I signed the note this time, without discussion. Where is the man who would not have done the same?

At 'Ste Blaise, à la Zuecca.'

I was seriously in love, and thanks to the good offices of the brother, who made us the excuse for his own amours, it was possible to see the object of my affections often. I took her in my gondola, and having dropped the brother and his friend, and thrown aside our masks, we spent hours in the gardens of the Zuecca at Saint Blaise, where we ran races together, the prize being a pair of garters which I had bought for her, and for which she gave me hers in exchange. I remember she outran me, and I had to simulate a fall to make her stop and come to my rescue. She was only fifteen, and absolutely innocent. I was determined to make her mine legally and for life, but when I spoke to her mother the good lady said we must be reasonable and wait; that as my charming C. C. was only fourteen years old, it was useless to ask her father's consent.

The dreadful thing was that, as carnival time was nearly over, we should no longer have an excuse for going about masked; and I had got into the habit of taking C. C., whom I now regarded as my wife in all but name, to a little casino in the country, and spending long hours with her. That would, of course, be in future impossible.

I decided to take M. de Bragadin into my confidence, and in an interview I had with him and his two friends, I laid the matter before them, keeping to myself certain details which it was unnecessary they should know, but insisting that my love for C. C. was so great that I was determined to elope with her, if her father withheld his consent to our union.

'I must,' said I, 'obtain some employment or position which will assure me an income equivalent, at least, to her fortune.'

The worthy gentlemen replied, that if *Paralis* would instruct them what to do they would gladly obey. This, of course, was just what I wanted, and the next two hours were spent in making pyramids and combinations which produced favourable answers to all their inquiries. It was decided that M. de Bragadin should be the one charged to ask the hand of the

Digitized by Microsoft®

young lady, as it was he who undertook to place me in a satisfactory position.

I went to tell C. C. the result of my interview with my friends, and found her and her mother in tears. The brother had been imprisoned for debt that very morning, and they had every reason to fear that the sums he owed were considerable. He had left a letter for me, begging me to go to his assistance. It was not in my power to be of use to him; all I could do was to give his mother twenty-five sequins for his immediate needs.

The circumstance of his imprisonment somewhat depressed our spirits, and I could not help feeling uneasy when C. C. told me that her father was expected home from the country that night. When I was bidding her farewell she slipped a note into my hand, in which she gave me instructions to re-enter the house that night, by means of a key contained in her letter. I should find her, she said, in her brother's room. As the reader may imagine, I was exact at the rendezvous. I entered the house without difficulty, and found my angel awaiting me.

The father of C. C. comes back to Venice.

'My father has arrived in perfect health,' she said, 'but he treats me like a child, though I fear that he will soon see I am no longer a child. God knows what he will do if he discovers I have a lover!'

'What can he do? If he refuses me your hand, I will run away with you, and the patriarch will not withhold from us the nuptial benediction. We shall belong to each other for ever.'

'It is what I desire more than anything in the world. But, O my dear friend, you do not know my father!'

The next day this terrible parent had a long interview with M. de Bragadin, the result of which was worse even than the mother had predicted it would be, for he declared, that as his daughter had still four years to wait before he would allow her to marry, he had decided she should pass those four years in a convent; he added, by way of softening his refusal, that if by

Digitized by Microsoft®

that time I had a good position, and we were both of us still in the same mind, he would consent to our union.

That night the little key was useless, for the door was bolted on the inside. I passed twenty-four hours in the cruellest perplexity, not knowing what to do for the best; as the brother was in prison, it was very difficult for me to hold any communication with C. C.

A prey as I was to desperate and sombre thoughts, I paid a visit to her mother. I was met at the door by a servant, who told me the family had gone into the country, she did not know where, and she did not know when they would be back. I then went to see P. C. in prison, but met with no better results. He knew nothing, and he told me a tissue of lies, in return for which I gave him two sequins.

C. C. is sent to a convent.

Misfortunes never come singly, and I now began to lose heavily at cards. I sold everything I possessed of any value, and got deeply into debt. I was too much ashamed of myself to appeal to my old friends for help, and it seemed as though there was nothing left for me but to kill myself. I was meditating suicide one day, while shaving, when my servant told me a woman wished to speak to me.

The woman came in; she had a letter in her hand. Imagine my feelings when I saw on it the print of a seal I had myself given to C. C.

A letter from C.C.

'Before I write to you at length,' the letter ran, 'I must be sure of the fidelity of this woman. I am in a convent, well and kindly treated. The superior has orders not to allow me to see, or hold correspondence with any one. But in spite of this I think I shall be able to write to you. I do not doubt your good faith, and I am sure you will never doubt mine. I will do whatever you tell me to do, for I belong to you alone. Reply to me in a few words only, until we are more certain of our messenger.'

I asked the woman if she knew how to read?

'Ah! sir, I should be in a sorry plight if I didn't. There are seven of us women in the service of the holy nuns of Murano. Each of us comes in turn to Venice once a week; I

Digitized by Microsoft®

come every Wednesday, so that if you like I can bring you an answer to that letter. The most important of all our commissions is the faithful delivery of letters confided to us, though I need not tell you, this is a secret, and outside of our regular functions. The nuns would not give us their letters if we could not read the addresses, as they don't want what they write to Peter to be read by Paul! You can rely on my discretion, and write what you like to that poor child, only I would not advise you to be as free with the other messengers; they may be honest, but they are poor ignorant creatures, and I am sure they chatter, if it is only to their confessors; as for me, I know I need only tell mine the sins I commit, and to take a letter from one Christian to another is not a sin; besides which, thank God! my confessor is a good old monk, so deaf he never hears anything I say! Well then, this day week I shall be back with her answer; and mind now, you don't keep me waiting, for our minutes are measured out to us like gold.'

I gave the good woman a sequin, whereupon she wept for joy, and I saw that she was my slave for ever. I hid another in the seal of the letter I wrote C. C., telling her I would send her all the money she needed while in the convent, for I guessed that her father did not supply her very liberally.

He takes to gambling again.

As the reader may imagine, I hardly knew how to get through the eight days which must pass before I received C. C.'s answer. I had no money to gamble with, and was boring myself considerably, when a young Milanese, named Antonio Croce, of whom I shall often have occasion to speak, came to see me. He had a plan, he said, by which both he and I could line our pockets. If I would go halves with him, he would start a faro bank at his house. There were seven or eight rich foreigners, who were all in love with his wife, and who would lose their money light-heartedly to win her favour We must each of us, he said, put three hundred sequins in the bank to start with. I knew very well that Croce's proposition was not of the highest morality, and at any other time

Digitized by Microsoft®

I should have sent him about his business, but I was at the end of my resources, and did not want to importune M. de Bragadin; besides, if I had refused, Madame Croce's admirers would have been victimised all the same, and some one else would have profited by their misfortunes.

I went with Croce to the Prato della Valle, where we found the signora surrounded by her court of foreigners. She was very pretty, but as a secretary of Count de Rosemberg, the imperial minister to Venice, was attached to her suite, no Venetian nobleman dared show himself in her society. I noticed among others an enormously wealthy Swede named Gilenspetz, a Hamburger, and an English Jew named Mendex.

Where were we to find the three hundred sequins needed to start the bank? I was obliged to have recourse to M. de Bragadin after all, but the good and generous old man as usual had not a sol in his pocket. He found a money-lender, however, who was willing to advance the sum on his signature, at five per cent. per month, the interest of one month deducted from the total.

The first night we played, Croce and I won sixteen hundred sequins between us, the next night Gilenspetz alone lost two thousand sequins, and the Jew Mendex lost a thousand. Sunday was a day of rest, but Monday the bank won four thousand sequins. On Tuesday, we all dined together, and were just beginning to play, when a commissioner of police came in, and told Croce he wished to say two words to him alone. They went out together, and when Croce returned he said, looking a little uncomfortable, that he had received orders not to allow any more gambling in his house. Madame fainted, the punters went off, and I, after taking half the gold which was on the table, followed their example.

Croce's principal crime in the eyes of the police, was that he had kept the novices and mere amateurs of play to himself, and so prevented them from losing their money at the *foyer* of the opera, where the bankers were generally Venetian noblemen.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XII

M. M.

A MAN never reasons so well as when his purse is full, never shows to such advantage in society, and is never so sure to win, as when it is not of vital importance to him that he should do so. The moment I regained courage and confidence, I regained my luck, and whenever I gambled was sure to win. I paid my debts to all, including the usurer, redeemed my jewels, and was once more able to make a decent figure in the world.

My head was quite full of my dear C. C. I commissioned a Piedmontese, a young artist whom I met at the fair of Padua, and who afterwards achieved fame and fortune in Venice, to paint my portrait—it was a very small miniature; he then painted a Saint Catherine of the same dimensions, and a clever Venetian jeweller mounted them both in a ring. One could only see the Saint Catherine, but, with a pin, press an almost imperceptible blue dot on the white enamel which surrounded it, and back flew a spring, and my portrait was revealed!

The messenger from the convent brought me a letter, which I read eagerly. C. C. told me that if on a certain day I would go to Murano and post myself outside the convent church, I should see her mother, and that I had better speak to her.

Following her instructions, I saw the good lady appear and enter the church. I passed in with her, and kneeling at her side I told her I should always be faithful to her daughter, and asked her if she was going to see her.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I am going to see her on Sunday,' she replied, 'and I will speak of you to her. She will be pleased, I know, to hear of you.'

He sends his portrait to C. C.

'Will you give her this ring? it is the picture of her patron saint; and tell her to wear it always, tell her to pray to it every day, for without that she can never be my wife. Tell her that for my part I pray to Saint James, and recite a *Credo* while thinking of her.'

The good lady was enchanted with my pious sentiments, and promised to do what I asked. I gave her ten sequins, which I begged her to remit to C. C. as pocket-money: she accepted them, at the same time mentioning that her father provided C. C. with everything needful.

My greatest pleasure in life now was the Wednesday letter, which the old messenger, Laura, brought me faithfully. After a rather serious malady from which she had suffered, and which, with the aid of Laura, she had been able to keep from the knowledge of the Mother Superior, C. C. was more beautiful than ever, old Laura assured me. I longed for a sight of her. An unexpected chance presented itself. One of the novices was to take the veil, a ceremony which always attracted spectators from the outside world. As the nuns on these occasions receive many visitors, it was probable that the boarders also might be allowed to go to the parlour. I ran no risk of being especially remarked. I should pass in the crowd. So without saying a word to any one, I presented myself at the convent church, and after the investiture walked into the parlour with the rest. I got within four paces of my dear little wife, and had the pleasure of seeing her eyes fixed on me in a kind of ecstasy. I noticed that she was taller and more womanly, and consequently more beautiful than before. After this I attended Mass at her church regularly on Sundays and feast-days. I could not see her, but I knew that she saw me, and that the sight gave her great happiness. There was not much danger of my being recognised, as the church was attended only by the people from Murano; neverthe-

He goes to the convent church in order to look at C.C. among the nuns.

Digitized by Microsoft®

less I was on my guard, for I knew her father wished her to forget me, and that he would remove her to the ends of the earth if he discovered that I knew her whereabouts.

I was not afraid of the '*bon bourgeois*' of Murano; but I little knew the craft and subtlety of the holy daughters of the Lord! Nor did I think that there was anything particularly noticeable about me, or attractive to the inhabitants of a convent. I was still unversed in the ways of womanly curiosity, and the little machinations indulged in by vacant hearts and intelligences. I soon learnt to know them better.

My beloved C. C. wrote to me one day and informed me that I had become the puzzle of the whole community, that one and all, boarders and nuns, even the oldest among them, were busy guessing who I could possibly be. They waited for my appearance, they made signs to each other when I came in, when I took holy water, when I knelt down or stood up, my slightest action was of interest to them. They noticed that I never tried to peer behind the grating where they were, or paid attention to any woman in the church; from which the old ones gathered that I was in terrible trouble, and the young ones that I was melancholy or misanthropical.

It was a fact that I was withering and pining away under the ascetic regimen it had pleased me to impose on myself. I was made to make some woman happy, and to be happy with her. I threw myself into play and won as a rule; nevertheless, I grew thinner and thinner, a daily prey to *ennui*.

The first letter from Mother M. M.

On All Saints' Day 1753, after having heard Mass, I was getting into my gondola to return to Venice when a woman rather like old Laura passed close to me, looked at me, and dropped a letter. When she saw that I had picked it up she went on quietly. There was no address on it, and the seal represented a running knot. It was as follows:—

'A nun, who for the last two months has seen you in her convent church, wishes to make your acquaintance. A pamphlet which you lost has come by chance into her hands, and leads her to believe that you speak French, but if you prefer you can

Digitized by Microsoft ®

answer this in Italian. If you care to be presented to her, she will give you the name of a certain lady who will bring you to the parlour. If you would rather, the nun will appoint a place in Murano where you can meet her any night you choose. You can sup with her, or you can leave after a quarter of an hour's conversation, as you will; or if you prefer to invite her to sup with you in Venice, fix an hour and a place and she will meet you. She will be masked, and you must come masked also, and alone. You must understand that were she not convinced of the generosity of your heart, and the elevation of your sentiments, she would never have ventured to take a step which might lead you to take an unfavourable view of her.'

The tone of the letter, which I give word for word, surprised me more than the proposition itself. It seemed to bespeak a mad woman, yet its strangeness and a sort of dignity there was about it attracted me. It occurred to me that the writer might be the nun who gave French lessons to my friend, and of whom she had often spoken, describing her as beautiful, rich, and generous. My dear C. C. might have been indiscreet, —perhaps this was a trap? A thousand theories occurred to me, but I discarded all those unfavourable to a project which, as a matter of fact, pleased me mightily. This is how I replied :—

He replies to it.

'I answer you in French, madam, hoping my letter will be as clear to you as yours to me. What you say is interesting, but you will understand, madam, that not being a coxcomb, I am a little apprehensive of your being about to practise some mystification on me, prejudicial to my honour. If it be really true that you consider me worthy of the honour of knowing you personally, I will hasten to obey your command. Of the three means you offer me, I choose the first; I will accompany the lady to the parlour, but as she will not know me, she cannot present me to you. Do not judge me harshly, madam, if I tell you I must conceal my name from you. I will not seek to know yours until you think fit to disclose it to me. I may mention by the way that I am a Venetian, and free in every sense of the word. I beg you to believe in my sincerity, and to measure my impatience by your own. I will go to-morrow at the same hour

Digitized by Microsoft®

to the place where I received your first letter, in hope of a reply to this.'

The next day my female Mercury handed me the following:—

'I see, sir, that I have not been mistaken in you. Of my three propositions you have chosen the one which does the most honour to your head and heart. I respect the reasons which prevent you from making yourself known to me. I enclose a note for the Countess of S——, which I beg you to read before presenting. She will tell you when you can accompany her here. She will not put any questions to you, but you will learn my name; and our acquaintance once made, you can come here masked as her friend, and ask for me whenever you choose. If this arrangement suits you, tell the messenger that there is no answer.'

The note to the countess, which she enclosed, was very brief:—

'My dear friend, come and see me when you have time, and tell the masked bearer of this note when you intend coming, so that he may accompany you. Your convenience will be his. Adieu. You will immensely oblige, YOUR FRIEND.'

I was lost in admiration of the high development of the spirit of intrigue which pervaded the nun's letter. She was so sure that having seen her once I should be desirous of seeing her again, that I was convinced she must be young and pretty. She was too clever in intrigue to be a novice, and I was anxious to see what manner of nun this could be who offered so casually to sup with me in Venice. I could not understand how she could violate the sanctity of her cloister with such ease.

At three o'clock that afternoon I called on the countess. She asked me to fetch her the next day at the same hour, after which we bowed gravely to one another, and parted. The countess was a most distinguished-looking woman, a little past her prime, but still beautiful. The next day being Sunday I went to Mass, dressed with much elegance and with my hair carefully arranged. I was already faithless in

Digitized by Microsoft®

imagination to my dear C. C., for I thought more of this opportunity of showing myself off to my unknown nun than to my charming little wife. In the afternoon I called, wearing a mask, for the countess. We took a two-oared gondola, and arrived at the convent without having spoken of anything but the weather.

He visits M. M. in her convent.

The countess asked for 'M. M.' at the convent gate. This name astonished me, for it was that of a well-known person. We were shown into a parlour, and in a few moments a nun appeared at the grating: she pressed a button and a sort of window opened, through which the two friends embraced. The countess sat facing the nun, and I remained a little in the background. In this way I was able to observe at my ease one of the most lovely women I have ever seen. She was about twenty-two or twenty-three years old, considerably above the average height; her complexion was fair, almost to pallor; her manners full of dignity and decision, yet at the same time modest and reserved; her great eyes were a brilliant blue, and her teeth like two rows of pearls; her hand and arm, which were bare to the elbow, were exquisitely moulded. The two friends talked together in a low voice for about a quarter of an hour. I could not hear what they said, for delicacy compelled me to remain at some distance from them; then, having embraced each other again, the nun turned on her heel and walked away without looking at me.

On the way back to Venice the countess said: 'M. M. is very lovely, and very clever too?'

'So I could see, and so I could imagine.'

'She did not say a word to you?'

'As I did not ask you to present me, she punished me by pretending not to see that I was there.'

When we reached the countess's house, she made me a deep curtsy, saying, 'Farewell, sir,' in a tone meant to convey to me that I must not seek to continue her acquaintance. I did not particularly wish to do so; and I left her to wonder over this strange adventure and its possible *dénouement*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He ponders over the extraordinary liberty enjoyed by Mother M. M.

I was at a loss to account for the complete liberty enjoyed by my beautiful nun. A casino at Murano, the power to sup alone at Venice with a young man! She must have an official lover; I was only her caprice! I loved C. C. still; and it seemed to me that an infidelity of this kind, should it ever come to pass, ought to be readily condoned by her, since it would effectually palliate the *ennui* in which I languished for her sake, and preserve me to her against her liberation. Among my intimate friends at this time was Countess Coronini, a relation of M. Dandolo's; this lady, who had been a celebrated beauty in her day, had retired to the Convent of Saint Justine. She still maintained relations with the world; and was visited by all the foreign ambassadors and principal personages of Venice. Within the walls of her convent the countess managed to be aware of everything that went on in the city, and sometimes more. I was sure that I should learn something from her about M. M., if I questioned her adroitly. So I resolved to pay her my respects, the day after I had seen the beautiful nun.

After a few ordinary remarks, I led the conversation to the different Venetian convents. We spoke of a certain nun called Celsi, who had so much intelligence and tact, that, although she was ugly, she exerted an immense influence; from her we passed to others who were credited with a taste for intrigue. I spoke of M. M., saying that she must certainly be of this category, but that no one knew for certain. The countess replied with a smile that some people were better informed than others. 'I cannot understand,' she said, 'why she should have taken the veil. She was beautiful, young, rich, free, cultivated, and a good, clear reasoner; there was no physical or moral reason for such a step: it was pure caprice.'

'Do you think she is happy, madame?'

'Yes, if she has not already rued the step she took, or if she does not rue it some day; but, if that happens, I believe she will be discreet enough to conceal her unhappiness.'

I was sure from the mysterious manner of the countess that

Digitized by Microsoft®

she knew more than she would say, and I determined to pay another visit to the convent at Murano, masked, of course. I rang the bell with a beating heart, and asked if I could see M. M., as I had a message to deliver to her from the Countess S. I waited for more than an hour, then a toothless old nun came and told me that Mother M. M. was engaged for the whole day!

A check.

A rake is exposed to these sudden and terrible checks. Such moments are humiliating, they are deadly. My concentrated despair nearly approached madness. I saw that I had been tricked, and that M. M. must be either the most impudent or the most foolish of women, for the two letters I had in her own hand were enough to ruin her. In this disposition I wrote her several missives, all of which, however, I had the good sense to destroy. When I was calmer, I sent her a few lines, saying that she would not see me again at Mass, for reasons she could easily divine. I enclosed her two letters to me, and despatched the packet by a *fourlan*, a sort of confidential commissioner, much employed in Venice in those days, on whose discretion and despatch one could rely, as one used to count on the Savoyards of Paris. I also wrote to C. C., telling her that imperative reasons prevented me from ever going to Mass again at her convent.

Ten days after, as I was leaving the opera, the same *fourlan* accosted me.

'God be praised! I have found you; I took your letter, and I have one to give you in exchange, but as you left me no address, I have been looking for you ever since; I only recognised you now by the buckles of your shoes.'

'Where is the letter?'

'At home, under lock and key, for I am afraid of losing it, if you will wait for me an instant in this café I will fetch it.'

I entered the café, and he returned with a big packet, which contained, firstly, the two letters I had returned, and secondly, a long letter from M. M. She told me that the old nun had not delivered her message correctly; she should have said,

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Mother M. M. *is ill*,' not 'engaged'; she explained why she had thought it better not to speak to me in the presence of her friend, and begged me, whatever I might think of her, not to condemn her unheard, but to grant her at least one more interview. And this precious letter had been lying for ten days at the *fourlan's* lodgings!

I ordered him to take my answer to Murano before dawn next day, so that M. M. might have it when she awoke. I told her that at eleven o'clock that morning I would be at her feet, imploring her pardon for having misjudged her.

His second interview with M. M. behind the convent grating.

I was punctual next day. As soon as I saw M. M. at the grating, I threw myself on my knees, but she begged me to rise. She was blushing deeply, and looked more beautiful than when I had first seen her.

'Our friendship,' she said, 'has begun stormily, let us hope that in the future it will enjoy peace. This is the first time that we have spoken to each other, but after what has passed, we seem like old friends.'

'When may I have the pleasure of expressing, freely and unrestrainedly, my sentiments towards you?'

'We will have supper together at my little country-house whenever you like, only you must let me know two days in advance; or, if you prefer, I will sup with you in Venice, if that is more convenient for you.'

'You are an angel; let us be frank with one another. Let me tell you that I am in easy circumstances, and that so far from fearing expense, I delight in it; and furthermore, that everything I have belongs to the woman I adore.'

'This confidence, dear friend, is very flattering; let me tell you in my turn that I too am rich, and all my wealth is at my lover's service.'

'And—have you no lover but me?'

'I have a friend, who is also absolutely my master—it is to him I owe my wealth. The day after to-morrow I will tell you more. Is there not also a woman whom you love?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Yes; but, alas! she was violently torn from me, and for six months I have lived a life of absolute celibacy.'

'Do you still love her?'

'Yes; when I think of her. She is like you, charming and attractive; yet I foresee that you will make me forget her.'

'I warn you that, if you once allow me to take her place in your heart, no power on earth can tear me from thence.'

'And what will your lover say?'

'He will be happy to see me happy. He is like that. Now answer me. What sort of a life do you lead in Venice?'

'Society, the play, gaming-tables, where I fight with fortune, sometimes winning, sometimes losing.'

'Do you go to any of the foreign ministers' houses?'

'No, because I am too closely connected with the Venetian nobility; but I know them all.'

'How can you know them, if you don't visit them?'

'I knew them abroad. For instance, I met the Spanish ambassador in Parma, the Austrian ambassador in Vienna, and I knew the French ambassador in Paris about two years ago.'

She interrupted me, saying quickly: 'It is noon, my dear friend, we must part. Come the day after to-morrow at the same time, and I will arrange for us to sup together that evening.'

She came to the opening in the grating. I stood where the Countess S. had stood, and I kissed her passionately, and left her.

I passed the next two days in a state of feverish impatience, which prevented me from sleeping or eating. Over and above birth, beauty, and wit, my new conquest possessed an additional charm. She was forbidden fruit. I was about to become the rival of the Church.

Had my reason not been overcome by passion, I should have known that this nun in nowise differed from the other women that I had loved, but for the moment she queened it over them all.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Animal nature secures for itself instinctively the three means necessary for its perpetuation.

His physiological theories.

With these three instinctive needs nature has endowed all creatures: Firstly, the instinct of self-nourishment. Secondly, the instinct of propagation. Thirdly, the instinct of destruction. Outside these general laws, however, each species has its own special idiosyncrasy. These three sensations, hunger, desire, and hatred, are habits, merely, with animals. Man alone is endowed with perfect organs, capable of perfect pleasure. He can seek, foresee, compose, perfect, and extend by reflection and recollection.

Dear reader, be patient with me, who am to-day only the shadow of the gay, the fascinating, the dashing Casanova that was. I love to dwell on memories of myself.

Man becomes like an animal when he gives way to these three instincts without reference to reason and judgment; but when mind controls matter, then these instincts procure for us the most complete happiness we are capable of knowing. The voluptuous but intelligent man disdains gluttony, rejects luxury with contempt; the brutal lusts of vengeance, which are evoked by a paroxysm of rage, are repulsive to him; he is dainty, satisfies his appetite in accordance with his temperament; he is amorous, but only happy if happiness is mutual. He seeks to be revenged for insult, but plans the method of it carefully, and in cold blood. If he is sometimes more cruel than the brute, he is also sometimes more noble, and finds vengeance in forgiveness. These three operations are the work of the soul, which for its own pleasure becomes the minister of the passions. We endure hunger the better to enjoy the satisfaction of our appetite; we put off the perfect enjoyment of love, to make it more intense; we postpone a reprisal to make it the more sure. It is also true that we sometimes die from indigestion, that we are mistaken in our affections, and that the individual we wish to exterminate escapes us; but nothing is perfect in this world, and we must accept all risks.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XIII

M. M.

I RANG the convent bell as the clock struck ten, the hour appointed for our meeting.

'Good heavens! my friend,' were the beautiful nun's first words, 'are you ill?'

'I can neither eat nor sleep, and if our appointment to-night is put off, I will not answer for my life.'

M. M. offers an assignation at her casino.

'It will not be put off. Here is the key of my little house; you will find some one there, for we cannot do without servants, but no one will speak to you, and you need speak to no one. You will go masked, and two hours after sunset. There is a staircase opposite the entrance, and at the top of the stairs you will see, by the light of a lanthorn, a green door, which you will open, it will lead you into a suite of apartments where, if I am not already there, you must wait for me. You will find fire and lights and some entertaining books; take off your mask and make yourself comfortable.'

I asked this strange woman, as I took the key she offered me, if she would come dressed in her religious habit.

'I always go out dressed as a nun,' she answered, 'but I have a complete wardrobe in my casino, and can transform myself into a woman of the world when I choose.'

'I hope you will keep on your habit.'

'Why, may I ask?'

'Because I like to see you in it.'

'Ha! ha! I understand. You think I have a cropped

Digitized by Microsoft®

head, it frightens you; but be easy, I have a wig which looks perfectly natural.'

'Heavens! don't mention it; the thought of a wig is terrible. Never fear but what I shall find you charming in any guise, but I beseech you not to put that cruel wig on in my presence. Ah! now I have offended you. I was a fool to speak of it. Tell me, how do you propose to leave the convent?'

'I have the key of a room which opens on to the banks of the river, and I have confidence in the lay sister who waits on me.'

'And the gondoliers?'

'They are the servants of my friend, and he is responsible for their fidelity.'

'What a strange man your friend must be! I fancy he is very old?'

'You are mistaken. He is not yet forty, and most attractive. He has birth, beauty, breeding, wit, sweetness of character—he is all a woman could possibly wish. It is a year since he assumed possession of me, and you are the first caprice I have permitted myself. He knows about you, for I showed him your letters and mine. He was surprised at first, and then he laughed. He believes you are a Frenchman, though you say you are a Venetian; but do not be alarmed, he will take no steps to find out who you are until you tell him yourself.'

I followed her instructions carefully, and found all as she had said: the quiet secluded cottage—casino, as we Venetians call it—with lights shining from the windows, and door obedient to the key, but no servants to be seen. At the top of the stairs was the green door she had spoken of. I pushed it open, and after crossing two ante-rooms, I found her waiting for me in a little salon. She was most elegantly attired, in the fashion of the day, and wore her hair dressed in a superb chignon, but as the recollection of the wig was still in my mind, I refrained from speaking of it. The room was lighted by wax candles in girandoles, and by four superb

Digitized by Microsoft®

candelabra placed on a table among a quantity of handsome books. She seemed to me of a loveliness far other to that which I had admired beneath her nun's coif. I flung myself on my knees at her feet, kissing her hands, telling her in broken accents of my gratitude and devotion. M. M. thought it necessary to make some show of resistance. How charming such refusals are! As a tender, respectful, but audacious lover did I meet her protestations, and as I kissed her beautiful mouth, my very soul seemed to pass from me to her.

At last she said, laughing: 'Dear friend, you will be surprised to hear that I am hungry; I believe I could do justice to supper, if you would keep me company.'

She rang the bell, and a middle-aged woman of respectable appearance answered the summons. She set the table for two, putting the wine, dessert, and sweetmeats on a sideboard. She then brought in eight hot meats, served in Sèvres china, set on silver chafing-dishes, and left us once more alone. The supper was dainty and abundant: I recognised at once the French mode of cooking. We had excellent burgundy and champagne. My companion mixed the salad dexterously; indeed, in everything she did, I admired her graceful ease. Her friend was evidently a connoisseur, and had instructed her in the art of good living. I was curious to know him, and when we were taking punch after supper, I said that if she would satisfy my curiosity in this particular I would tell her my own name.

'All in good time, my friend,' said she; 'let us not be in a hurry.'

Among the charms hanging at her side I noticed a little flask in rock crystal, exactly like one I wore on my own chain: like mine it was filled with cotton saturated with essence of rose.

'This is a rare perfume,' said I, 'and very costly.'

'It is next to impossible to procure,' she answered.

'You are right, the maker of this essence is a crowned head, the King of France himself. He made one pound of it, and it cost him thirty thousand francs.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What I have here was given by the king to my lover,' said M. M.

'And mine is some of a small quantity sent by Madame de Pompadour to the Venetian ambassador in Paris, M. de Mocenigo, by favour of M. de Bernis, who is French ambassador here at the present moment.'

Madame de Pompadour's present to the ambassador.

'Do you know him?' she asked curiously.

'I have dined with him. He is a favourite with Dame Fortune, but he deserves it. He is well born, and has a right to call himself Comte de Lyon. He is so handsome, his nickname is "*Belle Babet.*" But see, it is night, the hour when all living things seek rest.'

'What! are you so tired?'

'No, but I am sure that you must be. Rest here. I will sit beside you, and watch you sleep; or, if you prefer, I will go away.'

She took a handkerchief and bound it round my head, asking me to render her the same service. I must own that I shrank instinctively from the wig, but was agreeably surprised to feel instead the most beautiful natural hair, long, fine, waving, and of a reddish gold. At my cry of astonishment and admiration she laughed heartily, then explained to me that a nun is only obliged to hide her hair from the vulgar gaze, not to sacrifice it entirely.

We were disturbed by a noisy alarum, hidden somewhere in the room.

'What is that?' cried I.

'It is time for me to go back to my convent.'

She rang, and the woman who had served us at supper, and who was doubtless her confidante and secret minister, appeared. Having dressed her hair, she assisted her to change her satin corset for the dimity one of a nun; the jewels and fine clothes were carefully locked up; the Mother M. M. stood before me. Her confidante having left the room to call the gondoliers, she kissed me, saying: 'I shall expect you the day after to-morrow.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

C. C. suspects.

Next day Laura gave me a letter from C. C. It ran as follows:—

'DEAR,—Don't be angry with me, but give me credit for being able to keep a secret, young as I am. I am sure of your love, and I don't want you to tell me more than you think proper of your affairs, and I am glad of anything which can alleviate the pains of separation for you, only—listen! Yesterday I was crossing the hall, when I dropped something and moved a footstool to recover it. The footstool was just beside a crack in the wall of the parlour. I looked through—I am so dull here that I can't help being anxious—and I saw you, dear, in earnest converse with my friend, Mother M. M. I put the footstool back quietly and went away. Tell me all, dear, and make me happy. Does she know you, and how did you make her acquaintance? She is my bosom friend, the woman of whom I have often spoken, but without telling you her name. It is she who lends me books and teaches me things very few women know. She knows I have a lover, just as I know she has one, but we never ask each other questions. She is a wonderful woman. You love each other, I know, you could not help it, and as I am not jealous, I deserve your whole confidence. I am sorry for you both, for I don't see how you can possibly manage to meet. Everybody in the convent thinks you ill, and I am dying to see you. Come once at any rate. Adieu.'

Honour and delicacy demand that he shall continue to delude C. C.

This truly noble letter frightened me—not on account of C. C., she was true as steel, but because of others. Honour and delicacy forbade my telling her the facts. I lied boldly to C. C., saying that I had heard such wonderful things of M. M., that I had made an opportunity of seeing her, but that there was nothing whatever between us.

Saint Catherine's Day was C. C.'s birthday, and I thought it beseemed me to give the pretty recluse, who was imprisoned for my sake, a chance of seeing me. But I had discovered that I was watched and followed, and I thought it wiser not to visit Murano any more except at night or masked.

The following day I was in the convent parlour betimes. M. M. did not keep me waiting long. She congratulated me

Digitized by Microsoft®

on the good effect of my reappearance at church; the nuns, she said, were delighted to see me again after an absence of three weeks; even the abbess had expressed her pleasure, and at the same time her determination to find out who I was. This made me remember that the day before, a man had dogged my footsteps, so resolutely and so importunately that I had seized the fellow by the throat, and should certainly have shaken the life out of him, had he not managed to slip through my hands. I mentioned this incident to M. M., and we both agreed that it was probably a spy the holy mother had set at my heels. From this we concluded that it would be best for me to discontinue my visits to the chapel altogether. She told me all about the tell-tale chink in the boards, of which she had, she said, been warned by a young novice who was devoted to her. This was, of course, my obedient C. C., but I took care not to seem curious about her.

'And now, dear one,' I said, 'tell me when you will come again?'

'The newly professed sister has invited me to supper in her room, and I have no plausible pretext for refusing.'

'Can you not confide in her?'

'No. If I am not present at her supper I shall make an enemy of her.'

'Are you the only one to pay surreptitious visits to the outside world?'

'Yes, of that I am very sure. It is gold alone which here, as elsewhere, works miracles. But tell me, when can you meet me to-morrow—two hours after sunset?'

'Can I not meet you at your casino?'

'No, for it is my lover himself who is going to escort me to Venice?'

'Your lover! Incredible!'

'But none the less true.'

'I will wait for you there, in the Square of Saint John and Saint Paul, behind the statue of Bartholomew of Bergamo.'

'I don't know the square or the statue except from pictures,

Digitized by Microsoft®

He hires a casino in Venice.

but no matter, I will be there, unless the weather prevents me.'

I had no time to lose, if I wished to find a place to receive my beautiful guest in, but I soon found the very thing I was looking for, a charming casino in the environs of Venice. It had formerly belonged to the English ambassador, but when he left Venice he had abandoned it to his cook. The new proprietor let it to me until Easter for a hundred sequins, which I paid him in advance, on condition that he himself cooked for me. There were five rooms, furnished in the best possible taste. The meals were served in the dining-room through a buttery hatch, so that there was no need for servant and master to see each other. The salon was ornamented with superb mirrors and lustres in rock crystal and gilded bronze. A magnificent picture hung over the white marble chimney-piece, that was inlaid with Chinese plaques. An octagonal-shaped room led out of the salon; its walls, floor, and ceiling were entirely covered with Venetian mirrors. There was a boudoir which might have been furnished for the Queen of Love herself, and a bath of Carrara marble.

I ordered a sumptuous supper, with exquisite wines, to be prepared for that night, at the same time warning the landlord that he was to be sure that no one watched my ingoings and outgoings. The servants were to remain absolutely invisible. I then went and bought the most beautiful pair of slippers I could find, and a cap in *point d'Alençon* lace.

Two hours after sunset I returned to my casino. The French cook was much astonished at seeing me alone, and as he had neglected to light up the rooms, I reproached him severely, after which I told him to serve supper. It came up by a lift, through the door in the wall, and in very good style. I commented on every dish, but, as a matter of fact, I found all excellent. Game, sturgeon, oysters, truffles, wine, dessert, all was good, and all well served in fine Dresden china and silver-gilt plate. When I told him he had forgotten the hard-boiled eggs, the anchovies and dressing for a salad, the

Digitized by Microsoft®

poor cook raised hands and eyes to heaven as though he had been guilty of a terrible misdemeanour.

I was at Saint John's Square an hour before the appointed time. The night was cold, but I did not notice it. By and by I saw a two-oared boat come up, and a masked figure stepped ashore. My heart beat wildly, but as it drew nearer I saw it was a man, and wished I had brought my pistols. The mask walked once round the statue, and then came up to me, extending a friendly hand. It was my angel! She laughed heartily at my surprise, and taking my arm, we walked away to my casino, which was about a hundred steps from Saint Moïse. Everything was in perfect order. We went quickly upstairs, and I flung away my cloak and mask. M. M. was delighted with the rooms, and examined every corner. She was not sorry either to afford me an opportunity of admiring her beautiful figure, and the richness of her apparel, which did her lover's generosity credit. The mirrors reflected her charming person a thousand times over, and this system of multiplied portraits were evidently new to her. She stood still and looked at herself; I sat on a stool and watched her. She wore a coat of rose-coloured velvet, embroidered with gold spangles, a hand-embroidered waistcoat to match, black satin breeches, diamond buckles, a valuable solitaire on the little finger of one hand, and on the other a ring with a crystal set over white satin. Her mask, of black blonde, was remarkably fine in design and quality. She came and stood in front of me, that I might the better admire all these fine things. I turned out her pockets, and found in them a gold snuff-box, a *bonbonnière* set with pearls, a gold needle-case, a superb opera-glass, two fine cambric handkerchiefs simply soaked with perfume, two richly wrought gold watches with chains and bunches of charms sparkling with diamonds. I also found a pocket-pistol—a little English pistol in exquisitely engraved steel.

M. M. meets him in the Square of St. John in man's attire.

'All these, my beautiful one,' said I, 'are not half good enough for you, yet I cannot help expressing my admiration for the

Digitized by Microsoft®

astounding being—I had almost said the *adorable* being—who hopes by such offerings to convince you of his affection.'

'That is much what he said to me when I begged him to escort me to Venice and leave me there. "Be happy," he said to me, "and I only hope that the lucky man whom you honour will be worthy of your condescension."'

'He is a most astounding being! I repeat it. He is simply unique. I fear that I no more resemble him than I deserve the happiness whose prospect dazzles me.'

She asked my leave to go to unmask herself in a room apart. In a quarter of an hour she came back to my side, her hair dressed like a man's, tied with a black ribbon; it came down to her knees.

Their interview.

'Adorable creature!' I exclaimed, 'you were not made for mortal man, and I fear me you will never be mine. Some miracle will tear you from me at the very moment when I think that I hold you. Your divine spouse will perhaps be jealous of a mere man, and will destroy me with his lightning. Who knows, but in a quarter of an hour I may have ceased to exist!'

'Nonsense! I am yours now, this very moment!'

I proposed to ring for supper. She shuddered at the idea of being seen, but was pacified when I showed her the ingenious method by which we could be served without the servants entering the room.

'When I tell my lover this,' she said, 'he will say you are no novice in the art of love-making! And I see well that I am not the only person whom you receive in this discreet little nest.'

'You are the first woman who ever came to me here, adorable creature! Though you are not my first love, you will surely be my last!'

'I shall be content if I make you happy. My lover is satisfied with me; he is gentle, kind, and amiable, but he has never filled my heart.'

'Nor can you have filled his, or he would not permit you such liberty.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'He loves me as I love you, and you believe that I love you, don't you?'

'I like to believe it.'

The fatal alarum sounded all too quickly, and after a hasty cup of coffee, I took her back to the square of Saint John, promising to visit her in two days. She had put the beautiful lace cap in her pocket to keep as a souvenir.

When, however, I next presented myself in the convent parlour, she told me her friend had just announced his visit, and that I must postpone mine.

'He is going to Padua until Christmas,' she said; 'but in the meantime he has arranged for us to sup at his casino whenever we please.'

'Why not at mine?'

'He has begged me not to go to Venice during his absence. He is prudent, and I intend to do as he bids me.'

'Then I must fain be content as well. When shall we meet?'

'On Sunday.'

'I will go there in the twilight, and read till you come. But remember that nine days before Christmas there will be no more masking, and I shall then have to go to your casino by water, for fear of being recognised by the spy you know of.'

'But I hope you will be able to come during Lent, too, for all Heaven insists that during that time we should mortify the flesh! Isn't it strange that it should please the Lord that at one time we should amuse ourselves wildly and abstain at another? How can a mere anniversary affect Him, who is independent of our doings? It seems to me that if the Lord could have created us virtuous by inclination and did not choose to do so, then it is His own fault if we go wrong. Imagine the Lord keeping Lent!'

'My dear, who taught you to reason like this?'

'My friend, who lent me books, and opened my mind. I think for myself and don't listen to the priests.'

On Sunday, while I was waiting for my divinity, I amused

Digitized by Microsoft®

The literature that had made M. M. a free-thinker.

myself with examining the books in the boudoir, which, she said, had made her a freethinker. They were not numerous, but they were well chosen, and worthy of the place. Amongst them was everything that had been written against religion, and everything the most voluptuous pens had written about pleasure. Several richly bound folios contained engravings, whose merit lay all in the correctness of their drawing and the fineness of their execution. There were the illustrations of the *Portier des Chartreux*, engraved in England, those of Meunius, Aloysia, Sigea Toletana, and others, all of remarkable beauty. A quantity of little pictures hung on the walls, all *chefs-d'œuvre* of the same style.

I studied these volumes till my beautiful mistress in her nun's habit arrived.

We decided that while her lover was absent, I should live at the casino; and during the ten days he was away, I had the happiness of receiving her four times.

While there I amused myself by reading, and writing to C. C., but my love for her had dwindled away a good deal. What most interested me in her letters was her enthusiasm for her teacher, the Mother M. M., with whom she was most anxious I should become acquainted! She blamed me for lack of interest in her friend, and for not trying to make her acquaintance in the parlour. I answered that I was afraid of being recognised, and enjoined her to maintain the strictest secrecy.

I do not think it is possible to love two people at the same time, in the same degree, neither can one maintain a vigorous affection by over nourishment, or a paucity of it, for the matter of that. My passion for M. M. was kept at fever heat because I felt as if every meeting might be the last.

'It is certain,' I said to her, 'that some time or other, some one of the nuns will want to speak to you, while you are absent from your room.'

'No,' said she, 'there is no danger, for nothing is more strictly respected in the convent than the right of each nun

Digitized by Microsoft®

to make herself inaccessible to all the others, even the abbess. There is nothing to fear but fire, and then it would indeed seem strange for a nun to remain locked up in her cell. I have won over a lay sister, and the gardener, and one other nun. It is gold and the skill of my lover combined which have worked this miracle. He is responsible, too, for the fidelity of the cook and his wife at the casino, and of the two gondoliers, though we know that one of the latter is a spy in the service of the State Inquisitors.'

On Christmas Eve she wrote me that her lover would be back next day, and that they intended to go to the opera together.

'I shall expect you, dear friend,' she wrote, 'on New Year's Eve, and in the meantime I beg you to read the enclosed at your leisure, and at your own house.'

So, to make room for the other, I packed up my baggage and went off to the Bragadin Palace, where I read her letter:—

'I was piqued somewhat, dear friend, when you said, *à propos* of the mystery with which I am obliged to surround my lover, that so long as you possessed my heart, you were content to leave me mistress of my mind. This division of the heart and mind seems to me purely sophistical, and if it does not seem so to you also, it must be because you do not love me absolutely. You cannot separate me from my soul, or cherish my body, if my mind is not in harmony with it!

'However, lest you should some day think I have been wanting in frankness towards you, I have determined to tell you a secret concerning my friend, although I know he counts on my discretion. I am going to commit treason, but you will not love me the less for it, because, forced as I am to choose between you, and to deceive either one or the other, love has gained the day. It is not *you* who will be betrayed, so do not punish me for it. I am not acting blindly, and you can weigh the motives which have tipped the scales in your favour carefully.

'When I felt I must yield to my desire to know you, I took my friend into my confidence. We formed a high opinion of your character from your first letter to me, because you

Digitized by Microsoft®

M. M.'s plot: she unfolds it to her new lover.

selected the convent parlour as the place for our first interview, and his casino at Murano for the second. But in return for his complaisance he begged me to allow him to be present at our interview, to conceal him in a small dressing-room, from which one can see and hear everything which goes on in the other room. You have not yet seen this hiding-place, but I will show it you when next we meet. Tell me, dearest, could I refuse this strange satisfaction to a man who was so lenient to me? I consented, and naturally I hid the fact from you. Now you know my friend witnessed all we said and did that first night, but this need not trouble you, for he approved you. I was afraid, when the conversation turned on him, that you might say something wounding to his vanity; but as it happened your remarks were flattering enough. This, then, is the sincere confession of my treason; but you are wise, and I think you will forgive it, more especially as it has done you no harm. My friend is anxious to know who you are.

'On the night in question you behaved quite naturally; but would you have done so had you known you were watched? Probably not. But now that we know each other, and that you do not doubt my love for you, I am going to risk everything for everything. On the last night of the old year, my lover will be at the casino, and he will not leave until the next day. We shall not see him, but he will see us. As you will not be supposed to know that he is there, you must be as natural as you were the first time, otherwise he would guess I had told you. One thing you must be careful about, your subjects of conversation. My friend has all the virtues except the theological virtue called faith. So on this point you will have a free hand. You can speak of literature, travels, politics, everything you like, and you need not restrict yourself in personal anecdote. You are sure to meet with his approbation. Tell me frankly, do you object? Yes or no? I shall not close my eyes till I get your answer. If it is *no*, I will find some excuse, but I hope it will be *yes*.'

This letter astonished me, but on reflection I saw that, if anything, the leading part had been assigned to me, and so could afford to laugh.

I answered, assuring her that I would do her pleasure, and would be careful not to let him see I knew his secret.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I spent the six intervening days with my friends in Venice, and on the seventh, New Year's Eve, I repaired to the casino, where I found M. M. awaiting me. She was dressed with the most extreme elegance.

'My friend is not here yet,' she said; 'as soon as he is I will make you a sign.'

'Where is this mysterious cupboard?'

'Here; look at the back of this sofa, which is set in the wall; all the flowers which are carved in relief have a hole in the middle, the dressing-room is behind, there is a couch in it, a table, and all that is needful to pass the night in comfort.'

I complimented M. M. on her costume, remarking that it was the first time I had seen her wearing rouge. I liked the way she had put it on, as the court ladies at Versailles put on theirs. The charm lies in the negligent way in which it is applied; no one tries to make it look natural; it pleases, inasmuch as it permits us to anticipate a greater carelessness and freedom. M. M. said she wore it to please her friend.

'I argue from that,' said I, 'that he is a Frenchman.'

At this very moment she made me a little sign; the lover was at his post, and the comedy began.

A screen scene.

We sat down to table, where a sumptuous supper was laid; she ate for two, and I for four. I had eaten nothing that day but a cup of chocolate and a salad of whites of eggs drowned in Lucca oil and *vinaigre des quatre voleurs*. The dessert was served in silver-gilt dishes of the same pattern as the handsome candelabra which were on the table. To please the lover behind the screen, I alluded to these candelabra and admired them.

'They are a present from him,' she said, as I had expected.

'A most magnificent present; did he give you snuffers with them?'

'No.'

'From that I imagine he is a *grand seigneur*.'

'Why should you think so?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Because a *grand seigneur* does not even know that candles need snuffing.'

Presents for M. M. and C. C.

My beloved M. M. had expressed a wish to have my portrait: I sent for the artist who had painted me in miniature for C. C., and after three sittings he produced a masterpiece. It was rather larger than the one I had had done for C. C., and made so as to be worn in a locket. The portrait was hidden by an ivory medallion of the same size, on which was an Annunciation, the Angel Gabriel represented as a dark young man, and the Blessed Virgin as a fair woman. (The famous painter Mengs imitated this idea in the Annunciation which he painted at Madrid twelve years later.) The two were mounted by an expert jeweller in the most exquisite taste, and I hung them on a gold chain, of the pattern known as 'Spanish links,' six ells long.

Two days after offering this present to my divinity, I received from her a gold snuff-box, the lid of which contained her portrait in her nun's costume. The bottom of the box was hinged, and on being pressed in a certain manner it opened, and revealed another portrait, in which she appeared lying full length on a black satin couch, smiling at Cupid, who, his bow at his feet, was seated near her.

On Twelfth Night we went together to the opera, and afterwards to the Ridotto, where M. M. was much amused at the patrician ladies, who alone had the privilege of promenading up and down unmasked; we then passed into the larger gambling saloon, where my companion, having lost all her money, began to play with mine, with such extraordinary luck that she broke the bank. On counting our gains after supper, in our little casino, we found that my share alone amounted to a thousand sequins.

Shortly after Twelfth Night I received a letter from C. C.:—

'Ah, my dear little husband, I am quite, quite sure that you are in love with my charming friend M. M. She wears a locket containing a picture of the Annunciation, which is evidently by the artist who painted the miniature I have in

Digitized by Microsoft®

my ring, and I feel certain that your portrait is underneath; besides which, Mother M. M. is very curious about my ring, and asked me the other day if Saint Catherine did not conceal the picture of my lover. I am sorry to have to be reserved and deceitful towards her, but believe me when I say that it will not hurt me in the least if you tell me you care for her. I am fond of her, and she has been too good to me for me to endure this deceit for long; let us be quite frank with each other; it must be terrible to have to make love through an iron grating!'

I replied that she had guessed rightly so far as the locket was concerned; it was a present I had made to M. M., and contained my portrait, but she must keep the secret, and at the same time feel assured that the friendship I had for M. M. did not in any way interfere with my feeling for her.

I knew well enough that my letter was somewhat shifty, but I was weak enough to wish to continue an intrigue which my better sense told me was drawing to its inevitable close; it could not possibly continue, if an intimacy was once established between the two rivals.

The ball in the convent parlour.

I had learned from Laura that there was to be a ball in the big parlour of the convent, and I determined to go, disguised so that my two friends should not recognise me. In Venice these innocent amusements are permitted in convents in carnival time: the public dances in the parlours and the sisters watch them through the gratings; the ball winds up early, every one goes home, and the poor recluses have something to think of during the long dull months that follow. I decided to dress as a Pierrot. This costume, which is comparatively uncommon in Italy, has the advantage of hiding peculiarities of figure and bearing; the large cap covers the hair, and the white gauze stretched over the face prevents the eyes and eyebrows from being recognisable. I started for Murano without taking a cloak, and with nothing in my pockets but a handkerchief, my purse, and the key of my casino. The parlour was crowded, but I was the only Pierrot

Digitized by Microsoft®

among numberless harlequins, punchinellos, pantaloons, and scaramouches. Behind the grating, among the nuns and boarders, I saw my two friends, their eyes fixed on the dancers. I attached myself to a pretty columbine, and together we danced a minuet. She danced divinely, and we were frantically applauded. Then I danced twelve *forlanes* straight off, and then falling down, I pretended to be asleep, and every one respected the sleep of Pierrot. After a *contredanse*, which lasted an hour, a harlequin came up, and with the impertinence which is part of the character, attempted to rob me of my partner. He struck and worried me with his wand, till I quickly caught him by the waistband and carried him round the room; then I put him down and seized his columbine. I packed her on to my shoulder and chased him. Then I had a fight with another, and knocked him down; then, in the midst of the laughter and clapping of the spectators and the nuns, who had never seen such a spectacle, I gained the door and disappeared.

It was still two hours to the time appointed for meeting M. M. at my casino, and these hours I spent gambling, winning at every stroke. With my pockets full of gold, and gloating over the thought of M. M.'s surprise when she should recognise in me the applauded Monsieur Pierrot, I arrived at our casino, and entered the sanctuary. There was my divinity leaning against the chimney-piece. She was dressed as a nun. I approached on tiptoe, looked at her, and stood petrified!

M. M. and C. C. exchange clothes.

For it was not M. M.; it was C. C., in the costume of her friend. The poor girl did not heave a sigh, or proffer a word, or make a movement. I flung myself into a chair. I was stupefied, bodily and mentally, and sat there for half an hour, thinking over M. M.'s perfidy, for, sure, it was she had played me this trick.

But I could not remain all night in dead silence; I must do and say something. C. C., so far, only knew me for the Pierrot she had seen dancing at the convent; or perhaps she had guessed. I owed her something; I had given her the

Digitized by Microsoft®

right to call me husband. I was wretched. I took the covering off my face, and C. C. sighed out, 'I felt it was you.'

After lavishing on her such caresses as I could command at the moment, I begged her to tell me how she came there.

'I hardly know myself,' she answered; 'it is like a dream. After having laughed at the tricks of the Pierrot, whom we little thought was you, dear friend, M. M. and I left the parlour and went to her room. She asked me if I would do something for her, and I said, "Yes, with all my heart." She opened her wardrobe and dressed me as you see; she then said she was going to confide a great secret to my keeping, but that she knew she could trust me. "Know," said she, "that I was about to leave the convent, and stay away until to-morrow morning, but fate has decreed it should be you who are to follow this programme in my stead. In an hour's time a lay sister will come for you; follow her across the garden to the river, where you will find a gondola. Say to the boatman, 'To the casino.' In five minutes you will come to a little house; go in and upstairs; there you will find a comfortable room and a good fire; wait. I must not tell you more than this, but be sure that nothing unpleasant will happen." I looked upon it all as an amusing escapade, I followed her instructions, and here I am. I had been here three-quarters of an hour when you came in. In spite of your disguise, my heart told me at once it was you; but when you recoiled from me I was thunderstruck, for I knew then that though you expected some one, it was not me. But now kiss me. You know I am reasonable, and glad you are happy with M. M.; she is the only woman in the world I could bear to share you with. Kiss me!'

I embraced her again tenderly, at the same time telling her that I thought her friend had played us an ugly trick.

'I will not conceal from you,' I said, 'that I am in love with M. M. You must not judge me too harshly; remember you have been shut up for eight months in your convent, and during that time I have had to console myself as I best could.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I do not love you any the less, but I have become attached to M. M., and she knows it; she has accepted my homage, and now she has given me a mark of her disdain, for if she cared for me as I care for her she would not have thought of sending you in her place.'

C. C. defends M. M.

The loyal and generous C. C. took up the defence of her friend, and strove to persuade me she had been actuated only by the kindest motives. M. M., she argued, was as devoid of jealousy and small-mindedness as she was herself. M. M. was unable to keep her appointment; it was only natural that she should send the friend who was her other self instead.

But I was very angry with M. M. 'It is not the same thing at all,' I said. 'I love M. M., and I can never marry her. As for you, dear, you are to be my wife, and propinquity will give fresh life to our love. But it is not so with M. M. It is humiliating to think that I have only inspired her with a fleeting caprice, is it not?'

We continued arguing in this strain until midnight, when the prudent concierge brought us supper. My heart was too heavy to eat, although I made a pretence of doing so. I could not help seeing that C. C. had improved and developed. Nevertheless I remained indifferent to her, though the poor thing was full of tact. She continued to be tender without being passionate, and perfectly sweet in every way. Two hours before daybreak, as we were seated before the fire, she asked me what she should say to M. M. on her return to the convent.

'Tell her all,' I said; 'hide nothing from her; and above all, tell her that she has made me very unhappy. Believe me, dear friend, I love you with all my heart, but I am in a most difficult position.'

The alarum sounded. I had hoped that M. M. would appear during the course of that long night and justify herself, but no! With tears in our eyes we parted, C. C. to return to her expectant friend, and I to Venice.

It was bitterly cold, and a strong wind was blowing; there

Digitized by Microsoft®

was neither boat nor boatman to be seen along the quay, the rain beat through my linen dress. I could not go back to the casino, for in a fit of temper I had given the key to C. C. to remit to M. M. My pockets and purse were full of gold pieces, and Murano is celebrated for its thieves, who rob and assassinate with impunity; they are indeed granted many a privilege because of their skill in the glass factories; the government has even made them citizens to keep them there. I had not even the little knife about me which in my dear country every honest citizen must carry to defend his life. I wandered about until I came to a cottage, through whose window a light was shining. With much difficulty and much bribing I induced the proprietor to get up, and, accompanied by his son, row me back to the city. The storm had by this time increased in fury, and several times we were within an ace of drowning; one of the men fell overboard, but scrambled back into the gondola; we lost an oar, and were all drenched to the skin; at last, however, we got into the Beggar's Canal, and from there to the Bragadin Palace.

The accident to the gondola.

Five or six hours later, when M. de Bragadin and his friends came to see me, they found me in bed, in a high fever and delirious, but they could not help laughing at the sight of the dripping Pierrot costume on the sofa. By the evening I was better, though still very ill, and when the faithful Laura came in the morning I could not read the letters she brought me; it was many days before I could do so.

The two charming creatures each wrote to me protestations of esteem and affection, and expressed their desire that we should form a trio of friends. They implored me to think better of my determination to abandon the casino.

M. M. had indeed been present during my stormy interview with C. C., but she had prudently refrained from interfering with our hoped-for reconciliation. Then sleep had overtaken her, and she had not waked until the noise of the alarum roused her. C. C. had given her the key, which she now sent back to me, and together they had fled out into the

Digitized by Microsoft®

storm, and back to the convent, where they changed their dresses, and M. M. went to bed, while C. C. sat at her pillow and listened to her confession, how she had seized the opportunity of C. C. being called away to examine her ring, and with a pin had moved and disclosed the spring. Then she had guessed that they both loved the same man. In spite of this disclosure M. M. had not changed her manner to C. C., but had thought only of how she should prove her generosity to the other two. She had thought herself so clever when she had substituted C. C. for M. M., but 'our lover,' as they called me, had, alas! taken the matter in bad part. Then C. C.'s aunt had come in and told them a long story of the Pierrot and an accident to the boat, which terrified them. But the aunt was able to assure them that the Pierrot was saved and was a son of M. de Bragadin. When she had gone, M. M. turned to C. C. and asked her if I was really a son of M. de Bragadin, for he had never been married? Then C. C. told her the whole story, and how I was in treaty with her father for her hand. They hoped to meet me at the casino soon, either together or singly.

How could I resist this? As soon as I was well enough I wrote explaining the reason of my long silence, and fixing a rendezvous with M. M.

4th February 1754.

On the 4th of February 1754, I again found myself *tête-à-tête* with her. We fell spontaneously into each other's arms, and our reconciliation was complete. I asked her if we were really alone. She took a candle, and opening a large wardrobe, which I had already suspected of being practicable in some way, she shot a bolt, and behold, a small apartment with a sofa, and over that sofa three or four little holes through which the occupants of the chamber we were in could be observed.

'You want to know,' she said, 'if I was alone on the fatal night when you met C. C. here? I was not; my friend was with me, and don't be angry, for he was delighted with you and with C. C. in her distress. How well she reasoned, he

Digitized by Microsoft®

thought, and only fifteen!' Then we talked of my Pierrot disguise, and how it had led to their discovery of my real estate; and she admitted that she was glad I was not a patrician, as she had feared.

I knew perfectly well what she meant, but I pretended to be ignorant.

'I cannot speak to you openly,' she continued, 'until you promise to do what I am going to ask of you.'

'Speak, sweetheart, and count on me. I am sure you will ask nothing that could compromise my honour.'

'I want you to ask my friend to sup openly with us at the casino; he is dying to make your acquaintance. I have already told him who you are, as otherwise he would not have dared to suggest such a thing.'

'I imagine that your friend is a foreigner. One of the ministers, perhaps.'

'Precisely.'

'I hope he will do me the honour of not preserving his incognito on that occasion?'

'I shall present you to him in due form by his right name, and mention his political qualifications.'

'In that case then I consent; fix the day and I will be there.'

'Now that I am sure of your coming, I will tell you everything,' she said. 'My protector is M. de Bernis,[1] the French ambassador.'

[1] Pierre de Bernis was born 22nd May 1615 at St. Marcel, Ardêche. He was educated at the school of Louis le Grand and the seminary of St. Sulpice. His father was a friend of Cardinal de Fleury, whose aid he solicited for his son. On leaving St. Sulpice at the age of nineteen, Pierre was received in the best society on account of his birth, his good looks, and his talent for writing *vers de société*. The Princesse de Rohan made him the *mode*. Thanks to the patronage of several *grandes dames*, he entered the Academy when only twenty-nine years of age, while Voltaire, who was then fifty, was still waiting to be admitted. The friendship of Madame de Pompadour counted for much in his success. Verses on her dimples obtained for him a pension and a lodging in the Tuileries, which latter she furnished with odds and ends from her own apartment. He was sent ambassador to Venice, in 1752, recalled in 1755, and made member of the Grand Council. He was charged to conclude a secret

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I can now understand why you dreaded to hear that I was a patrician! The State Inquisitors would not have been long in showing their zeal! They would have soon interfered with us, and I shudder to think of the awful consequences which would surely have ensued. I should have been put in "The Leads," and you would have been dishonoured, and the abbess, and the convent! Great Heavens! what risks you have run! As it is, we are safe, and nothing remains but to fit the date of the supper.'

'Four days from now we are going to the opera, and after

treaty between France and Austria, which was to oppose the alliance between England and Prussia. This famous treaty, which astonished all Europe, was conceived by Madame de Pompadour, the Comte de Kaunitz, and de Bernis, but its conclusion and execution were due to the young minister. For the first time in nearly three hundred years the houses of Bourbon and Hapsburg entertained friendly relations. In 1757, while Minister of Foreign Affairs, he wished to stop the Seven Years' War by means of any honourable peace, but this was contrary to Madame de Pompadour's designs. She became his enemy: he was exiled from court, and took refuge near Soissons. Clement XIII. raised him to the cardinalate: he was already in minor orders, and was ordained priest so as to receive the red hat, which was conferred upon him two days before leaving Paris. The magnificence of his receptions, the polished ease of his manner, his tact, ability, generosity, and great talents had all combined to make him one of the most striking figures at the court of Louis XV. There is a strong contrast between his political life and his poetry. In the one we find gravity, judgment, simplicity, good taste, and elegance; in the other lightness, affectation, forced sentiment, and superficial ornamentation, and a profusion of florid adjectives, which caused Voltaire to bestow on him the nickname of 'Babet-la-Bouquetière.' One cannot but smile at the difference between morality as he taught and practised it (that is, in his early days; after his elevation to the cardinalship his conduct was exemplary). It is difficult to realise that the man who supplied M. M. *with her small, choice library* is the same who wrote, speaking of the Regent,

> 'De nos jours caressa la licence
> Honora trop les arts et trop peu l'innocence;
> La modestie alors déchira son bandeau
> Et la foi conjugale éteignit son flambeau.'

And again, apostrophising the art of printing—

> 'Pourquoi, toujours soumis à la cupidité,
> Prêtes-tu ton burin à la perversité?
> Pourquoi conserves-tu de coupables maximes
> Qui troublent les états et fomentent les crimes?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

the second ballet, will come on here, if that is agreeable to you.'

After the departure of my beautiful nun I returned post-haste to Venice, where my first care was to send for my cook. I wanted the supper to be worthy of host and guests.

A party of three at the casino.

Four days after this, the time appointed by M. M., she appeared at the casino with the ambassador.

'I am delighted, sir,' he said, 'at this opportunity of renewing our acquaintance, for madame tells me we knew each other in Paris.' While saying this he looked at me keenly, as though trying to recall my face.

'I had the honour,' I answered, 'of dining with your Excellency at M. de Mocenigo's, but you were so occupied with Marshal Keith, the ambassador from the Court of Prussia, that I could not succeed in attracting your attention.'

'I remember you now,' he said, 'for I asked some one if you were not one of the secretaries of the Embassy. However, from this day forth we shall not forget each other, and I hope our intimacy will be a lasting one.'

We sat down to table, when of course I did the honours. The ambassador was a connoisseur, and found my wines excellent. The supper was delicate, abundant, and varied, and my manner towards the handsome couple was that of a private individual receiving his sovereign and the royal favourite. I saw that M. M. was pleased at my attitude, and at the manner in which I talked with the ambassador, who listened to me with the greatest interest. Though we were naturally a little shy, the conversation was animated and amusing. Monsieur de Bernis was a thorough Frenchman, and could thrust and parry in conversation as only one of his nationality can. We spoke of the romantic manner in which our acquaintance had begun, and from thence M. M. led me adroitly to speak of C. C. and my attachment to her; her description of my little friend so pleased the ambassador that he asked why she had not been invited to the supper.

'Why,' said the artful nun, 'it might easily be managed

Digitized by Microsoft®

The plan of M. M.: he yields.

another time, as she shares my room; I could bring her here without any difficulty—that is, if M. Casanova desires it.'

This offer astonished me somewhat, but it was not then the moment to show my surprise.

'If I am to be of the party,' said the ambassador, 'I think she ought to be warned beforehand.'

'I will tell her,' I said, 'to obey madame blindly; at the same time I must beg your Excellency to be indulgent towards a girl of fifteen, who is quite unversed in the ways of the world.'

The next morning I received a letter from M. M., in which she said, that she could not rest until she was sure that the proposed *partie carrée* was to my liking; if I had consented merely from politeness she would undertake to postpone it indefinitely.

I could see then, when it was too late, that I had been the dupe of two cunning diplomats. There was no doubt of it! The ambassador admired C. C., and equally without doubt the complaisant M. M. had determined to further his ends. She could do nothing without my consent, and this she had obtained very cleverly. I had jumped at the bait; at the same time she had made it impossible for me to reproach her, by offering to quash the arrangement, and she knew very well that my vanity would not let any one suppose me jealous; there was nothing left for me to do but to put a good face on it, and not appear stupid and ungrateful in the eyes of a man who after all had shown me the most unheard-of condescension. I hastened therefore to reiterate my invitation, though I was now conscious that our ideal intercourse was drawing to a close.

The ambassador was the first to arrive on the fateful night. He was most civil to me, and told me that had he known me in Paris he would have put me in the way of making my fortune. Now, when I look back on it all, I say to myself, 'Supposing he had done so, where and what should I be now?' Perhaps one of the victims of the Revolution, as

Digitized by Microsoft®

he himself would undoubtedly have been had not fate decreed he should die at Rome, in the year 1794. He died very rich, but very miserable.

I asked him if he liked Venice, and he replied that it was delightful, and if one had plenty of money one could amuse oneself there better than anywhere else. 'But,' he added, 'I am afraid I shall not be here much longer; keep my secret, though, for I do not wish to sadden M. M.'

A party of four at the casino.

We continued this confidential talk until the arrival of M. M. and her young friend. C. C. looked perfectly ravishing, and during the supper, which was fit for a king, the ambassador was most attentive to her. Wit, gaiety, decency, and *bon ton* presided at the table, but did not exclude the Gallic salt which Frenchmen know well how to insinuate into any conversation. M. M. treated the cardinal like an intimate friend; to me she behaved politely, she might have been C. C.'s elder sister.

M. de Bernis thanked M. M. for the most delightful supper he had ever assisted at in his life, thus obliging her to invite us to another the week following. At this second supper, however, he did not appear. Just as we were ready to sit down to table, the concierge came in with a letter, in which the ambassador said that a courier had brought him some unexpected despatches, and it was impossible for him to join us.

'It is not his fault,' said M. M., 'we must amuse ourselves as we best can, but let us make another rendezvous. Shall we say Friday?'

I acquiesced, not realising that once more I was walking into a trap; but the next day, in thinking over recent events, my eyes were opened, and I saw how I had played into the ambassador's hands: the story of the courier was an invention; the *Suisse* at the door of the ambassador's house told me that no despatches had been received for two months. He had voluntarily stayed away, so as to leave me with the two friends. I, in my turn, could not be less obliging; when

Digitized by Microsoft®

Friday night came, I must invent some excuse for absenting myself.

He sees through M. M.

It was M. M.'s doing. She wanted me to believe in her love, and she was able to assume all those virtues a man best prefers—honour, delicacy, and loyalty—but she was still a libertine at heart, and yearned to make me her accomplice. She had subdued the spirit to the flesh to such an extent, and her conscience to such a pitch of flexibility, that it no longer reproached her. She had manipulated events to her liking, and she relied on a sense of false shame in me, to stand her ally.

De Bernis and she knew well enough that C. C. was a weak woman, and that once deprived of my moral support she would not be able to withstand them. I was sorry for C. C., but I felt that I could never marry her now.

C. C. wrote and described the supper to me: it made me laugh. She liked the ambassador, but she tried to persuade me that she loved me. M. M.'s letter was still more singular. She told me that C. C. had become a freethinker like ourselves, and was now superior to prejudices. M. M. herself had been under no delusion as to my polite fiction. I had, she thought, magnificently returned the ambassador's civility. I said to myself, '*Georges Dandin, tu l'as voulu*,' and I had the effrontery and courage to write to C. C., congratulating her on her new conquest, and bidding her emulate and imitate M. M. in everything.

On Shrove Tuesday we all four supped together, and this was the last evening I ever spent in C. C.'s company. She was very lively, but having decided on a line of conduct, I devoted myself entirely to M. M. The ambassador proposed after supper that we should play a game of faro: having cut the cards, and put an hundred double louis on the table, we managed so that C. C. should win the whole sum. She was dazzled at the sight of so much gold, and begged her friend to take care of it for her, until she should leave the convent to get married.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Now, although her infidelity had led me to look upon her in a totally different light to that in which I had hitherto regarded her, I could not help feeling that it was owing to me that she had wandered so far astray, and that consequently I must always remain her sincere friend. Had I reasoned as clearly in those days as I do now, I should probably have acted otherwise. I should have said, 'It was I who first set the example of infidelity; I told her to follow the advice of M. M., when I knew that her counsels must be vicious; why should I expect a poor weak girl to be stronger than a man who is twice her age?' Following this line of argument, I should have condemned my own conduct rather than hers, and should not have changed towards her, but the fact is, that while I thought myself supremely broad-minded, and above all prejudices, I was nearly as limited and as much a slave to custom as most men who expect immaculate virtue in their wives, while insisting on absolute licence for themselves and their mistresses.

De Bernis bids them farewell.

On Good Friday, when I arrived at the casino, I found de Bernis and his mistress plunged in sorrow; supper was served, but he ate nothing; M. M. was like a marble statue. Discretion and good breeding forbade me questioning them, but when M. M. left us, de Bernis told me that he had orders to leave for Vienna within fifteen days. 'I may as well tell you,' he said, 'that I do not think there is any likelihood of my returning, but do not let her know this, it would only add to her grief. I am going to work with the Austrian cabinet on a treaty which will make all Europe talk. Write to me as a friend, and without reserve, and if you really care for our mutual friend, look after her, and above all be careful of her honour; be strong to resist temptations which may expose you to what would be fatal to you both. You know what happened to Madame de Riva, who was a nun at the convent of S——? As soon as the scandal became public she disappeared, and her protector, M. de Frulai, my predecessor, went mad, and died shortly after. J. J. Rousseau told me

Digitized by Microsoft®

that his madness was the effect of poison, but Rousseau always sees the darkest side of things. I think he died of grief at being unable to help the unhappy lady, whom the Pope has since dispensed from her vows. She lives now at Parma, married, but without respect or consideration. Let loyal and prudent friendship be stronger than love; see M. M. sometimes in the convent, but do not meet here, for the gondoliers will surely betray you as soon as I am gone. So for God's sake be careful in the future, and above all keep me informed, for I shall always be interested in her and her fate, from duty and from sentiment.'

The minister then sent for the concierge, and drew up a deed in his presence, which he made him sign. By this deed he made over the casino and everything in it to me, and ordered the concierge to treat me in everything as his master.

We were to have one farewell supper together; but when, on the appointed evening, I entered the casino, I found M. M. alone, as pale as death, and almost as cold.

'He has gone,' she said, 'and he commends me to you. I shall perhaps never see him again. Fatal man! I thought I only cared for him as a friend, but now that I have lost him, I see all that he was to me. Before knowing him I was not happy, but I was not miserable, as I am now, and as I shall be for the rest of my life.'

He pronounces judgment on the character of M. M.

During that long and wretched night her character was completely revealed to me. She was a creature of the moment, as wildly transported with joy over good fortune as she was cast down and overcome by sorrow when things went against her. To-day, when years have bleached my hair, and calmed the ardour of my senses, I can judge her dispassionately, and I feel that my beautiful nun sinned against modesty, that most worthy attribute of her sex. But if this unique woman was wanting in that virtue—I then thought the lack of it admirable—she was equally free from the frightful venom called jealousy, a miserable passion which burns and dries up its victims, and the objects of their hate.

Digitized by Microsoft®

For some time we faithfully followed de Bernis's injunctions, and only saw each other in the convent parlour; then, giving way to our feelings, we disobeyed him, and appointed a meeting at the casino.

'I am sure,' said M. M., 'I can rely on the gardener's wife, she will let me in and out of a small door at the bottom of the garden; all that we need is a gondola and a boatman. Surely, if you pay him well enough, you can find one who will serve us faithfully.'

'Listen,' said I, 'I will be the boatman myself, you will let me in through the little door, and I will stay with you here, and the following day as well, if you think you can hide me.'

'No,' said she, 'your project is too dangerous; let me know as nearly as possible the time you will come in your boat, and I will be waiting for you. We will go to our dear casino; after all, it is the safest place for us to meet in.'

I bought a boat, and a boatman's costume, hired a *cabane* in which to keep them, and after having made one or two trial trips round the island, I went one hour before sunset to the little door in the garden wall. It opened an instant after my arrival, and M. M. came out, wrapped in an immense cloak.

It must be owned that my first experience as *barcarolo* was not encouraging, and would certainly have cooled the ardour of lovers less infatuated than we were. The nights were short, and M. M. had to return to her convent before three in the morning, which gave us but little time to be together. Once, an hour or so before it was time for her to start on her homeward journey, a frightful storm broke, and we were obliged to sit out in driving wind and rain; although I was a strong and competent oarsman, I had not the skill of a professional. I do not know what would have happened to us, if we had not had the luck to be overtaken by a four-oared barque, which, for two sequins, consented to tow us to our destination. If salvation had not come to us in the shape of the barque, we should have had to elope together,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and my life would have been irrevocably bound to hers. Then I should not have been sitting here at Dux, at the age of seventy-two, writing these Memoirs.

For three months we contrived to see each other weekly, and always by the same means. I, of course, grew more skilful in the management of my boat, and in all this time we did not meet with the slightest accident.

Note.—In the Letters of the Prince de Ligne to Casanova *à propos* of the propriety of printing the more personal anecdotes of the *Mémoires* we have the mysterious direction : '*Faites imprimer M. M. et L. L. puisque A. S. est mort.*'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XIV

THE FALSE M. M.

De Bernis having left Venice, I became intimate with Murray, the English resident minister. He was a fine fellow, learned, and very fond of women. He kept Ancilla, one of my old loves, and she died in his arms, a hideous sight, of the illness which killed Francis the First of France. Murray cynically bragged about his heroism in loving her to the end. He did not replace her for some time, but flew like a bee from flower to flower. Some of the prettiest women in Venice passed through his hands. Two years later he left for Constantinople, where he represented the Cabinet of St. James with the Sublime Porte.

About this time, fate threw in my way a patrician named Mark Anthony Zorzi, a man of some talent, celebrated for his witty couplets ; he was devoted to the drama, and produced a comedy which the public dared to hiss. The piece was condemned for its want of merit, but he was convinced that its failure was due to the influence of the Abbé Chiari, the titular poet of the Theatre Saint Angelo. From that moment Zorzi looked on the abbé as his enemy, and vowed vengeance against him. He hired a set of ruffians, who attended the theatre nightly, to hiss, without rhyme or reason, every one of the unfortunate Chiari's comedies. I did not care for Chiari, either as man or author, and Zorzi's house was an agreeable one to frequent ; he had an excellent cook and a charming wife. I repaid his hospitality by criticising his enemy's productions, about

Digitized by Microsoft®

Causes which, in his own estimation, led towards his incarceration in 'The Leads.'

which I wrote *martelliers*, a form of doggerel verse much in vogue. Zorzi had these verses printed and distributed. My poor lines became one of the factors in my subsequent misfortunes. They gained me the dislike of M. Condulmer, a person of much political influence. This good gentleman was over sixty, but was still alert and vigorous; he was fond of money and play. It was said he practised usury on the sly, but he was careful to maintain a good reputation, and passed for a saint, as he went to daily Mass at Saint Mark's, and had been seen on many occasions weeping before the crucifix. He had another reason to dislike me besides my lampoons. Before I appeared on the scene he was first in the good graces of the wife of Zorzi, who after my advent grew cool towards him; he was also part proprietor of the theatre of Saint Angelo, and the non-success of the poetical abbé's pieces affected his pocket painfully.

Unfortunately for me he was appointed Councillor of State, and in this quality served for eight months as inquisitor, in which eminent and diabolical position it was easy for him to insinuate to his colleagues that it would be a good thing to put me in prison. The notorious 'Leads'—*I Piombi*—were made for disturbers of the public peace and repose, like myself.

At the beginning of the winter came the astonishing news of the treaty of alliance between the houses of France and Austria. This treaty totally changed the political face of Europe, and had hitherto been considered by the powers as impossible. All Italy rejoiced at the alliance, for had the slightest friction arisen between France and Austria, her fair fields would have become the theatre of war. This marvellous treaty was conceived and concluded by a young minister who until then had been looked upon merely in the light of a *bel esprit*. The whole thing was planned in secret, in the year 1750, by Madame de Pompadour, the Comte de Kaunitz, and the Abbé de Bernis, who was not made ambassador to Venice till the following year.

Digitized by Microsoft®

For two hundred and forty years the houses of Hapsburg and Bourbon had been at enmity: the reconciliation between them, which was brought about by de Bernis, lasted barely forty years, but was probably as durable a one as could possibly be made between kingdoms so essentially opposed to one another. After the signing of the treaty de Bernis was made Minister of Foreign Affairs. Three years later he re-established the French parliament, and as a reward received a cardinal's hat, but almost immediately after this honour he was disgraced and practically exiled to Rome.

What both he and I had foreseen, came to pass: he was not able to return to Venice, and in him I lost a most devoted and powerful protector. He signified to M. M. in a letter, breaking the fact to her in the most affectionate and delicate manner, that their separation was a final one. I have never seen a human being so heartbroken; her grief was such that I believe she would have succumbed to it, had I not fortunately prepared her for the blow, some time before it fell. I received instructions from de Bernis to sell the casino and all that it contained, and to hand the proceeds to M. M.; only the books and engravings were to be sent to Paris in charge of the concierge. Truly they constituted a pretty breviary for a future cardinal!

So by the middle of January we had no casino. I could now only see M. M. at the convent grating. She came to me there, one day early in February, looking like a dying woman. She told me she thought she would not live long, and gave me her jewel-case, containing her diamonds and the greater part of her money; she only reserved a small sum for herself. She also gave me all the curious books she possessed, and her love-letters; if she recovered I was to return them to her, but in case of her death I was to keep everything. I promised her that I would live at Murano till she was better, and old Laura found me a furnished room and lent me her pretty daughter, Tonine, as a servant. I was terribly afraid Tonine would console me to her own destruction. I meant to ask Laura to

Old Laura lends him her daughter as a servant.

Digitized by Microsoft®

provide me some one plainer, but I thought better—or worse—of it, and Tonine stayed and devoted herself to my comfort.

A few days later I heard through C. C. that her friend was delirious, and had raved loudly for over three days, in French fortunately, or she would certainly have put the decorous nuns to flight. This was the worst day of her illness. The moment her senses returned to her, she asked C. C. to write and tell me that she would be sure to recover if I would promise to carry her off as soon as her health would allow of a long journey. I said she might count on me, that my own life depended on it. From that time she began to mend; by the end of March she was out of danger. She was not to leave her room till after Easter. I went on living at Murano, and Tonine, my pretty servant, made the time pass pleasantly for me. M. M.'s letters were loving, but they had ceased to interest me. It was difficult and tiresome to me to answer them.

At the end of April I saw M. M. at the convent grating. She was very thin and much changed. I flatter myself that my behaviour inspired her with confidence, and that she did not notice the change which a new love had worked in me. I dared not take the hope of the projected elopement from her, lest she fell ill again. I kept my casino, which didn't cost much, and went to see M. M. twice a week, and on other days I stopped at the casino and made love to Tonine.

One evening when I was supping at the casino of Mr. Murray, the English resident, with my friend Dr. Righellini, I purposely turned the conversation on a beautiful nun, M. E., whom we had seen that afternoon at the Convent of the Virgins, a religious house under the jurisdiction of the Doge.

'Between Masons,' said the Englishman, 'I think if you asked M. E. to supper, and offered her a handsome present, she would come.'

'Some one has been hoaxing you, my dear friend,' I answered, 'or you would not say such a thing. It is anything but easy to gain access to the most beautiful nun in Venice.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'She is not the most beautiful nun in Venice. Mother M. M. of Murano is far better looking.'

'I have heard of her,' said I. 'I have even seen her—once. But I do not think that she could be bribed.'

'I think she could,' said he, smiling; 'and I am not over credulous.'

'I will wager anything you are mistaken.'

His wager.

'You would lose your wager. As you have only seen her once you would perhaps not recognise her portrait.'

'Indeed I should. Her appearance made a great impression on me.'

He took half a dozen miniatures out of a table drawer.

'If you recognise any of them,' said he, 'I hope you will be discreet.'

'You can count on my silence,' said I. 'Here are three whom I know, and one who is certainly like M. M., but so many women have traits in common.'

He persisted, and even went so far as to tell me, under the seal of secrecy, that M. M. had supped with him in her nun's dress, and had accepted a purse containing five hundred sequins. He had never been to see her at the convent, he said, for fear of arousing the suspicions of her official lover, the French ambassador. Although I could not stifle the rising doubts in my mind, I still had sufficient faith in M. M. to wager Murray five hundred sequins that he was mistaken, and we determined to decide the wager as follows. He was to make a rendezvous with the supposed M. M. through Capsucefalo, the man who had introduced him to her. As soon as she arrived at the appointed place he would leave her for an hour or so, and then he and I were to go to the convent at Murano and summon M. M. to the parlour. If the answer came that she was ill, or busy, I was to admit that I had lost the wager. He was moreover to take his nun, whether she was M. M. or no, to my casino. My pretty Tonine was to prepare a cold supper and to keep out of the way on the fateful night.

We dined there first, Righellini, Murray, and I, and Tonine

Digitized by Microsoft®

waited on us. Murray and Righellini were delighted with her. She confided to me afterwards her amazement at seeing the Englishman[1] walk away as fresh and steady as possible with six bottles of my good wine in him. He looked like a handsome Bacchus, limned by Rubens.

When we came to the convent gate I was more dead than alive, though I did not love M. M. any longer. I entered the parlour with my Englishman. It was lighted by four candles, and after a few moments of the most horrible suspense my dear M. M. appeared, with a lay sister, holding small flat candlesticks in their hands. Murray looked very serious, and did not even smile when M. M., brilliant and beautiful, addressed him.

'I am afraid,' she said, 'that I am making you miss the first act of the opera?'

'I had rather see you, for one moment, madame, than the best opera in the world.'

'You are English, I think, sir?'

'Yes, madame.'

'The English nation is now the first in the world, for it is as free as it is powerful. Gentlemen, I am your very humble servant.'

So we were dismissed! As soon as we were outside the door of my casino—'Well,' said I, 'are you convinced?'

'Come along, and hold your tongue. We will talk about this when we get home; meantime, you must come in here with me. What should I do left alone for four hours with the creature in there? Capsucefalo is to fetch the pretended nun at midnight, and I promise you some fun. I shall throw them both out of the window.'

The false nun.

When I entered the room with Murray, the false nun flung a handkerchief over her face, her mantle and her mask were on the bed. She began to abuse Murray for introducing a third person, but he silenced her by brutally calling her by her right name. We found a pair of pistols and a dagger

[1] Murray was a Manxman.

Digitized by Microsoft®

hidden in the folds of her dress, which we took from her, threatening her with imprisonment if she made the slightest disturbance. After some protest she decided that it would be better to make friends with us, if possible, and told us the whole story. Capsucefalo had told her that there was a lot of money to be made out of Murray if she were only clever enough to play the game under his directions. She had studied the rôle until he had pronounced her perfect in it; but she was only a poor courtesan from Venice, whose name was Innocente.

We sat down to supper and supped well. We thought fit to utterly neglect the creature, and did not even offer her a glass of wine. Shortly after midnight we heard some one knocking gently at the door. Murray opened it, and admitted Capsucefalo, who did not change countenance when he saw me, but said, 'Oh, it is you, is it? Well, you know how to keep your mouth shut.'

Murray, who was playing carelessly with the fair one's pistols, asked him quietly, where he was going when he left us, and where he intended to take his protégée.

'Back to the convent.'

'I hardly think so. I fancy it is more likely you will keep each other company in prison.'

'I think not,' said the other, in no wise disconcerted; 'for the affair would make too much noise, and the laugh would not be altogether on your side. Come,' said he, addressing his companion, 'it is time we were off.'

Murray, calm and cold as became an Englishman, poured Capsucefalo out some chambertin, and the scoundrel had the impudence to drink to his health.

'That is a fine ring you have on,' said Murray; 'may I look at it more closely? It is a good diamond; what did you give for it?'

'Four hundred sequins,' answered Capsucefalo somewhat abashed.

'I will keep it at that price,' said Murray, putting it

Digitized by Microsoft®

into his pocket, 'and we will cry quits, eh, procurer of nuns?'

Capsucefalo remained for a moment speechless, then with a low bow he left the room, followed by his companion.

I congratulated Murray on the neat way in which he had outwitted the knave. He laughed, and shrugging his shoulders, said, 'That is how legends grow; but for you I should have been firmly convinced that the nuns of Venice are as immoral as they are lovely!'

I told the whole story to M. M., and it was curious to note her changes of expression—fear, anger, indignation and pleasure—when I told her that the gentleman who accompanied me to the parlour was the English consul. She expressed disdain when I told her that he had said he would willingly give a hundred guineas a month for the privilege of seeing her from time to time, even with the grating between them. She teased me about Tonine, and I confessed. She told me that I owed it to her, however, to have Capsucefalo put away, and I was obliged to promise her that if the resident did not get rid of him I would. However, two or three days later, when I was dining with Lady Murray (English women, when they are the daughters of titled people, retain the parental title after marriage[1]), Murray told me that he had spoken to the Secretary of the Inquisition about the affair, and that Capsucefalo had been sent back to Cephalonia, and forbidden to re-enter Venice on pain of death. As for the courtesan, no one knew what became of her.

He dines with Lady Murray and her daughters.

About this time M. de Bernis wrote to me, and to M. M., begging us to think seriously before putting our project of running away together into execution. He said that I must talk sense to our nun, and point out to her that if we went to Paris it would be impossible for him to protect us, and that not all his influence could guarantee our safety. We agreed with him and wept, but indeed M. M. was growing convinced, and I had very little more trouble with her.

[1] Casanova instructs us here out of the depths of his ignorance.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I think that in every man's life there are distinct periods governed by good or bad luck. I was now entering upon one of these latter. I was unsuccessful in whatever I undertook. I had had a long run of luck in love and at cards both. I had won steadily for many months, but now, though love still smiled upon me, chance forsook me altogether. I lost not only my own money, but M. M.'s. At her request I sold her diamonds, but their price went the way of our other possessions. It could now no longer be a question of eloping together. We had nothing to elope on.

Murray, the English resident, makes him a proposition.

One day Murray made me a proposal with regard to Tonine, which I did not feel I should be justified in keeping from her. I loved her, but I knew well enough that we should not be able to spend the rest of our lives together. If I would give her up he offered to establish her in well-furnished apartments where he could see her when he chose. She was to have a maid, a cook, and thirty sequins a month for table expenses, excepting wine, which Murray would attend to himself. He would allow her an annuity of two hundred crowns a year, to which she would be entitled after she had been a year with him. Tonine cried, though she liked the Englishman well enough, except when he tried to speak Venetian, which made her die of laughing. She made me talk of it to her mother; such details were, she said, a little delicate to be spoken of between mother and daughter. Her mother was delighted, however, so that was settled.

Then I went to see M. M. She was sad, for C. C.'s father had died, and her people had removed her from the convent, and were trying to marry her to a lawyer. C. C. had left a letter for me, swearing eternal fidelity. I answered honestly that I had no prospects, and left her free. All the same C. C. did not marry till after my escape from 'The Leads,' when she knew that I could never again set foot in Venice. I saw her twenty-nine years later, a sad little widow. If I were in Venice now I certainly would not offer to marry her, it would be an impertinence at my age, but I would share my

Digitized by Microsoft®

little all with her, and we would live together like brother and sister.

The reader will remember my satires on the Abbé Chiari. He had answered them in a pamphlet in which I was somewhat roughly handled. I replied to this pamphlet, and threatened the abbé with the bastinado if he were not more careful in his way of speaking in future. He took no public notice of this threat, but I received an anonymous letter bidding me mind myself and leave the abbé alone. About this same time a man named Manuzzi (whom I afterwards found out to be a vile spy in the pay of the inquisitors) offered to get me some diamonds on credit, and on this pretended business obtained admission to my rooms. While there he began to turn over my books and manuscripts, showing special interest in those which dealt with magic. Like a fool I showed him some books dealing with elementary spirits. My readers will do me the justice to believe that I was not the dupe of this nonsense. I merely amused myself with it, as one may amuse oneself with a clever toy. A few days later the traitor told me that a certain person, whose name he was not at liberty to mention, would give me a thousand sequins for five of my books, provided he was convinced of their authenticity. I confided them to him, and in twenty-four hours he brought them back, saying that the would-be purchaser feared they were forgeries. Some years afterwards I learnt that he had taken them to the Secretary of the State Inquisitors, and the fact of my having such books in my possession was sufficient to convince this official that I was a magician.

He is proud of his books, and shows them.

Everything went against me in this fatal month. A certain Madame Memno took it into her head that I was teaching her son the precepts of atheism. She appealed to the uncle of M. de Bragadin to check me in my nefarious career, and naturally the old man was only too glad of an excuse to attack me, for like all de Bragadin's family he was jealous of me. He declared I had obtained an undue influence over his nephew by means of my *cabbala*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Things were growing serious; an *auto-da-fé* might even have become possible, for the things I was accused of concerned the Holy Office, and the Holy Office is a ferocious beast with whom it is dangerous to meddle. There were certain circumstances connected with me, however, which made it difficult for them to shut me up in the ecclesiastical prisons of the Inquisition, and because of this it was finally decided that the State Inquisitors should deal with me. I learnt afterwards that a paid denunciator, supported by two witnesses, had been found to solemnly declare that I did not believe in God, and worshipped the devil. As a proof of this it was alleged that when I lost at play I was never heard to curse Satan! I was also accused of not observing Fridays and other days of abstinence. I was suspected of being a Freemason, and was known to be intimate with foreign ministers who doubtless, said my traducers, paid me large sums of money for information I obtained from my patrician friends. This was a long and serious list of charges against me. It was obvious that I was looked on with disfavour by many influential personages, and several of my real friends, who were truly interested in me, advised me to travel for a time, but I was too obstinate to listen to their counsels. I knew I was innocent, and therefore I thought I had no cause for fear, besides which the actual troubles and anxieties with which I was beset prevented me from attending to what I considered imaginary difficulties. I was heavily in debt, and had pawned all my valuables. Fortunately I had confided my miniatures, papers, and letters to my old friend, Madame Manzoni. How necessary this precaution was my readers will soon see. On returning from the theatre one night I found my door had been forced; the Grand Inquisitor himself, my landlady told me, accompanied by a body of police, had paid me a domiciliary visit, and had turned over everything in my apartment. They told the woman they were looking for a large case of salt, which was an article of contraband; of course they did not find the pretended object of their search, and after

Digitized by Microsoft®

a thorough investigation of my belongings, retired, seemingly empty-handed.

Certain hints of arrest: M. de Bragadin urges him to fly.

'The case of salt,' said my old friend, de Bragadin, 'is nothing but a pretext. I was a state inquisitor for several months, and I know something of their ways. They do not break open doors in search of contraband goods. Believe me, when I tell you, you must leave Venice at once. Go to Fusina, and from thence to Florence, and do not return till I tell you you can do so without risk.'

Blind and presumptuous as I was, I would not listen to his advice. He then, and as a last resource, begged me to take up my abode in the palace with him, for a patrician's palace is sacred, and the archers of the police do not dare to cross the threshold without a special order from the tribunal. Such an order is rarely or never given.

I am ashamed to say I refused even this request from the dear and worthy old man to whom I owed so much love and gratitude; had I listened to him I should have saved myself much misery, and him much grief. Long and earnestly he urged me to take some precautions for my safety, but in vain. I was moved when I saw him actually weeping; but as I did not want to yield, I begged him to spare me the sight of his tears. With a strong effort he controlled himself, made a few casual remarks, and then with a kind, affectionate smile embraced me, saying, 'Perhaps this is the last time we shall see each other, but *Fata viam invenient.*'

I returned his embrace and left him; his prediction was fulfilled. I never saw him again; he died eleven years later.

I was not in the least concerned about my safety, but I was troubled about my debts. On leaving the Bragadin Palace that last time I went to see one of my principal creditors, to persuade him to grant me a delay of eight days before forcing me to pay what I owed him. After a painful interview with this man I went home to bed.

The next morning, before it was light, the door of my room was flung open, and the terrible Grand Inquisitor entered.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Are you Jacques Casanova?' he asked.

He then commanded me to rise and dress myself, and to give him all the papers and documents in my possession, whether written by myself or by others.

'In virtue of whose order?' I asked.

'The order of the State Tribunal,' he replied, and I knew there was nothing for me to do but to obey.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XV

A VENETIAN STATE PRISON

Who can explain the influence which certain words exercise over us? Strong in my courage and my innocence, I was yet positively petrified by the word 'tribunal,' and could only passively obey.

Messer Grande.

'Take them,' said I, pointing to the papers which covered my writing-table. Messer Grande stuffed them into a sack, and then told me I must give up the bound manuscripts I possessed. I showed him where they were hidden, and I knew now that it was Manuzzi who had betrayed me, for these were the books he had offered to buy—the *Clavicula of Solomon*, the *Zecor-ben*, a *Picatris*, a full *Essay on the Planetary Hours*, and the conjurations necessary for holding colloquies with demons of all descriptions. Those who knew I had these books thought that I was a great magician, a supposition which had somewhat flattered me.

Messer Grande confiscates his books.

Messer Grande also took the books I had on my table, *Petrarch*, *Ariosto*, *Horace*, the *Military Philosopher*, a manuscript which Mathilde[1] had given me, the *Portier des Chartreux*, and *Aretino*.

While these things were being gathered up, I dressed myself mechanically, shaved, put on a laced shirt, and my best clothes. Messer Grande watched me imperturbably, dressing as if for a wedding. There were about forty archers outside the door, which showed they expected some difficulty in arresting me! Two would have been enough. It is odd that in

[1] Probably a slip of Casanova's for M.M.?

Digitized by Microsoft®

London, where every one is brave, one man can arrest another single-handed. Among cowards thirty are not considered too many: it is, perhaps, because the coward turned assailant is more frightened than the coward whom he assails! Anyhow in Venice I have often seen a single man stand up against twenty policemen, and escape from them in the end; and I remember once in Paris helping a friend to get away from forty vile myrmidons of the law!

I was taken to the Grand Inquisitor's house, and locked up in a room there. I was quite incapable of thinking or making any plans for my defence, and I spent four hours dozing on a sofa, waking up every now and then, only to fall asleep again, as though under the influence of some powerful narcotic. About three o'clock the captain of the archers came in and told me he had orders to conduct me to 'The Leads.'[1] In silence I followed him; we took a gondola, and after many twistings and turnings, entered the Grand Canal, and landed at the prison quay. After going up and down several staircases, we crossed an enclosed bridge, connecting the ducal palace with the prison, and spanning a narrow canal, which is called the 'rio di Palazzo.' We crossed a long gallery, and entered a room in which sat an individual in patrician dress, who, after looking me up and down, said, 'Put him in safe keeping.' This man was the secretary of the inquisitors, Domenico Cavalli. He was evidently ashamed to speak Venetian before me, for he ordered my detention in the Tuscan *patois*. I was handed over to the guardian of the prison, who held an enormous bunch of keys. I followed him up two little flights of stairs and down a gallery, ending in a locked door. Beyond

[1] The prison took its name from the fact that the roof was covered with sheets of lead instead of tiles. The garrets of the palace were divided into cells which formed the prison, and were entered by a narrow staircase from the Salle Bussola. In the space between the last room and the roof were a dozen cells, where state prisoners were confined, but at the present day the partitions are down to make a depôt for paper, and the prison is suppressed. It was by the last window on the side of the Bridge of Sighs that Casanova escaped. Victor Hugo describes 'the Leads' in *Angelo, Tyrant of Padua.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

this door was another gallery, and another door opening on to a long dirty garret, ill lighted by a window in the roof. At first I thought this garret was my destination, but I was mistaken, for, taking up a huge key, the gaoler opened a heavy door, barred with iron, and only about three feet and a half high, with a small round hole in the middle; he made a sign to me to pass through, but at that moment I was busily staring at an iron machine solidly clamped to the wall, in the shape of a horse-shoe, and about fifteen inches in diameter.

He talks with the gaoler.

'I see, sir,' said the gaoler smiling, 'that you want to know the use of that little instrument. When their Excellencies order some one to be strangled, he is seated on a stool, his back against the wall, that collar round his neck; a silken cord goes through the holes at the two ends, and passes over a wheel; the executioner turns a crank, and the condemned man yields up his soul to God! So we have every reason to believe, for, thank Heaven, the confessor does not leave him till he is dead.'

'Most ingenious,' said I, 'and I think it must be you who have the honour of turning the crank.' He did not answer, but made me another sign, in reply to which I passed through the door; I had to bend myself double to do so. He locked me in, and then asked me through the grated hole what I would like to eat. I answered that I had not thought about eating so far, whereupon he left me, and I heard him carefully fasten the doors behind him.

There was a window in the cell, about two feet wide, crossed by iron bars, the thickness of a man's thumb. This formed sixteen panes, five inches square. This window would have let in plenty of light had it not been half blocked by an immense oaken roof beam. I could not stand upright, as the walls were only five feet and a half high; on one side was a kind of alcove, capable of holding a bed, but there was no bed, or table, or chair, or furniture of any kind, except a small tub, and a narrow bench screwed to the wall, four feet above the floor. On this bench I laid my paduasoy mantle, my beauti-

Digitized by Microsoft®

ful new coat, and my hat, trimmed with a long white feather and Spanish point lace. It was terribly hot. I went to the hole in the door to get some air, and saw several enormous rats running about freely in the outer garret. These animals have always been abhorrent to me, and make my blood run cold. I hastily shut up the hole with a wooden shutter which hung on the inside.

First hours in prison.

I passed eight hours, leaning my arms on the window ledge, silent and motionless. The sound of a clock striking roused me; it was strange that no one came near me. I was not hungry, but I was thirsty, and had a bitter taste in my mouth. After another interval of three hours I grew furious. I shouted and yelled, and kicked against the walls and doors; but all to no purpose. After an hour of this exercise I shut the grating, lest the rats should get in, and lay full length on the floor. I was now convinced that the barbarous inquisitors had abandoned me to die of starvation. Yet I failed to see how I had merited such treatment. I was a libertine, a gambler, outspoken, and too fond, perhaps, of the less innocent pleasures of life, but I had committed no crime against the state. Varying my meditations with curses and imprecations, worn out with fatigue, tortured with hunger and thirst, God was good to me—I fell asleep.

God is good to him: he sleeps.

It was pitch dark when I awoke. I was lying on my left side on the hard narrow plank. I stretched out my right hand to find my handkerchief, which I had by me, when to my horror it encountered another hand, stiff and cold as ice. I have never in my life been so frightened, and it was several minutes before I recovered my senses sufficiently to perceive that it was my own left hand I was grasping; it had become insensible through the hardness of the boards, and the weight of my body. This incident, trivial in itself, made me think. I saw I was in a position which distorted and exaggerated everything, so that what was true appeared false, and what was false appeared true. I determined to be on my guard against the chimeras my heated imagination was certain to

Digitized by Microsoft®

conjure up; for the first time in my life, at the age of thirty, I called to my aid the philosophy whose germs had always been dormant in me. Many men die without ever having really reflected in their lives, and this not because they are lacking in intelligence, but because circumstances of a sufficiently extraordinary nature have never arisen to shake them out of their routine.

At last the day began to break, after what seemed an interminable night, and I heard the sound of bolts being withdrawn. The harsh voice of the gaoler came through the door, 'Well, have you had time to think of what you would like to eat?'

I replied civilly that I should like some rice soup, boiled beef, a roast of some kind, some bread, wine, and water. I saw that he was astonished at my not complaining, and he asked if I did not wish for a bed and some furniture? 'For,' said he, 'if you think you are only here for one day you are mistaken.'

'Bring me what you think is necessary.'

'Where am I to go for these things? Here is a pencil and paper, write down what you want.'

I made a list of the things I required, clothes, furniture, and the books the inquisitors had taken out of my room.

'Not so fast, not so fast,' said the brute; 'cross off books, paper, pens, looking-glass, and razors—all those are forbidden fruit here; and give me some money to pay for your dinner.'

I had three sequins in my pocket, and I gave him one, and he went off to serve, as I afterwards learned, the seven other prisoners who were confined in the cells under the leads. He reappeared at noon, with the furniture and food. I was given an ivory spoon to eat with, knives and forks were forbidden.

He asks for books that are not edifying.

'You must order what you want for to-morrow,' he said, 'for I can only come to you once a day. The secretary says he will send you some instructive books to read; those you asked for are not edifying.'

'Tell him I wish to thank him for having given me a cell to myself.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You do not know what you are saying. You have been put by yourself as a punishment, you will soon long for company.'

He was right; a man shut up alone in a dismal place where he can only see the person who brings him his food for a few minutes once a day becomes wretched. I began to crave for human society, and would have welcomed an assassin or a leper. Solitude in a prison cell means despair; one must know it from actual experience, and I would not wish my worst enemy such a fate. If a man of letters is supplied with paper and ink, his misfortunes are lessened by nine-tenths, but my persecutors did not want to make things pleasant to me.

I set my table and sat down to dinner, but though I had been fasting for forty-eight hours, I could only swallow a few spoonfuls of soup. I passed the day in my armchair, but when night came it was impossible for me to close my eyes, for three reasons: firstly, the rats; secondly, the terrible din made by the clock of Saint Mark's, which sounded as if it were in my room; and thirdly, the thousands of fleas which invaded my body, bit and stung me, poisoning my blood to such an extent that I suffered from spasmodic contractions amounting to convulsions. When Laurence, the gaoler, came to make my bed and sweep out my cell, he brought me two big volumes, which I carefully abstained from opening, as I knew that the sight of their titles would cause me a movement of indignation, which it would be impossible for me to suppress, and the spy would carefully describe it to the inquisitors. One of the books was called *The Mystical City*, by Sister Mary of Jesus of Agrada.[1] The other was *The Adoration of the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ*, by the Jesuit, Father Caravita. This second one

Rats and fleas.

The Mystical City, by Sister Mary of Jesus of Agrada.

[1] Maria d'Agrada was a member of the Coronel family, all of whom were singularly religious. They founded a convent in 1619 at Agrada, of which Maria, born 1602, became superior. Her confessor ordered her to burn the life of the Blessed Virgin, which she had written in obedience to a pretended revelation. She did so, but soon after recommenced and finished the work, which is a strange example of mysticism.

Digitized by Microsoft®

did not appeal to me particularly, but *The Mystical City* looked interesting.

It was the outpouring of the extravagant imagination of an over-devout, melancholy, cloistered Spanish nun. Her chimerical, fantastic, and monstrous visions were dignified with the name of 'revelations.' She claimed to have received a divine mission to write the life of the Blessed Virgin, the information and instructions necessary for the work being furnished by the Holy Ghost Himself! She dated the life of Mary, not from the day of her birth, but from that of her immaculate conception in the womb of her mother Anne.

This Sister Mary of Agrada was the superior of a convent of Cordeliers, founded by herself. Having narrated in detail everything which her divine heroine did during the nine months she passed in the maternal breast, she proceeds to inform us that at the age of three years old she swept out the house, aided by nine hundred angel servants whom God sent her, and who were commanded by Michael, who came and went as a messenger between her and God.

The most striking thing about this book is the strong sense the reader has that nothing was invented by the author, fanatic though she was; invention cannot rise to such heights; everything was written in full faith and conviction, and bears the stamp of sincerity. It is the work of an exalted brain, drunk with the idea of God, revealing to others, without a shadow of pride, those things believed to have been revealed to it by the Holy Ghost.

The book was published with the permission of the Holy and Horrible Inquisition, and this was, to my mind, the most astonishing thing of all about it, for, so far from exciting zeal or fervour for religion in one's mind, it seemed to me only calculated to make one treat Christian mysteries and Christian dogma as fabulous.

I passed a week over this *chef-d'œuvre* of aberration, and began to feel its obsession. As soon as I went to sleep the influence of Sister Mary of Agrada made itself felt, aided no

Digitized by Microsoft®

doubt by melancholy, bad food, and want of air and exercise. My extravagant dreams amused me when I recalled them waking; if I had had the materials at hand I would have written them down, and, who knows, might have produced an even madder work than that poor maiden's. And this shows me how mistaken we are when we think the mind of a man is a positive force; it is only a relative one. The Spanish nun's book held everything to unhinge a well-balanced mind, but that mind must first be isolated, put in 'The Leads' and deprived of all occupation.

Many years after, in the year 1767, I was going from Pampeluna to Madrid. We stopped to dine at a little town in Old Castile. Such an ugly and dull little town! How I laughed when I learned it was Agrada!

'It was here, then,' I thought, 'that the brain of that holy maniac conceived her wonderful book.' An old priest, who was highly edified at the interest I showed in the historian of the Mother of Christ, pointed out to me the place where the book was written, and told me that the father, mother, sister, in fact all the family of the blessed biographer, had been great saints. He told me that Spain was soliciting her canonisation from Rome at the same time as that of the venerable Palafox.

At the end of nine or ten days I had spent all my money, and when Laurence asked for more I had to tell him I had none.

'Where shall I go for some?'

'Nowhere.'

My taciturnity and laconic way of speaking displeased this ignorant, talkative, and curious fellow much. Next day he told me the tribunal allowed me fifty sols a day, which was paid to him; he would give me an account of it every month, and spend my savings as I wished.

Seventy-five francs a month was more than I required for food, especially as heat and inaction had deprived me of all appetite. We were then in the dog-days, and the sun's beams darting down on the leaden roof of my prison kept me, as it

Digitized by Microsoft®

were, in a perpetual vapour bath. I had now been fifteen days in this hell, and, incredible as it may seem, during all this time nature had absolutely refused to fulfil her functions; when at last she consented to act, I thought my last hour had come, and to this day I am subject to a cruel infirmity due to my sufferings in prison.

He is ill.

I became so ill that Laurence decided to ask for a doctor. A grave, kind personage came, who bled me and gave me lemonade and barley-water. He told me that my mind had much influence on my body, and that I was unduly melancholy.

'It is not surprising,' said I, 'considering the two books which form my whole library.'

He came to see me four times, and brought me Boëtius. His visits and the change of literature had such a salutary effect that by the end of September I was comparatively well. I now began to cherish a hope of recovering my liberty, and occupied my mind day and night with schemes of escape.

Laurence allowed me as a special favour to go out in the garret while my cell was swept. I was standing there one day surrounded by the archers of the guard, when the great central beam of the roof began to move slowly towards the right, and then with a jerky movement fell back into its original place. As soon as I could collect my thoughts, I knew that this must be due to an earthquake. Such was my frame of mind that this event caused me a sensation of pleasure, and when four or five seconds after the same movement was repeated, I cried out: '*Un' altra, un' altra, gran Dio, ma più forte!*'[1]

In those few seconds of time I had speculated on the possibility of the palace crumbling to pieces, and of my being flung safe and sound on the Square of Saint Mark.

This shock which we felt was the vibration of the terrible earthquake that destroyed the city of Lisbon.

Description of 'The Leads.'

'The Leads,' where state prisoners are confined, means simply the attics under the leads of the ducal palace. To reach them one must pass through the palace and over the bridge I have

[1] 'Another, another, great God, but stronger!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

already spoken of, and which has been nicknamed the 'Bridge of Sighs.' One can only get to the cells by passing through the hall called the 'Bussola,' where the inquisitors assemble. The secretary keeps the key of this hall, and only gives it to the gaoler in the morning, when he is waiting on the prisoners. The floor of my cell, which looked west, was directly over the hall where the inquisitors assemble at night after the daily sitting of the Council of Ten.

There seemed to be only one possible way of escape, and that was to pierce the floor of my cell; but to do this I must have instruments; to get instruments I must bribe one of the archers, and I had no money. But having once got the idea into my head, I was not easily discouraged. I have always held that what a man wants to do, that he will do, in spite of all difficulties; but he must begin early, for after a certain age fortune forsakes one, and cannot be whistled back.

Laurence informed me that there was a new secretary, M. Pietro Businello, a good fellow whom I had known in Paris, on his way to London in his quality of consul of the Venetian Republic. I was not sorry.

One afternoon the bolts were shot back, and Laurence appeared, leading in a young man, weeping bitterly. After having taken off his handcuffs, he pushed him over towards me, and left the cell without deigning a word of explanation. As he was four or five inches shorter than I was, he could stand upright, and having dried his eyes, he began to make the tour of the cell. As he drew near the bed, on which I was lying, I bade him sit down.

'Who are you?' I asked.

Story of young Maggiorini.

'My name is Maggiorini, from Vicenza. My father is a coachman to the Poggiani. I was apprenticed to a hairdresser for five years, and on leaving him went as *valet de chambre* to the Comte de X. I had to dress the hair of his only daughter, and I fell in love with her; she returned my passion, and for some time we were happy. Then circumstances made it necessary for us to confide in some one. The confidante whom

Digitized by Microsoft®

we chose, her old nurse, told her that she felt it was her duty to inform her father. We begged her to wait a day or two, and in the meantime we made up our minds to elope. My sweetheart laid her hands on all the money she could, and on her departed mother's diamonds. We were to leave this very night for Milan. Yesterday the count sent for me, and giving me a letter, told me to go at once and deliver it at a certain address in Venice. He spoke so kindly and quietly that I had not the slightest suspicion of what he was preparing for me. I hastened off with the fatal letter, and as I was leaving the house to which I had carried it, I was arrested and taken to the guardhouse, where they kept me all night. From the guardhouse I was brought here. But it seems to me, sir, that I have a right to consider the young countess as my wife?'

'You are mistaken.'

'But nature——'

'Nature, when man is fool enough to listen to her, brings a man to "The Leads"—where you now are.'

The poor young man began to weep afresh. He was a nice-looking boy, honest, open, and evidently very much in love. I forgave the young countess her indiscretion, while at the same time I condemned her father for exposing her to such temptation. If one lets a wolf into the sheepfold, one must not complain if a lamb gets snapped up sometimes! I gave him half my supper and the mattress off my bed, and the next day they brought him a mattress and fifteen sols' worth of food: this was the sum a paternal tribunal allowed him for his maintenance. I pointed out to Laurence that with my fifty sols he could feed us both, and might spend the surplus on having Masses said for himself, as he was very pious. He was so charmed with this proposal that he told us we could walk in the garret for half an hour. This promenade suited my health and my plan of evasion. At the end of the rat-haunted garret was a lot of old furniture, two large wooden cases, and a pile of manuscript papers.[1] I took up a handful

[1] These were doubtless part of the very mass of Venetian archives that were afterwards destroyed by fire mentioned by Armand Baschet.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He finds and reads the State papers of the Venetian Republic.

one day and carried them back to my cell. They were the reports of criminal trials, and most diverting. I was able to read what had certainly at one time been kept very secret. Some of them dated from two or three centuries back, and were full of singular interrogations and replies, most indicative of the style and manners of the day. Some of them were veritable *chroniques scandaleuses*, dealing with the behaviour of confessors with their penitents, guardians with their wards, professors with their pupils, and so forth, and procured me many an hour's distraction. Among the rubbish was a warming-pan, a boiler, a fire-shovel, some tongs, old candlesticks, from which I judged that some bygone illustrious prisoner had been allowed the use of these objects. But what interested me most was an iron bolt, as thick as a man's thumb, and a foot and a half long. I touched none of these things, for as yet my plans were not sufficiently mature for me to know what would be useful.

One morning they took away my companion; and this was a real sorrow to me, for ignorant and unlettered though he was, he was well-meaning, and he was a human being. Laurence told me he had been sent to the prisons called '*Les Quatres*,' which are in the basement; they are very dark, but the prisoners are allowed a lamp. I heard afterwards that the poor fellow was there for five years, and was then sent to Cerigo for another ten! What ultimately became of him I do not know.

Fortunately they did not deprive me of my daily half-hour in the gallery, and I now began to examine it more closely. One of the cases was filled with writing-paper, pens, and balls of string; the other was nailed down. A piece of polished black marble, about twelve inches long, fascinated me. I looked at it longingly every day, without in the least knowing what to do with it. At last the temptation to possess it grew too strong, and I slipped it into my pocket. When I got back into my cell I carefully hid it among my shirts.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XVI

'THE LEADS'

LAURENCE, who was a great gossip, could not understand how it was I never questioned him. He wanted to plume himself on his brilliant faculty of discretion. He began to account for my attitude by supposing that I did not consider his information worth having, and this piqued his *amour-propre.* Anyhow, he began to volunteer scraps of news.

'I believe,' said he one day, 'that you will soon have another visitor, for the six cells up here are all full, and if any person of quality comes, of the kind that cannot be sent to "*Les Quatres*," he needs must be quartered on you. At "*Les Quatres*" all sorts of folks get taken in; but here it is different, we only have distinguished characters, whose crimes are unknown to the vulgar. If you only knew, sir, who are your companions in misfortune, you would be astonished. They say that you yourself are a man of learning, but, you will excuse me, it takes more than *learning* to be treated as you are treated here. Fifty sols a day is a good round sum. Three francs a day are allowed for a citizen, four for a gentleman, and eight for a foreign count. I know, for it all passes through my hands.'

The gaoler sings his own praises.

He then began to sing his own praises.

'I am not a thief, nor a traitor, nor a liar, nor a miser, nor bad-tempered, nor brutal, as my predecessors were, and when I have drunk a pint too much I am all the nicer for it. If my father had sent me to school, and I had learned to read and write, I might by this time be Grand Inquisitor myself,

Digitized by Microsoft®

who knows? Signor André Diedo esteems me highly; my wife, who is only twenty-four, and who does your cooking for you, is very fond of him, and can go and see him whenever she likes. He has her shown in even if he is in bed, a favour he does not accord to any of the Senators, I can tell you. You will get all the new-comers here, but not for long, for as soon as the secretary has found out from their own mouths what he wants to know, he packs them off. If they are foreigners they are taken across the frontier, for the government does not assume the right to dispose of the subjects of other countries. The clemency of the tribunal, sir, is wonderful, there is not another in the world which treats its prisoners so kindly. You may think it hard not to be allowed to write, or receive visits, but if you come to think of it, writing and visiting are a great waste of time.'

The very day after this harangue the gaoler brought me a comrade; a thin, stooping man, about fifty, with a large mouth and bad teeth. He had small grey eyes and thick red eyebrows, which made him look like a screech-owl, and he wore a little wig of black horse-hair, that smelt most disagreeably of oil. He did not say a word all day, though he accepted a share of my dinner. I did not question him, for I knew that sooner or later he would have to talk. Before many days were over I learned that he was a usurer, imprisoned for exacting an extortionate rate of interest. He was led away one day, and returned weeping, to draw out of his boots two purses full of gold. He went off with them, and this was the last I saw of him. I concluded he had been threatened with torture if he did not make restitution.

New Year's Day 1756.

On New Year's Day 1756, Laurence came in with a large packet for me: it contained a dressing-gown, lined with fox-skin, a quilted silk counterpane, and a large bear-skin bag to put my legs in. Imagine my joy at receiving these presents, the more welcome as the cold was now intense; furthermore, I was told I was to receive six sequins a month, with which I could buy what books I liked, and might subscribe to the

Digitized by Microsoft®

Gazette. All this came from my dear old friend and father, M. de Bragadin; Laurence told me he had gone down on his knees to the inquisitors, and begged them with tears to allow him to send me these proofs of his constant affection.

One must have been in a position like mine to feel what I felt at that moment. I wrote in pencil on a scrap of paper—

'I thank the generosity of the tribunal, and the untiring goodness of M. de Bragadin.'

One fine day when I was walking in the garret my eyes fell on the bolt, of which I have already spoken, and I saw in a flash how I could make an offensive and defensive weapon of it.

I carried it away under my dressing-gown, and worked at it for eight days, rubbing it on the bit of marble until I had sharpened it up to a point. I made eight long pyramidal facets, and produced an octagonal dagger, as well proportioned as if it had been turned out by an armourer. It was not achieved without much trouble and fatigue. I had no oil, and had to spit on the stone to moisten it; my right arm became so stiff it was impossible for me to move it, and the palm of my hand was an open wound, but when I looked at my shining weapon I forgot my pains. I was delighted with this tool, though I had as yet no idea how to use it, but the first thing was to hide it from prying eyes. I found a safe place for it in the stuffing of the back of my armchair, and, as I afterwards found, this was the best place I could have chosen.

I own that I am proud of my evasion; not of my success, for good luck had a large share in that, but of my courage and strength of mind in conceiving such a project, in spite of all I had against me.

I was certain that under my cell was the room in which I had seen Cavalli, the secretary. This room was cleaned every morning. The thing to do was to make a hole through the ceiling, let myself down with the sheets of my bed, and hide under the table till the door was opened. If there should be

Digitized by Microsoft®

an archer outside, I must trust to Providence and my weapon to get rid of him. The difficulty was to keep Laurence and his men from sweeping under my bed, more especially as I had particularly asked them to do so, on account of the fleas.

He will not let them sweep under his bed.

I pretended I had a violent cold, and that the dust made me cough. For a few days this worked all right, and then Laurence grew suspicious, came in with a candle, and every corner was swept out. The next morning I pricked my finger, and showing the blood-stained handkerchief to the gaoler, 'You see,' I said, 'what the dust did; I coughed so violently I must have broken a small blood-vessel.'

The doctor was sent for, and when I told him the cause of my illness, he said I was perfectly right, nothing was so bad for the lungs as dust: he told us a young man had just died from the same thing; and, in fact, if I had bribed him, he could not have served me better.

I was too profitable a person for Laurence not to wish to take care of me, and the archers were ordered not to disturb me any more by sweeping, and Laurence was profuse in his apologies, assuring me he had only kept my room clean to please me.

He makes himself a lamp.

The winter nights were very long. I had to pass nineteen mortal hours in the dark. A miserable kitchen-lamp would have made me so happy, but how was I to get it? Truly 'Necessity is the mother of Invention.' I had a small earthen pot, in which I cooked eggs: this filled with salad oil, with a wick made of cotton frayed out of my counterpane, would do for a lamp, but how was I to light it? I asked Laurence to get me some pumice-stone for the toothache from which I pretended to be suffering, and as he did not seem to know what pumice-stone was, I added, as negligently as I could, that a flint would do just as well, if I soaked it in vinegar. The credulous fool gave me half a dozen. I had a large steel buckle on the waistband of my under-drawers, so was now the proud possessor of flint and steel; yet I had to have recourse again to the doctor, and on pretence of a skin

Digitized by Microsoft ®

eruption got some flowers of sulphur; under the sleeves of my beautiful coat, between the silk and the lining, the tailor had sewn pieces of *amadou*: flint, steel, matches, tinder, I had them all.

I lighted my lamp and I decided to begin working on the floor the first Monday in Lent; but, alas! I had to wait, for on Carnival Sunday, Laurence brought in a big fat Jew, named Gabriel Schalon, famed for the ability with which he found money for young men of good family whose luck was against them. This Jew was talkative, stupid, and ignorant. I wished him at the bottom of the sea, for I had no intention of taking him into my confidence. I let him into the secret of the lamp, and I learned afterwards that he told Laurence, but the latter evidently attached no importance to it.

On Wednesday in Holy Week, the secretary made his annual visit to the prisoners, and those who wished to obey the law of the Church and keep Easter Sunday might do so, after first signifying their wishes to him. On his appearance the Jew flung himself at his feet, weeping and crying, but his lamentations produced no effect. I merely made him a low bow, which he returned, and for two or three minutes we looked at each other without speaking. Seeing that I had no intention of breaking the silence, he bowed again, and left us. I must have looked very odd with my eight months' beard, and my costume made for a summer's day gala.

On Holy Thursday a Jesuit father came to hear my confession; and on Easter Day a priest brought me the Blessed Sacrament.

My confession was couched in too laconic a fashion for the child of Ignatius. 'Do you pray to God?' he asked me.

'From morning to night, and from night to morning, for in my present situation everything, my agitation, my impatience, the very wanderings of my mind even, must be a prayer to the Divine Wisdom, which alone sees my heart.'

'As it was from us you learned your religion,' said he,

Digitized by Microsoft®

'practise it as we do, pray as we do, and remember *that you will leave here on the day of the saint whose name you bear.*'

The priest prophesies his departure.

The father's prophecy made such an impression on my mind, that I passed in review all the saints of the calendar to whom I could possibly lay claim. It could not be Saint James of Compostella, because it was on his day that Messer Grande came and staved in my door. There was Saint George, a saint of fair consideration, but I did not know much about him. I could as a Venetian count on the protection of Saint Mark; then there was Saint James, the brother of Christ, but his day came and went. They say at Padua that Saint Anthony works thirteen miracles a day; he worked none for me. I finished by only having confidence in my Saint Pike, as wielded by my own right arm. Yet the Jesuit had not made such a bad shot after all, for I left *I Piombi* on All Saints' Day.

A fortnight after Easter I was relieved of my troublesome Israelite, so could get to work in earnest.

The flooring was made of larch-wood; after working for six hours I had scraped off a towelful of chips; these I put to one side, intending to empty them behind the cases in the garret. The first plank was four inches thick; when I got through it, I found another of the same size. In three weeks I had made a hole in the three planks of which the flooring was composed, and then I despaired, for below the planks was a layer of bits of marble, forming what is called in Venice a *terrazo marmorino*. This is the ordinary paving of all Venetian houses except the very poorest; the nobles themselves prefer the *terrazo* to the most beautiful *parquet*.

Of course my bolt made no impression on this cement, and I was almost discouraged when I remembered the story of how Hannibal made a passage through the Alps, after softening the rocks with vinegar. I poured all the vinegar I had into the hole, and the next day, whether it was that it had really had some effect, or whether it was that I was stronger for rest, I managed to crumble away the mortar which held the mosaic

Digitized by Microsoft®

together. Under the marble was another plank, which I guessed must be the last.

How I prayed while I worked: strong minds may say that prayer is no good, they do not know what they are talking about! I know from experience how efficacious prayer is, for if help does not come directly from God, it comes from the confidence we feel in Him.

By the twenty-third of August my labour was ended, the hole was sufficiently wide and long for me to squeeze through. There was only now the plaster of the ceiling to remove. I could see through a tiny hole into the secretary's room. I fixed the date of my evasion for the vigil of the feast of Saint Augustine, for I knew that on that day there was an assembly of the Grand Council in another part of the building. This vigil fell on the twenty-seventh.

On the twenty-fifth, a misfortune befell me which, when I think of it now, makes me shiver, in spite of the many years which have gone by since then.

At noon precisely I heard the bolts drawn back. I flung myself into my armchair. Laurence came in, crying: 'I bring you good news, sir. I bring you good news.'

For a moment I thought it was my pardon, and I trembled lest the discovery of the hole should revoke it.

'Follow me,' said the gaoler.

'Wait till I am dressed.'

They change his cell as a favour.

'No, come as you are. You are only going to step out of this villainous cell into another one, which is clean and has been newly done up, where there are two big windows from which you can see half Venice, and where you can stand upright.'

I nearly swooned. 'Give me some vinegar,' said I, 'and go and tell the secretary and the tribunal that I thank them for their kindness, but I beg them to let me stay here. I am used to this place now. I would rather not change.'

'Are you mad, sir?' said Laurence with the most irritating good nature. 'You do not know what is good for you. You

Digitized by Microsoft®

are going to be taken from hell to be put in paradise, and you refuse? Come, come, you must obey. Get up. I will give you my arm, and your books and traps shall be brought after us.'

It was useless to rebel. More dead than alive, I tottered out, leaning on his arm. We went down two narrow corridors, up three steps, across a hall and then through another corridor, only about two feet wide, at the end of which was the door of my new abode. It had a grated window in it, looking on to the corridor, and in this latter were two windows, also grated, which commanded a fine view as far as the Lido; but nothing pleased me then, though afterwards this window was a veritable boon to me, for through it there came a soft fresh breeze, such as I had been long stranger to. My one gleam of consolation was when the archers brought in the armchair in which my tool was hidden. They brought in my bed, and then went to fetch the remainder of my things, but they did not come back.

For two mortal hours I sat in an agony of suspense. The door of my cell remained open, and there was something strangely ominous and unnatural about this. Besides 'The Leads' and '*Les Quatres*' there are nineteen subterranean prisons in the same ducal palace, frightful cells, destined for unhappy creatures who are not condemned to death, though may be their crimes have merited capital punishment.

'The Wells' in the ducal palace.

The judges of the world have always thought they were showing great mercy to certain criminals when they left them their lives, but as a matter of fact they have thus often imposed sufferings worse than death. These subterranean prisons are living tombs; they are called 'The Wells' because there is always two feet of water in them, which flows in through the grating that lets in the daylight, such as it is. The wretch who is condemned to one of these cells has to pass his time perched on a trestle, which supports his straw mattress, and is, at the same time, his wardrobe, dining-table, and larder. A pitcher of water is brought him in the morning with a little

Digitized by Microsoft®

thin soup and some bread. This he must eat up at once if he does not want the rats to get it. Those who are sent to 'The Wells' generally finish their days there, and, strange though it seems, some of them live to be very old.

While I was waiting the return of the archers, I saw myself, in imagination, hurled into one of these horrible holes. By and by I heard hurried steps, and Laurence came in, pale with anger, foaming at the mouth, and blaspheming God and the saints. He ordered me to give him the hatchet and the tools I had used for piercing the floor, and at the same time to tell him the name of the archer who had furnished me with them. I replied that I did not know what he was talking about. When he ordered his men to search me, I jumped up, and stripping myself naked, 'Do your duty,' I said, 'but don't one of you dare to touch me.'

They hunted through my mattress and pillows, and the cushions of the armchair, but never thought of looking among the springs in its back.

'You won't say where the instruments are with which you have made the hole in the floor, but we know how to make you speak,' said Laurence.

'If it be true that I have made a hole in the floor, and I am questioned about it, I shall say that it was you yourself who gave me the tools, and that I have returned them to you.'

He angers the gaoler, and suffers accordingly.

This answer and my determined tone somewhat took him aback. He continued to curse and tear his hair, and as an immediate punishment for me shut the windows of the corridor, so that I was stifled for want of air.

At break of day he brought me some horrible wine and some water, so dirty it was impossible to drink it. Everything was equally bad, the meat stank and the bread was hard. He did not listen when I complained, but busied himself sounding the walls and floor with an iron bar. I watched him with a seemingly indifferent air, but did not fail to notice that he did not strike the ceiling. 'It is through there,' thought I, 'that I shall pass out of this hell.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I spent a cruel day. An exhausting sweat, and hunger brought on by want of food, made me so weak, I could scarcely stand. I could not even bear to read. The next day the wretch brought me such putrid veal for my dinner that the smell alone made me sick.

'Have you received orders,' said I, 'to kill me with hunger and heat?'

He did not answer me, but went out locking the door noisily behind him. I asked for pencil and paper that I might write to the secretary. No notice was taken of my request. This cruel treatment on the part of my gaoler and his ingenious methods of torturing me so wrought on my naturally violent temper that I determined to kill him. On the eighth day of semi-starvation I made up my mind to plunge my pike into his belly. But I slept well that night, which calmed me, and I contented myself with telling him I would have him assassinated as soon as I was free. He only laughed. At last I hit on the means of making him speak. In the presence of the archers, I ordered him in a voice of thunder, to bring me my accounts, and to tell me exactly every penny he had spent of my money. This disconcerted him, and he told me in an uneasy voice that he would bring me the settlement next day. He appeared in the morning with a large basket of lemons M. de Bragadin had sent me, a fine roast fowl, and a big bottle of water. He gave me his account. On glancing down it I saw there were four sequins to my credit; I told him to give three to his wife, and divide the remaining one among the archers. This small act of generosity won their affection.

'You say, sir,' said Laurence, 'that it was I who gave you the tools you used in making that enormous hole. I suppose I must believe you, though I don't understand it. But would you mind letting me know who gave you the materials for your lamp?'

'You did. You gave me oil, flint, matches, the rest I had.'

'Merciful Lord! and did I give you a hatchet?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I will tell you everything, and I will tell you the truth, but only in the presence of the secretary of the Inquisition.'

'For God's sake, then, hold your tongue. I should lose my place, and I am a poor man with children.'

He went off, holding his head in his hands, and I congratulated myself on having found means to frighten him. He would hold his tongue for his own sake.

One day I ordered him to buy me the works of Maffei. He hated laying out money for books, and he said, 'If you have read all those you have I can borrow some from another prisoner, which would be an economy.'

He asks for books; not novels, which he hates.

'Novels, probably, which I hate.'

'No; scientific books. If you think you are the only intellectual person here you are mistaken.'

'Well, take this from me to the other intellectual person, and ask him to lend me one in exchange.'

I gave him the *Rationarium* of Petau, and in five minutes he returned with the first volume of Wolff.

I thought I might possibly enter into a correspondence with my fellow-prisoner, and was delighted to find these words written on the margin of one of the pages—

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius.

The reader will remember that I was not allowed pencil or ink, but I had made a very good pen out of the nail of my right hand little finger, which I wore very long, and the juice of mulberries made capital ink. I wrote six Latin verses, and a list of the books I possessed, on a piece of paper, and slipped it under the binding[1] of the borrowed book; above the title I wrote *Latet*.

He enters into correspondence with Marin Balbi, and forms a low opinion of his discretion.

When the second volume was brought me next day I found a loose sheet of paper, on which was written, in Latin—

'There are two of us in the same prison, and we are delighted at the prospect of corresponding with you. My name is

[1] Italian books of that period were mostly bound in parchment, turned over and stitched, thus forming a pocket on each cover.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Marin Balbi; I am a Venetian nobleman and a monk, and my companion is Count Andréa Asquini of Udine. He wishes me to tell you that his books, of which you will find a note on the back of this volume, are at your service, but we warn you that we must be very careful not to let Laurence know of our intercourse.'

It was all very well to warn me to be careful, but rather ridiculous to do so on a loose sheet of paper, which Laurence might easily have found. This incident did not give me a very high idea of my correspondent's sagacity.

I wrote to Balbi telling him who I was, how I had been arrested, and my ignorance as to the motives of my punishment. He replied in a letter sixteen pages long, recounting all his misfortunes. He had been in prison for four years, for having seduced three young girls, whose children he had had the naïveté to baptize in his own name. The first escapade had brought him a lecture from his superior, the second a threat of chastisement, and the third the realisation of the threat. The father superior of his convent sent him his dinner daily. He said that the superior and the tribunal were tyrants, that they had no authority over his conscience; that, persuaded that the children were his, he considered he had only acted honestly in giving them his name; and that he was not able to stifle the voice of nature speaking in favour of these innocent creatures.

From this letter I could judge tolerably accurately what manner of man he was. Eccentricity, sensuality, want of logical power, spite, stupidity, imprudence, and ingratitude, were all plainly shown forth; for after telling me that he would be very miserable without Count Asquini, an old man who had plenty of books and money, he proceeded to turn him into ridicule. Outside I should not have given a second thought to such an individual, but in 'The Leads' the value of everything was distorted. In the back of the book I found a pencil, a pen, and some paper.

In another letter he gave me the history of all the prisoners

Digitized by Microsoft®

A letter from the indiscreet Balbi.

then under lock and key. It was the Archer Nicolas who furnished him with information, and also with such things as Laurence refused to buy for him. He had told him, he said, all about my hole in the floor; the patrician Priuli was now in my cell; and it had taken Laurence two hours to repair the damage I had done. He was obliged to let the carpenter, the locksmith, and all the archers into the secret. One day more, Nicolas affirmed, and I should have been free, and Laurence would have been hanged; for every one believed he had supplied the tools. M. de Bragadin had offered the archer a thousand sequins if he helped me to escape, but Laurence got wind of this and wanted to earn the recompense himself, without incurring any risks; he counted on obtaining my pardon from M. Diedo, through his wife. Balbi begged me to tell him the whole story, and how I had procured the instruments, at the same time assuring me of his discretion; that he possessed *no* discretion was proved by his asking me to describe my attempt in writing.

I began to think that perhaps all this was only a trick on the part of Laurence, so I answered that I had made the hole with a big knife I had, and which I had hidden on the top of the window-ledge. Several days went by and Laurence did not visit the spot mentioned, so I saw that my letter had not been intercepted.

I knew I should never be pardoned: if I were ever to regain my liberty it must be by my own exertions, and the only way out of my cell was through the ceiling, for every morning they sounded the boards and walls. I could not pierce the ceiling, it must be done from the other side. There was but one person who could help me, and that was the monk; I began by asking him if he wanted to be free. He replied that he and his comrade would do anything to break their chains, but all the projects which suggested themselves were impossible. I gave him my word of honour that he would succeed if he would only promise to obey me implicitly.

I then described my tool to him, and told him I would find

Digitized by Microsoft®

means of sending it to him; with it he must break through the ceiling of his cell, and then through the wall, so that I could join him. 'This done,' said I, 'your share will be finished, I will undertake the rest.'

He replied that even if he managed to make these two apertures we should still be in prison; we should merely exchange our cells for the garret, which was closed by three barred doors.

'I know that, reverend father,' I answered, 'but I do not propose to leave by the doors. Tell Laurence to buy you about forty big religious pictures, and stick them up all over your cell. Such a pious proceeding will not arouse any suspicion in his mind, and will hide the hole in the ceiling; if you ask me why I don't do this myself, it is because I am looked on with distrust, and any new departure of mine would be carefully criticised.'

These instructions he carried out, and in a short time wrote and told me that the walls of his room were well decorated, and that he had even managed to fix two or three of the largest pictures on the ceiling.

A big version of the Vulgate comes in useful.

A version of the Vulgate had just appeared, in a big in-folio volume, and this I ordered Laurence to buy for me, hoping to be able to hide the precious tool in the back of it, but to my disappointment the book was too short. The ingenious Balbi, not wishing to be behindhand in inventiveness, told me he had discovered a simple and practical means of getting the weapon. Laurence had often spoken to him and Count Asquini of my fur-lined cloak, and Count Asquini wished to buy one like it; I was to send mine to him by Laurence, to see if he approved of the pattern, and was to wrap the tool in it. I sent the cloak next day, but was not such a fool as to follow Balbi's advice; even if Laurence suspected nothing, a folded pelisse is an awkward thing to carry, and he would be sure to throw it over his arm.

When the cloak arrived minus the pike, the monk of course imagined it had been discovered, and wrote bewailing his folly

Digitized by Microsoft®

in having suggested such a plan, and mine in having so easily followed his suggestion. I knew from this what to expect if our enterprise failed.

The dish of macaroni.

On the day of the feast of Saint Michael I told Laurence I wanted to cook a dish of macaroni myself, seasoned to my own taste, and that I should like to send some of it to the person who lent me the books. He made no objection, and brought me all the necessary ingredients. I hid the pike in the back of the Bible (it poked out about two inches at each end), put a huge dish of macaroni and cheese, swimming in butter, on the top of the book, and handed it all to Laurence with instructions to be careful and not spill any grease on the cover. He was too much occupied with the smoking macaroni to notice anything peculiar about the book, and it was a beautiful sight to see him bearing it out carefully on outstretched arms, his eyes fixed on the dish, grumbling at me the while for having put in too much butter; he declared if it was spilt it would not be his fault. He returned in a few minutes to tell me that it had travelled safely.

Father Balbi got to work at once, and in eight days made a sufficiently large hole in his ceiling, hiding it in the daytime with a picture stuck on with paste made of bread. On the eighth of October he wrote that he had passed the whole night working on the wall which separated us, and had only succeeded in removing one brick. He immensely exaggerated the difficulty of separating the bricks, which were held together with a strong cement, but he promised to continue, though, he added, he was convinced we should only aggravate our situation.

Alas! though I assured him that on the contrary we should succeed, I was not really sure of anything, except that I wanted to get out of my horrible prison, and that to do so I was determined to brave every danger.

On the sixteenth of October, at ten o'clock in the morning, as I was translating an ode from Horace, I heard a slight movement above my head, followed by three little taps. This was the signal agreed upon between us.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Balbi worked until the evening, and next day wrote that he hoped to finish that same afternoon. The hole, he said, was a circular one, and he must take great care not to pierce my ceiling. This was most important, for the slightest appearance of dilapidation in my cell would betray us.

I fixed on the following night to leave my cell never to return. I was sure that with help I could make a hole in the roof of the ducal palace, and in three or four hours, once outside, I would find some means to get to the ground in safety.

A new fellow-prisoner.

But fate was once more against me. That same day, it was a Monday, at two o'clock in the afternoon, while Balbi was working overhead, I heard the door of the outer cell open. I had only just time to give the alarm signal for him to retire into his cell, when Laurence appeared with two archers, and a little badly dressed man, whose arms were tightly bound. The gaoler apologised for bringing me a very bad character as a companion, and the person thus described paid not the slightest attention to him or to me.

'The tribunal must do as it pleases,' said I, in a tone of ill-assumed resignation. Laurence had a straw mattress brought for my fellow-prisoner, and told him the tribunal allowed him ten sols a day for his food; he then left, locking us in together.

I was in despair at this fresh *contretemps*, but as I wished to gain the scoundrel over to my side, I told him he could have his meals with me. He kissed my hand gratefully, asking if he might, all the same, keep the ten sols which the tribunal allowed him per diem. When I said yes, he fell on his knees, and lugging an immense rosary out of his pocket, began to examine the four corners of the room.

'What are you looking for?'

'Pardon me, sir. I am looking for a picture of the Blessed Virgin, or a tiny little crucifix would do, for I am a Christian, and never in my life had I such need of prayer. I want to recommend myself to Saint Francis of Assisi, whose name I unworthily bear.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I thought it possible that he imagined me to be a Jew; therefore, to prove that I was at heart as good a Christian as he was, I gave him the Office of the Blessed Virgin. After kissing the picture in the beginning of the book, he asked my permission to tell his beads, after which pious recreation he begged me to give him something to eat, as he was dying of hunger. He ate everything I had to offer him, and drank the remainder of my wine, which made him very intoxicated, so that he wept and chattered at the same time.

From his prolific but disconnected conversation, I gathered that he was a spy in the service of the Inquisition, but that not satisfied with one master, he had tried to place his talents at the disposition of two. It would take a cleverer rogue than he to play such a dangerous game successfully. The Holy Tribunal had discovered his treachery, and clapped him into prison.

He tries Soradaci, and finds him wanting.

As soon as he was asleep I wrote to Balbi, telling him not to lose courage, that it was necessary to suspend our work for the time being, but that I hoped to be relieved of my companion ere long. The next day I ordered Laurence to procure me a picture of Saint Francis, a crucifix, and two bottles of holy water, four times as much wine as I usually consumed, and an immense quantity of garlic and salt: these last two articles were the favourite dessert of my fellow-captive. Laurence told me that Soradaci, that was the scoundrel's name, was to go before the secretary in a few days to be questioned; he would very likely be set at liberty after that. I felt certain that his treasonable instinct would lead him to betray even me, from whom he had received nothing but kindness, but I determined to make sure. I wrote two letters on indifferent subjects but creditable to me in sentiment, one to M. de Bragadin, and one to the Abbé Grimani, and these I confided to Soradaci, begging him if he regained his liberty to deliver them. He swore fidelity on the crucifix and the holy pictures, declaring he would let himself be hacked to pieces rather than injure me. He sewed the letters in the lining of

Digitized by Microsoft®

his coat. After they had been in his possession two or three days, Laurence came to take him to the secretary. He was absent several hours, and I began to hope that he had gone for ever, when he reappeared.

'You can give me back my letters,' I said, 'you are not likely now to have a chance of delivering them.' At first he tried to put me off, pretending that it was dangerous, the gaoler might come in while he was ripping open his coat; then he protested that in all probability he would be questioned again in a day or two and then set free. Finally, he flung himself on his knees at my feet, and declared that in the presence of the secretary he had been seized with such a fit of terror and trembling that that functionary had suspected something was wrong, and had had him searched. The two letters were of course discovered, and the secretary had confiscated them.

I believed just as much of this cock-and-bull story as I chose. While chuckling inwardly at the success of my ruse, I covered my face with my hands, and flinging myself before the picture of the Virgin, I demanded of her, in loud and solemn tones, vengeance on the miscreant who had broken his sacred vow, after which I lay down on my bed, my face turned to the wall, and during all that night and the following day, I did not say one word in answer to Soradaci's cries, tears, and protestations of repentance. I was acting a part in the comedy I had planned. I wrote to Balbi to come at seven o'clock that night to finish his work, and to be not one minute earlier or one minute later, and to work for exactly four hours and no longer.

'Our liberty,' said I, 'depends on rigorous exactitude.' It was now the twenty-fifth of October, and the moment when I was to execute my project, or abandon it for ever, was not far distant. The State Inquisitors and the secretary went every year to pass the first three days of November at some village on the mainland. Laurence profited by this absence to get drunk every night, and consequently slept later in the morning.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I had got into that superstitious frame of mind which leads men, at some momentous point of their career, to be influenced by a verse in the Bible or a verse in Virgil. My intellect, weakened by long months of captivity, clamoured for an oracle. I determined to consult the divine poem *Orlando Furioso* by Ariosto. I wrote my question on a slip of paper, with a combination of numbers which was to point out stanza and verse, and I found the following line:—

'Fra il fin d'ottobre e il capo di novembre.'[1]

The aptitude and precision of this verse seemed to me admirable. I won't say that I placed absolute faith in it, but it was excusable of me, I think, to feel elated at the promise it held forth.

The most singular part of this is, that between the end of October and the beginning of November there is only the instant of midnight, and it was precisely on the stroke of twelve on the thirty-first of October that I left my cell.

He confuses and befools Soradaci.

Soradaci had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, and I judged that the moment had now come to make an impression on his confused and stupid mind, to render it, if possible, more confused and more stupid than usual. I called him, and he dragged himself along the floor to my feet, where, weeping bitterly, he told me that if I refused to forgive him, he should die during the day, for the curse of the Blessed Virgin was on him; he suffered terribly in his stomach, and his mouth was covered with ulcers.

'Sit down,' said I, 'and eat this soup. Know that Our Lady of the Rosary appeared to me at daybreak, and ordered me to forgive you. You will not die, and you will leave this cell with me. The grief that your horrible treason caused me prevented me from closing my eyes all night, for those letters will certainly condemn me to prison for the rest of my days. My only consolation was the certitude that I should see you die in agony within three days. While in this state of mind,

[1] 'Between the end of October and the beginning of November.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

unworthy, I must admit, of a Christian, I had a vision. I saw the Mother of God herself; she spoke to me in these words: "Soradaci is devoted to the Holy Rosary, and for this reason I protect him, and I desire you to pardon him, so as to counteract the curse which he has invoked on himself. As a reward for your generosity in forgiving him, I shall order one of my angels to assume human form and to come down from heaven, and break through the roof of your prison, so that you can escape. You may take Soradaci with you, but only on condition that he swears to abjure the trade of a spy." After these words the Blessed Virgin disappeared.'

The animal, who had listened to me with open eyes and mouth, suddenly asked at what hour the angel would come, and if we should see him?

'He will be here at sunset; we shall not see him, but we shall hear him at work, and he will leave at the hour announced by the Blessed Virgin.'

'Perhaps you only dreamt all this?'

'No, I am sure of what I say. Do you feel that you can give the promise?'

Instead of answering, he curled up on his mattress and went to sleep. He woke up two hours later, and asked if he might take the proposed oath.

'You can put it off,' said I, 'until the angel appears in the cell, but then, if you do not swear to renounce your villainous trade, which has brought you here, and which will lead you to the gallows, I shall make you stay behind me, for such is the order of the Mother of God, and she will surely withdraw her protection from you.'

The angelic visitation.

I could read on his ugly face that this procrastination was to his taste, for he did not believe in my angelic visitation. He looked compassionately at me, and evidently thought I was wandering; but I smiled inwardly, for I knew the coming of *the angel* would frighten him out of his miserable wits.

An hour before the appointed time we dined. I drank

Digitized by Microsoft®

nothing but water, and gave Soradaci all the wine and all the garlic, his beloved delicacy.

At the first stroke of seven I flung myself on my knees, ordering him to do likewise. As soon as I heard a little noise, the other side of the wall, 'The angel is coming!' I cried, prostrating myself, and at the same time giving him a violent blow which toppled him over on his face. We remained for a quarter of an hour in this position, during which time the sound of Balbi's tool was plainly audible. I then permitted him to rise to his knees, and for three hours and a half I recited the rosary, forcing him to repeat it with me. From time to time he fell asleep, but he never interrupted me; now and then he would gaze furtively at the ceiling, and from there to the picture of the Blessed Virgin, as though demanding from her an explanation. At half-past eleven, 'The angel is going—prostrate yourself!' I commanded in a solemn voice.

I made Soradaci swear not only that he would not say a word to Laurence of our heavenly visitor, but also that while the gaoler was in our cell he would lie on his bed, with his face turned to the wall. This precaution was needful, for a wink would have been sufficient to betray us.

It was natural that I should want to regain my liberty, and there were only two ways in which I could manage the scoundrel whom fate had thrown into the same cell with me. I must either subjugate him, or suffocate him; the latter would have been easier, and less dangerous, but does any man living say that I had better have done so? If there is such a man, I pray God to enlighten him. I think, in acting as I did, I did my duty, and the victory which crowned my exploit may be taken as a sign that Providence was not displeased with me.

Soradaci obeyed me scrupulously, and remained with his face hidden while Laurence was in our cell. I verily believe that if he had made the slightest movement I should have strangled him. When the gaoler had departed I told him that the angel would descend through the roof about noon, that he would bring a pair of scissors with him, and that he

Digitized by Microsoft®

(Soradaci happened to be a barber by trade) must cut off my beard and the angel's.'

'Will the angel have a beard?'

'Yes. After you have shaved us we shall get out on to the palace roof, break through it, and descend on the Square of Saint Mark, from whence we shall go to Germany.'

He did not answer, and ate his dinner in silence. My heart and mind were too full to eat; I had not been able to sleep for two nights.

At the given moment the angel appeared; Soradaci prostrated himself, while Father Balbi slid through the hole and flung himself into my arms.

He is shaved with the angel, by Soradaci.

'Your task is over,' said I, 'and mine is just beginning.' He gave me back my tool and a pair of scissors with which Soradaci arranged our beards in a very creditable manner. I told the monk to stay with him while I made a tour of inspection. The hole in the wall was narrow, but I managed to squeeze through. I entered Balbi's cell, where I found Count Asquini, a fine-looking old man, whose figure, however, was not made for gymnastic feats, such as climbing about on a steep roof covered with sheets of lead. He asked me what I proposed to do next, and told me he thought I had acted rather lightly and hastily.

'I shall go straight ahead,' I answered, 'until I find liberty or death.'

'You think,' he said, 'that you will get from the roof to the ground, but I don't see how you are to do that, unless you suddenly grow wings. Anyhow, I dare not go with you; I shall stay here, and pray God for your safety.'

I returned to my cell, where I spent four hours cutting up my sheets, blankets, mattress and palliasse into strips. With these I made a hundred fathom of cord. I made a packet of my coat, cloak, some shirts, stockings and handkerchiefs. We then passed, all three of us, into the count's cell. I had now flung away my Tartufe's mask, and spoke openly before Soradaci.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

In two hours, with the aid of the monk, I managed to make a hole in the attic roof. To my horror I saw that it was bright moonlight, and as on fine nights everybody promenades in the Square of Saint Mark, this forced us to wait until midnight; the extraordinary spectacle which we should have presented scrambling about on the leads would certainly have aroused first curiosity and then suspicion.

I asked Count Asquini to lend me thirty sequins, promising to return them as soon as I was safe in Germany, but the poor old man, in spite of his virtues, was a miser at heart. At first he tried to persuade me that I did not require any money; finally, with many tears, he offered me two sequins, which I was obliged to accept.

Count Asquini is seventy, and afraid.

The first proof which Balbi gave me of his noble character was to tell me ten times over that I had broken my word to him, for I had told him my plan was complete, whereas it was nothing of the sort. He added that had he known this he would not have joined in the enterprise. Count Asquini, with the wisdom of seventy years, tried to persuade me to give it up, telling me that it was hopeless, for even if we fell into the canal, which was the best thing that could happen to us, we should break our arms and legs, for the water was not deep enough to destroy the force of the fall. He was a barrister, and naturally eloquent, but what moved him most, I knew, was his two sequins.

'The steepness of the roof,' he said, 'which is covered with sheets of lead, will not permit you to walk upright. The cords you are taking will be useless, for you will find nothing to fasten them to; but supposing you do, one of you will have to lower the other two, after which he will be obliged to go back to his cell. Which of you is capable of this heroic self-sacrifice? Then again, by which side do you hope to get down? Not by the pillars opposite the square, you would be seen; not by the church, for it is enclosed in gates impossible to scale; not by the court, for you would fall into the hands of the archers. On the fourth side is the canal;

Digitized by Microsoft®

have you a boat or gondola awaiting you? No, you would have to swim to Saint Apollonia; and even if you swim like sharks, what a state you would be in when you got there!'

This speech, which our desperate circumstances certainly justified, made my blood boil, the more so as it was interlarded with the reproaches of the monk, and the weeping and wailing of Soradaci. Nevertheless, I had the courage to listen to it patiently without answering harshly. I felt I was in a delicate position, the slightest thing might decide the cowardly Balbi to remain, and alone I could not hope to succeed. Soradaci implored me to leave him behind. 'You are the master,' he said, 'but if you order me to follow you it will be to certain death. I shall fall into the canal, I am convinced, and I shall be of no use to you. Let me stay here, and I will pray to Saint Francis for you.' The fool little knew how pleased I was to be rid of him. I borrowed pen and ink from Asquini and wrote the following letter, which I gave to Soradaci:—

'"I shall not perish, but live to sing the praises of the Lord."

'It is the duty of our Lords, the State Inquisitors, to use every means in their power to keep a guilty man in prison, but the prisoner, if he is not on parole, should do everything he can to escape. Their right is based on justice, his on nature. They did not ask his consent to imprison him, he need not ask theirs to set himself free.

31st Oct. 1756.

'Jacques Casanova, who writes this, in the bitterness of his heart, knows that he may be recaptured, in which case he appeals to the humanity of his judges not to make his lot harder than that from which he is fleeing. He gives everything in his cell (provided he is not so unlucky as to be brought back to it) to Francis Soradaci, with the exception of his books, which he gives to Count Asquini.

'Written one hour before midnight, without a light, in Count Asquini's cell, the 31st of October 1756.'

I instructed Soradaci to give this letter to the secretary

Digitized by Microsoft®

himself, who would doubtless come up to question him and Asquini personally.

It was now time to start. The moon was no longer visible. I tied half the cords on one of Balbi's shoulders, and his packet of clothes on the other, doing the same for myself; then the two of us, in our shirt-sleeves, our hats on our heads, went through the opening.—

'E quindi uscimmo a rimirar le stelle.'[1]—DANTE.

[1] 'And then we went out to contemplate the stars.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XVII

THE ESCAPE

Astride on a gable.

I WENT out first, Balbi followed me; Soradaci had orders to put the sheet of lead covering the hole back into its place, and then to go and pray with all his might to Saint Francis. I crawled along on all fours, pushing my tool into the cracks between the leaden roofing, and dragging the monk after me. With his right hand he firmly clutched the band of my breeches, so that I was in the painful position of a pack-horse and saddle-horse combined, and this on a steep lead roof made more slippery by the damp of a thick fog! Half-way up the monk called out to me to stop; one of his packages had slipped, but he was in hopes it had lodged in the gutter piping. My first impulse was to give him a kick and send him after it, but I checked myself, and asked him if it was the packet of cords; he said no, it was his clothes and a manuscript which he had found in the prison attic, and which he expected to sell for a high price. I told him he must bear his loss patiently; he sighed, and we crawled on. By and by we got to a gable, on which we could sit astride; two hundred feet in front of us were the cupolas of Saint Mark, which is, properly speaking, the private chapel of the Doge, and no monarch in the world can boast of a better or finer. Here my unfortunate companion lost his hat, which rolled over and over till it joined his clothes in the canal. He declared this was a bad omen, but I cheered him by pointing out that if the hat had fallen to the left, instead of to the right, it would have tumbled at the very feet of the guards in the courtyard. It

Digitized by Microsoft®

was a proof, I told him, that God was protecting us, and at the same time, it was a lesson to him to be more prudent.

I left Balbi perched on the gable, while I explored the roof in search of some skylight or window, by means of which we could enter the palace. After searching for more than an hour without finding any point to which I could fasten my cords, the canal and the courtyard were not to be thought of; to get beyond the church, towards the *Canonica*, I should have to climb such perilous slopes that I abandoned this idea also. Nevertheless, something must be done. I fixed my eyes on a garret window facing the canal, about two-thirds from the top of the roof. It was far enough away from our part of the palace for me to feel sure it was not connected with the prisons. If I could get in through it I should probably find myself in some attic, inhabited or otherwise, belonging to the apartment of some one of the palace functionaries, and at break of day the doors would be opened. I was morally certain that any of the palace servants, even those of the Doge himself, so far from giving us up to justice, would only help us in our flight, even had we been the worst of criminals, so hateful was the Inquisition in the eyes of all men. I let myself slide down the roof till I arrived astraddle the garret window; by leaning over I could feel it was filled with small panes of glass, behind which was a grating. The glass was easily disposed of, but in my nervous state of mind the grating, slight though it was, filled me with dismay. I was weary, hungry, over-excited, and this obstacle seemed insurmountable. I was beginning to lose my head, and my courage, when the simplest incident imaginable restored my mental equilibrium. The bell of Saint Mark's struck twelve! The day now beginning was All Saints, the prediction of the Jesuit father flashed through my mind, and at the same moment I remembered the line from Ariosto—

The bell of St. Mark's.

'Fra il fin d'ottobre e il capo di novembre.'

The sound of the bell was as a speaking talisman to me,

Digitized by Microsoft®

bidding me be of good heart, and promising me victory. I broke the glass, and after a quarter of an hour's hard work with my pike I lifted out the entire grating; blood was streaming from a wound in my left hand, but I was too excited to notice it.

I got back to my companion, who welcomed me with the grossest insults, for having left him so long, at the same time assuring me he was only waiting for seven o'clock to return to the prison. 'And what did you think had become of me?'

'I thought you had fallen over.'

'And this is how you show your joy at my safety! Follow me now, and you will see where I have been.'

We scrambled to the garret window, and held a consultation as to the best means of entering it; it was easy enough for one, as the other could lower him by the cords, but how was he to follow after?

Balbi's selfishness.

'Let me down first,' said the amiable Balbi, 'and when I am safe inside you will find some means of rejoining me.' His brutal selfishness made me feel like digging my pike in his stomach, but I again restrained myself, and silently did as he asked. When I drew up the cord, I found the height from the window to the floor was fifty feet, the window was high in the roof of an immensely lofty gallery. Not knowing what to do, I wandered over the leads, where, on a sort of terrace I had not visited before, I found a tub full of plaster, a trowel, and a ladder. I dragged the ladder after me to the window, and managed to push it in as far as the fifth rung, but beyond that it was impossible, as there was an interior beam, which barred its entrance. The only thing was to push it from below instead of from above, as I was then doing. I fastened the cord to the ladder, and let it slip, till it hung balanced on a point of the gutter piping, and then slid gently along till I was beside it. The marble gutter offered a slight rest to my feet, and I lay on my stomach up the roof; in this position I had the strength to raise the ladder and push it before me.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I got about a foot of it inside, which diminished the weight sensibly, when in my efforts to force it I slipped, and rolled over the roof, hanging only by my elbows to the gutter. In this frightful position I remained, as it seemed to me, some moments, but did not lose my presence of mind; the instinct of self-preservation made me, almost against my will, use all my strength in the supreme effort of hoisting myself back on the roof. I succeeded. I now lay along the gutter, panting and exhausted, but safe for the moment, though not out of danger, or at an end of my troubles, for the effort I had made caused a nervous contraction of my muscles, which resulted in a cramp so painful I completely lost the use of my limbs. I knew that immobility is the best remedy for cramp, and I had the sense to remain perfectly still until it passed away. What a terrible moment it was! By and by I was able to move my knees, and as soon as I had recovered my breath, I raised the ladder (which had fortunately been held in place by the frame of the window), and managed to introduce several more rungs of it through the opening, until it leaned parallel with the sill.

I then took up my pike, and once more climbed slowly and painfully up the slippery leads, till I got to the window, where I had no further difficulty with the ladder. I pushed it all in, and my companion held the other end of it firmly.

I flung into the attic the remaining parcels of clothes, the cords, and such *débris* and rubbish caused by my demolitions as I could gather up. I was particularly anxious not to leave any marks of my passage behind me on the roof. It was there that the archers, led by Laurence, would first search for us, and it was possible that we might still be lurking in the attic when they came that way. This done, I descended the ladder into the garret, where the monk received me, more graciously this time.

Arm in arm we walked round the shadowy place in which we found ourselves. It was about thirty feet long by twenty wide; at one end was a door barred with iron; this, however, was not

Digitized by Microsoft®

locked, and we went through it into another room, in the middle of which was a big table surrounded with chairs and stools. We opened one of the windows, but could see nothing but precipices, so to speak, between the windows. I closed the window, and went back to where we had left our baggage. Perfectly incapable of further effort, I fell on the floor; with a roll of cords to serve for a pillow, I gave myself up to sleep. Had I been certain that death, or torture, awaited me on waking, it would have made no difference. Even now I can remember the heavenly sensations of rest and forgetfulness which came over me as I sank to slumber.

He sleeps in the jaws of death. Balbi reproves him.

I slept for three hours and a half: the monk aroused me by shouting and shaking me. He told me it had struck five, and he could not understand how, given our position, I could sleep! *I* could, though! For two days and nights I had not closed my eyes, and for the same length of time had eaten nothing; the efforts I had made were enough to wear out the strength of any man. My nap had restored my vigour, I was able now to think and to act.

'This place,' said I, 'is not a prison, so there must be some way out of it.'

The ducal chancery.

There was a door at one end, through which we passed into a gallery lined with shelves filled with papers: these were the archives, as I afterwards learned. A little stone staircase took us to a second gallery, and a second staircase into a large hall, which I recognised as the ducal chancery. On a desk lay a tool, a sort of long slim chisel which the secretaries use to pierce parchments with, so as to attach the lead seals of the chancery to them. I forced the desk with it, and found a letter to the *proveditor* of Corfu, announcing the despatch of three thousand sequins, which he was to spend on the restoration of the old fortress. Unfortunately the money was not there; God knows with what pleasure I should have taken it had it been otherwise!

I tried to force the door of the chancery with my chisel, but soon saw that it was impossible. I decided to make a hole in

Digitized by Microsoft®

the panelling. With my pike I smashed and battered as well as I could, the monk helping me with the chisel, and both of us trembling at the noise we made.

In half an hour the hole was large enough, but it presented a terrific appearance, for the edges were splintered and broken, and bristling with sharp points, like the spikes on the top of a wall; it was about five feet from the ground. Putting two stools one on the other, we mounted on them, and taking Balbi first by the thighs and then by the ankles, I managed to lower him in safety. There was no one to help me, so I stuck my head and shoulders through as far as I could, and told the monk to drag me over the splinters, and not to stop, even if I reached the other side in pieces; he obeyed, and I arrived in frightful pain, with my hips and thighs torn and bleeding.

We ran down another staircase, at the bottom of which was the great door of the royal staircase. At one glance I saw that it was impossible to get through that without a mine to blow it up, or a catapult to beat it down. My poor pike seemed to say: *Hic finis posuit.*

Calm, resigned, and perfectly tranquil, I sat down, saying to the monk: 'I have done, it is for God or fortune to do the rest. I don't know if the palace sweepers will come to-day, as it is a holiday—All Saints Day, or to-morrow, which is All Souls. If any one does come, I shall make a run for it as soon as I see the door open, but otherwise, I shall not move from here, if I die of hunger.'

At this speech the poor man flew into a rage, calling me madman, seducer, liar. I let him rave without paying any attention to him. Even if some one opened the door, how to pass unnoticed in the state I was in?

Balbi looked like a peasant, but he was at least intact. His scarlet flannel waistcoat and his violet skin breeches were in good condition, and he was unscratched, whereas my appearance was horrible. I was covered with blood, and my clothes were in ribbons. I had torn my stockings, and scraped

Digitized by Microsoft ®

all the skin off my knees while I was hanging from the gutter piping; the broken panel of the chancery door had caught and rent my waistcoat, shirt, and breeches into rags. My thighs were furrowed with deep wounds.

I bandaged myself up as well as I could with handkerchiefs, smoothed my hair, put on a clean pair of stockings and a laced shirt with two others on the top of it, stuffed as many handkerchiefs and stockings as I could into my pockets, and flung the remainder into a corner.

He puts on his hat, and leans out of the window.

I must have looked like a reveller who had wound up the evening in some wild orgy! To crown all I put on my fine hat, trimmed with Spanish gold lace, and a long white feather; and thus attired I opened a window. It is not surprising that I immediately attracted the attention of the loungers in the courtyard, one of whom went to tell the concierge. The good man thought he must have locked some one in by mistake the night before, and ran off for his keys. I heard them jingling as he came upstairs; I could hear him puffing at every step. I told Balbi to keep close to me, and not to open his mouth. I stood, my pike in my hand, so that I could get out of the door the moment it was opened. I prayed to God that the concierge would make no resistance, as I was prepared to kill him if need were.

The poor fellow was thunderstruck at my aspect. I rushed past him and down the stairs, the monk at my heels. I went rapidly, yet avoiding the appearance of flight, down the magnificent steps called the Giant's Staircase, paying no heed to Balbi, who kept saying, 'To the church, to the church.' The door of Saint Mark's was not twenty paces away, but one could no longer take sanctuary there. The monk knew that, but fear had spoilt his memory. I went straight through the royal gate of the palace, across the little square, and on to the quay, where I got into the first gondola I saw, saying to the boatman, 'I want to go to Fusina quickly; call up another gondolier.' While the boat was being unfastened I flung myself on the cushion in the middle, while the monk took his

Digitized by Microsoft®

place on the seat. We must have been an odd-looking couple: he with his extraordinary face and bare head, my beautiful cloak flung over his shoulders, and I with my most unseasonable elegance, plumed hat, and ragged breeches, laced shirt and bleeding wrists. We must have looked like a pair of charlatans who had been in some drunken fray.

When we were well started I told the boatman I had changed my mind, I would go to Mestre. He replied that he would take me to England if I would pay him enough, and we went gaily on.

On the Grand Canal rowing to Mestre.

The canal had never seemed to me so beautiful, more especially as there was not a single boat in sight. It was a lovely morning, the air was fresh and clear and the sun had just risen. My two boatmen rowed swiftly. I thought on the awful nights I had passed, the dangers I had traversed, the hell in which only a few hours before I was imprisoned; my emotion and my gratitude to God overcame me, and I burst into tears. My worshipful companion, who up till then had not spoken a word, thought it his duty to console me. He made me laugh.

At Mestre I arranged for a post-chaise to take us on to Treviso; in three minutes the horses were in. I looked round for Balbi, he had disappeared; I was on the point of abandoning him when I caught sight of the scamp in a coffee-house, drinking chocolate and flirting with the waiting-maid. When he saw me he called out to me to come and join him, and to pay for what he had consumed, as he was penniless. Speechless with rage, I grasped him by the arm and marched him up to the post-chaise. We had not gone many yards before I met a man I knew, Balbi Tomasi, a decent fellow, but reported to have dealings with the inquisitors; he recognised me and cried out: 'Hallo! what are you doing here? I am delighted to see you, have you run away?'

'I have not run away, I was set at liberty.'

'Impossible! I was at M. Grimani's only yesterday, and I heard nothing of it.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Reader, it is easier for you to imagine the state of mind I was in than for me to describe it. I thought this man was paid to arrest me; that in another moment he would call up the police, who were all over Mestre, and I should be ignominiously marched back to 'The Leads.' I jumped out of the carriage, and asked him to step to one side with me. As soon as we were at a safe distance from the others I seized him by the collar; he saw the pike I was brandishing and guessed my intention; with a violent effort he wrenched himself away, and ran with all his might down the road, jumping over a wide ditch, from the other side of which he kissed his hand to me several times, as a sign that I had his good wishes. I was glad I had been saved from committing murder, for I began to think he meant me no harm. I got back into the chaise, looking disdainfully at the cowardly monk, who saw now the danger he had exposed us to, and we went on in silence to Treviso.

He is recognised by a spy of the Inquisition.

There I ordered a chaise and pair for ten o'clock, though I had no intention of taking them, firstly, because I had not enough money, and, secondly, because a post-chaise is easily tracked; it was merely a ruse. The landlord asked if we wished breakfast, but though I was fainting with hunger I had not the courage to eat anything; a quarter of an hour's delay might prove fatal. I wanted to get out into the open country where one man, if he is clever, can defy a hundred thousand.

We passed out of Treviso by Saint Thomas's gate, and struck across the fields. After walking for three hours I fell down exhausted. I told Balbi to get me something to eat or I should die; he said contemptuously that he had thought I was braver. He had filled his own stomach full before leaving 'The Leads,' and he had taken some chocolate and bread since. However, he found a farmhouse not far off, and brought me back a good dinner for thirty sols; after which we walked for another four hours, and then stopped by the roadside, twenty-four miles from Treviso. I was exhausted; my ankles were swollen and my shoes worn through.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I felt that it was impossible for me to continue to travel with Balbi; to think for him as well as myself, and to be constantly bickering and reproaching one another. His presence irritated me in my worn and nervous state, and I felt willing to pay any price to be rid of him.

'We must go to Borgo di Valsugano,' I said; 'it is the first town across the frontier of the Republic; we shall be as safe there as if we were in London; but we must use every precaution, and the first is to separate. You will go by the woods of Mantello, and I by the mountains; you will take the easiest and shortest way, and I the longest and most difficult; you will have money, and I shall have none. I make you a present of my cloak, which you can easily change for a coat and a hat; here is all that is left of the two sequins I took from Asquini. You will be at Borgo the day after to-morrow, in the evening, and I shall turn up about twenty-four hours later. Wait for me at the inn which is on the left, the last house in the town. For to-night I shall trust to luck to find me a bed somewhere. I am absolutely in need of rest and peace, which I can't get with you. I am, moreover, certain that they are looking for us, and that if we show ourselves together at any inn we shall be arrested. You go your way, and let me go mine.'

'I have been expecting some such speech,' said Balbi, 'and shall answer it by reminding you of all your promises. You said we should not separate, and I do not intend to; your fate shall be mine, and mine yours.'

'You are determined not to take my advice?'

'Most determined.'

'We shall see.'

He digs a hole in which to bury Father Balbi.

I took my instrument out of my pocket, and began quietly to dig a hole in the ground. After half an hour of this occupation I told him to recommend his soul to God, for the hole I had just made was to bury him in.

'I will get rid of you somehow—alive or dead.'

He looked at me for some time in silence, wondering

Digitized by Microsoft®

whether I was in earnest or not, then coming over to me—'I will do as you wish,' he said.

I embraced him, handed him the money, and renewed my promise to meet him at Borgo.

I cannot say how pleased I was to see him disappear down the road. His presence paralysed me. As soon as he was out of sight I got up and walked across country till I came in sight of a little village. A shepherd was feeding his flock on the hillside, and I asked him the name of the village and its principal inhabitants. One red house which was conspicuous among the rest he told me belonged to the captain of the local police. I cannot explain the instinct which led me to go straight up to this house, the very one that I should have avoided. A little child was spinning a top in the courtyard; I spoke to it and it went and called its mother. A pretty young woman came out, and asked me politely if I wished to see her husband, as unfortunately he was away from home.

'I am sorry,' said I, 'that my *confrère* is absent, but I am charmed to make the acquaintance of his wife.'

'His *confrère*! then I am speaking to M. Vetturi. My husband will be so sorry to miss you.'

'I hope he will be back soon, for I was going to ask him to let me sleep here to-night. I really cannot go on in the state I am in.'

'You shall have the best bed in the house, and a good supper, but I do not expect my husband back for three or four days. Two prisoners have escaped from 'The Leads,' one a patrician, and the other an individual named Casanova, and my husband has had orders from the inquisitors to search for them. But what have you done to your knees?'

'I was shooting in the mountains, and I slipped on some sharp rocks. I lost a good deal of blood, and it has made me very weak.'

'O poor gentleman! My mother, who lives with us, will soon cure you.'

This archer's pretty wife had very little professional acumen.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Hunting in a silk coat and white silk stockings! How her husband must have laughed at her afterwards; but I am sure God rewarded her innocent kindness.

He sleeps at the house of the head of the local police.

Her mother dressed my wounds most tenderly, lecturing me on foolhardiness the while she washed and bandaged me. She gave me a good supper, and probably undressed me like a child, for I fell asleep to wake next morning in bed, rested in body and mind, my wounds almost healed. I had slept for twelve hours.

I dressed myself quickly, went downstairs, out of the house, and across the yard, without taking any notice of two men who were standing there, and who were very likely policemen. I walked straight ahead of me, and soon left the village behind. My heart was full of gratitude to the kindly, hospitable women who had fed and tended me. I only regretted that I was unable to thank them for their goodness. I walked for five hours till I came to a church, the bell of which was ringing. It was All Souls Day, and the villagers were flocking in to Mass. I joined the number, being in the reckless frame of mind when a man will follow his lightest whim. Coming out of church I met Mark Antony Grimani, nephew of my guardian, the state inquisitor.

'What are you doing here, Casanova, and where is your companion?'

'I gave him all the money I had, and he has taken another road. If your Excellency would give me a little help I could easily manage now.'

'I can give you nothing, but you will find hermits along the road who will not let you starve; but tell me how you escaped from "The Leads"?'

'My story would no doubt interest you, but it is long, and in the meanwhile the hermits may eat up the provisions which are to prevent me from dying of hunger.'

I bowed ironically and went my way. In spite of my extreme need I was not displeased at this refusal. It made me feel that I was a far finer gentleman than this patrician,

Digitized by Microsoft®

who bade me beg from the monks. I learned afterwards that his wife reproached him bitterly for his hard-heartedness. There is no doubt that benevolence and generosity is commoner among women than men.

I continued my way until sunset; then, tired, harassed, and hungry, I stopped at a lonely, decent-looking house. I asked the concierge if I could see the master. He answered that his master had gone to a wedding, but had ordered him to welcome any friends who might come during his absence. So luck favoured me a second time, and again I found a good supper and a good bed.

He dines at a Capuchin monastery.

The next day I dined at a Capuchin monastery, and in the afternoon came to a villa, the owner of which was a friend of mine. I was shown into his study, where he was writing. He dropped his pen in alarm when he saw me, and told me to be off at once. I asked him to lend me sixty sequins, offering him my note of hand, drawn on M. de Bragadin, but he answered that he could give me nothing, not even a glass of water, lest he incurred the anger of the tribunal. He was a money-changer, a man about sixty years old, and under great obligations to me.

Shaking with rage, I seized him by the collar, and pulling out my pike threatened to kill him if he did not help me. He opened a drawer full of gold, in his desk, and told me to take what I wanted.

'Count me out six sequins,' I said.

'You asked for sixty.'

'Yes—as a friendly loan; but as I must take them by force I will only have six, and I will give you no receipt for them. They shall be paid you back, though, at Venice, where I shall write and tell of your mean and cowardly conduct; and now let me go quietly, or I will come back and burn your house down over your head.'

I slept at a peasant's hut that night, and in the morning bought an old redingote, a pair of boots, and a donkey; further on I exchanged the ass for a cart and two horses, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

He passes the Venetian frontier.

with this equipage arrived at Borgo di Valsugano, where I found Balbi. If he had not spoken to me I should not have known him. A long riding-coat and a felt hat worn over a cotton night-cap disguised him completely. He told me a farmer had given him these things in exchange for my cloak, that he had eaten well along the road, and had met with no adventures.

I passed two days in bed writing letters to Venice, in all of which I spoke of the money-changer and his brutality. I then went on to Bolzan, where an old banker of my acquaintance lent me a trusty messenger to carry news to M. de Bragadin. He returned in six days with a hundred sequins, and I began to clothe my companion and myself. The miserable Balbi was perpetually reminding me that but for him I should never have escaped, that whatever fortune I might make eventually, half of it would belong by rights to him. He made love to all the servants, and, as he was anything but handsome, met with many rebuffs, which he accepted with true philosophy, beginning again the next day. From Bolzan we went to Munich, where I lodged at 'The Stag.' I found my old friend the Countess Coronini, who was living at the Convent of Saint Justine, and was in high favour at Court. She told me that she had spoken of me to the Elector, who said there was no reason why I should not remain in Bavaria, but that he could not guarantee the safety of Balbi—a runaway monk.

I got a letter of introduction to the Dean of Saint Maurice, at Augsburg, and packed Balbi off to him, in a carriage, with everything he could want. I was glad to be rid of him so cheaply, and in four days received a letter from him saying the dean had received him kindly.

My health was much impaired. I was suffering from a constriction of the nerves, which alarmed me somewhat, but a month's rest and a strict régime restored me completely.

Some Venetian friends of mine, Madame Rivière and her family, came to Munich during this time. They were going

Digitized by Microsoft®

He meets friends at Munich.

on to Paris for the marriage of the eldest daughter, and offered to take me with them. They would not hear of my bearing any share of the expense, and I thankfully accepted the offer. Two days before leaving I received another remittance from Venice, and as I felt it my duty to convince myself of Balbi's wellbeing, I took a post-chaise to Augsburg. I found him well lodged, well served, and well clothed, and congratulated him on his good fortune. He asked me bitterly what I meant by that, saying that he had not a penny in his pocket.

'Ask your friends for some money.'

'I have no friends.'

'That must be because you have never been a friend to any one but yourself.'

'Take me with you to Paris.'

'What would you do there?'

'Why, what will you do?'

'Work, and put my talents to account. Your wings are strong enough now for you to fly alone. I have done all I can for you, and you ought to be grateful for the comfortable situation you are in.'

Some months later the dean wrote to me that Balbi had run away with one of his women servants, taking with him a large sum of money, a gold watch, and twelve silver forks and spoons. The dishonest wretch took refuge at Coire, in Switzerland, where he asked to be received into the Calvinist Church, and to be recognised as the legitimate husband of the woman who was with him. When he had spent all his money his wife left him, and he went to Brescia, a town belonging to the Venetian States, where he assured the governor of his repentance, begging him to take him under his protection. He was sent in chains to Venice, and re-imprisoned in 'The Leads,' where he remained two years, and was then sent to an isolated monastery near Feltre, whence he escaped to Rome. The Pope dispensed him from his monastic vows. As a secular priest he was no longer in the power of

Digitized by Microsoft®

the Inquisition, and he returned to Venice, where he led a dissolute and miserable life, dying in 1783.

Paris, 5th January 1757.

We journeyed to Paris in a most excellent and comfortable *berline*, and I did my best to entertain my companions, and render myself as amusing and serviceable as possible in return for their generosity. We arrived on the 5th of January 1757. I went straight to my friend Baletti, who received me with open arms, though I had not written to him. He was expecting me, for he had heard of my flight from prison, and knew that it would be necessary for me to get as far from Venice as possible. There was general rejoicing in the house when they knew of my arrival. This interesting family was devoted to me. I procured a nice apartment near them, and then took a *fiacre* to the Hotel de Bourbon,[1] intending to present myself to M. de Bernis, who was then Minister of Foreign Affairs, but I found he had gone to Versailles. I was, of course, anxious to place myself as soon as possible under the protection of the complaisant lover of my beautiful M. M., and so I went on to Versailles, but had the misfortune to cross M. de Bernis on the road. There was nothing for it but to return to Paris; but when we got to the gates we saw a crowd of people rushing about in great confusion, and crying out, 'The king is assassinated; they have assassinated the king.' They stopped my carriage, and made me get out; I was taken to the guard-house, where in a few minutes I was joined by twenty or thirty people, all as innocent as I was. We stayed there, sulky and suspicious, staring at each other, until at last an officer came in, and apologising to me, said we were at liberty to go our ways.

'The king is wounded,' he said, 'and has been taken to his apartments; nobody knows who the assassin is, but he has been arrested.'

[1] This palace, which was built in 1722 by the Duc de Bourbon, has gone through many changes, and been used for many purposes. In 1796 the Council of the Five Hundred held their sittings there; under the Empire it was used by the Corps Legislatif. From 1814 to 1848 it served as the Chamber of Deputies, and in 1851 the National Assembly sat in a provisionary hall which occupied part of the courtyard.

Digitized by Microsoft®

It took me three hours to get back to Paris, and in that short time I was passed by at least two hundred couriers, galloping *ventre à terre.* At each moment a fresh one went by, and each one cried out the news he was carrying; finally, I gathered that the king had been bled, that his wound was a slight one, so slight that if he chose he could go on to Trianon; and that it was decreed that the wretched assassin[1] was to be drawn and quartered alive, and then burnt.

When I got to Paris the gossips flocked round me, and I had to repeat what I had heard ten times over.

[1] The excitement and misery of the Seven Years War and the well-known immorality of the king preyed on the already diseased mind of Damiens. He was convinced that no change for the better would take place till the king personally suffered. His intention was to wound Louis, not kill him. He went to Versailles and waited two days before an opportunity occurred. As the king was coming through the porch which now leads to the Museum, Damiens stuck a penknife into the king's back, exclaiming, 'I did it for God and the people, because France is perishing.' Casanova's faintly compassionate attitude towards Damiens is exceptional in his times, and speaks for his humanity.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XVIII

MADEMOISELLE DE LA MEURE

So here I was once more in Paris, glorious Paris. I was beginning to learn to look upon it as my adopted country, for I could not hope to return to the one which had given me birth. I was no stranger to Paris, but hitherto I had considered it only as a centre of amusement; now I considered it as the field on which my fortune was to be won. I must bring into play all my physical and mental powers; I must become acquainted with great and influential persons, take my colour from them, and do everything in my power to please them.

'I will be,' I said to myself, 'reserved in speech and behaviour, and this will gain me a reputation the fruits of which I shall gather by and by.'

My adopted father, good, generous M. de Bragadin, had promised me an allowance of a hundred crowns a month, so that I was fairly well provided for, and could wait till chance served me.

Naturally enough my first idea was to address myself to the late French ambassador to Venice; he was then in high favour at court, and I knew him well enough to be sure of his support.

I told the story of my escape in every salon: it took me two good hours. I wrote a letter which I took myself to the Palais Bourbon, left it, and waited. Next morning at eight o'clock I received a note giving me an appointment for the same day.

M. de Bernis received me most cordially; he told me he

Digitized by Microsoft®

had heard from M. M. of my escape; and he showed me her letter giving him all the details of my flight. These details were in every respect incorrect, and were evidently imaginary; but this was not M. M.'s fault, she had only repeated the current version of my story as it had been told to her. 'C. C.,' she wrote, 'comes very often to see me, but, alas! our poor friend is not over happy in her married life.'

The Cardinal de Bernis prints the account of his escape.

I promised M. de Bernis to write out the account of my adventures. He said he would send a copy to M. M. On taking leave of me he very gracefully slid a rouleau of a hundred louis into my hands; I spent this money on replenishing my wardrobe, which was excessively meagre. I wrote my story in eight days, and sent it to my generous protector, authorising him to have as many copies of it printed as he liked, and begging him to distribute them to such persons as he thought would be useful to me.

Three weeks after he told me he had spoken about me to M. Erizzo, the Venetian ambassador, who said, that though personally he had no cause for reproach, he should prefer not to receive me, as he did not wish to get into trouble with the Holy Office. M. de Bernis also told me that he had given my narrative to the Marquise de Pompadour, and that he would take an early opportunity of presenting me to that influential lady. 'You can go, my dear Casanova,' he said, 'to M. de Choiseul and to the comptroller-general, M. de Boulogne; you will be well received, coming from me; if you are clever you will be able to do something with the latter. Try and invent something which will bring money into the royal coffers, but avoid complications and chimerical combinations.'

For the moment I could think of nothing which would add to the king's revenues except new taxes; but I went to M. de Choiseul.[1] He received me in the dressing-room, where he

[1] He owed his success principally to his friendship with La Pompadour. After being ambassador to Rome and Vienna he became successively Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of War. He retired in 1770 as a result of

Digitized by Microsoft ®

was writing, while his valet dressed his hair. He put several questions to me, writing all the time I was answering them. When he had finished his letter, he said, 'Tell me how you managed to escape from prison.'

'Your Excellency, it would take at least two hours to tell you, and you appear to be very busy.'

'Tell me, in brief, how did you get through the roof?'

'I could not tell you that in less than half an hour.'

'Why were you imprisoned?'

'The interest of my story, your Excellency, lies in its details, and they are lengthy.'

'Well, you will tell me them some other time. I must go to Versailles now; come and see me again. And in the meantime how can I be of use to you?'

I had been somewhat put out by his careless reception of me; but these last words were said so kindly that my good humour returned.

Then I went to M. de Boulogne, in appearance, manners, and costume a very different person from the Duc de Choiseul. He was old, and looked clever, and I respected him.

'Tell me your views,' he said, 'either now or in writing: M. Pâris Duverny [1] wants twenty million francs for his military college, and we must find that sum without charging the state or depleting the royal treasury.'

the plots against him, but returned after the accession of Louis XVI. Though the queen welcomed him heartily, the king, who had been warned against him, was exceedingly cold, and de Choiseul retired again to his chateau at Chanteloup.

[1] Pâris, otherwise called Duverny, was one of four brothers, financiers, who banded together to destroy the system of John Law. He was too strong for them; they were exiled, but returned after his fall. Their influence and power was immense, and they were hated. They were exiled again by Cardinal Fleury in 1726, and Joseph was imprisoned in the Bastille. After Fleury's death in 1743 they became more influential than ever. Madame de Pompadour befriended them, and for the nineteen years she was in power Pâris Duverny managed all the finances of the Empire. He founded the École Militaire in 1751. In 1846 his coffin was opened, as there had been much mystery as to the manner in which he had disposed of his wealth. Nothing, however, relating to its whereabouts was discovered.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I have a scheme in my head which would bring the king the interest on a hundred millions,' I said.

He undertakes to raise twenty millions for the French king.

'How much would it cost?'

'Nothing, but the expense of collecting.'

'I know of what you are thinking.'

'I am surprised at that, sir, for I have told no one.'

'Come and dine with me and M. Duverny to-morrow, and we will talk it over.'

Duverny, the financier, was honest and honourable. He was the brother of de Montmartel; scandal said he was the father of Madame de Pompadour.

On leaving the comptroller-general I went and walked about in the Tuileries Gardens, reflecting on this strange turn of fortune. On hearing that the king needed twenty millions, I had incontinently declared I could procure a hundred, without the faintest idea where they were to come from. This hard man of business had asked me to dinner to prove to me that he had already grasped my scheme before I told him of it. 'I must,' I thought, 'first find out what Duverny and Boulogne have in their minds, perhaps I can suggest some amendment to their scheme, or else preserve a mysterious and provocative silence.'

The dinner was to be at Duverny's house at Plaisance, a little beyond Vincennes. I presented myself at the door of the man who had drawn France out of the gulf into which, forty years before, Law's system of gambling operations had plunged her.

There were several people at dinner, and the conversation was exceedingly tiresome. The death of Fontenelle was discussed, and the trial of Damiens, which was to cost five millions. When dessert was served, however, the host, leaving his guests, begged me to follow him into another room. There we found a man of about fifty, who was presented to me as M. de Calsabigi. Duverny, taking a book from his hand, gave it to me, saying, with a smile, 'M. Casanova, here is your project.'

Cost of the trial of Damiens.

Digitized by Microsoft®

On the first page of the book I read—

'A lottery of ninety tickets; each lot, which is to be drawn once a month, can only fall on five numbers.'

'I own, sir,' said I, 'that that is my project.'

We spent the remainder of the night discussing the means of organising the lottery, and I may say, without vanity, that the amendments and rectifications I proposed were so valuable as to lead them at once to acknowledge their importance. Calsabigi's scheme was a crude one, but I soon convinced them of my power to develop it into a working possibility.

He institutes a lottery.

It would be tedious to describe at length all our calculations; suffice it to say that M. l'Alembert was called in, in his quality of arithmetician, and that he perfectly approved of my plan. De Bernis presented me to Madame de Pompadour, who was good enough to remember that she had met me some five years previously, when my bad French had considerably amused her. My knowledge of the language, she said, had increased since then, and become so perfect that I ought seriously to think of taking out papers of naturalisation. She showed the deepest interest in the lottery; and in eight days the council passed a decree authorising it. The scheme was briefly this: to limit the winning numbers to five; had they been six it would have been perfectly fair; as it was, the sixth fell to the State, so that the king would draw every month a profit of a hundred thousand crowns.

I was offered six of the receiving offices and four thousand francs a year from the profits of the lottery. Calsabigi was to have three thousand francs at each drawing, and the head office in the Rue Montmartre; he was far better paid than I was, but I was not jealous, as I knew that in reality the idea was his. I rented five of my offices for two thousand francs a year each, and the sixth, in the Rue Saint Denis, I furnished in a most luxurious manner, and put my valet in charge. He was a very intelligent young Italian, who had been in the service of the Prince de la Catolica.

As I wanted to attract people to my office, I posted bills

Digitized by Microsoft®

stating that all winning tickets signed by me would be paid within twenty-four hours. This took with the crowd, and we sold many more tickets in the Rue Saint Denis than at the other offices. My first receipt was forty thousand francs, out of which we had eighteen thousand francs prizes to pay. I had provided myself with the necessary funds, knowing I should be reimbursed. As there was no delay, our office became the popular one: my valet was on the road to fortune, for each winner gave him something for himself. The total receipts were ten million francs. Paris alone furnished four millions, and the State made a profit of six hundred thousand francs; this was not bad for the first time! The Parisians had won a number of small prizes, which gave the lottery a brilliant reputation; it was easy to predict that the next time the receipts would be doubled.

My lottery was, after all, nothing but a tax that fell particularly heavily on certain persons, at the same time offering them a problematical gain, so the government merely exploited the avarice and cupidity of the public; and I shall not refer to it again until certain subsequent events in my life make it necessary to do so.

I must now go back to the first month of my second sojourn in Paris. My brother François returned to Paris. Shortly after my arrival there he came from Dresden, where he had spent four years studying, and copying all the famous battle pictures. We met with mutual pleasure, but on my offering to use my influence to facilitate his reception into the Academy, he replied proudly that he wanted no recommendation but his own talent.

'The French,' he said, 'rejected me once. I bear them no grudge for doing so, but to-day I hope for a better reception.'

He painted a very fine picture, which he exhibited at the Louvre. It was received with acclamation, and the Academy bought it for twelve thousand francs. He became famous, and in twenty-six years made over a million francs, but his

Digitized by Microsoft®

foolish extravagance, and two unfortunate marriages he made, kept him a poor man.

In the month of March, my dear old friend, Madame Manzoni, sent me all my manuscripts and miniatures, which the reader will remember I had placed in safety with her some time before my incarceration in 'The Leads.' The messenger was a young Venetian nobleman, the Count de Tiretta.

The Comte de Tiretta takes him to see La Lambertini.

The jolly Tiretta offered to introduce me to a friend of a friend of his, Madame Lambertini, widow of the Pope's nephew. The curious title interested me. I went with Tiretta, and found neither widow nor Pope's niece, but an out-and-out adventuress by profession and inclination. She began an intrigue with Tiretta at once, and I did the same with a pretty girl, Mlle. de la Meure, who was there with her aunt, whom I treated at first with but scant respect; I could not conceive of any respectable young woman living under the wing of La Lambertini. They all played at cards, and the pretty niece was told off to amuse me. For a moment she left me and went to stand behind her fat aunt's chair, but was sent back to me, because, said the old lady, she brought her ill luck. That evening I prosecuted my attentions with so much fervour, that a few days afterwards Mlle. de la Meure wrote to me saying that her aunt was trying to marry her to a rich merchant of Dunkirk.

'She knows no more of him than I do, but the *courtier de mariage* speaks highly of him; what else could he do? Still, if what has passed between us has not injured me in your estimation, I propose myself to you as a wife, with seventy-five thousand francs, and as much more when my aunt dies.'

He meets Mlle. de la Meure.

This touched me, but the idea of marriage appalled me as usual. She gave me four days to think it over; they were enough to convince me that I did not love her enough. I went to dine at La Lambertini's, where I was to meet her, all the same. She came looking lovely, and in the presence of her aunt I arranged to take them all with me to see the execution of Damiens on the 28th of March. All Paris was

Digitized by Microsoft®

going, and I rushed out, took a *fiacre*, and hired a splendid window for three louis. When I came back I fell into a *tête-à-tête* with Mlle. de la Meure, and weakly promised to marry her. I bade her, however, place no obstacle in the way of the threatened visit of the Dunkirk merchant, her suitor, to Paris.

He hires a window in the Place de Grève.

On the day of the execution[1] I fetched the three ladies from their house, and as the *fiacre* was small, I took Mlle. de la Meure on my knee. The window I had chosen had two steps: the ladies were on the front one, and I and Tiretta stood behind looking over their shoulders. We stayed four hours. Every one knows about Damiens: he was a fanatic, who to gain heaven tried to kill the king. He managed to do little more than scratch the king, but he was tortured as if his crime had been fully consummated. I must say that I had to turn aside from the sight of the martyrdom of this victim of the Jesuits, and to stop my ears to keep out his piercing shrieks of agony—the poor creature was literally torn in pieces; but the sight did not affect La Lambertini and the fat aunt of Mlle. de la Meure in the least—indeed I was amused to see that Tiretta was teasing and cajoling and caressing the latter all the time. This was sheer hardness of heart, and I had to pretend to believe when they told me that the horror inspired in them by the monster's attempt had completely killed all sense of pity. After this long day we left the ladies at their house, and Tiretta and I went to dine at the Hôtel de Russie, where I scolded him for the lightness of his conduct.

When I went again to see Mlle. de la Meure, the dear good aunt came in and told me that Tiretta had made his peace with her, and that she was going to take him under her roof *en pension* for a year! To her niece she said, 'Be ready after

[1] The torture and execution of Damiens took place on the Place de la Grève, of which one side sloped away to the Seine. He was broken on the wheel, and torn in pieces by four horses. The process lasted four hours. The attitude of the two ladies was the conventional one of all Parisians at the period. Their English sisters, in their avidity for sights like public hangings, did not leave them far behind. But surely the incident of the 'fat aunt' here recorded outdoes all in cynicism and callousness.

Digitized by Microsoft®

dinner to start for La Villette,[1] where we will stay all the spring. And hist! you needn't tell my sister all about it.'

'Oh no, aunt. Do I ever tell of you?'

'Just hear her! One would think from the way she talks that this sort of thing happened every day!'

I laughed. We dined together, and then they departed all three for La Villette, and I went to spend the rest of the evening at the Italian players.

Three days later I went to stay a day or two. An actress called Quinault, and Madame Favart,[2] and the Abbé Voisenon were fellow-guests. The Dunkirk merchant was expected, but did not come till I left. I went again to La Villette to see him, and found the young lady dressed up in his honour. He was handsome and charming. We dined, we talked, but not Mlle. de la Meure. When the merchant was about to leave for Paris, the aunt begged him to come again to-morrow, and asked her niece to second the invitation. She obediently did so, and if she had not, he would have left the house without having once heard the sound of the voice of his affianced.

When he had gone:—

'Well, what do you think of your future husband?'

'Let me off answering, dear aunt, for the present, but put me next him to-morrow and make me talk, for, even if he approves my appearance, my conversation may disgust him. One must not take people in. Perhaps he won't have me when he finds how stupid I am.'

'I know you don't mean that; you think yourself clever,' said the aunt, 'and M. Casanova tells you so, I'll be bound.'

[1] La Villette, now an integral part of the town, was then a rustic retreat of the Parisians.

[2] Mlle. de Ronceray, better known by her husband's name of Favart. Maurice de Saxe fell in love with her at a performance she gave at his camp in Flanders. He was so importunate that she fled to Brussels. He then obtained a *lettre de cachet* against her husband, who escaped to Strassburg, where he lived hidden in a cellar, painting fans by the light of a candle for his livelihood. After Maurice de Saxe's death the devoted pair were reunited in Paris, and Favart's operas met with immense success.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'He knows what he is talking about,' she said.

Then we played cards, and went to bed. I had been in my room for a quarter of an hour when the door opened and my mistress came in, not in *négligée*, but dressed as she had been all the evening. It was an evil augury.

Interview with Mlle. de la Meure.

'Tell me,' she said shortly, 'if I am to agree to this marriage?'

'Do you like him?'

'I don't dislike him.'

'Then agree.'

'Very well, and good-bye. From this moment love between us ceases and friendship begins. Adieu.'

'Let our friendship date from to-morrow.'

'No, not if I die for it! If I am to be the bride of another, I will be worthy of him. I might even be happy in the days to come, who knows? Don't keep me, let me go—you know I love you.'

'Kiss me, then.'

'No.'

'But you are crying?'

'No. In God's name let me go.'

'You will only go and cry in your own room. I am in despair. Stay, and I will be your husband.'

'No, I can't consent to that—now.'

She made an immense effort and tore herself away. I could not sleep for remorse and shame.

I stayed to dinner next day, but I pretended, as I often did, to have toothache when I wished to be let alone. She never spoke to me, she never looked at me, and I know now she was right.

It was a very long dinner, and after it was over Mlle. de la Meure announced her marriage, in eight days, and her departure for Dunkirk.

I don't know why I did not fall down dead, but I went back to Paris and wrote her a passionate love-letter. She begged me, in her answer, not to write to her any more. Then I thought she must have fallen in love with the merchant, and longed to kill him. I thought I would go and see him at his

Digitized by Microsoft®

lodgings, tell him of my relations with his *fiancée*, and if this did not put him off, propose a duel. I went, with two pistols, but he was asleep, and I waited for a quarter of an hour, at the end of which he entered in a dressing-gown, and flung his arms round my neck. I was overwhelmed. Coffee was brought, and still not an offensive word could I find to say. The fit was past. It is humiliating to think that chance alone had prevented my behaving like a scoundrel.

A secret mission to Dunkirk.

One day M. de Bernis sent for me, and asked me if I felt disposed to undertake a secret commission, and if I thought I had the requirements needful.

'As far as inclination goes,' I answered, 'I am disposed to do anything to make money; and as for the aptitude, your Excellency is a better judge than I am.'

He smiled, and after dwelling for a moment or two on past recollections, told me to go and see the Abbé de la Ville, who would be more explicit than he could be.

The abbé was a cold, calm politician, who served the state well: the grateful king rewarded him with a bishopric, on the day of his death. He pronounced a dissertation on the nature of secret missions and the discretion necessary in those charged to carry them out. He then asked me if I thought I could manage to scrape acquaintance with the marine officers then at Dunkirk, and make him a circumstantial report of the commissariat, the number of sailors, ammunition, administration, police, and so forth, of eight or ten men-of-war lying there. 'As it is a secret mission,' he added, 'I can give you no letters. I can only supply you with funds and wish you *bon voyage*.'

As I was new to that kind of business, I imagined it to be much more difficult than it really was, and gave myself considerable trouble to get private introductions to the officers. My charming friend, Silvia Baletti,[1] the actress, furnished me

[1] Gianella Baletti, better known as Silvia, was born 1701, and for forty years was the idol of Parisian playgoers. Her husband, Joseph Baletti, acted under the name of Mario, and their son Louis, Casanova's friend, had also some reputation as an actor and dancer.

Digitized by Microsoft®

with several, and a passport through the Duc de Gesvres. An hour after my arrival at Dunkirk I found out Madame de P. (Mlle. de Meure), and she and her husband offered me a bed. I said I would come and dine with them sometimes. Before I had been in Dunkirk three days I was personally acquainted with all the captains stationed there. The brave fellows admitted me to their friendship, and asked me to dine on board their ships. I talked at random about the construction of vessels, and the Venetian methods of manœuvring them. The more nonsense I talked the more they seemed delighted with me; they took me down into the holds, where I put a hundred questions about freight and ballast. I drew out of them everything I wanted, and in the evening I carefully transmitted to paper all my observations, good and bad. I only slept four or five hours a day, and in fifteen days I knew all I desired to know.

I was very serious during this trip; frivolity and gambling were entirely laid aside; I devoted myself wholly to my work.

The mission costs twelve thousand francs.

This mission cost the government twelve thousand francs, and it could easily have got all the information I furnished it with without spending a sou. Any intelligent young officer could have done what I did. But the ministers in France in those days spent money which was not theirs, to enrich their creatures. They were despots, and the down-trodden people counted for nothing with them; the state was heavily in debt, and the provinces in the most deplorable condition. *A revolution was necessary*, I think, but it need not have been a bloody one, it should have been moral and patriotic; but then the nobles and the clergy were not generous and public-spirited enough to make those slight sacrifices which would have saved the king, the state, and themselves.

I have already spoken of Silvia's daughter, Manon Baletti, a charming, sprightly, and beautiful creature to whom I was sincerely attached, and who returned my affection. She was in every way suited to make me an excellent wife, and had it not been for my invincible dislike to matrimony I should have

Digitized by Microsoft®

asked her parents for her hand. I had more than once thought seriously of marrying her, but always found some plausible excuse for delay.

My devotion to her did not prevent me from being interested in the mercenary beauties who then held *le haut du pavé*, or those others who held themselves a head higher because they sang or danced, or played the parts of queens or waiting-maids every night.

Camille, actress and dancer.

Camille, actress and dancer at the Comédie Italienne, attracted me, partly, I must own, on account of the delightful little house near the Barrière Blanche, where she lived with the Comte d'Eigreville. He was the brother of the Marquis de Gamache and the Comtesse du Rumain, a handsome, amiable fellow, who loved to see his mistress's salon crowded. The Comte de la Tour d'Auvergne was one of her most assiduous admirers, a young man of good birth, who adored her, but who was not rich enough to keep her to himself. Camille had made him a present of a little waiting-maid, named Babet, a naïve, simple child about fifteen, who was delighted to share his humble lodgings in the Rue de Taranne.[1] One evening, having supped at the Barrière Blanche, De la Tour d'Auvergne, his Babet, and I returned to Paris in a small carriage. The night was dark, and I, not wishing to lose an opportunity, took her hand and gently pressed it; to my delight the pressure was returned. Growing bolder, I raised the hand to my lips and covered it with kisses, when, O horrors! a voice said: 'Greatly obliged to you, my dear Casanova, for your delicate attentions, but I fear you mistake!'

These words were followed by a peal of laughter. Fortunately for me, at that moment the carriage stopped at my door, and I escaped. The story, of course, made the tour of the town, and for days I could not show myself without being hailed

[1] The Rue de Taranne is an interesting street. It took its name from Simon de Taranne, an alderman, who had his hotel there in 1417. The Marquis de Saint Simon lived there in 1711, Diderot in the house which stood at the corner of the Rue Saint Benoit, and d'Holbach lived at No. 12.

Digitized by Microsoft®

with laughter, but as I bore the raillery good-humouredly, the affair was soon forgotten. De la Tour d'Auvergne and I became fast friends. He came to me one evening in the *foyer* of the theatre and asked me to lend him a hundred louis, which he had lost the night before at the Princess Anhalt's. I had not so much as that in hand, and I told him so, but he was so distressed that I consented to take the sum from the lottery safe.

He puts his hand into the lottery safe to oblige De la Tour d'Auvergne.

'My word of honour,' he said, 'is surely worth a hundred louis; put it in the place of the money until I redeem it on Saturday.'

Saturday came, no comte and no money. On the Monday I had to hand in my accounts, I was therefore obliged to pawn my solitaire ring to meet the amount.

I met De la Tour d'Auvergne some days later: he told me he was much distressed at not having repaid me, but that he would do so the following Saturday, '*on his word of honour*.'

'Your word of honour,' I answered, rather rashly, 'is in my safe, therefore I can't count on it, but you can pay me back when you like.'

He turned very pale.

'My word of honour is dearer to me than my life, my dear Casanova, and I will give you the hundred louis to-morrow morning at nine o'clock, behind the café at the end of the Champs Élysées. I hope you will come and fetch them, and bring your sword with you.'

'This is paying a *bon mot* too dear,' I said. 'I had rather ask your pardon, if that will put an end to the matter.'

'No,' said he. 'It is I who am in the wrong, not you; but only my sword can settle it. Will you come?'

'Of course.'

I loved this gentleman, so I supped sadly that night. We breakfasted together next morning, after which he handed me the hundred louis, and begged me to follow him to L'Étoile, the spot he had selected. We had hardly crossed swords when I made my famous thrust and wounded him in the breast, and,

A duel with De la Tour d'Auvergne.

Digitized by Microsoft®

lamb-like, he dropped his sword, and putting his hand inside his coat, drew it out stained, and said sweetly enough, 'I am satisfied.'

I looked at the point of my sword and saw it had not gone in very deep. I told him so. We embraced cordially, and I accompanied him home. We kept the duel to ourselves, no one knew of it, and eight days after we were supping with Camille.

Some time after this Camille told me he was taken ill with sciatica, and took me to see him in bed. I told him I could cure him by means of Solomon's talisman and five magic words. He laughed, but said I might do as I liked. I sent out for nitre, flowers of sulphur, and a little brush. I mixed the drugs together, and told Camille to rub his thigh while I muttered a spell. They were not to laugh, and she must rub for half an hour. Then with my mixture I painted on his limb the five-pointed star known as the sign of Solomon, or the pentacle. I then wrapped his leg up in three napkins, and told him to keep quiet for twenty-four hours.

A few days after, when I had almost forgotten the whole thing, I heard horses outside my door. I looked out and saw De la Tour d'Auvergne jump out lightly and come upstairs. He said I had cured him, and that all his friends were amazed.

'You should not have spoken of it,' said I; 'you know what Paris is; now I shall be treated as a quack.'

'Only by a few fools. But I have come to ask you something. I have an aunt who is deeply versed in all the abstract sciences, and an adept at chemistry. She is rich, and mistress of her fortune. She is dying to see you, for she says she knows you, and that you are not what you pretend to be. She has begged me to take you to dine with her, and I hope you will accept. She is the Marquise d'Urfé.'[1]

[1] There is a good deal of ambiguity about Casanova's account of this most illustrious of his victims. There is no mention of her relations with the Regent, so frequently alluded to by him, in any contemporary memoirs of that personage. Her genealogy, as given by him, is incorrect. The d'Urfé family was one of the oldest and most renowned in France. It became extinct in the person of Joseph Marie de Lascaris d'Urfé, who died in 1724. His wife, Louise de Gontaut, is the

Digitized by Microsoft®

I did not know the marquise, but the name of d'Urfé impressed me, for I knew the history of the famous Anne d'Urfé, who flourished at the end of the sixteenth century. This lady was the widow of his great-grandson. I thought it better to decline the invitation to dinner; I knew my supposed talent was only empirical, and had no wish to expose myself to public ridicule. I said that the count might take me to her house one day, and that we would all three dine there.

De la Tour d'Auvergne introduces him to his aunt, Madame la Marquise d'Urfé.

Madame d'Urfé lived on the Quai des Théatins, next door to the Hotel Bouillon. She was beautiful, although no longer young; her manners had all the easy dignity of the Regency. I saw very soon that she wished to appear learned: I realised that I should be able to please her, by making her pleased with herself. We dined at two o'clock, and during dinner the conversation was futile and trifling enough, as is the fashion of the *beau monde.* After dessert De la Tour d'Auvergne left us, to see his cousin, the Prince de Turenne, whom he had left that morning in a high fever, and after he had gone Madame d'Urfé began to talk chemistry and magic and science, as it was her mania to do. I was fatuous enough to ask her if she was acquainted with *primary matter.* She replied politely that she already possessed what is called the philosopher's stone, and

Marquise d'Urfé alluded to here. Casanova speaks of her husband's celebrated ancestor Anne d'Urfé, and his wife, Renée de Savoie. As a matter of fact Anne d'Urfé had no descendants, and Renée de Savoie was his mother. She married Jacques d'Urfé, by whom she had two sons, Honoré and Anne, both celebrated as literary men, and the latter as a soldier as well. Both brothers were in love with a lady called Diane de Chateau Morand, and though she first married Anne, his triumph was short: the marriage was declared null, and after an interval of two or three years she espoused Honoré. During this interval, however, it is to be supposed that his affection for her had cooled, as he plainly states in his papers that he married her, not for love, but because of her immense estates. She made his life a burden to him because of her dirty and disorderly habits: her rooms, and even her bed, were always full of big dogs. His celebrated novel, *The Ingenious Romance of Astrea*, is supposed to be the story of his amours with his sister-in-law: it had a most phenomenal success, and was translated into every European language, even Finnish. It was his library, which contained a number of rare books of magic, that Madame d'Urfé inherited.

Digitized by Microsoft®

was initiated in the higher mysteries. She showed me her library, which had belonged to the great d'Urfé and to Renée of Savoy, his wife. She had added a hundred thousand francs' worth of manuscripts to it. Paracelsus was her favourite author, and, according to her, he was neither man nor woman, but a hermaphrodite. He died, she said, from an overdose of the universal panacea. From the library we went to the laboratory, which positively astonished me. She showed me substance which she had kept on the fire for fifteen years, and which was to remain there another four or five: it was a powder whose operation would transmute all metals into the purest gold. She showed me a pipe through which the coal passed down and kept the fire of her furnace at the same degree of heat. The coal came down by its own weight and always in the same quantity, so that the heat never varied, even if she left it alone for three months.

Madame d'Urfé shows him her laboratory.

The calcination of mercury was child's-play to this wonderful woman.[1] She showed me some. She showed me the Diana's tree made by the famous Taliamed, whose pupil she was. He was not dead, as people pretended, for, she said, smiling, 'I often get letters from him. If the Regent had listened to him, he would be still living. Ah! the dear Regent, he was my first friend; it was he who named me Egeria, and it was he who married me to M. d'Urfé.'

She possessed a manuscript commentary by Raymond Lully, explaining Arnaud de Villeneuve's writings on Bacon and Heber who, according to her, were not dead either. This document was in an ivory casket, carefully locked up, although no one was allowed to enter her laboratory. She had an *athanor* who had been living for fifteen years. I found in one of her books the very pentacle I had drawn on her nephew's hip, surrounded by planetary signs—those of Agrippa. I told her so.

In speaking of the theory of planetary hours, I mentioned

[1] There was a great revival of interest in all things magical in the seventeenth century; the Rosicrucians, of whom little had been heard for nearly three hundred years, re-appeared, and it became a kind of fashion to be affiliated to their sect, and many of the Court ladies were bitten with the mania for dabbling in witchcraft.

Digitized by Microsoft®

the works of Artephius and Sandevoye. She told me she possessed them, but in Latin, and asked me if I would translate them for her.

'It is impossible for me to refuse you anything, madame, for a reason which I will tell you, perhaps, to-morrow.'

'Why not to-day?'

'I must first find out the name of your familiar spirit, or if you will make the sign of the order, I will tell you.'

'I dare not, and you know why.'

The sign in question was that of the Rosicrucians, and a lady like Madame d'Urfé naturally hesitated to make it to a man whom she saw for the first time.

He dines every evening with the marquise to meet her set.

It was nine at night when De la Tour d'Auvergne came back. He was not a little surprised at finding me still with his aunt. He told us that his cousin had smallpox, and that he was going to nurse him, so that for a month at least he should be invisible. After praising his devotion, Madame d'Urfé gave him a charm to hang round the Prince de Turenne's neck, and we left together. I was to dine with Madame d'Urfé and all her set, in parties of three, so as to appreciate them properly. The second day I met at her table an Irish physician of the old school, Macartney, who bored me passably. Another day the Chevalier d'Arzigny, an old man of eighty, very vain, and very ridiculous, was the guest. He was called the 'king of dandies': he had been at the court of Louis Quatorze, and was full of anecdotes of bygone times. His withered cheeks were well rouged; he wore a flowered coat, ornamented with the *pompons* that were the fashion in Madame de Sévigne's day. He had a mistress to whom he pretended to be tenderly attached, and at whose little house outside Paris he supped every evening. He was as amiable as he was decrepit; he was most scrupulously clean, and his button-hole was always adorned with a bouquet of sweet-smelling flowers, such as tuberoses, jonquilles, or Spanish jasmine. His wig was plastered with pomatum; his eyebrows were painted and perfumed, and so were his artificial ivory teeth.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Another day I dined with Charon, councillor at the High Court, where he conducted Madame d'Urfé's law-suit with her daughter, Madame du Châtelet, whom she cordially hated. The old councillor had been her lover forty years back, and considered himself bound to uphold the cause of his former mistress. In those days French magistrates pronounced in favour of their friends. They bought their practices, and sold justice, to make the balance true.

The most amusing person I met was the famous adventurer who called himself the Comte de Saint-Germain ;[1] he talked all through dinner and ate nothing. He liked to take people's breath away, and often he succeeded. He was clever, spoke all languages, and had studied music and chemistry. He was handsome, and could influence women. He gave them cosmetics which would prevent them from growing any older ; to make them younger would be, of course, impossible.

He was in favour with Madame de Pompadour, and consequently with the king, for whom he had constructed a fine laboratory. The amiable monarch, whom most things wearied, liked to dabble in chemistry. This prince of swindlers calmly declared that he was three hundred years old, that he possessed the universal panacea, and could command and control nature; that he could make ten small diamonds into one fine large one without their losing weight, and so on. He was never seen to eat anything; he was nourished, he said, on a

[1] The origin of this mysterious and interesting adventurer was never determined, nor the date of his birth. Madame de Gergy knew him in Venice in 1700, when she judged him to be about forty-five. When she met him at Madame de Pompadour's, fifty years later, he was unchanged. He pretended to be possessed of an elixir which repressed the ravages of time, and a secret for taking flaws out of precious stones. Louis XV. confided a valuable diamond to him, and he doubled its worth by removing a flaw. He was immensely rich ; no one knew the source of his income ; he had no property, no banker, never gambled, and lived in magnificent style. He spoke all European languages, besides Sanskrit, Arabic, and Chinese ; was very musical, and a gifted painter. Vanloo begged him to divulge the secret of his brilliant colouring, but he refused. He left Paris, 1759, for the States of the Margrave of Anspach, where he called himself Zaraski. He died at Hesse, 1782.

Digitized by Microsoft®

certain food known only to himself. He went to the very best houses.

By this time I knew Madame d'Urfé through and through. She believed that I was an adept, hiding my personality behind an incognito. I read the manuscript she had given me without a code, and that I offered to impart to her. I did. It was mere gibberish, but she was thunderstruck. I told her that a genius had revealed it to me. From that moment she became entirely subservient to me. I became her soul's arbitrator, and sadly did I abuse my power. Yet the woman over whom I gained this extraordinary and unrighteous ascendency was really learned, really clever and logical in every point but one. I cannot, now that I am old, look back on this chapter of my life without blushing, and the frankness which I have imposed upon myself is my penance.

He puts the marquise in communication with *Paralis*.

The good lady's pet delusion was her firm belief in the possibility of holding converse with genii and elementary spirits. She would have given anything in the world to be able to do this. I put her in communication with my *Paralis* by means of my table of numbers, and when she had obtained his answer to her question, that is to say, the master word which was the key to her manuscript, which *Paralis* was naturally able to give her, I left her, carrying with me her soul, her heart, her intelligence, and the little common sense that remained to her. According to her, it depended alone on me to upset the whole world, and make or mar the happiness of France. She imagined I was immensely wealthy, and that I went under an assumed name to prevent being arrested. All these details were revealed to her by her familiar spirit during the night—that is to say, in the dreams which her exalted imagination took for realities. She did not see that had I possessed the powers with which she credited me, no government in the world could arrest me and no prison bars restrain me. Passion and infatuation are incapable of reasoning.

She told me one day, in perfect good faith, that it had been revealed to her that the accident of her sex alone stood in the

Digitized by Microsoft®

way of her communion with spirits, but that I could cause her soul to pass into the body of a male child, born of the philosophic union of a mortal with an immortal, an ordinary man and a divine woman. There was no sacrifice, she said, she was not prepared to make, if she could only be born again with the nature of a man. I answered that, as a matter of fact, I could perform that operation, but that I could not perform it on her, as it would be necessary for her to die first.

'I know,' she answered, 'and I know the kind of death I should have to suffer, but I am ready.'

'What do you imagine would be the manner of your death, madame?'

'Poison, the same poison which killed Paracelsus. I know its composition. I know *everything*. All that is wanting is the man child, born of an immortal being. All depends upon you, and I do not think your courage will fail you because of any misplaced pity for my poor, worn-out old body.'

At these words I rose and went to the window, looking on the quay, where I remained a quarter of an hour in deep thought. 'When I returned, 'You have been weeping, my friend,' she said.

I did not contradict her. I took my hat and sword and left her, sighing. Her carriage, which was always at my orders, was at the door, and I went in it for a long drive along the boulevards until theatre-time, unable to put this strange woman out of my mind.

His apology for his exploitation of the marquise.

If I had acted like an honest man, and told her that her notions were absurd, she would not have believed me; she would merely have imagined me jealous of her superior knowledge. I should have lost my hold over her without convincing her of her mistake. So I thought it wisest to let myself go. Moreover, I was flattered by the condescension of this titled lady, who moved in the best circles, and who possessed immense riches, vast estates in the country, and superb mansions in town. I knew she would refuse me nothing, and though I did not

Digitized by Microsoft®

mean to profit by her wealth, I liked to think that I could do so if I chose.

In spite of her money, and her supposed power of coining more, she was stingy, and only spent thirty thousand francs a year. She gambled on the Bourse with her savings, generally with success.

About this time my brother, who was on the high-road to fame and fortune, got married. At his wedding I met Corneman the banker, the friend of Mlle. de la Meure's husband, who liked me. He spoke of the prevalent scarcity of money, and asked me to suggest a remedy for it to the comptroller. He said there was a company of negotiators in Amsterdam who would buy royal securities at a fair price, and we could take in exchange the papers of some other Power whose credit was better than that of France, and on these it would be easy to realise. This idea seemed to me a good one, and I spoke of it to M. de Bernis, who advised me to get a letter of recommendation to the French ambassador at La Haye, and go off to Holland to see if I could discount the royal papers.

I saw the comptroller-general and the Duc de Choiseul, who approved of the scheme, and a few days later I started for Holland with the necessary credentials, and a letter of exchange drawn on Boaz, a Jewish banker at La Haye, for three thousand florins; this sum was to meet my current expenses. Madame d'Urfé confided to me sixty thousand francs' worth of stock in the Gothemberg India Company, which she could not sell in Paris, because there was no money there.

I was well received at La Haye and at Amsterdam, where the best society of the city showed me great hospitality. I was presented to the mother of the Stadtholder, who was then only twelve years old; the mother was a worthy and respectable woman, but seemed very ill; she fell asleep every minute, even while talking. She died soon after my visit to Holland, and at the *post-mortem* examination it was proved that she had dropsy of the brain, which explained her perpetual drowsiness.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Thérèse Trenti singing at the Opera House, Amsterdam.

There was much talk of a beautiful Italian actress, Madame Trenti,[1] who was playing at the opera. Imagine my surprise when I found she was none other than Thérèse Imer, for whose sake the reader will remember I had quarrelled with my first protector, the old senator Malipiero, eighteen years before! I had seen her again in 1753, and our relations had been somewhat more serious than in our childish days, after which she had gone to Bayreuth, and become the mistress of the Margrave.

She sang divinely an air beginning with these words—

'Eccoti venuta alfin, donna infelice,'[2]

words which seemed to have been written for the occasion.

I was told she was singing in all the towns in Holland, taking just what the audience chose to give her, at a collection which she made personally after the performance; that she always dressed in black, not only because she was a widow (her husband, the dancer Pompeati, committed suicide), but because of a great sorrow which she said had overtaken her.

She came down into the hall presently, followed by a little girl of five or six. As they drew near me, my heart began to beat ridiculously. I took twelve ducats[3] out of my purse, and wrapped them in paper. When she passed in front of me, I laid them on the plate without looking at her, though I saw she was gazing at me. In a moment the little girl came back and kissed my hand. I could not but recognise myself in the child, but I hid my feelings as well as I could. 'Will you have some sweets, little one?' I said, giving her my *bonbonnière*.

The little Sophie the image of her father.

'Do you know, M. Casanova,' said the lady who was with me, 'that that child and you are as like as two drops of water?'

[1] Thérèse Imer, who for some years acted under the name of Trenti, was a German by birth; at seventeen she was the mistress of the Venetian senator Malipiero, at whose house she made Casanova's acquaintance. She afterwards went to London, where she gained great notoriety as Madame Cornelys of Soho Square.

[2] '*Thou hast come then at last, unfortunate woman.*'

[3] A ducat was worth about two florins.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'A mere chance,' I said.

'Possibly, but chance has been extremely exact in this case.'

After the play I was eating oysters, when Thérèse came to me, leading her child by the hand. I rose to greet her, and she fell swooning on the sofa. When she had come back to her senses—if indeed she had ever lost them—I invited her to sup with me. We remained at table until seven o'clock next morning, recounting our adventures, fortunes, and misfortunes. Sophie, as the little one was called, slept soundly on the sofa until daybreak, when her mother, who had reserved the most interesting part of her story till the last, told me she was my child. She showed me an extract from her baptismal register; her birth coincided with the period of our acquaintance, and her likeness to me left me no room to doubt. I told Thérèse that I would adopt the child, and be a father to it; but she declared that she could not part with it.

'I have a boy who is twelve years old,' she said, 'and whom I cannot bring up suitably; will you take him instead?'

'Where is he?'

'He is at Rotterdam; I cannot say at school, for the fact is he is *pawned*.'

'Pawned?'

'Yes; for they will not give him back to me until I pay all I owe, which is eighty florins. You have already given me sixty-two; give me four more, and I shall be the happiest of mothers.'

'Here are twenty for you.'

Her gratitude was excessive. I could feel nothing for her but pity, and finally, with a mutual promise to meet at La Haye in a week's time, she bade me adieu, with a strange mixture of tenderness and temper.

At Amsterdam I was presented to a rich merchant, whose name, strange to say, was also Casanova. He told me that his family came originally from Naples, and on this we established a cousinship which was exceedingly useful to me, for he introduced me to many other merchants, and took me to

Digitized by Microsoft®

He meets M. d'O. and his daughter at Amsterdam.

the Bourse. There I met a M. d'O.,[1] who offered to take my India stock, at fifteen per cent. Finding the bargain an advantageous one, I concluded it with him. I sold out for seventy-two thousand francs, twelve thousand more than Madame d'Urfé had hoped for; I knew that this transaction would considerably add to my credit with her.

He sups with Thérèse.

As I have already said, I had given Thérèse a rendezvous at La Haye. I was to sup with her after the theatre. I found her on the fourth story of a mean-looking house. A table was placed in the middle of the room, covered with a black cloth. Two candles were burning on this sort of funeral altar, and the odd creature, with her two children, was seated behind it: she looked like Medea. I was richly clothed, and the brilliancy of my apparel contrasted strongly with the poverty of her surroundings.

The boy was small, but well formed, with an intelligent face and manner. He said he remembered having seen me at Venice; the little girl sat silently on my knee, with her arms round my neck, caressing me in the most engaging manner.

'Dear mamma,' she said, 'is not this handsome gentleman the same we saw in Amsterdam, whom every one said was my papa, because I am so like him; but my papa is dead!'

'That is true,' said I; 'but I will be your good friend if you will let me.'

We sat down to table, where we were served with a delicate supper and excellent wines.

She treats him better than she ever treated the margrave.

'I never treated the margrave better than this,' said Thérèse, 'in the little *tête-à-tête* suppers I used to give him.'

I wished to study the character of the boy, as I proposed to take him back to Paris with me, and I soon found that he was deceitful, always on his guard, composing his answers, and never speaking from the heart. Every word he uttered was said with a view to pleasing me. His mother, thinking to praise him, told me his greatest quality was secretiveness, and that he was as reserved with her as with others.

[1] M. d'O. was the rich banker Hope.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'That,' said I in a cutting tone, 'is simply abominable. You have stifled in your son the most precious gifts of nature, and instead of an angel, you have done your best to make a monster of him. I do not see how a father, no matter how tender his heart may be, can feel much affection for a son who is always tightly buttoned up.'

This sentiment seemed to astonish the mother.

'Tell me, my boy,' I continued, 'have you that confidence in me which a father has the right to expect from his son? Will you promise never to have any secrets from me?'

'I promise,' he answered, 'rather to die than to tell you a lie.'

'That is his character,' said his mother, 'I have taught him to look on lying with abhorrence.'

'So far so good, madame, but at the same time you might have taught him to be more open; it would have been more conducive to his happiness. Will you come to Paris with me too?' I added, addressing Sophie.

'Oh yes, with all my heart, but mamma must come as well; she would die without me.'

'But if I bade you go?' said Thérèse.

'I would obey, mamma; but how could I live away from you?' In saying this the child pretended to shed tears. I say pretended, for she was only repeating a lesson. It distressed me to see that this little creature also was being taught to dissemble; and I told the mother that she had taught her children to act in a marvellous manner, but that if she wanted them to become honest members of society she was on the wrong track altogether. I had a further example of this before leaving. Sophie begged me to sup with them the following day.

'I can't, my dear child,' I said; 'I have just refused your mother, and she would be offended if I granted you what I have refused her.'

'Oh no,' said the child naïvely, 'for she told me to ask you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I began to laugh, but her mother called her 'little stupid,' and her brother said *he* would never have said such a silly thing. The poor child was confused and trembling. I hastened to console her, promising to sup with them next day.

'On condition,' I added, 'that you give me a very simple supper, and only one bottle of Chambertin, because you are not rich.'

'Oh, but that does not matter,' she answered, 'for mamma says you will pay for everything.'

This reply made me laugh more than ever. I saw through Thérèse; I admired her—but I was in love with Mlle. d'O., with whom I practised magic in between-whiles.

The next day I received a letter from Madame d'Urfé. Her stock, she said, had only cost her sixty thousand francs. She did not wish to make a profit on them, and she enclosed a bill of exchange for twelve thousand francs which she begged me to accept as a mark of friendship. She went on to say that her familiar spirit had told her I should return to Paris, accompanied by a young boy who was actually the result of a philosophical union. It was a strange coincidence, though my connection with Thérèse could certainly not be called a philosophical one.

Returning home from the theatre one evening I passed a café, which seemed to be popular, judging from the number of people going and coming in and out of it. I was curious to see what this kind of place was like in Holland, so I entered with the crowd.

Good Lord! it was a smoky orgie held in a sort of cellar —a den of vice and debauchery. Two or three squeaking and discordant instruments formed the orchestra. The air was thick with the smell of tobacco, garlic, and beer. The company was composed of sailors and men of the lowest class, seated silently by, or clumsily dancing with the most hideous women. The poor sailors thought this place a paradise,

Digitized by Microsoft®

though there was not a single decent-looking girl in the lot. A big, ugly-looking fellow came up to me and told me if I liked to pay a halfpenny I could dance. I replied that I had no desire to do so, whereupon he pointed out a Venetian woman, and said the least I could do was to treat her to a drink.

He meets Lucy of Paséan.

I went up to the woman and asked her if she really came from Venice, and if so, how long was it since she had left her country.

'About eighteen years ago,' she answered.

I ordered a bottle of wine, and gave her the change from the ducat I handed the waiter. She wanted to kiss me to show her gratitude, but I prevented her.

'Would you rather be in Amsterdam,' I asked, 'or in Venice?'

'Alas! if I was in my own country I should not follow this frightful calling.'

'How old were you when you left?'

'I was fourteen, and I was happy with my father and mother, who are now perhaps dead of grief; but I was fool enough to run away with a rogue of a courier.'

'What part of Venice do you come from?'

'I did not live in Venice, but in the country, at a place called Frioul.'

Frioul!—eighteen years ago—a courier! I looked more closely at the unfortunate creature, and I recognised Lucy of Paséan! Decidedly I was in '*en pays de connaissance*'—first Thérèse, now Lucy!

He moralises on her fate.

Debauchery, far more than age, had disfigured her face and thickened her features. Lucy! the tender, the pretty, the innocent and naïve Lucy, whom I had loved so much, whom I had so sentimentally respected, had become hideous, repulsive, and vicious.

The poor creature was tossing down her drink meanwhile, without so much as looking at me, or caring to know who or what I was. I put some more money in her hand, and without

Digitized by Microsoft®

giving her time to count it I fled from the dark and dismal cavern.

I passed a horrible night! Lucy of Paséan haunted my dreams. Lucy at thirty-two years of age given up to vice, with no prospect before her but misery and infamy! I greeted the day with joy, for light brought a little peace to my remorseful soul that hated shadows.

Twelve days later I received despatches from M. de Boulogne, the comptroller-general, telling me to conclude the exchange of the twenty millions of royal securities I was charged with, on the terms which had been offered me —that is to say, eighteen millions two hundred thousand francs.

I might have made an advantageous marriage in Amsterdam, and settled down into a prosperous and wealthy merchant, for M. d'O.'s young and beautiful daughter was much attracted by me, and her father would have welcomed me as a son-in-law, but a silly desire to cut a fine figure in Paris made me throw away all these advantages. The fifteen months I had passed in 'The Leads' had not eradicated my ruling passion.

He offers to buy his own daughter for a thousand ducats.

Thérèse, whom I saw at Rotterdam, told me that she knew I had made half a million francs in Amsterdam. She said if she could leave Holland and go to London she would make her fortune. She had instructed Sophie to tell me that my good luck was due to the prayers she had addressed to Heaven for me! I laughed at the *finesse* of the mother, and the piety of the daughter, and contented myself with giving her a hundred ducats, promising her another hundred when she should write to me from London. It was easy to see that she thought my present a very modest one, but I did not add to it. She waited until I was actually stepping into my travelling carriage to beg me to give her another hundred ducats. I whispered to her that if she would give me my daughter I would make it a thousand. She reflected a moment, and then said she could not bear to part with the child.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I know why,' I answered, and taking a watch out of my fob I gave it to Sophie.

I arrived in Paris on the 10th of February, and took superb rooms close by the Rue Montorgueil.[1]

[1] One of the few streets of Paris which retains its ancient name. It contained until within recent years many fine old houses, some dating from the thirteenth century. It is called after the *Mont Orgueilleux* because it leads to a slight acclivity. The Comte d'Artois, nephew of Louis XI., lived there, and barred the street with a gateway, which was pulled down in 1545.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XIX

MADEMOISELLE X. V. C.

During my voyage from La Haye to Paris, I had plenty of time to study my adopted son, and I soon saw that his mind was not as beautiful as his little person.

The side of his character which his mother had most carefully developed was discretion. This, of course, given her circumstances, was necessary enough, but the child had carried this discretion to an exaggerated degree, and had added to it dissimulation, distrust, and a false show of confidence—a fine trio to have taken root in a young soul!

My first visit was to my protector, de Bernis, whom I found in fine company. I recognised the Venetian ambassador, but he pretended not to see me.

'How long have you been in Paris?' asked M. de Bernis.

'I have just this moment arrived. My post-chaise is at the door.'

'Go to Versailles then, at once; you will find the Duc de Choiseul there and the comptroller-general. You have worked miracles! Go and be congratulated, and come back and see me afterwards. Tell the duke I have sent Voltaire a passport from the king, naming him gentleman-in-waiting in ordinary.'

He pays his respects to Madame d'Urfé.

Before going to Versailles, however, I paid my respects to Madame d'Urfé. She received me warmly, at the same time saying she had expected me: her genius had warned her of my arrival.

'Corneman told me that you had achieved financial wonders in Holland,' she said, 'but *I* know that the wonders are other

Digitized by Microsoft®

than what he imagines. I am sure that it is you yourself who have advanced the twenty millions. You were not offended at my offering you such an insignificant present as twelve thousand francs? It was only a small mark of my esteem. I shall tell my servants to refuse admittance to any one to-day. I am so happy to see you back again, I want to have you all to myself.'

I told her about the boy of twelve I had brought with me from Holland. She was delighted.

'I will take charge of him,' she said; 'I will put him to school with M. Viar, where my nephews are. What is his name? I am dying to see him. Why did you not both come here to stay?'

Her questions and answers succeeded each other so rapidly it was impossible for me to get in a word. When I could I told her I should have the honour of presenting the boy to her the next day but one, as on the morrow I must go to Versailles.

On leaving Madame d'Urfé I went to my office, where I was pleased to find that everything was in order. From there I went to the Comédie Italienne, where Silvia was playing. I found her in her dressing-room with her daughter.

'My friend,' she said, 'I know that you have had a great success in Holland. I congratulate you.'

I told her that I had worked for her daughter Manon's sake, and was pleased to see the girl blush with delight, in a most significant manner.

Mlle. X. V. C. an English-woman.

'I will join you at supper, and then we can talk at our ease,' I added, and leaving the dressing-room I went into the amphitheatre. In a box I saw Madame X. V. C. and her family. Madame X. V. C. was Greek, but had married an Englishman, by whom she had six children. On his deathbed he embraced the Catholic religion, but his children could not inherit his fortune of forty thousand pounds sterling, unless they declared themselves members of the Anglican Church. The family had just returned from London, where they had gone through all

Digitized by Microsoft®

the forms necessary to satisfy the English law. What will not one do for interest?

We were now in the year 1758. Five years previously I had been intimate with these people at Padua, and had fallen in love with the eldest girl, but the mother had forbidden me the house. The girl had written me a charming letter, which I have still, and which I read over sometimes now that I am old and weary, but I must own that at the time of its reception I was quite taken up with M. M. and C. C.

Mlle. X. V. C. soon recognised me, and pointed me out to her mother, who smiled at me affably and signed to me to go into their box. She received me most kindly, and told me to come and see them at the Hotel de Bretagne, Rue Saint André des Arts. They told me they were going to spend six months in Paris before returning to Venice, and Mlle. X. V. C. added, that they had heard of my exploits in Holland, and also of my escape from 'The Leads.'

'We learned,' she said, 'all the circumstances of your marvellous evasion, from M. Memmo, who wrote us a letter of sixteen pages about it. We trembled with joy and shuddered with fear on reading it.'

'And how did you know I was in Holland?'

'From M. de la Popelinière.'[1]

I had known de la Popelinière, who was a *fermier-général*, seven years before. Just as she mentioned his name he came into the box. He complimented me on what I had done, and said that if I could procure another twenty millions from the India Company he would have me made a *fermier-général* at once.

'I advise you, M. Casanova,' he said, 'to become a naturalised Frenchman, before it is known that you have made half a million francs over this affair.'

[1] He was noted for his extravagantly generous patronage of artists and writers, and as being the author of a book called *Tableau des mœurs du temps*, illustrated by twenty licentious engravings. It was too infamous even for the period of Louis xv., and was seized by order of the king. The only known example is now in the possession of Prince Galitzin.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Half a million francs! I only wish it was true.'

'You certainly cannot have made less.'

'I assure you, sir, that the business will ruin me, if I am not paid my brokerage.'

'Of course you are quite right to talk like that; anyway every one is anxious to make your acquaintance. France is under great obligations to you, for you have sent the funds up enormously.'

He makes presents to Silvia and Manon Baletti.

After the theatre I went to Silvia's house, where I was received as one of the family. It seemed to me that it was to their constant friendship that I owed my fortune. I had presents for each member of the family. The finest of them was a pair of diamond earrings for which I had paid fifteen thousand francs. I gave them to Silvia, who immediately handed them to her daughter. Three days later I sent her a chest filled with Dutch linen, and fine Malines, and point d'Alençon lace. For the men of the family there was a golden pipe, a snuffbox in enamelled gold, and a repeater watch. Was I rich enough to make such presents? No; and I knew it, but I made them then while my pockets were full of money. for fear that later on I should not be able to do so.

He goes to Versailles to interview De Choiseul.

The next day I went to Versailles, where M. de Choiseul received me more graciously than at our first interview. It was easy to see I had grown in his estimation. He told me that if I thought I could float a loan of a hundred million florins at four per cent., he would back me up with all his interest. I answered that I would wait until I saw what reward was to be given me for what I had already done.

'But you have made two hundred thousand florins,' he said.

'Half a million francs is not a bad beginning for a fortune,' I said, 'but I can assure your Excellency that I have made nothing of the kind. I have only made my commission, which I am going to claim.'

'Well, you must explain all that to the comptroller-general.'

When I told M. de Boulogne that he owed me a hundred

Digitized by Microsoft®

thousand florins commission, he smiled ironically. 'I know,' said he, 'that you have brought back letters of exchange for a hundred thousand crowns.'

'That is true, but they have nothing to do with what I have done for you. Furthermore, I have a project for augmenting the king's revenue by twenty million francs.'

'Put your project into execution, and I promise you the king will give you a pension of a hundred thousand francs, and letters of nobility, if you choose to become a Frenchman.'

'That needs consideration,' I answered, and left M. de Boulogne to pay a visit to Madame de Pompadour, whom I found in the king's private apartments rehearsing a ballet.

When I got home, my adopted son had disappeared. I was told that a 'great lady' had come to see him, and had taken him away with her. Guessing that it could be none other than Madame d'Urfé, I went to bed with an easy mind.

I found the little man next day with the marquise, and told him he was to consider her as his queen, and to do everything she bade him. The Comte de Saint Germain dined with us, and told us of many marvellous things he had seen and done in his long life. I could hardly help laughing when he repeated a conversation he had with the fathers assembled for the Council of Trent. A few days after this he went off to Chambord, where the king had given him an apartment, and a hundred thousand francs, so that he could work quietly at the dyes which were to make the cloths fabricated in France superior to those of all other countries. Saint Germain had pleased the king by setting up for him a laboratory at Trianon, and showing him how to amuse himself by dabbling in chemistry. The king was bored everywhere except when hunting. The Parc aux Cerfs only stupefied him, for he was not a god, but only a man after all. It was the complaisant Pompadour who had introduced Saint Germain to the king, in the hope of amusing him with his experiments. She thought she had received from the adept the water of youth, and owed him a good turn in consequence. This marvellous

Digitized by Microsoft®

water did not pretend to restore youth, but to maintain the person who used it in *statu quo* for centuries. As a matter of fact the water had operated, if not on the body, at least on the mind of the Pompadour. She assured the king that she felt she was growing no older. The king himself was infatuated with the impostor. One day he showed the Duc des Deux Ponts a diamond weighing twelve carats, which he declared he had made by melting down several little diamonds.

Madame d'Urfé sent my adopted son to school at Monsieur Viar's, where she paid for his various masters, and gave him the name of the *Comte d'Aranda*, though he was born at Bayreuth, and his mother had never had anything to do with a Spaniard of that title. I did not go to see him for two or three months.

I determined that I would take a house outside Paris, and fixed on one called 'Little Poland.'[1] It was about a hundred yards outside the barrière de la Madeleine, on a little eminence behind the Duc de Grammont's garden. It had two gardens, one of which was on a level with the first story. There were three suites of rooms, stables, coach-houses, baths, a good cellar, and a fine kitchen, the whole well furnished. The owner was nicknamed the 'King of Butter,' and he always signed his name thus. Louis Quinze had bestowed this sobriquet on him because he had once stopped at his house and found the butter good. It was a pendant to the *Dinde en Val* of Henri Quatre. 'The King of Butter' let his house to me for a hundred louis a year, and supplied me with a good cook who was called 'the pearl.' He furnished me with plate and linen for six people, and all the wine I needed; the latter cheaper than I could have got it in Paris, for, being outside the gates, we had no

[1] The square formed by the junction of the Rues des Rochers, Saint Lazare, de la Pepinière and de l'Arcade covers the space once known as La petite Pologne. A collection of taverns was to be found there. The one kept by the celebrated Rampanneau stood where the barracks are now; fields stretched beyond, some of them cultivated, many of them waste. As Casanova speaks of his house as being in the country, it was probably on the edge of the fields. May one imagine him haunting the *Salle des pas perdus* at the Gare Saint Lazare?

Digitized by Microsoft®

dues to pay. In eight days my house was ready. I had a coachman, two fine carriages, five horses, a groom, and two footmen in livery. I always drove very fast—the greatest of pleasures in Paris. When I killed a horse I replaced him for two hundred pounds!

Madame d'Urfé, who came to my first dinner, was delighted with everything; she was sure that it was all in her honour, and I did not disabuse her.

One night at the opera, a black domino came up to me, and in a falsetto voice began to tell me a great deal about myself. I persuaded her to come into a box with me; she then took off her mask, and I recognised Mlle. X. V. C., the Englishwoman with a Greek mother.

'I came,' she said, 'with one of my sisters, my eldest brother, and M. Farsetti; but I slipped away from them and changed my domino, so that they have lost me altogether.'

I felt sure of her from that moment, but I thought well to temporise a little.

'I heard at Versailles, mademoiselle, that you are to marry M. de la Popelinière: is that true?'

'My mother wishes it, and the old farmer-general believes it, but I will never consent.'

'He is old, but very rich.'

'Very rich and very generous, for he would settle a million francs on me if he died without children, and his whole fortune if he had any. But I will never marry a man I do not love, when my heart is engaged elsewhere.'

'Who is the happy mortal on whom you have bestowed this treasure?'

'I am not sure that I can call him a happy mortal: it is some one in Venice. My mother knows, but she declares I should not be happy with him; she would rather I married M. Farsetti, but I detest him. I would rather marry Popelinière than he.'

'If I can help you in any way, mademoiselle, count on my devotion.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I saw she was in great trouble, and I told her as discreetly as possible that my fortune was at her disposal, and that if needful I would risk my life in her service. She kissed me with tears in her eyes, and we parted till next day. I dined at her house. It was snowing, and I arrived there covered with snowflakes. She did not dine, but stayed in bed writing letters. She drew out of her pocket-book a sheet in my handwriting, the letter I had sent her years ago. 'Oh, that fatal *Phœnix*!' she said, 'it will very likely be the cause of my death.' '*The Phœnix*' was the happy mortal of whom I had predicted that he would receive the love she refused me.

The fatal *Phœnix*.

'I did find him,' she said, 'after six months. He gave me his heart. I gave him mine as you said I should, and now——!' She cried, and I essayed to console her.

The next day a young man brought me a letter, saying he had orders to wait for an answer.

'It is two o'clock in the morning, dear friend,' the letter ran; 'I have much need of repose, but something prevents me from sleeping. The secret which I am going to confide to you will weigh less heavily upon me when I have deposited it in your sympathetic breast. It will be a relief to me to be frank——'

The secret, when she had written it, appalled me. She was in the most terrible situation conceivable for a young unmarried woman. I asked her no questions in my answer, not even the man's name, but simply told her I would be there at eleven o'clock.

I met the unfortunate girl on the steps of her house.

'I am going to Mass,' she said; 'come with me.'

We went to the Augustinian convent, and leaving her maid in the church, we paced up and down the cloisters.

'Have you read my letter?'

'Yes, here it is. I give it back to you that you may burn it. I am proud of your confidence in me, be sure I will do my best to deserve it.'

'I know; but tell me what I am to do? I have thought of poisoning myself, and I have everything needful for that; but

Digitized by Microsoft®

I thought I would ask you first, you are my only friend. Speak!'

She stopped and put her handkerchief to her eyes, mine also were full of tears.

'I will never abandon you,' I said; 'your honour is as dear to me as your life. Try to be calm, and rest assured that I will get you out of this. And let me tell you your letter gave me great pleasure, for it proved to me that you had chosen me for your confidant. Have you told your secret to any one—your waiting-maid, or one of your sisters?'

'To no one, not even to the cause of my misfortune. I shudder when I think of what will be said, of what my mother will do when it comes to be known, and it must be known soon now.'

'Things are perhaps less desperate than you imagine.'

'Perhaps, and it is for that I wished to consult you. I want you to take me to some one who will tell me all about it. If you will make an appointment with me, we can slip away unobserved during the next ball at the opera.'

'That would be most compromising.'

'What! in this great city of Paris, where such women are to be found by the hundred! It is impossible for us to be recognised, above all if we keep our masks on.'

I had not the strength of mind to refuse her, and I made an appointment for the last ball. I was to wear a black domino, with a white Venetian mask, a rose painted on the left side of it. As soon as she saw me leave the ballroom she was to follow me, and get into the *fiacre* which would be waiting for us.

I know that I ought to have sought out the most respectable person of the kind I could lay my hands on, but, led by my evil genius, I met on my homeward way Montigny, the actress, in company with a very pretty girl whom I did not know. Curiosity induced me to follow them, and to pay a visit to Montigny without mentioning the lady's name. I asked her if she knew of a woman who would be useful to Mademoiselle X. V. C. She gave me an address in the Marais, telling

Digitized by Microsoft®

me I should find there a perfect pearl. She told me several anecdotes about this pearl, which should have sufficed to put me on my guard, but I took the address, and went next day to reconnoitre the house.

The pearl of wise women in the Marais.

On the night of the ball everything happened as we had arranged, and a quarter of an hour after leaving the opera we arrived at the house of the infamous woman Montigny had recommended to me. She was fifty years old; and received us effusively, and told us her services were entirely at our disposal.

'You must pay me fifty guineas,' she said; 'half down, to pay for the drugs I will give you, and half later.'

'If madame decides to take your remedies,' I said, 'I will come to-morrow to buy them.' I gave her two louis, and we left the house. Mademoiselle X. V. C. agreed with me that the woman was a villainous-looking creature, and was sure that if she took her drugs they would kill her.

'I have no hope,' she said, 'and no confidence, but in you.'

I encouraged her to trust in me, assuring her that her trust was justified.

All of a sudden she complained of cold.

'Have we time,' she said, 'to go and warm ourselves at your fire? I have a great desire to see your pretty house.'

This caprice of hers surprised me as much as it pleased me. I stopped our *fiacre* at the Pont-au-Change, and we walked to the Rue de la Ferronnerie,[1] where we took another one. I promised the driver six francs *pourboire*, and in a quarter of an hour we were at my door.

The servant answered my summons, and I ordered him to light a fire and give us something to eat, with a bottle of champagne.

Mlle. X. V. C. sups with him at Little Poland.

'An omelette?' I suggested.

[1] Takes its name from the *ferronniers* or ironmongers, whom Louis IX. allowed to establish themselves along the Charniers des Innocents. It was in this street that Henri IV. was assassinated by Ravaillac, at the point of its junction with the Rue Saint Honoré.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'An omelette will do capitally,' said mademoiselle; she was laughing.

I kissed her tenderly. She returned my kisses at first, but presently she pushed me away.

'Alas!' said she, 'I am not mistress of my own heart, and am far more to be pitied than you.'

Her tears were falling abundantly, her head drooped on my shoulder, my lips sought hers—but the play was over! The mere idea of forcing a woman's affections in any way has always been repugnant to me. Love is free.

After a long silence we gathered up our masks and dominoes, and returned to the opera. On the way, she told me that she would be obliged to renounce my friendship if I set such a price on it.

'Love,' said I, 'must give way to honour, and your honour and my own oblige me to remain your friend, were it only to convince you of your injustice towards me. I shall do for pure devotion what I should like to have done for love.'

We separated at the opera, where, in a moment she was lost in the crowd. She told me afterwards that she danced all night.

I went home in a very ill humour, determined to revenge myself by leaving her to her fate. But when I awoke I was still in love with her. I meant to be generous to the unfortunate creature, who without my help would surely be lost. The rôle was not an easy one to play, but I played it well.

I went to see the charming English girl daily, taking care to behave as a friend merely. She seemed pleased at the change in me, but her satisfaction may have been only assumed, for I know women well enough to be sure that, though she did not love me, she was piqued to see how lightly I had laid aside my pretensions.

I was now giving her an opiate, as she found it impossible to sleep. She begged me to double the dose, but I refused, and at the same time forbade her to be bled a third time, for I discovered that she had taken her waiting-maid into her confidence, and this latter, who had a medical student for

Digitized by Microsoft®

sweetheart, had persuaded her to let him bleed her twice. I asked her if she was generous with these people, so as to insure their discretion. She could not be, she said, as she had no money. I sent her twelve hundred francs next day, with a letter, asking her to have recourse to me in all her needs. She accepted the money, but I learned afterwards that the larger part of it went to her brother Richard, a young scoundrel, abandoned to the most vicious courses.

She grew daily more desperate, and would not leave her bed. She spoke of destroying herself so calmly and resolutely that I became seriously alarmed.

He consults Madame d'Urfé about Mlle. X. V. C.

One day when I was dining *tête-à-tête* with Madame d'Urfé, I told her the case without mentioning names, and asked her if she could help her.

'I know an infallible method,' she answered, 'the *aroph*[1] of Paracelsus, and it is not a difficult one to employ. Would you like to know what it is?' So saying, she rose and went in search of a manuscript, which she put into my hands. It was an ointment composed of many drugs, such as saffron and myrrh, mixed with virgin honey.

The remedy of Paracelsus.

The recipe and its mode of use were so laughable that I could hardly maintain my gravity, nevertheless I spent two good hours reading the amusing reveries of Paracelsus, of which Madame d'Urfé took every word for gospel; afterwards I looked to see what Boerhaave had to say about the *aroph*, and saw that he treated of it seriously.

I determined to communicate my discovery to my friend, whom I now saw daily, and for several hours, without the slightest restraint. I called on her in the morning, about ten o'clock, and found her, as usual, in bed, and weeping because the opiate I gave her produced no effect. The moment appeared favourable, I described the remedy at great length, adding that as her lover was absent she must have recourse to some friend, who could be trusted to

[1] Casanova gives the word *aroph* as coming from *aro*, aroma, and *ph*, the initial letters of *philosophorum*. He cites Boerhaave as his authority.

Digitized by Microsoft®

administer the dose as often as Paracelsus prescribed it. She burst out laughing, and for three days there was no further question of the *aroph* between us, and I began to regret having mentioned it to her. I invited her, with her mother and family, to dine with me at Little Poland. I also invited Silvia, her daughter, a musician named Magali, and the tenor la Garde, who in those days was to be met at every select reunion. Mademoiselle was delightfully gay all through dinner, which, I may say, was elegant and sumptuous enough, as I spared no expense. We did not separate until midnight, but before leaving mademoiselle found means to whisper to me to go and see her early next day, as she had something of the greatest importance to tell me. I was with her before eight o'clock. I found her very sad. La Popelinière, it seemed, was hurrying on her marriage with him, and her mother was persecuting her to the same end.

'She says,' said the girl, 'that the contract must be signed at once, and that she has ordered a tailor to come and take my measure. I dare not refuse, and at the same time I dare not comply. I am going to kill myself rather than marry, or confide in my mother.'

'Death,' said I, 'is an expedient of which there is always time to think when all others are exhausted. Why do you not confide in De la Popelinière? He is an honourable man, and will know how to help you without compromising you; besides, it will be to his interest to keep your secret.'

'How would that help me? And my mother, what of her?'

'I will undertake to make your mother listen to reason.'

'My poor friend, how little you know her! No, I must die, and death will certainly be less cruel than the other tortures with which I am threatened.'

'And the *aroph*, do you still persist in considering it as a joke?'

It was after this conversation that the poor girl gave in, and consented to take the *aroph*.

Three or four days later I found her pensive, but calm.

Digitized by Microsoft®

She told me she did not believe in the remedy, that her mother was continuing to persecute her, and that in a short time she would have either to sign the marriage-contract with the old *fermier-général* or run away, and she begged me to supply her with the necessary funds.

I was ready to help her, but I wanted if possible to save appearances, as I might have found myself with an ugly affair on my hands, had it come out either that I had abducted her, or that I had furnished her with the means to leave the kingdom. Furthermore, there had never been any question between us of uniting our destinies with an indissoluble tie such as matrimony.

A sacred concert at the Tuileries.

Things were at this pass when I went one afternoon to a sacred concert at the Tuileries. The music, I remember, was by Mondonville,[1] and the words by the Abbé de Voisenon, 'The Israelites on Mount Horeb.' It happened that I sat next to Madame du Rumain, and she asked me to go home with her afterwards. My mind was full of Mademoiselle X.V.C., and I suppose I must have been very *distrait*, as the good lady said: 'What is the matter, M. Casanova? you seem out of sorts! Are you on the eve of taking some important resolution that you are so pre-occupied? I am not curious, but if I can help you in any way tell me. I will go if necessary to Versailles to-morrow morning, you know I am great friends with all the ministers; tell me your trouble, my friend, perhaps I can help you.'

It seemed to me as though an angel were speaking. After having looked at her some time in silence, 'Yes, madame,' said I, 'I am in great trouble. I will tell you about it, but you must allow me to say first, that it is an inviolable secret, and that the honour of a certain individual depends on its being kept most rigorously. If after this you will listen to me, I promise to follow your advice, should you deign to give me any.'

[1] A celebrated violinist, musician to the king, and superintendent of the chapel of Versailles.

Digitized by Microsoft®

After this exordium I told her the whole story, even the name of the girl, and all the circumstances by which I had come to interest myself in her.

Madame du Rumain remained absorbed in thought for some minutes, then she said: 'I must leave you now, as I have to go to Madame de la Marq's to meet the Bishop of Montrouge, but I think I can help you. Come to see me the day after to-morrow at eight o'clock in the morning; I shall be alone. Do nothing until you have seen me.'

I determined to abide by her in this difficult matter. The Bishop of Montrouge, of whom she spoke, was well known to me; he was the Abbé de Voisenon, who was so nicknamed because he was often at Montrouge, an estate outside Paris belonging to the Duc de la Vallière.

Madame du Rumain has a plan.

'My dear afflicted friend,' said Madame du Rumain, when two days later I presented myself at her house, 'I think I can arrange matters for you. I have been to the convent of C——, whose abbess is an intimate friend of mine, and I have told her your secret. She will receive the young lady in her convent, and will give her a kind lay sister to take care of her. You must not say now,' she added, smiling, 'that convents are useless places. Your protégée must go there alone with a letter which I will give her for the abbess. She must receive no visitors, and no letters except such as will pass through my hands, the answers to which the abbess will send to me, and I will hand them to you. You will understand that she must correspond with no one but you, and you will hear of her through no one but me. Tell your friend what I propose, and as soon as she is ready I will give you the letter for the abbess. Tell her only to take with her what is strictly needful, and, above all, no jewels or diamonds. The abbess will go to see her from time to time in the room which will be allotted to her, and will be very kind to her, I am sure, and lend her books to read; in a word, she will be treated with all consideration. Tell her not to confide in the lay sister who nurses her, for however honest and good she may be, her secret might leak

Digitized by Microsoft®

out. After it is all over she will go to confession and make her Easter Communion; the abbess will give her a certificate of good conduct, with which she can return to her mother, who will be only too delighted to receive her after her long absence. She can allege as the motive of her retreat her dislike to the marriage which her family wished to force on her.'

He escorts Mlle. X. V. C. to the Convent.

On leaving Madame du Rumain I went at once to the Hotel de Bretagne, and made Mlle. X. V. C. acquainted with the plan, which the poor child welcomed as though an angel had suggested it. It was most important that we should not be seen leaving the house together, but I posted myself at the corner of the street, so that I could watch her when, next morning at eight o'clock, she came out of the hotel carrying a few things in a bag. She got into a *fiacre* and drove to the Place Maubert, I following her; here she dismissed it, and took another to the Port Saint Antoine, where she exchanged it for a third, which took her straight to the convent. I had promised her that I would go and see her mother next day, as though nothing had happened, and had exhorted her to be of good courage and to write and tell me everything. I was very uneasy about her, for though she was intelligent and resolute, she was very inexperienced.

He calls on her mother.

The next day was Sunday. It was with an anxious heart that I went to the Hotel de Bretagne, bearing a calm and composed exterior into the midst of distress and confusion, which I knew I should find there.

I chose the moment when the family were at table, and I walked straight into the dining-room and sat down by madame, pretending not to notice her surprise at seeing me, though her face became crimson. A moment afterwards I inquired where mademoiselle was. She turned round and looked at me fixedly, without speaking.

'Is she ill?' I said.

'I do not know,' she answered very sternly.

I waited for a few moments, and as nobody spoke, I rose and

Digitized by Microsoft®

asked if I could be of any use. I was coldly thanked; whereupon, making my bow, I withdrew.

In the ante-chamber I met Madeleine, the waiting-maid.

'Where is your young mistress?' I asked.

'Surely you know, sir,' she answered, 'better than any one else, anyway people think you do; please not to keep me, I am busy.'

I pretended to be greatly surprised, and left the hotel, glad to have finished my painful task. The reception I had met with gave me the right to pose as the offended party, and to decline to call on the family again.

The mother of Mlle. X. V. C. appeals to him to produce her daughter.

Two days later I was looking out of my window, when a *fiacre* stopped at my door, and Madame X. V. C. came up, accompanied by her friend M. Farsetti.

'I have come,' she said, 'to beg you to give me back my daughter, or at least to tell me where she is.'

'I know nothing about your daughter, madame. Do you suppose I am capable of a crime?'

'I do not accuse you of a crime, or threaten you in any way; I only ask you this as a mark of friendship. Help me to find my daughter, this very day. You were her confidant, her only friend; she passed several hours alone with you every day, you must know where she is; have pity on a disconsolate mother. No one as yet knows of her disappearance; bring her back to me, and everything shall be forgotten.'

'Madame, you distress me greatly; I pity you from the bottom of my heart, but I can only repeat I know nothing.'

The poor woman flung herself on her knees at my feet, weeping bitterly. Farsetti cried out indignantly that she should blush to kneel to a man like me.

'What do you mean by a man like me?' I said.

'We are sure that you know where she is.'

'Get out of my room this instant,' I cried, 'and wait for me in the passage, where I will come to you in a quarter of an hour.' So saying, I took him by the shoulders and sent him spinning through the door. Madame tried to calm me.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You must be patient,' she said, 'with a man who is in love. He adores my daughter, and would marry her to-day, in spite of her light behaviour.'

'Madame, it is these aspirants to her hand who have forced your daughter to leave her home; she detests Farsetti even more than she does the De la Popelinière.'

'I promise you there shall be no further question of marriage if she comes back. You *know* you know where she is, for you gave her fifty louis; without money she could not have left; do not deny it, here is a piece of your own letter.'

She showed me a scrap of writing containing these words: 'I hope that the accompanying fifty louis will prove to you that I am ready to do anything to help you.'

As a matter of fact I had given her the sum in question for her brother; the dissipated little wretch was always in trouble.

'I do not deny that I gave your daughter the money, madame, but it was to pay the debts of your eldest son.'

'My son?'

'Yes, madame.'

'I will pay you back at once, and indeed, my dear Casanova, I believe in you. Will you help me to look for her?'

'I will, madame. I will begin my researches to-day.' And after this fine promise, and semi-reconciliation, we separated.

He goes with her to see the commissary of police.

I felt myself obliged to take my part seriously, so the next day I called on M. Chaban, the commissary of police, whom I had met several times at Silvia's house; but this man, who was an adept in his *métier*, began to laugh when I explained the object of my visit.

'Do you really want me to find the pretty young English woman?' he asked.

'Certainly, sir.'

He laughed still more loudly, and I saw that he considered my visit merely as a *ruse*. The next day Madame X. V. C. appeared and told me she was on her daughter's track. 'You must come with me,' she said, 'and help me to persuade her to return home.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Taking me by the arm she led me downstairs, to where a *fiacre* was waiting. I was on hot coals, for I expected to hear her give the address of the convent; instead of that she told the coachman to drive to the Place Maubert, where we got out and went into a dark, dirty, and obscure alley. It seems she had discovered the first *fiacre* her daughter had engaged, which had deposited her at this place. We went into one of the houses where furnished apartments were let, and we hunted it through, from the cellar to the garret, of course without any result, after which we went back to the Hotel de Bretagne, encouraging one another, and hoping for better luck next time.

Three or four days later I received a letter from mademoiselle, full of delight at the peace and tranquillity she was enjoying. She spoke most highly of the abbess and the lay sister who waited on her. The only thing she complained of was that she was forbidden to leave her room.

The adventure, as far as regarded la Popelinière and Farsetti, had become known now in Paris, and was the talk of all the cafés. Every one insisted on connecting me with the affair, but I felt that I could afford to laugh.

De la Popelinière writes a little play on the subject of his treatment by Mlle. X. V. C.

De la Popelinière took it all very sensibly; indeed he wrote a little one-act play about it, and had it performed at his private theatre.

Mlle. X. V. C. had now been a month in the convent; her affair was beginning to be forgotten, and I thought that everything was comfortably settled. But I was mistaken.

The Abbé de Bernis, whom I went regularly to see once a week, advised me to forgo my claims to commission for what I had done in Holland, and to inform the comptroller-general of my scheme for augmenting the revenue. I owed too much to de Bernis not to follow his advice, and in good faith I told M. de Boulogne my scheme. It was that all persons, other than father and son, inheriting money or property, should be compelled to pay one year's interest on the sum-total to the state. It seemed to me that this law could be displeasing to no one, as it only postponed the

Digitized by Microsoft®

enjoyment of the inheritance for one year. The minister approved of my scheme, and having drawn it up carefully, placed it in his secret portfolio. He assured me my fortune was made. Eight days after he was dismissed, and replaced by M. de Silhouette, who received me coldly when I presented myself, and told me there would be time enough to talk of rewarding me when the law was promulgated. Two years later the law was passed, but they laughed at me when I declared myself the author of it, and asked for my recompense.

About the same time the Pope died, and was succeeded by the Venetian Rezzonico, who presented my protector, de Bernis, with a cardinal's hat. Louis Quinze bestowed it on him with his own royal hands, and two days after exiled him to Soissons. Such is the friendship of kings!

The fate of de Bernis.

M. de Bernis repaired much of the evil which Cardinal de Richelieu had done. In concert with the Prince de Kaunitz he transformed the old hatred between the houses of Austria and Bourbon into a cordial *entente*. He delivered Italy from the horrors of war, of which she was the theatre each time the two houses quarrelled. The Pope, who had been Bishop of Padua, particularly appreciated this, and as a reward created him cardinal. He was exiled from Paris for daring to tell the king he did not consider the Prince de Soubise a proper person to command his armies! As soon as the Pompadour heard this she insisted on his disgrace with the king. Every one was indignant, but she was all-powerful, and the newly made cardinal was soon forgotten. The French are like that —lively, witty and amiable, insensible to their own misfortune, or the misfortune of others, so long as there is any food for merriment.

The illustrious cardinal passed ten years in exile, far from the world, miserable in his retirement. He was never recalled to the court, and, for the matter of that, in no single instance did Louis Quinze recall a disgraced minister. When the Pope, Rezzonico, died, de Bernis went to Rome to attend the conclave, and remained there the rest of his life.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XX

THE POLICE OF PARIS

He visits Rousseau with Madame d'Urfé.

About this time Madame d'Urfé was seized with a desire to make the acquaintance of J. J. Rousseau, and we went to pay him a visit at Montmorency. We took him some music to copy as a pretext, but, as a matter of fact, he piqued himself on his execution, and was always paid double the sum given to any other copyist. At that time he had no other means of subsistence.

Rousseau was a plain man of sound critical judgment, distinguished neither in manners nor conversation. I should never have called him amiable. He had no style, and Madame d'Urfé pronounced him to be common. We saw the woman with whom he lived, but she hardly spoke to us, and kept her eyes cast down all the time we were in her presence. The queer philosopher and his queer *ménage* amused us vastly all the way home.

I must here set down a story about him and the Prince de Conti. The prince, who was an amiable and learned man, went to Montmorency on purpose to pass a pleasant day with the celebrated Rousseau. He found him in the park, and told him he had come to dine with him that they might spend some time together in conversation.

'Your highness will fare but ill, I fear,' replied Rousseau, 'but I will tell them to lay a place for you at table.'

Then the prince and the philosopher passed some two or three hours in walking and talking. When dinner-time came they entered the dining-room, where the table was laid for three.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Who is going to dine with us? I thought we should be *tête-à-tête*,' said Conti.

'Our third, your Highness,' said Rousseau, 'is my other self, a being who is neither my wife, nor my mistress, nor my servant, nor my mother, nor my daughter, but something of all these combined.'

'I quite believe you, my dear friend, but I came here to dine with you, and not with your other self. I will leave you to your whole!'

So saying the prince bowed and left. Rousseau did not try to keep him.

On our return to Paris we went to the Comédie Française to see a piece called *La Fille d'Aristide*. It was hissed, and the author, Madame de Graffigny, died of grief five days after. Voisenon had helped her to write it. As a remarkable contrast to this, about the same time, the mother of Rezzonico died of joy when her son was elected Pope. Grief and joy kill more women than men, which proves that, if they are more sensitive than we, they are also weaker.

I went with Madame d'Urfé to pay a visit to my adopted son at M. Viar's school, and found him lodged like a prince, well dressed, and taken every possible care of. She had given him a pretty little horse, and he was always addressed as the Count d'Aranda. When I asked Madame d'Urfé why she allowed him to assume a name which was not his, and which might get him into trouble some day, she answered that from what the boy had said she was convinced he had a right to it.

'I have,' she said, 'a seal stamped with the arms of d'Aranda on it; he told me they were the arms of his family, and when I asked him to explain, he begged me not to question him, as his birth was a secret, and he was forbidden to speak of it to any one.'

I was astonished at the young scamp's assurance. As soon as I was alone with him, I asked him what he meant by his impertinence.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I know it is silly,' he said; 'but it makes them respect me here.'

I pointed out the dishonesty of his conduct, but the little scamp begged me not to expose him.

'I would rather be sent back to my mother,' he said, 'than own to Madame d'Urfé that I have imposed on her, and I could not remain in this school if I had to give up the name by which I have come to be known.'

I yielded so far as to promise that for the present at anyrate I would say nothing.

A plan to stamp the pattern on Lyons silk.

For some time I had been thinking seriously of a commercial undertaking, which, if my calculations proved correct, would be extremely lucrative. The idea was to stamp on silk the beautiful designs which are painfully and minutely woven in them at Lyons, thus producing an elegant material at a much lower price to those which are made in the usual slow, painstaking manner. I was enough of a chemist to undertake the technical part of the business, and enough of a capitalist to feel sure of success, and I had found a partner versed in the ways of commerce to manage the establishment.

I spoke of it to the Prince de Conti, and he advised me to put it into execution, promising me all the assistance in his power.

The shop in the Marais.

I took a large house near the Temple for a thousand crowns a year: it contained a spacious hall for my workwomen; another large hall to be used as a shop; several rooms for my employees, and a nice apartment for myself, if I should choose to establish myself there. I divided the business into thirty shares, five were for the artist designer who was to be my manager; one to a doctor who was to live in the house with his wife and family, and attend to the shop; one for a book-keeper who had two clerks under him, and who also lodged in the house; the other allotments I kept to distribute among such of my friends as should care to be associated in the enterprise. I engaged four men servants, a woman servant, and a porter; and the director found twenty intelligent young girls who were to do

Digitized by Microsoft®

the painting in return for a weekly salary. The carpenters and locksmiths were at work from morning to night, and everything was ready in three weeks. I put into the shop three hundred pieces of taffetas, a like quantity of *gros de Tours*, and camlets of divers colours, on which the designs were to be stamped. I paid ready money for everything.

I spent about sixty thousand francs in less than a month, and had to meet a weekly expenditure of twelve hundred francs. I could easily have disposed of the other shares, but I wanted to keep them if possible, as I expected to make two hundred thousand francs profit yearly. I was not blind to the fact that this undertaking might ruin me; but a glance at my beautiful materials reassured me; they were so cheap that every one said they would become the rage. Madame d'Urfé only laughed when I talked of the shop; she was sure it was a ruse on my part, to put curious people off the track of my identity.

The sight of my twenty work-girls, all more or less pretty, and all under twenty-five, was a great pleasure to me. The best paid among them only earned twenty-five sous a day; but they all had a reputation for good behaviour, for they had been chosen by the manager's wife, a devout woman of ripe age, who had begged me to grant her this privilege. Manon Baletti did not share my satisfaction; she was anything but pleased to see me at the head of this tribe of girls, and sulked with me for weeks about it.

The establishment gave me importance in my own eyes and the eyes of others. A great deal of money passed through my hands and every one thought I was on the road to fortune, and my *amour-propre* was flattered by the dependence of so many people on myself.

Everything seemed to be going well, but the fire was smouldering which was to break out shortly and destroy all my hopes.

One day when I was walking in the Tuileries Gardens I noticed an old woman, and a man wearing a sword, who

Digitized by Microsoft®

watched me very closely; on passing them for the third or fourth time, I recognised the woman whom I had consulted about Mlle. X. V. C. The man was a Gascon called Castel-Bajac, whom I had once come across in a tavern.

He is served with a summons to appear before M. de Sartine.

The next day as I was stepping into my carriage a man came up and handed me a paper; it was a summons to appear before the commissary of police, in reply to a complaint brought against me by a woman whose very name I have forgotten.

She declared that on a certain night I had presented myself at her house accompanied by a young woman, both of us masked, and wearing dominoes; that, holding a pistol in one hand, and a roll of fifty louis in the other, I had threatened her with instant death did she not furnish me with sundry drugs and medicaments. Fear, she said, prevented her from refusing me outright, but she remained sufficiently mistress of herself to tell me that what I needed could not be ready before the following night, whereupon we left her, promising to return. She had not seen me since until she met me walking in the Tuileries; the gentleman who was with her, M. Castel-Bajac, told her my name, and she considered it her duty to denounce me at once.

The lawyer whom I consulted advised me to see the magistrate known as the 'criminal lieutenant.' This was the famous de Sartine,[1] whom the king appointed lieutenant of police a couple of years later. I found him a polished and amiable man, who, in spite of his evident sympathy for me, did not conceal from me that my case was a serious one. He asked for my full confidence, naïvely adding that if I were innocent it would do me no harm. I thanked him, and answered that I had no reserved communication to make, for the woman was absolutely unknown to me, that I had never consulted such a person, and that she was a wretch who, in

[1] Sartine was so clever as an administrator and organiser of police that most of the reigning sovereigns had recourse to him in their difficulties, but at no period were there such a number of prisoners in the Bastille under *lettres de cachet*. Necker was his bitter enemy, and obtained his dismissal in 1780. Louis XVI. gave him a pension. He died in Spain.

Digitized by Microsoft®

conjunction with a scoundrel of her own kind, worthy of her, was trying to blackmail me.

'I am willing to believe you,' he answered, 'but luck is against you, and it will be difficult for you to prove your innocence. A certain young lady disappeared three months ago, you were known to be on intimate terms with her, paid spies have been watching you ever since. The woman swears that the young woman who was with you was none other than Mlle. X. V. C.; she says you both wore black dominoes. Now it has already been proved that you were both at the opera ball, and both in black dominoes on the night in question, and that you disappeared from the ball together. A false witness (there are any amount to be had for money) may be found to swear that he saw you leave the opera and get into a *fiacre*; the driver of a *fiacre* will come forward, and say he drove you to the woman's house; remember that for the past three months her family has not been able to trace her whereabouts; it is said that she is dead. Now do you begin to see the gravity of the situation? I tell you frankly, that the absurdity of the accusation brought against you made me laugh, it is the accessories which complicate it. I see now that love and honour compel you to silence, but I have spoken without reserve, and I hope you will do the same. In two or three days, I warn you, you will be called before the court, and then you will see me in the character of a judge; I shall be just, but impartial, and severe as the law itself. Tell me all frankly, now, and I promise you the young lady's honour shall not suffer.'

The danger of his position.

I was petrified, for I fully saw the danger of my position.

'I know where she is,' I said, 'and I can assure you that she would never have left home if her mother had not tried to make her marry a man she loathed.'

'But that man is married; let her return to her mother now. When once she is with her family you will be safe—unless, indeed, the hag maintains her charge against you, which I doubt.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Alas, sir! it is not the charge which troubles me, there are other reasons which prevent her returning to her family. I cannot tell you more, without a certain person's permission. I will try to obtain it, if you will be good enough to see me again in two days' time.'

I was on the brink of a precipice, but I was decided to leave the kingdom rather than betray the secret of my unhappy friend. I would have given any money to hush the matter up, but it was too late. I went to Madame du Rumain, whom I found in bed.

'There is no time to lose, my dear Casanova,' said the charming woman, 'you must confide everything to M. de Sartine. I will speak to him myself, and at once.'

She wrote a note to de Sartine, asking him for an audience that afternoon, and it was arranged that I should return to her house at five o'clock to hear the result of the interview.

I saw at once, by her face, that she had been successful.

'I have told him everything,' she said. 'I have assured him that when mademoiselle has recovered she will go back to her mother, without saying a word of what has taken place. You can make your mind easy, only as the action has been brought against you, it must run its course; you will be called before the court to-morrow. I should advise you to see the registrar on some pretext or other, and to manage to make him accept a bribe.'

M. de Sartine is very friendly.

I was summoned, and I appeared. I saw M. de Sartine seated at the tribunal. He told me that the case was adjourned, and that in the meantime I must not absent myself from Paris, or get married, as all civil rights were suspended during a criminal proceeding. I assured him that I would do neither the one nor the other.

I called on the registrar, presumably to ask him if, being a foreigner, there was any fear of my being forcibly detained; and after expressing my fears on this head, I slipped three hundred louis into his hand, saying it was for the expenses of

Digitized by Microsoft®

the case, and that I would be much obliged if he would defray them for me.

Four days later I was walking on the Boulevard du Temple, when I was accosted by a Savoyard, who told me that a person who wished to see me was waiting in an alley a few yards away. I followed at his request, and there was the infamous Castel-Bajac!

'I have only two words to say to you,' he began. 'I want to tell you how you can stop the action, and save yourself a great deal of money and trouble. The old woman is certain that you are the man who called on her with a lady, some months ago, but she is sorry now she accused you of abduction. Give her a hundred louis, and she will swear to the registrar that she was mistaken, and everything will be at an end. You need not pay the money until after she has made her declaration, your word is sufficient.'

I followed him to the registrar's office in the Rue aux Ours,[1] where I deposited a quarter of the sum demanded. Two days after, the woman, in the presence of witnesses, acknowledged that she had been mistaken, and begged my pardon.

Mlle. X. V. C. restored to her family and happily married.

The same day the Comtesse du Rumain received a letter from the abbess announcing that all had gone off well. Mademoiselle, she said, would leave the convent in six weeks, furnished with a certificate of good behaviour; the abbess declared she had been four months under her protection; during this time she had never left the convent, and had received no visitors.

Shortly afterwards the old harpy was put in prison, Castel-

[1] Took its name from *Oués* (Old French) from the numerous cook-shops where roast geese and fowls were sold. At the corner of the Rue Salle au Comte there existed, up to 1780, a statue of the Virgin, before which a lamp was kept always burning. The tradition was that a soldier who had lost all his money in a neighbouring cabaret on the night of 30th June 1418 struck the statue with his sword, on which blood gushed forth from it. He was tried, and executed on the same spot. The miraculous statue was taken to the church of St. Martin, and another placed in the Rue aux Ours, before which every year on the 3rd July fireworks were let off, and a mannikin, supposed to represent the soldier, was burnt. Statue and soldier disappeared during the Revolution.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Bajac was sent to Bicêtre, and the registrar was crossed off the roll of advocates. The action against me continued, though I knew I had no cause for uneasiness, until Mlle. X. V. C. was restored to her family. She could not remain in Paris, where her story was known to all, so she left with her mother and sisters for Venice, where she married and became a great lady. Fifteen years afterwards I met her; she was then a widow, rich, and universally respected, for her rank, her intelligence, and her social virtues.

First meeting with Castel-Bajac.

The reader will see later on under what circumstances I again met Castel-Bajac. Towards the end of the year 1759, before leaving for Holland, I spent several hundreds of francs to obtain the release of the woman who had tried to blackmail me.

I was living in princely style, and might have been supposed to be happy, but no! My enormous expenses, my prodigality, and my love of pleasure and display, kept me perpetually in straitened circumstances. My business would have supplied all my wants, but the war interfered largely with all sorts of commerce. I and my undertaking could not but be affected by the poverty which was general in France. I had four hundred pieces of painted stuffs in my shop, but it was not likely I should sell them before peace was proclaimed, and peace was far distant. I spent a great deal on my house at Little Poland; but the principal cause of my ruin was the money I wasted on my work-girls: they exploited my weakness, and were extortionate in their demands; whatever the one had the other insisted on having. I refused nothing to the caprice of the passing hour, nor to that of the hour that was past.

Madame d'Urfé, who thought I was immensely wealthy, was no trouble to me; I could make her happy just by supplying her to her heart's content with magical operations. Manon Baletti was more troublesome, with her jealousy and her just reproaches. She could not understand, and no wonder, why I put off marrying her. Her mother died of consumption in my arms; ten minutes before she expired she commended her

Digitized by Microsoft®

daughter to me, and I promised sincerely to marry her, but fate, as usual, was opposed to my matrimonial projects.

Poor Silvia Baletti was one of my dearest friends. I remained three days with the family, and shared their grief from the bottom of my heart.

At the beginning of November I sold fifty thousand francs' worth of shares to a man named Garnier in the Rue du Mail; he was to have one-third of the painted silks in the shop. Three days after signing the contract, the doctor, who, the reader will remember, was also caretaker, went off in the night with the contents of the safe. I think the painter helped him. This loss was a very heavy one, for my affairs were beginning to be in a bad condition; to make matters worse Garnier summoned me to return the fifty thousand francs. I replied that the loss must be supported in common, but he declared the contract null, and went so far as to accuse me of being in connivance with the doctor. The merchant who had acted as security for the latter became bankrupt; Garnier grew impatient, laid hands on everything in the factory, and seized even my horses and carriages, and all I possessed in my house at Little Poland. Worse than this, as I was getting into a *fiacre* in the Rue Saint Denis, at eight o'clock one morning, I was arrested and carried off to Fort l'Évêque.

He is arrested in the Rue Saint Denis.

I was handed over to the gaoler, who told me that if I paid fifty thousand francs down, or could find some one to go bail for that amount, I should instantly be set at liberty.

'I can do neither the one nor the other,' I answered.

'Then you will stay in prison.'

I wrote to my lawyer, to Madame d'Urfé, to my brother, who had just got married, and to all my friends.

Manon Baletti sent me, by her brother, the diamond earrings I had brought her from Holland, for which I had paid fifteen thousand francs; Madame du Rumain sent me her lawyer, a man of rare ability, and at the same time told me that if five hundred louis would help me they were at my disposal. My brother did not answer my letter, and did not come to see me;

Digitized by Microsoft®

and my dear Madame d'Urfé sent me word that she expected me to dine with her that day. I thought she must have gone mad, for I knew she was incapable of teasing me.

Madame d'Urfé buys him out of prison.

At eleven o'clock my room was full of people, among them a poor shopkeeper named Baret, to whom I had rendered certain services, for which his pretty wife had amply repaid me. The poor fellow was in tears, and offered me everything in his shop, which touched me vastly. Finally, they announced a lady who was waiting below in a *fiacre*, but as she did not appear, I asked the doorkeeper why he did not show her up; he replied that after asking a great many questions she had gone away. From the description of the lady I guessed it to be Madame d'Urfé.

I was disagreeably affected at finding myself deprived of my liberty. The recollection of 'The Leads' was ever present to my mind, though I could not compare the present with my Venetian experience. I had thirty thousand francs in ready money, and jewels of more than double that value, but I could not bring myself to give in to what I considered an unjust demand. I was discussing the advisability of doing so with Madame du Rumain's lawyer, when the gaoler came in, and said with politeness: 'Sir, you are at liberty. A lady is waiting for you at the door in her carriage.'

I ordered le Duc, my *valet de chambre*, to see who the lady was. It was Madame d'Urfé. I made my bow all round, and after four hours' captivity left the prison in a magnificent equipage.

I thanked her in few words, telling her I was glad to be under such obligations to her, but that unfortunately it was Garnier who would profit by her generosity. She replied with a smile that he would not profit so largely, nor so easily, as he imagined. She wished me to go at once and show myself in the Tuileries and the Palais Royal, so as to convince the public that there was no truth in the rumour that I was in prison, which had spread like wildfire through Paris.

After having sauntered for some time in a careless manner up

Digitized by Microsoft®

and down the two promenades, which were then the most fashionable and the most frequented in the city, and having derived much secret amusement from the surprise depicted on several countenances, I went to see Manon and returned her her earrings. The dear girl cried with joy on seeing me, and I made her doubly happy by telling her that I had decided to give up the factory. She was convinced that my seraglio in the Rue du Temple was the only obstacle to our marriage.

My imprisonment disgusted me with Paris, and from that period dates my hatred for law proceedings of any description. I was involved in a double web of chicanery with Garnier and with my own lawyer. It was absolute torture to me to have to spend time or money on these pettifoggers.

I determined to get rid of everything I had in Paris, and to go back to Holland, to work seriously at the re-establishment of my credit. In the meantime, I would buy an annuity on two lives—my own and my wife's—with what spare capital I had. My wife was to be Manon Baletti, and this project was entirely to her taste. Unfortunately, I did not put it into execution at once.

I gave up Little Poland, and withdrew from the École Militaire the eighty thousand francs which I had had to deposit as guarantee for my lottery bureau. I did not want to leave Madame d'Urfé with an absurd lawsuit on her hands, so I compromised with Garnier for twenty-five thousand francs.

He leaves Paris.

I sold my horses, carriages, and furniture, and left Paris with a hundred thousand francs in cash, and as much again in jewels. I told Madame d'Urfé that my oracle bade me absent myself awhile. I said good-bye to Manon, swearing to come back and marry her. I travelled in a post-chaise, le Duc, my valet, preceding me on horseback. I had, besides, a good Swiss lackey who served as courier.

Le Duc was a young Spaniard, shrewd, intelligent, and unscrupulous. He served me faithfully, and I cherished him particularly because he dressed my hair more skilfully and neatly than any other servant I ever had.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He reads Helvetius on his way to Holland.

I read *De l'Esprit*, by Helvetius, all the way. I was more surprised at the stir the book had created than at the stupidity of the Parliament in condemning it. The magistracy, instigated by the clergy, had done all in its power to ruin Helvetius, who was a very worthy man, and was certainly far cleverer than his book would imply him to be. I did not find anything particularly new in the historical part, in which Helvetius deals with the manners and morals of nations. He reels off platitudes which have been repeated over and over again for centuries, and which Blaise Pascal has put far better. Helvetius formally retracted all he had written, so as to be able to remain in France. He preferred an easy life to honour and principle. His wife was greater-hearted than he, and was willing to sell their belongings and take refuge in Holland rather than submit.

I spent two days in Brussels at the Hôtel de l'Impératrice, where I saw Mlle. X. V. C. with Farsetti, but I pretended not to recognise them. From thence I went on to La Haye, where I stayed at the 'Prince of Orange.' Monsieur de Choiseul had authorised me to arrange, if possible, a loan for the French government, at five per cent., which loan I could negotiate either with some foreign state, or with a private company. He had given me his word that peace would be declared in the course of the winter; but he was deceiving me, for he knew very well that there was no chance of an end of the war. He also promised me, that in case of success, I should not this time be cheated out of the fruits of my labours. I had had a bitter lesson with M. de Boulogne, and I was determined not to undertake anything for the government unless I foresaw an immediate and palpable benefit for myself.

M. d'Affri, who was the French minister for the Low Countries, received me cordially.

'Do you know the *soi-disant* Comte de Saint Germain?' he asked. 'He says the king has charged him to raise a loan of a hundred million francs, but he has brought no letters, and I believe the man to be an impostor.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I told him what I knew of this extraordinary individual; how the king had given him an apartment at Chambord, and how he pretended to be able to make diamonds. He agreed with me that it was a pity he did not manufacture a few for his friend, Louis Quinze, instead of running about trying to borrow money.

I saw the pretended count the next day, and he told me that though he had no doubt of being able to find the hundred million francs, he thought it more than likely that *I* should fail altogether in obtaining any money, always provided, he added, that I too had come with the intention of raising a loan. The Bourse, he said, was scandalised at various operations in the French market, and I should have much difficulty in persuading any one to listen to me.

Among the guests at the hotel was a certain Count Piccolomini and his wife, a tall, beautiful Roman, with black eyes and a startlingly white skin. An English officer named Walpole seemed dazzled by her charms, and never left her side. They played *primiera* together, and the countess cheated him in the most barefaced manner, but he only laughed and paid up, until he had lost fifty louis; then he cried quarter, and proposed that they should exchange the card-table for the theatre. I also went to the play, and on returning from it, learned that Piccolomini had left in haste, accompanied only by his valet, and taking with him scarcely any baggage. His wife came up as the hotel-keeper was telling me this, and whispered that her husband had left because he had fought a duel; at the same time she invited me to sup with her and Sir James Walpole. Another Englishman came in during supper and told Walpole that Piccolomini had been accused of cheating by one of their countrymen, that they had fought, and that the Englishman had been brought back to the hotel wounded in the arm and shoulder.

The following day I received a letter from Piccolomini, begging me to escort his wife to Amsterdam, where he would meet her. The adventure promised amusement, and I should

Digitized by Microsoft®

have accepted it had I been in the slightest degree attracted by the countess. As it was, I handed the letter over to Walpole, who offered to take my place, and the two started for Leyden the next day, *en route* for Amsterdam.

I was seated at dinner one day when two Frenchmen, who were dining at a table near me, began to talk rather loudly. One of them said, 'The famous Casanova must be in Holland by this time!'

Said the other, 'I should like to meet him, and ask him for certain explanations, which, perhaps, he would not care about giving.'

I looked at the man, and was sure I had never seen him before. I felt the blood rush to my face, but controlled myself, and asked as calmly as possible if he knew Casanova personally?

'I should think I did!' he answered insolently.

'No, sir, you do not know him, for I am Casanova.'

'By the Lord,' he answered, 'you are very much mistaken if you think you are the only Casanova in the world!'

This checkmated me for the time, but I knew if I waited I should be revenged. The Frenchman, puffed up with his easy victory, was talking about everything under the sun, and by and by, *à propos* of something which I forget now, he asked me what countryman I was?

'I am a Venetian, sir,' I answered.

'Then you must be a good friend of the French, as your republic is under the protection of France.'

Casanova's brilliant retort.

'The republic of Venice is strong enough,' I answered, 'to do without the protection of France or any other power. She has been in existence for the last thirteen centuries, and may have friends and allies, but not protectors. Though you will probably say, to excuse your ignorance, that there is more than one Venetian republic in the world!'

This turned the laugh against him, but he was not easily put down. At dessert some one spoke of the Earl of Albemarle; the English present praised him, and said had he lived,

Digitized by Microsoft®

there would not have been war between England and France. Some one spoke of Lolotte, his mistress, of whom mention has already been made in these Memoirs. I said I had met that charming person at the Duchesse de Fulvie's, and that she was in every way worthy of her fortune—the Comte d'Érouville, a soldier and well-known man of letters, had just married her.

When the Frenchman proceeded to boast of the good reception she had given him, it was more than I could stand.

'Insolent liar!' I exclaimed, making as though to throw my plate at his head.

I left the room, knowing that he would follow me, and turned my steps towards a little wood, about half a mile from the town. He came close behind me, and without a word we drew our swords. The fight did not last long; my lunge, which never failed me, made him fall back, he was wounded above the right breast; fortunately my sword was a very flat one, and the wound bled freely. I ran to his assistance, but he repulsed my help, saying that we should meet again at Amsterdam, when he would have his revenge. I did not see him, however, till five or six years later, when I met him in Warsaw. He was in needy circumstances, and I got up a subscription in his favour. His name was Varnier, and I rather think it was he who was president of the National Convention under the infamous Robespierre.

He again meets Lucy of Paséan.

At Amsterdam I met an old acquaintance, Rigerboos, who had been one of the intimate friends of Thérèse Trenti, the mother of my adopted son. She called herself Cornelis, which was the real name of Rigerboos, as I afterwards learned. He insisted that I should go sleighing with him on the Amstel. The Dutch are devoted to this pursuit, which costs a ducat an hour: I consider it tiresome. Having frozen our faces and hands, we thawed them with sillery and oysters, after which we made the round of the *musicos*, a form of entertainment as dull as the sleighing. In one of these houses Rigerboos called me by my name, loudly and clearly; an instant afterward a woman

Digitized by Microsoft®

came forward, and, standing in front of me, looked at me fixedly. The room was very badly lighted, and it was some seconds before I recognised poor Lucy, whom, as the reader will remember, I had met in a similar establishment a year before. I turned away, for the sight of her only depressed me; but she spoke softly to me, saying how glad she was to see me in good health, and I could not refuse to answer her. I called Rigerboos, and we all three went into a private room, so that Lucy might tell us her story.

She was simply hideous; it was nineteen years since I had first known her at Paséan. Nineteen years of her life passed in misery, debauchery, and humiliation had made her the abject and vile creature we saw before us. The courier l'Aigle, with whom she had left her home, had deserted her after five or six months; a ship's captain then took her to Xantes; thence she had sailed to England with a young Greek girl. After two or three years in London she came to Holland. She was now only thirty-three. While she talked to us she drank down two bottles of burgundy, it was enough to show us what her end would be.

M. d'O. and the King of France's diamond.

The reader will remember M. d'O., the rich merchant, who had bought Madame d'Urfé's India stock from me on the occasion of my former visit to Holland, and who had wished me to become his son-in-law. My inability to accept his proposition had in no wise cooled his affection for me, and on my return to Amsterdam he received me as kindly as ever. His daughter Esther was much interested in occult experiments, and I had taught her the cabbala. Her father was a firm believer, and one evening after supper, he begged us both to listen attentively while he spoke to us on a matter of great importance.

It seemed that the famous Saint Germain had been to him about the loan he was trying to raise, and that M. d'O. and his friends were on the point of handing over to him the required sum, when, warned by his daughter's oracle, d'O. had insisted on a delay. During the delay orders had been sent from

Digitized by Microsoft®

France for the French ambassador to withdraw his authorisation from Saint Germain, and the latter had decamped, leaving in M. d'O.'s hands a magnificent diamond, the finest of the French crown jewels.

'You now understand, my children,' said M. d'O., 'the nature of the question I wish to put to your oracle. I have never seen such a splendid diamond in my life. This is what I wish to ask, Shall we, that is, my partners and I, declare that the stone is in our possession, or shall we keep silence until it is claimed by the French government?'

It was decided that Esther should establish the pyramid, and trace with her own hand the four mighty initials, but when all was arranged, I took care to suggest to her the additions and the subtractions, so as to obtain the answer I wanted. She was thunderstruck when she found the following sentence: 'Silence imperative. Unless silence, general derision. Diamond of no value whatever.'

When the honest d'O. learned that his daughter's oracle had pronounced the diamond to be false, he raged and stormed, and said it was impossible. When he was calmer he implored me to appeal to the same authority, but without Esther's assistance, as he was sure she was mistaken.

Needless to say, the reply I obtained was identical with hers, and the good merchant went off post-haste to have the diamond tested, and to recommend the most absolute discretion to his associates.

We learned afterwards that Saint Germain possessed the art of making imitation diamonds which could only be distinguished from the real by their weight. We shall hear more of this celebrated impostor later on.

The infidelity of Manon Baletti.

On Christmas Day 1759, I received a packet from Manon Baletti; the packet contained my letters to her and my portrait. She wrote saying that she was about to be married to a M. Blondel, the royal architect, and a member of the Academy; and as if her infidelity were not enough to make me miserable, she added, that if I should by chance meet

Digitized by Microsoft®

her anywhere on my return to Paris, she would thank me not to speak to her, or recognise her in any way.

Twenty times did I begin a reply to this letter, and twenty times I did tear up what I had written. A thousand projects crossed each other in my imagination. I wanted to start for Paris then and there, to wreak my vengeance on Blondel, this man whom I did not even know, and who had stolen from me the woman whom I had fondly hoped to possess, and who was looked upon by all my friends as my affianced wife. I would punish her by slaying the creature she dared to prefer to me. I cursed her father, I cursed her brother; they had left me in ignorance of the gross insult which was being so perfidiously prepared for me.

Mlle. Esther d'O. comes to see him with hergoverness.

I passed the day and the following night in a kind of delirium. About three o'clock in the afternoon the good d'O. came to see me, to persuade me to go to La Haye with him, but seeing my condition he did not insist. I told him I was in great trouble, and he left me after many expressions of sympathy. The next day I received a visit from his daughter Esther, accompanied by her governess.

'What is the matter with you, my dear Casanova?' she asked.

'Sit down by my side, dear Esther, and I will tell you. Time, the great healer, and your agreeable conversation, will cure me; in the meanwhile, as long as you are with me, I forget my woes.'

'Dress yourself, and come and pass the day with me, I will do my best to distract you.'

'I am very weak, I have taken nothing for the last three days but a little bouillon and some chocolate.'

At these words I saw the tears gather in her beautiful eyes. She took up a pen which was on my table and wrote these words:—

'My friend, if a large sum of money can cure your trouble, or even make it less poignant, tell me; I am your doctor, and you will make me happy by accepting my offer.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I kissed her hands.

'No, dear, generous Esther, it is not money I want; were it so I would let you help me. What I want is what no one can give me; strength of mind to conceive and carry out a plan of action.'

Esther rang for le Duc, and, with her governess, looked out herself the clothes she wished me to appear in. Le Duc dressed my hair, and Esther sent for some beef-tea for me. I began to hate Manon, instead of loving her. I believe it was my vanity, not my love, that she had wounded after all! I was sitting, my face to the fire, in the hands of le Duc, when Esther, who had been looking over my clothes, came up to me, and handing me Manon's letter, timidly asked if that was not the cause of my sorrow, and was I angry with her for looking at it?

'No, my dear,' I said; 'pity your poor friend and don't speak of it. Read them all if you like, I don't care.'

Esther consults the oracle on his behalf.

Eagerly she read them. Le Duc went away, and we were alone, for the good governess mending lace in the window-seat did not count. Esther asked if she might keep the two hundred letters that she had found, and would I show her Manon's likeness? I opened the lid of the snuff-box. I expected that, woman-like, she would find fault with Manon's looks, but no, she admired her heartily. I told her that I meant to send the portrait to Manon's future husband, but the sweet girl found means to prevent my doing anything so mean. She consulted the oracle, and saying with a smile, 'I have not tampered with it, you may be sure,' gave as its answer: '*The portrait should be sent to the lady, not to her husband; such an act would be unworthy of a gentleman.*'

I felt much better, and went to see her next day, so early that her governess had to awaken her. She looked very pretty in her batiste nightcap with its pale blue ribbon, and an Indian muslin fichu thrown lightly over her shoulders. She let me kiss her, and then I went away while she dressed, and we went down and dined with her father's secretary. Poor

Digitized by Microsoft®

man, he adored her hopelessly, and he cannot have cared to see me with her.

I confided to Esther my little plan of visiting Germany before returning to Paris. She encouraged me to do so, but I had to promise to come back to her by the end of the year. I did not behave ill to Esther, and though I did not see her again, I have nothing to reproach myself with. I was prevented by subsequent events from keeping my promise to her.

End of Casanova's second journey to Holland.

I paid into M. d'O.'s hands all the money I had, and in exchange he gave me letters of credit on a dozen German banks. Then I set off in the post-chaise I had ordered from Mardyk, with a hundred thousand Dutch florins at my disposal, and plenty of clothes and jewels. I dismissed my Swiss valet, and retained my faithful Spaniard, who travelled in the boot.

This is the end of my second journey to Holland, wherein I cannot say that I in any way advanced my fortunes.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXI

THE WIFE OF THE BURGOMASTER

I only stayed one day at Utrecht, and thence went on to Cologne; not without adventures, for when I was half a league from the city, five deserters rode up to my chaise, crying out, 'Your money or your life!'

At Cologne.

I shouted out to the postillion that I would kill him if he did not gallop on. The highwaymen shot after the carriage, but without hurting it. I should have done as the English do when they travel, keep a lightly furnished purse to throw to robbers. My own was so well lined that I must needs risk my life to defend it.

I lodged at 'The Golden Sun' at Cologne, and the first person I met there was the Comte de Lastic, Madame d'Urfé's nephew, with whom I dined. He offered to take me to the theatre with M. de Flavacour after dinner, and to introduce me to some of the notabilities. I spent more than an hour on my toilet, as I wished to appear to the best advantage.

In the box opposite to us was a very pretty woman, who stared at me through her opera-glass. I begged de Lastic to present me, which he did with the best grace in the world. She was the wife of the burgomaster, and General Kettler of the Austrian service was never long away from her side. She received me graciously, and asked me about Paris and Brussels, where she had been educated, without paying the slightest attention to my replies. She was too much taken up in staring at my lace and jewellery.

She asked if I was making a long stay at Cologne, and I

Digitized by Microsoft®

answered indifferently, that I thought of going on to Bonn the next day. Whereupon General Kettler said: 'I am sure, sir, madame will be able to persuade you to defer your departure, and I shall be delighted, as it will give me the pleasure of your further acquaintance.' He then left the box with de Lastic, leaving me alone with the beauty.

'The count is mistaken, I think,' she said, 'in attributing such power to me.'

'He is not mistaken in your influence, madame, but he may be mistaken in supposing you would care to exercise it.'

'Well, then, we must punish him for his indiscretion—stay.'

I bent over her hand, kissing it respectfully.

'It is understood then, sir, you will stay. The general gives a ball to-morrow. I hope you will dance with me.'

'If I might dare to hope, madame, that you will dance with me only during the whole evening?'

'I promise I will dance with you until you stop for very weariness.'

'In that case you will dance with no one else.'

'Tell me where you get that delicious pomade which scents the whole air. I noticed it as soon as you came in.'

'I get it from Florence, but if you dislike it, madame, I will lay it aside.'

'On the contrary, I wish I had some like it.'

He presents the burgomaster's wife with twelve pots of Esther's pomade.

Then the general came back, and I left the box, in love and hopeful. The lucky pomade was a present from Esther, and I was using it for the first time. The parcel Esther had given me contained twenty-four pots of it in fine porcelain. I put twelve of them in an elegant casket, which I sent without a word by a commissionaire.

Every one was surprised to hear that the general had invited me to his ball, as he was exceedingly jealous. He was elderly, and anything but handsome. He did not seem to object, however, to my dancing with madame. I thought I would stay on at Cologne, and in a moment of hardihood I dared to

Digitized by Microsoft®

tell her that I would remain all through the carnival if she would promise me a rendezvous.

'And supposing I were to break my promise, what would you say?'

'I should regret it, but I should say that you had been prevented from keeping your word.'

'Stay, then,' she answered, for the second time.

The day after I went to pay her my respects, and she introduced me to her husband, a good fellow, neither young nor handsome, but obliging and amiable. Then the general's carriage drove up, and she said to me hastily: 'If General Kettler asks you if you are going to the elector's ball at Bonn, answer in the affirmative.'

I knew nothing about the elector's ball, though I found out afterwards that it was a masked ball, to which every one could go. When by and by the general did ask me, I forgot my orders, and answered that my health did not permit me to indulge in such pleasures.

'You are wise,' said he, 'one must sacrifice amusement to health.'

He goes to the elector's ball at Bonn.

On the day of the ball, towards dusk, I left Cologne in a suit of clothes which no one had seen me wear, and with a box in my post-chaise containing two dominoes. I went to an hotel at Bonn, and put on the one domino, taking the other with me in my chaise.

I soon recognised the burgomaster's wife, seated at faro with several other ladies. I put ten ducats on a card, and lost four times running. Some one then asked the general to cut the cards, and I fancied he would bring me luck. I put fifty ducats on and won, after which I won again and again until I broke the bank. Then I slipped back to my hotel, put away my money, changed my costume, and returned to the ball-room. Every one was wondering who the fortunate stranger could be, and I overheard General Kettler say it must be a Venetian who had come to Cologne a few days ago. The man he was talking to was the unlucky banker, an Italian, Count Verita.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I know Casanova,' said the latter, 'if he is in Bonn the elector will not let him go without seeing him.'

Later on in the evening, as I wanted to dance, I was obliged to unmask, and the count came up and said: 'My dear fellow-countryman, allow me to congratulate you on having broken the bank.'

'I should congratulate myself if it were so,' said I, 'but it is not.'

Two hours later he accosted me again, laughing. 'You changed your domino in such and such an hotel,' he said, 'in such and such a room. The elector knows all, and he told me to tell you that you are not to leave to-morrow.'

'Will he have me arrested?'

'Why not, if you refuse to dine with him?'

'Tell his highness that I will obey his orders. Will you present me to him at once?'

'He has retired for the night, but come and see me to-morrow at midday.'

When the count presented me, the elector was surrounded by his courtiers, and as I had never seen him, I naturally looked out for an ecclesiastic. He noticed my embarrassment, and said, in bad Venetian, 'To-day I am wearing the costume of the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order.'

I tried to kiss his hand; he prevented me, and shook mine affectionately, saying: 'I was in Venice when you were in 'The Leads,' and my nephew, the Elector of Bavaria, told me that after your escape, you stayed some time in Munich. If you had come to Cologne I should have kept you. I hope that after dinner you will tell us about your escape, and that you will remain to supper and join us at a little masquerade.'

I told him that my tale took two hours in the telling.

He was a gay, jovial, and debonair man, and seemed so healthy that no one would have supposed he was going to die the very next year.

After dinner I began, and I kept the most brilliant company interested for two hours. My readers know how dramatic

Digitized by Microsoft®

the situations were, but it is impossible to give in writing the fire and enthusiasm which I could put into it *viva voce.*

The elector's masquerade was delightful. We were all dressed as peasants: the costumes came from the elector's private wardrobe. General Kettler looked the best, but then he was naturally a rustic. Madame was ravishing. We danced nothing but German dances and country dances. There were only four or five ladies of high rank present. All the others, more or less pretty, were particular friends of the elector's, who all his life long was a lover of pretty women. Two ladies danced the *forlane*, a Venetian dance, and a very lively one. It is a *tête-à-tête* dance, and as I was the only man present who knew it, I had to dance with both of them in turn, so it nearly killed me. During the evening the burgomaster's wife told me that all the ladies of Cologne were leaving the next day, and that I could make myself exceedingly popular by inviting them to breakfast at Brühl.

'Send a note to each one, with the name of her cavalier included. Put yourself in the hands of Count Verita, who will arrange everything; let him do for you what he did two years ago for the Prince de Deux Ponts. Lose no time. You can count upon about twenty guests: but above all get your invitations delivered by nine o'clock to-morrow morning.'

I had no thought but to obey. Brühl—breakfast—twenty persons—like the Prince de Deux Ponts—letters to the ladies —Count Verita! I had it all off by heart, as though she had been repeating it to me for an hour.

'It is easy enough,' said Verita, when I consulted him, 'I will give the orders at once; but tell me how much you wish to spend.'

'As much as possible.'

'You mean as little.'

'Not at all. I want to treat my guests handsomely.'

'You must name a fixed sum.'

'Well, then, say two—three—four hundred ducats; is that enough?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Two hundred is ample. Deux Ponts did not spend more.'

I wrote eighteen notes before going to bed, and the next morning early they were all distributed.

A gold snuff-box set in diamonds from the elector.

The next day Verita brought me a superb gold snuff-box from the elector, with his portrait surrounded with diamonds.

The breakfast was for one o'clock, and at twelve I was at Brühl, a country house belonging to the elector, with nothing extraordinary about it except its furniture. It is a pale copy of Trianon.

The table was laid for twenty-four persons, forks and spoons in silver gilt, damask linen, superb china, and on the sideboard a collection of beautiful plate. At one end of the hall were two other tables covered with sweetmeats and the choicest wines.

I announced myself to the *chef*, who assured me I should be more than satisfied. 'The *menu* comprises twenty-four dishes,' he said, 'but you will have twenty-four dishes of English oysters, and a magnificent dessert as well.'

The feast at Brühl.

I received my guests in the doorway, asking forgiveness of each one for my temerity in inviting him or her.

There were twenty-four guests, and as I had asked only eighteen, three couples had come without invitation, but I was charmed at their evident desire to be present. I did not sit down, but served the ladies, going from one to another, and ate, standing, the delicate morsels they handed me from their own plates. The oysters were not finished until we got to the twentieth bottle of champagne, so that by the time the *déjeûner* proper began, every one was talking at once. I noticed with pleasure that not a drop of water was drunk. Champagne, tokay, rhine wine, madeira, malaga, cyprus, and alicante were the wines served, and it is impossible to mix water with any of them.

Before the dessert an enormous dish of truffles was put on the table. I suggested that we should drink maraschino with them, and the ladies took a great many glasses. The dessert was sumptuous. Among other elegant fancies served were the

Digitized by Microsoft®

portraits of all the sovereigns of Europe. We sent for the *chef* to compliment him, and he, wishing to oblige, said that all the sweetmeats were portable and would resist the warmth of the pocket. Whereupon every one helped themselves, the ladies stuffing their reticules and sacs.

'I wager,' said General Kettler, 'that this is a trick which the elector has played us to finish up his fête. His highness wished to remain incognito, so M. Casanova has played, and very well played, the rôle of host.'

The general is entertained by him.

'General,' said I, 'if the elector had honoured me with such an order, I should have obeyed, but I should have felt humiliated. His highness has bestowed a much greater favour on me,'—and I showed him the snuff-box, which was passed round the table. Then, after sitting three hours, every one rose, to be in time for the play.

On the last day of the carnival, Kettler, who now hated me cordially, invited everybody to a supper followed by a ball, but from these festivities I was carefully excluded.

Madame was furious.

'You must go, whether you are invited or not,' said she.

'Madame, how can I? I will obey you in everything but this.'

'I know all you would say,' she answered, 'but you must go. I should consider myself disgraced if you are not there.'

'If you insist, I will go, but you know that it means death for one of us, for I am not the man to put up with an affront.'

'Yes, I know, but promise me to go, or I shall not go either, and then we should never see each other again.'

I promised, and as I meant to keep my promise, I determined to be as discreet as I could, and not put myself doubly in the wrong.

I went to General Kettler's house after the theatre. There were only five or six people there, and I talked to a very agreeable canoness about Italian poetry, until the other guests had arrived. Madame and the general came last. Kettler did not see me, and a quarter of an hour after, supper was announced.

He goes to General Kettler's supper uninvited.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The canoness rose, took my arm, and we sat down to table, talking all the time of literature. When all the places were taken, one gentleman remained standing.

'There must be some mistake,' said the general, and he began to pass his guests in review. I pretended not to notice what was going on. When he came to me he exclaimed, 'Sir, I did not invite you.'

'True, general,' I answered civilly, 'but I was so sure that it was mere forgetfulness on your part, that I thought I would come and pay you my respects.'

Then I renewed my conversation with the canoness, as though nothing had happened.

There was silence for four or five minutes, then the canoness began to chatter again, and soon every one was talking gaily, except the general, who sulked. I was determined to bring him round, and watched for a favourable opportunity, which presented itself by and by.

Some one spoke of the Prince Biron, who was then in Siberia, saying that his whole merit lay in having flattered the Empress Anne.

Flattery of General Kettler.

'Pardon me,' said I, 'his merit lies in having so faithfully served the last Duke Kettler, who, but for Biron's bravery, would have lost all his men in the late war. It was Kettler who magnanimously sent him to Saint Petersburg, but Biron never solicited the duchy for himself; he recognised the rights of the younger branch of the Kettlers, who but for the caprice of the Czarina, would be reigning to-day.'

The general, whose austere mien had somewhat relaxed during my observations, now turned to me, and said graciously that he had never met a better informed man than I, adding regretfully: 'Yes, but for that caprice I should be reigning to-day.'

After this he burst out laughing, and sent me a bottle of Rhine wine, and during the rest of the supper addressed all his conversation to me. I could read madame's pleasure in her eyes.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I danced with my canoness, who was a charming woman, all night. I only danced one minuet with madame. The general, by way of winding up with an extra piece of clumsiness, asked me if I were going to leave Bonn soon. I said not till after the Grand Review. The burgomaster's wife, when next I saw her, told me that she was in a mortal fright when she heard him say he had not invited me.

'It is certain,' she added, 'that he would not have stopped at that had it not been for your tactful excuse, but had he said one word more I should have risen, offered you my hand, and we would have gone out together. M. de Castries says he should have left also, and I believe that all the ladies who were your guests at Brühl would have followed us.'

He attends Mass in the burgomaster's private chapel.

Two days after, I dined at the burgomaster's. He was an agreeable and well-educated man; he liked a quiet life, and his wife was much attached to him. He went away for a while, and madame took me over the house.

'This,' she said, 'is our room, and this is my little boudoir. These two grated windows look down into a church, which we may consider as our private chapel, for we can hear Mass from the windows; and here, you see, is a small staircase which leads to a door in the chancel.'

An idea occurs to him during the service.

The next day I attended Mass at the burgomaster's chapel, and I saw madame, demurely hooded, come through the little door, followed by her family. I was dressed in a riding-coat so as not to attract attention, and I do not think she noticed me; but what I noticed, for the devil is as busy in church as elsewhere, was the way in which the door opened on to the staircase. A mad idea came into my head, and I communicated it to madame next day at the theatre. She laughingly told me she had thought of the same thing, and that I should find further details in the first newspaper she should give me.

Two days later she handed me the Gazette, saying there was nothing in it. There was a letter folded in the pages which I read as soon as I was alone. She told me that if, on a certain

Digitized by Microsoft®

day, I could manage to hide myself in the chapel, so that the beadle should not find me when he came to lock the doors, she might come down and visit me after every one else had gone to rest.

I went the next day to the chapel to see how the land lay. I found that there was a pulpit in which I could easily hide, but it was near the sacristy door, and for that reason dangerous. There was a confessional quite close to the small door, and by sitting down on the step where the confessor puts his feet, I might perhaps escape detection. The space was very narrow, and I was not sure that I could remain there once the door was shut; but at midday, when the beadle absented himself for dinner, I tried it and found it just possible. About eight days afterwards madame told the general, in my presence, that her husband was going to Aix-la-Chapelle for three days. At the same time she looked meaningly at me.

It was four o'clock in the afternoon when I crouched down in the confessional, commending myself to all the saints. As soon as I heard the beadle lock the door I left my narrow prison and sat down on a bench, and thence I saw her shadow on the grating. By and by, growing bolder, I tried the door; it opened, and I found myself on the staircase. There, seated on one of the steps, I passed five hours, which would not have been so tedious if the rats had not tormented me horribly.

At ten o'clock she came to me, candle in hand, and we supped delicately together in her boudoir.

A fortnight later I met her again. I entered the chapel at eleven o'clock in the morning, because, being neither a Sunday nor a fête-day, the door would be locked at noon, and took up my position. About one o'clock a paper fell from the grated window, and fluttered almost to my feet.

'You will be more comfortable on the stairs,' it said, 'where you will find light, books, and a little dinner. I have also put a cushion for you; rest assured the time seems longer to me than to you. May God preserve you from coughing—above all in the night, for then we should both be lost!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I found everything on the staircase—food, wine, a spirit lamp, coffee, lemons, sugar and rum, books, and candles. I made coffee and drank punch and read for six hours, then I slept till she came and woke me. I dare say I should have met her again, but the general went to Westphalia, and she went to the country. I was about to leave Cologne shortly, but we promised to meet again the following year, a promise which we were unable to keep.

The two months and a half that I stayed in the city had not in any way affected my pocket, for though I often lost at cards, the sum I had won at Bonn defrayed all my expenses.

I left Cologne in the middle of March, and stopped at Bonn to present my respects to the elector. Count Verita gave me a letter to a canoness at Coblentz, which obliged me to make a halt at that town; but the good lady had gone to Manheim, so I missed her. To make up for this, however, I met an actress named Toscani, who was going to Stuttgart with her daughter. The mother wanted to see what the duke would think of the girl, for she had destined her for him from earliest infancy. She had just come from Paris, where the celebrated Vestris had given her dancing lessons.

La Toscani was determined that the duke should fall seriously in love with her daughter, and that he should dismiss the reigning favourite, a dancer named Gardella, the daughter of a *barcarol* at Venice. I determined to go with these two nymphs to Stuttgart, where I hoped to meet La Binetti, the daughter of the *barcarol* Romain, whom I had helped to make her *débût* at Venice. I was also to meet there the youngest Baletti, whom I was very fond of, and his wife, besides several other old friends. Altogether, I expected to pass time at Stuttgart agreeably.

The court of the Duke of Würtemberg.

The court of the Duke of Würtemberg was at that time the most brilliant in Europe. The immense subsidies which France paid him for a troop of ten thousand men enabled him to maintain himself in luxury. He had hunting equipages, magnificent stables, a French theatre, and an Italian

Digitized by Microsoft®

opera and *opéra comique*, twenty Italian dancers, any one of whom would have been considered a star at one of the big Italian theatres. The celebrated Novero was his ballet-master, and he could put on the stage as many as a hundred *figurantes*. All the dancers were pretty. The principal lady was La Gardella, the Venetian whom I had known long years ago in the house of the senator Malipiero. She was married to Michel Agata. The duke, when he tired of her, gave her a pension, and the title of Madame. The others were jealous of these honours, but the Venetian knew how to maintain her position; though she had lost the affection of her master, she was still his very good friend, gave him bad advice, and he in return accorded her in public all the respect he could have shown a royal princess.

He is forbidden to applaud in the theatre when the duke is present.

I repaired to the opera on the night of my arrival, handsomely dressed. I was ignorant of the usages of small German courts, and I applauded a solo vigorously. A minute afterwards an individual came into my box and addressed me very rudely in German. I could only reply '*Nichts verstand*,' which was all the German I knew. He went out, and an officer entered, who told me in French that as the duke was in the theatre it was forbidden for any one else to applaud.

'Very good, sir, I will come when the duke is not here, for when I am pleased I like to give expression to my pleasure.' I left, and as I was getting into my carriage the same officer came up, saying that the duke wished to speak to me. I followed him to the club, when I was ushered into the duke's presence.

'You are M. Casanova?'

'Yes, sire.'

'Where have you come from?'

'From Cologne.'

'How long do you expect to remain in Stuttgart?'

'Five or six days, if your highness permits.'

'Stay as long as you like, and you may applaud in my theatre at your good pleasure.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I will profit by your permission, sire.'

The duke gives him leave to applaud as he likes in the royal theatre.

After the theatre I paid my respects to La Gardella, who invited me to dine with her next day. I also saw La Binetti, one of my oldest friends, who told me I should find a place laid for me at her table every day.

Curtz, the first violin, had been my comrade in the old days, when I played the fiddle in the orchestra of Saint Samuel at Venice. He was delighted to see me, and presented me to his daughter, of whom he said, 'Here is one girl at least who is not made for the duke. He shall never have her.'

He had not the gift of prophecy, poor fellow, for the duke did fall in love with the girl, a short time afterwards, and wearied of her in due course, as he did of all the others.

The next day I breakfasted gaily with the favourite, but I had been foolish enough to tell one of the court officials that I was a relation of hers, and her mother, who was exceedingly proud of her daughter's present position, disapproved of my claim to relationship. She told me that none of her relations had ever been on the stage, so I asked her if she had heard from her sister lately. The said sister was a fat blind woman who begged her bread on one of the bridges in Venice!

I promised to return to breakfast the next day, but as I was leaving the porter came up to me and told me I was not to set foot in the house again. I then wished that I had held my tongue. I was engaged to dine with La Binetti, or I should have gone off at once. She lived with the Viennese minister, who was her lover, and the part of the house she inhabited was built on the town wall. When I left her I was courteously accosted by three officers, whose acquaintance I had made at a café the evening before. They persuaded me to go back to town with them, and we supped at a house of a suspicious character. I ate very little, and only took two little glasses of Hungarian wine. We played faro. I felt quite drunk; my head was going round, but I went on punting, and I lost fifty or sixty louis in a few minutes. The officers were distressed at my losses, and insisted on my taking

Digitized by Microsoft®

He takes the bank at faro with the three officers, loses sixty louis, and is robbed into the bargain.

the bank of a hundred louis against them. I lost, renewed the bank and lost again. My head was growing heavier and heavier. Finally, I lost over a hundred thousand francs. I was now so overcome, although I had not taken anything since supper, that I had to be carried back to my hotel in a sedan chair. My servant told me when he undressed me that I had neither of my watches on, nor my gold snuff-box.

Two days later my officers paid me a visit.

'Gentlemen,' said I, 'I have lost an amount which it is impossible for me to pay, and which I should not have lost but for the poison you put in the wine. You have furthermore robbed me of three hundred louis worth of jewels and valuables. I shall not lodge a complaint, for it is my own fault, but I shall pay you nothing.'

The spokesman of the party replied: 'We are too honest to have taken advantage of you. You were unfortunate; that any one may be. We do not wish to be hard on you, so we will content ourselves with taking your diamonds, arms, and carriage, which we will have estimated; if they do not realise the sum you owe, we will accept notes of hand for the rest, and we will remain good friends.'

'Sir,' I answered, 'I do not desire the friendship of people who have despoiled me thus, and I will not pay you in any way.'

At these words they broke out into threats.

'Gentlemen,' said I, 'I am not affected by your menaces. There are two ways in which we can settle this dispute—the law and the sword. I will fight you, one after the other, in all honour and discretion.'

They answered that they should have great pleasure in killing me, but only after I had paid them; and departed.

La Toscani's mother, who was an exceedingly intelligent woman, persuaded me to send for an advocate, who advised me to lay the whole case before the duke at once.

'It was the officers who decoyed you into the gambling-house, it was they who gave you the drugged wine, they who

Digitized by Microsoft®

stripped you of your jewels, after having caused you to lose an enormous sum of money. The matter is a hanging one, and the duke is sure to give you satisfaction, as gaming is strictly forbidden here.'

I decided to appeal to the duke, and was on my way to the chateau when I was seized by the arm. It was one of my three gentlemen. I naturally drew my sword, the officers of the guard ran up. I declared that the three accomplices had laid violent hands on me, and several persons present declared that I had only acted in self-defence. I was admitted to the ducal palace, and got as far as the last ante-chamber, where I spoke to the chamberlain, and asked for an audience; he assured me that the duke would receive me, but a moment after one of the three officers came in and spoke to him in German. I had been handed over by Caiaphas to Pilate! An hour passed, then the chamberlain came and told me I could go home, the duke knew all.

He is handed over by Caiaphas to Pilate!

I saw that I could not hope for justice, and I returned sadly to La Binetti. Her husband assured me that the Viennese minister would take me under his protection, and his wife promised to speak for me to her lover. The diplomatist came after dinner, and when he had heard my story, told me to write it out, and he would see it came to the duke's hands.

But in the evening le Duc came to tell me that an officer was in possession of my room at the hotel, that there were two soldiers posted in the street, and that I should be arrested if I returned thither.

La Binetti declared that I must not return to the hotel, but must stay at her house, where there was no danger of my being insulted. I sent le Duc to fetch the things I wanted for the night, and remained talking with my hostess until the Viennese minister came in. He told me that he had given my petition to the duke, but I never heard anything more of it.

He takes counsel with La Binetti.

After four days' peaceful abode in La Binetti's house, her lover received a notice from the Minister of State, enjoining

Digitized by Microsoft®

him to dismiss me at once, as by retaining me he was hindering the course of justice. La Binetti was furious, lost her temper, and said insulting things to her Viennese, who only laughed at her, saying that it was not his fault, he could not keep me against the will of the sovereign. I saw no one at the inn till after dinner, when a sheriff served a notice on me to appear before a notary to make my deposition. I spent two hours with this man, who wrote down in German what I told him in Latin; when he had finished he told me to sign the document. I refused to sign what I could not read; he said that I insulted him by these doubts of his good faith. I replied that I did not in the least doubt his good faith, but that my refusal was dictated by ordinary prudence.

I was awakened next morning by le Duc announcing an officer, who told me in French that I must consider myself as a prisoner, and confined to my room. He asked me politely for my sword, and I was obliged to give it him; it was mounted in beautifully wrought steel, and was a present from Madame d'Urfé, worth at least fifty louis.

One thing I was determined on, namely, that in any event I would not disclose the existence of the valuable letters of exchange in my pocket-book.

La Binetti, La Toscani, and young Baletti came to dine and sup with me, and the three officers came to see me separately, each one promising that if I would give him a certain sum he wo uldpacify the others and get me out of my difficulties; they would any one of them have been satisfied with three or four hundred louis.

On the fifth day of my arrest the duke went to Frankfort, and I learned through La Binetti that he had promised the officers not to interfere in the affair. My lawyer told me I had better sacrifice my jewels and obtain my discharge, though La Binetti, who was a shrewd woman, did not agree with him.

'There is a cabal against you,' said the lawyer, 'supported by very influential personages; witnesses have been found to swear that you are a professional gambler, and that it was

Digitized by Microsoft®

you who enticed the others to play; that it is not true that you were drugged, or that you lost your watches and your snuff-box. These they say will be found in your trunk, when they search your effects to sell whatever they may find. If they fetch more than the amount claimed, the balance will be taken for law expenses; if less, you will be enrolled as a simple soldier in the troops of his serene highness. I have heard it said that the four louis which are given as a bonus to every recruit will be counted in your assets, and that the duke will be only too pleased to have such a fine man in his service!'

I wrote to the chief of police, giving him the titles of Monseigneur and Excellency freely, and implored his protection. I told him I had decided to sell all I had to pay my creditors, but so that my things might not be sold at a loss I entreated him to grant me a delay of four days, and to send me an honest valuer. Four hours later a respectable-looking individual, who spoke Italian, came to me, and told me my request was granted.

'Your lace alone,' he said, 'is worth twenty thousand francs, and your jewels and other valuables are worth at least a hundred thousand, but I give you my word of honour that I shall not mention this to the officers. Try to persuade them to accept half of what they claim, and in this way you can get off with part of your belongings.'

'If I can do that, sir, I promise I will give you fifty louis; here are six on account.'

'I accept them gratefully; you can count on my assistance; the whole town knows your creditors are scoundrels; the duke knows it as well as any one, but he has his reasons for wishing to ignore their swindling.'

I hoped now to save all my baggage, except the carriage. I had a difficult task before me, but at least I was not under 'The Leads,' and the thought of that kept up my courage. La Binetti told me that if I could manage to get to her house, she would have me let down from one of the windows; that there I should be outside the town, and a hundred steps from

Digitized by Microsoft®

the high-road ; with a good pair of horses I could be beyond the duke's territory by daybreak.

And with La Toscani.

It was now the turn of La Toscani to make a suggestion. 'You must abandon your trunks,' she said, 'and send your other things to my house. I will get them safely to you as soon as I know your place of refuge. I will take everything away from here, under my clothes, piecemeal, and will begin this very evening.'

I promised La Binetti I would be at her house on Sunday night, if I had to slay the sentinel who was always at my door. Baletti declared he could find me a trustworthy servant to meet me on the highway with a chariot and horses. La Toscani then and there fastened two of my finest suits under her petticoats; my friends aided me so efficiently that by midnight on Saturday my trunks, my travelling-bag, and my dressing-case were all empty; my jewels I had in my pockets, and the keys of two trunks in which La Toscani had laid my clothes. The soldier who guarded me never came into my room unless I called him, and as soon as he knew I was in bed he would lock the door and go away till the next morning. He always took his supper on a little table in the ante-chamber, and I was in the habit of sending him out some dessert.

An evasion.

I arranged a dummy in my bed, dressed in a wig and a night-cap. While the sentinel was eating his supper I stole out and reached the top of the stairs where it was dark, and he could not see me. After a few minutes le Duc came out of my room with a couple of bottles of wine, which he and the soldier proceeded to discuss. When these were empty, le Duc went back into my room, and told the sentinel I was in bed and asleep. The good fellow contented himself with locking the door of the empty cage, and he and my faithful Spaniard left the house together. In the meantime, I, wrapped in my fur pelisse, with my hunting knife and pistols in my belt, got safely to La Binetti's house. We lost no time in idle words. Everything was prepared : I flung my pelisse down to Baletti, who was waiting for me, knee-deep in the mud of

Digitized by Microsoft®

the moat. La Binetti and La Toscani let me down from the window by means of a cord tied round a piece of wood, and Baletti caught me in his arms.

We waded up to our waists in water and filth, scrambled through hedges and over ditches, till we reached the high-road, to the place where the carriage was waiting for me. Baletti's servant was with the carriage, the postillion was drinking at a cabaret near. I took the servant's place on the box, and when the postillion returned I told him to drive quickly to Tübingen without stopping to change horses. We went off at a good pace, but I could not help laughing at his face when we arrived at Tübingen! Baletti's valet was young and small, I was tall and past my youth! After opening his eyes very wide, he stammered out that I was not the gentleman he had started with.

'You were drunk,' said I, giving him a louis. The poor devil had not a word to say to this reasoning, and we went on to Fürstenberg, where I was safe. There I had a good supper and went to bed. Next morning I wrote to the three scoundrels, telling them I would wait for them at Fürstenberg for three days, and fight them one after the other, and that if they did not come I would publish their cowardice. They never answered! But when le Duc turned up on horseback, with his portmanteau in front of him, he told me that all Stuttgart knew my whereabouts, and that the poltroons would try to have me assassinated. I had better, he said, get to Switzerland.

'You are afraid, my poor boy,' said I, 'but you need not be. Tell me what took place after my departure.'

Le Duc's story.

'At nine o'clock in the morning,' he said, 'the officers came. I told them you were asleep. They went to a café near by, and ordered me to fetch them when you awoke. At midday they returned and broke open the door. They politely said "good morning" to the dummy in the bed, but as it did not answer one of them went up and shook it. I roared with laughter when the wig and the stuffing rolled on the floor; one of them struck me several times with his cane. I swore

Digitized by Microsoft®

if they touched me again I would defend myself. I told them I wasn't your keeper, and if they wanted to know where you were they had better ask the sentinel. He vowed that he had locked you in, and that you must have escaped by the window. They called up a corporal, and the poor fellow was marched off to prison. The landlord, hearing the row, came in. When he saw the empty trunks he smiled, and said your post-chaise would pay *his* bill. As I answered "I don't know" to all their questions, I was clapped in jail, and told I should be kept there till I spoke. "On my honour as a Spaniard," I said, "I know nothing, and even if I did I should not tell; an honest servant cannot be expected to betray his master." Seeing they could get nothing out of me, they ordered me to be lashed and set at liberty. My back smarted a good deal, but I was glad I had done my duty and got off so lightly. The landlord sold your chaise and your trunks to the Viennese minister, who, they say, helped you to escape through the window of his mistress's house. I left town without difficulty, and here I am!'

A few hours after le Duc's arrival we took the mailcoach to Schaffhausen, and then to Zurich, where I put up at 'The Sword,'[1] an excellent hostelry.

[1] The inn of 'The Sword' still exists, 'old-fashioned, but comfortable.' Travellers may thus imagine that they are occupying the very rooms in which Casanova prosecuted his amours with the 'fair Amazon.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXII

THE INN AT ZURICH

Snug in my comfortable room at 'The Sword,' I counted up and found I had at least a hundred thousand crowns. 'Enough,' said I, 'to keep me in comfort. I will give up my adventurous life and live in peace and tranquillity for the rest of my days.'

I went to bed, and dreamed of peace. Early in the morning I rose and walked for an hour and more through a beautiful country. I was in the midst of a vast plain surrounded by mountains, and in the distance I saw a church, with a large building adjoining it. I guessed that it was a convent.

The abbot of Einsiedeln.

The door of the church was open. I went in, and was amazed at the richness of the sculptured marbles, and the beauty of the altar ornaments. I heard Mass, and then I went to the sacristy where some Benedictine monks were assembled. The abbot, whom I knew by his cross, came up and asked me if I would like to visit the monastery and the church, and offered to show me over himself. There were some magnificent vestments; chasubles embroidered with gold and seed pearls, and sacred vessels set with diamonds and other precious stones. We spoke Latin, as I understood very little German. He asked me where I was staying.

'Nowhere,' I answered. 'I came from Zurich on foot, and my first visit was to the church.'

I don't know if I pronounced these words with a certain unction, but the abbot clasped his hands and raised his eyes to heaven as though to thank God for having touched my heart, and guided me in my pilgrimage. I was not surprised,

Digitized by Microsoft ®

for I know I always look a desperate sinner. The abbot invited me to dine with him; I accepted gratefully, for one can be sure of good cheer in a monastery. I had not the least idea where I was, but I would not ask, as I wanted the abbot to believe I was a pilgrim bent on expiating my crimes. He told me that his monks fasted, but not he, as he had a dispensation from Pope Benedict.

When we were in his apartment, which was not in the least like a penitent's cell, he showed me the brief of the dispensation, which he kept framed and glazed hanging opposite the dining-table. The table was set for three persons, and the abbot told me he dined with his chancellor.

'You understand,' he said, 'that in my quality of abbot of the monastery of our Lady of Einsiedeln, I am a prince of the Holy Roman Empire.'

I breathed freely, for now I knew where I was. I had heard of Einsiedeln. The monastery was the Swiss Loretto, and was celebrated for the number of pilgrims who visited it. The prince abbot asked me many questions about myself, and offered me letters of recommendation. I thanked him, and said I was a Venetian, and that I would answer his questions more fully in a private interview. It was thus that, without premeditation on my part, I pledged myself to confess to the abbot. It was a little whim of mine!

We dined off salmon, trout, woodcock, and snipe. The abbot was greedy, and knew what he was eating, a *gourmet*, though he affected sobriety. Then he withdrew to the library, where hung the portrait of the Elector of Cologne, in his bishop's robes. I said it was like him, but not flattering, and showed my snuff-box. The library was full of huge in-folio volumes; the newest of these was a century old; they all treated of theology and religious controversy. 'I suppose,' said I, 'your monks have private libraries, with books treating of physics, history, and travel?'

'No,' said he, 'my monks are worthy men, who only think of their duty and live in blissful ignorance.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I don't know what was the matter with me that day, but it suddenly came to me that I would like to be a monk. I said nothing about that then, but what I did say was this.

He would be a monk.

'I want, reverend father,' said I, 'to make a general confession of all my sins, so that to-morrow, after having received absolution, I can go to Holy Communion.'

He led me to his cell, and, without allowing me to kneel down, said he was ready to hear what I had to say.

For three long hours the poor man listened to a series of scandalous histories, told without zest or spirit; but I was in a pious frame of mind; my airs of contrition astonished myself. The revered abbot esteemed me sincere; he told me that when, by strict attention to morality, I had placed myself once more in a state of grace, contrition would come of itself, and I was fain to believe him.

He pronounced over me the sacramental words which have the power to remit all human sins, and he advised me to pass the rest of the day in prayer. He would order supper to be served to me in my room, and next day I should receive the Communion.

I am amazed when I think of my own inconceivable docility. Alone in my cell I had visions of joining the order, and I began to think that fate or my good angel had brought me to the place where happiness awaited me, where I could for the rest of my life live sheltered from the freaks of fortune.

The one thing needful to me was a library of my own choosing. The abbot would let me buy what books I liked, if I promised to leave them to the monastery at my death. I did not fear the discord, envy, and bickering inherent in such a community, for I was ambitious of nothing which could excite jealousy. In spite of the spell I was under, I foresaw the time when I should be free of it, and shivered at the thought. 'I will ask the abbot,' I thought, 'to let me spend ten years in the novitiate before taking any vows. If I have not repented by that time I never will.'

I put all this scheme in writing, and the next day I gave it

Digitized by Microsoft®

to the abbot, when we were taking our chocolate together after Mass.

He read it, and laid it on his desk without saying a word. By and by he re-read it, and told me he would give me an answer after dinner.

He takes fifteen days to consider.

I waited with the impatience of a child who has been promised a new toy. We dined as sumptuously as the day before, and as we left the table the abbot said: 'My carriage is waiting for you at the door to take you back to Zurich. I want you to give me fifteen days in which to think over your proposition. I will take the answer to you myself. Here are two sealed letters, which I beg you to hand personally to the individuals to whom they are addressed.'

I said that I would wait for him at 'The Sword' for fifteen days, in hopes that he would grant my request. He gave me his blessing, and I departed.

As soon as my Spanish servant saw me again, he laughed.

'What are you laughing at, scoundrel?' said I.

'I am laughing because, although you have only just come into Switzerland, you have already stayed out two whole nights!'

The next day I delivered the abbot's letters; one was to a M. Orelli, the other to M. Pestalozzi. They both called on me the following afternoon, and invited me to dine. I went with them to the town concert, the only possible entertainment in Zurich, which I found very tiresome. All the men sat on one side, and all the women on the other. This arrangement, in spite of my recent conversion, displeased me mightily. Still I was so circumspect that in four days my reputation was completely established in Zurich. I was respectfully saluted in the streets. I passed three hours each morning studying German, with a somewhat singular professor, an apostate monk, who roundly abused all religious orders, including that of Einsiedeln.

I was at my window one evening about six o'clock, watching

Digitized by Microsoft®

the passers-by—it was the day before the date of the abbot's promised visit—when I saw a carriage with four horses pull up at the inn door. Four well-dressed women got out. The fourth, who wore a riding habit, impressed me with her elegance and beauty. She wore a little blue satin cap with a silver tassel, which made her look very knowing. As I leant out of the window to look at her, she raised her head as though I had called her, and looked me straight in the face for half a minute. It was too long for a modest woman, and quite long enough to set me on fire.

The four ladies from Soleure.

I rang for the butler.

'I will sup to-night in the dining-room with the rest of the company.'

'If it is to see the ladies who have just come, they have ordered supper in their own room, as they are leaving very early.'

'Where for?'

'Our Lady of Einsiedeln.'

Three of the ladies were given up to piety and good works; I could see that. The fourth could only be so out of good-fellowship, for I am clever at telling a woman's character by her face and play of feature, and I saw self-indulgence and love of amusement written on every line of hers.

I was completely at a loss what saint to invoke, when an idea occurred to me. I slipped a gold piece into the man's hand, saying: 'You must lend me your green apron, I want to wait on the ladies myself.'

He borrows the butler's green apron.

'I will go and get you a fine new apron, sir. The pretty one has already asked me who you are! I said you were an Italian nobleman; and, by the way, I have asked your Spaniard to help me to wait, for I am single-handed.'

'He must not go into the room, he might laugh. Keep him in the kitchen.'

I arranged my hair in a catogan, and put the apron on over a scarlet jacket. On looking at myself in the glass I thought I looked for once mean enough for the part. Le Duc

Digitized by Microsoft®

came to tell me when the supper was ready, and I went into the dining-room.

'Make haste!' said the ugliest old woman, 'for we have to get up before daylight.'

I placed chairs for them at the table, making eyes at the beauty the while. The butler came up, but presently whispered familiarly, 'You stay up here and wait, I 'm very busy.'

I took up my position behind a chair opposite her. She was surprised; but the others never even looked at me. While they were eating the boiled beef, which came after the soup, I cut up a capon at the side-table in the most masterly manner.

'That man knows how to carve,' said my fair one. 'Have you been in this place long, my good man?'

'A few weeks only, madame.'

'You wait very well.'

'Madame is very good to say so.'

I had tucked my ruffles, which were of superb English point, inside my sleeves, but a bit of my cravat, which was of the same lace, peeped through my buttonhole. When I handed her her plate she noticed it.

'Wait, wait a minute,' she said; 'what beautiful lace you wear!'

'Yes, madame, so I have been told, but it is very old. An Italian gentleman who lodged here gave it me.'

'Have you the cuffs to match?'

She discovers him, but is discreet.

I held out my hand, and she pulled the cuff out slowly. I saw she had found me out, and was acting with discretion. But she blushed when one of her friends said: 'My dear, how curious you are; one would think you had never seen lace before.'

When supper was over the three ugly ones retired, each one into a corner of the room, to undress, while I cleared away, and my heroine began to write. Then when I had done, I remained standing by the door respectfully.

'What are you waiting for?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Your orders, madame.'

'I want nothing more, thank you.'

'You still wear your riding-boots, madame; do you want to go to bed with them on? If you will allow me to unlace them——'

I knelt down before her, and unfastened her boots slowly, while she continued to write.

'That will do now,' she said, 'you can go, we shall see you to-morrow night.'

'You will sup here, madame?'

'Certainly.'

I took away the boots, asking if she would like the door locked.

'No,' she said sweetly, 'put the key inside.'

Le Duc, who was waiting outside the door, took the boots from me.

'You will see, sir, she will tip you a louis to-morrow, you played your part so well. I declare, if you don't hand it over to me I will blow the gaff.'

Next morning at daylight I took the boots upstairs, and knocked at the door at the very moment their coachman came to call them. I asked them if they would like to breakfast. They laughed, and said they had just supped. My lady was nearly dressed, as I could see through the open door. She called me, and carelessly put out her little foot to be shod; the pretty cavalier airs she assumed enchanted me. She had on a pair of light green velvet breeches, and strutted about in them in manly fashion. And who minds a butler?

Towards midday the good abbot arrived, and we dined *tête-à-tête*. He congratulated me on the character I had earned at Zurich.

'Here,' he said, 'is a distich which you can put over your door—

"Inveni portum. Spes et fortuna, valete;
Nil mihi vobiscum est, ludite nunc alios."'

'That is a translation,' I said, 'of two verses of Euripides,

Digitized by Microsoft®

He tells the Abbot of Einsiedeln that he has no more mind to be a monk.

but, my lord, they must do for somebody else, for I have changed my mind since yesterday.'

'I congratulate you,' said he, 'and I hope that you will be happy. I may tell you, in strict confidence, that it is easier to save one's soul in the world even than in the cloister.'

I do not believe, as my renegade monk would have persuaded me, that the abbot was a hypocrite; he spoke like an honest, intelligent man.

I thanked the abbot most respectfully, and accompanied him to his coach; he told me I could always count on his friendship, and so we parted.

As soon as he had gone I placed myself on the bridge in front of the inn, to wait for the kind angel who had come all the way from Soleure to deliver me from monkish temptation. About six o'clock I saw her coming along with her companions; I hid myself, but they stopped, and looked up at the windows of my room. I knew from this that she had not only discovered my secret, but had confided it to the others. I was much vexed. I supped alone in my apartment, to see if I could not mystify them a little. Le Duc took my place, and waited on the ladies. He told me afterwards that they asked several times where the other butler was. Le Duc had found out her name —Madame de ——, but she had not allowed him to unlace her boots, that was one comfort. They left early next morning; I was at my window to see them go off. My lady got in last, and, pretending that she wanted to find out if it was raining or no, took off her satin bonnet, and looked up. I blew her a kiss, and she replied with a smile.

I was determined to follow them to Soleure; I wrote to Madame d'Urfé, asking her to send me an introduction to M. de Chavigny, the French minister there, and to address her reply *poste restante*, Soleure. I also wrote to the Duke of Würtemberg, who never answered me; perhaps he thought my letter a little bitter in tone. I had to stop at Baden because of an accident to my carriage, and at the inn there, the landlord's daughter, a good-looking girl, asked me to waltz

Digitized by Microsoft®

with her. It was a Sunday. Suddenly her father came in, and the girl ran off.

'Sir,' said he, 'you are to pay a fine of one louis, for having danced on Sunday.'

He is fined for dancing on Sunday.

'Go to the devil, my friend; I shall not pay one *sou*.'

'You must,' said he, showing me a notice on the wall, which I could not read, as it was in German.

'I will appeal.'

'To whom, sir?'

'To the nearest magistrate.'

He left the room, and, a quarter of an hour afterwards, a servant came to tell me the magistrate was waiting for me in the next room. I thought the magistrates in Switzerland were marvellously polite, when, on entering the room, I saw my host with a wig and a cloak on.

'Sir,' he said, 'I am the judge, and I condemn you to pay not only the original louis, but six francs costs.'

'If your daughter had not invited me I should not have danced; she is as guilty as I am.'

'Quite true, sir. I will pay a louis for her,' and drawing the coin out of his pocket, he laid it on the table beside him.

I laughed, and paid the six francs.

At Soleure I found a letter from Madame d'Urfé, enclosing one from the Duc de Choiseul for the ambassador. I took a carriage, and left card and letter on his excellency, who was out, but who sent an officer in the course of the day with an invitation to dinner. I was pleased, for I intended to play an important part at Soleure; I had plenty of money, and I knew it is easy to dazzle the dullest and the brightest eyes with that blessed metal.[1]

Thirty years before, M. de Chavigny had been ambassador to Venice, and I knew many an anecdote about him,

[1] De Chavigny, Comte de Toulonjon, was born in 1688, went as envoy to Genoa and then to Hanover, whence he followed George II. to England. He afterwards went to Venice and Vienna, and to Switzerland in 1751. He died in 1771. D'Argenson says of him, 'He has done badly wherever he has been sent.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

some of which I fancied might serve me, if I brought them out discreetly. He was a fine old man, and received me well, placing me next to him at table. I seized a propitious moment, and told him he was still spoken of in terms of affection at Venice; he replied that he should never forget the years he passed in my beautiful city. We spent some time after dinner talking of such of his old friends as were known to me, by name at any rate.

He visited me at my hotel next day, and after discussing the weather, told me he was going to put some absurd questions to me, and that I must not be offended; for his part, he did not believe one word of what he had been told.

'Two ladies, who saw you leave my house yesterday, have warned me to be on my guard against you. They allege that you are neither more nor less than the butler of an hotel. Where they lodged in Zurich, they assure me that you waited on them at table; yesterday, they say, they met another of the inn servants, and it would seem as though you and he had run away together, the Lord knows why! I replied that, even had you not brought me a letter from M. de Choiseul, I should not believe it. At the same time, if there is any foundation for this story, I beg of you to tell me.'

I told him exactly what had happened, adding that I had come to Soleure only on the chance of seeing my lady again; and I added that, although he had named no names, I was convinced that it was the ugly trio who had betrayed me.

He meets the four pilgrims of Zurich.

M. de Chavigny laughed heartily, and asked me to dine with him next day, and meet the four pilgrims. When I entered the room I saw two of them in a corner, and going up to the most spiteful-looking one, who was lame, I made a low bow, and asked her if she remembered me.

'Then you actually admit that you are the butler of "The Sword"?'

'No, not exactly; but I acted the part for an hour or two, madame, when you punished me by not deigning to

Digitized by Microsoft®

address me. I hope that here I shall be more fortunate, and that you will allow me to pay you my respects.'

'It is marvellous! You played your part so well that any one would have been taken in. We shall see if you are as clever in your present rôle. Come and see me at my house.'

After this the story became public, and while it was still furnishing subject for merriment the door opened, and the beautiful Madame de ——, accompanied by her husband, came in.

'Here,' said she, presenting me to him, 'is that charming butler from Zurich!'

The worthy man thanked me for the honour I had done his wife, in waiting on her and taking her riding-boots off. I saw that she had told him all.

At dinner M. de Chavigny put me at his right hand; my two traducers were on either side of me. As I did not wish them to see through my little game, I forced myself to make them pretty speeches, though they were both of them exceedingly displeasing to me. I never even looked across the table at Madame de ——.

He plays Murray in Voltaire's *L'Écossaise*.

De Chavigny, who was anxious that I should enjoy myself at Soleure, suggested that we should act Voltaire's comedy of *L'Écossaise*, and that Madame de —— should play the heroine. He would play Montrose, and I Murray. The lame old woman was anything but pleased at this arrangement—it only left her the unsympathetic part of Lady Alton—and said spitefully, 'It is a pity there is no butler in the piece, M. Casanova would have played him to perfection.' We received our parts next day, and after dinner the ambassador invited us to remain and dance. He asked me to open the ball with the most distinguished lady present. After this I danced with several others, till the kind old man came to me and said I was to ask Madame de —— for the cotillon.

'Lord Murray must not dance it with any one but Lindane,' he said, and I saw from the twinkle in his eye that he had divined my secret.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The first time we stopped to rest I told Madame de —— that I had come to Soleure on her account only, and that it was for her sake that I had disguised myself at Zurich, and that I hoped she would let me pay her my court.

'I cannot receive you at my house, for a certain reason,' she said, 'but we shall probably meet often, if you stay here long enough. I would ask you not to show me any very marked attention in public.'

Fully satisfied with this answer, I promised I would do everything she wished, and defeat curiosity as far as possible.

This little touch of mystery added vastly to my pleasure.

I begged the cripple to give me some hints about acting, and went to her house every morning; but she was sharp enough to see that I was only using her as a tool.

She was a widow, between thirty and forty years old, with a yellow skin, a black, bright eye, and a spiteful expression. She affected a stiffness of gait to hide the inequality of her legs; she had the pretension of being a wit, and talked incessantly.

My attentions to her were, it may be imagined, of a discreet and respectful character, and one day she remarked that after my exploits as a butler she should never have supposed me to be so shy. I knew well enough what she meant, but I had no intention of prosecuting my courtship more seriously, and meant to drop the whole thing as soon as we had acted our comedy.

All Soleure came to the first performance. The lame widow was delighted with the success she obtained in her repulsive part; M. de Chavigny drew tears from all present, and it was said that he played better than the great Voltaire; as for me, I nearly fainted when in the third scene of the fifth act Lindane said to me, '*Quoi? vous! vous osez m'aimer!*' She pronounced the disdainful phrase with such energy that she got a round of applause. This gave me time to collect myself, and I replied in the same style: '*Oui! je vous adore, et je le dois.*' I put so much pathos into the words that applause broke out again.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Before we played it a second time M. de Chavigny advised us to have another rehearsal, and invited us to his country house for that purpose; we were all to return with him to sup at Soleure afterwards. Just as we were leaving he told M. de —— that he wanted to speak to him on business.

'Get into my carriage with me,' he said; 'M. Casanova will accompany madame in yours.'

Madame accepted my hand with an air of perfect indifference, but when she was on the step of the carriage she pressed it with all her might.

We were alone. Half an hour passed like a moment; we lost no time in grimaces, our lips met in a kiss, only to sever at the hotel door; we wished it had been ten leagues further on.

The pinch of hellebore.

She got out of the carriage first. I noticed her heightened colour with alarm. This unnatural flush would surely betray us to the prying eyes of her envious friends. I did not know what to do. I had in my pocket a little box containing powdered hellebore; I opened it, took a pinch myself, and offered it to her. Not knowing what it was, she helped herself liberally. When we were half-way upstairs the drug took effect; she began to sneeze violently, and continued to do so for a quarter of an hour. This fully accounted for the redness of her cheeks. She was as quick-witted as she was pretty, and when the fit had passed she said archly that her headache was better, but that another time she would be careful not to take so strong a dose of the remedy. This sample of my good fortune decided me to remain at Soleure some time longer, and I made up my mind to take a house outside the town. After the party was over I went up to the ambassador's room.

'Well,' he exclaimed, 'did you profit by the *tête-à-tête* I arranged for you?'

After this I could not do less than take him into my confidence. I told him of my plan, and though he fully approved

Digitized by Microsoft®

of it, he begged me to be careful not to compromise Madame de ——. He advised me to complain of ill-health, and to consult his doctor, whose favourite prescription, it appeared, was country air. In a few days all the town knew I was out of health, and obliged by my doctor's orders to pass some time in retirement. M. de Chavigny joked Herrenschwand, the doctor, about his new patient, saying he ought to forbid me to receive ladies at my retreat: the lame widow added that he ought to confiscate certain portraits which I kept in my dressing-case.

I had ceased to visit her; she reproached me with my inconstancy, and said I had been making game of her.

'But I know more than you think,' she said, 'and I shall be revenged, I swear.'

'You cannot be revenged,' said I, 'for I have done nothing to offend you; however, if you intend to have me assassinated, I will ask for a guard.'

'We don't assassinate people in this country,' was her agreeable answer; 'we are not Italians.'

M. de Chavigny told me that M. de —— had a favourite cousin, an officer in the French service, who had had the ill-luck to kill his adversary in a duel, for which he had been condemned to death; if, he said, I could be of use to this unfortunate man, I should earn the friendship and goodwill of my adored one's husband.

I spoke to M. de —— in the presence of the ambassador, and he brought me the documents relative to the affair. I wrote to the Duchesse de Grammont, begging her to speak to her father. I then wrote to my good Madame d'Urfé, telling her that the future of the sublime order of the Rose Cross depended on this Swiss officer being pardoned.

He uses Madame d'Urfé's interest at the French Court.

I read both letters to M. de ——; he was deeply grateful; after which I dined *tête-à-tête* with M. de Chavigny, who, by the way, showed me a letter he had just received from Voltaire, thanking him for having played Montrose in his comedy.

M. de —— found me a charming house on the Aar,

Digitized by Microsoft®

about an hour's drive from Soleure; it had a garden, a bathroom, several well-furnished rooms, everything that I needed. I at once took it for six months, on condition that I could leave at any moment. M. de Chavigny told me his major-domo would find me servants, and that anything which was lacking in my establishment I could borrow from his.

'I shall go to see you often,' he said, 'and ask you for a plate of soup, and you must keep me *au courant* of your love affair. Madame de —— is a charming woman. Does she know that I am in the secret?'

'Yes, but she is not displeased. She is sure of your discretion.'

'Thirty years ago,' said Chavigny, 'I would have courted her on my own account.'

The new housekeeper.

Next day I went to take possession of my new abode, accompanied by le Duc. A very pretty young person came to meet me, making a deep curtsy.

'Do you belong to the household, mademoiselle?'

'Yes, sir! the ambassador's major-domo has engaged me as housekeeper here.'

'Ah! forgive my surprise, and be so good as to show me my room.'

I asked her to be seated beside me on the sofa, but she excused herself, saying modestly, 'That is an honour I must not accept. I am only your servant.'

'As you will, mademoiselle, but I hope when I dine alone you will not refuse to keep me company, for I detest solitary meals.'

'I shall obey you, sir.'

'Where is your room?'

It was immediately behind mine, and I was surprised at the number and elegance of the costumes hanging on the wall, and toilet necessaries displayed on the table, the piles of fine linen, caps, shoes, and embroidered slippers.

She seemed to me too well dressed and too interesting for

Digitized by Microsoft®

a housekeeper, and I suspected it was some trick of M. de Chavigny's, for a good-looking girl of four or five and twenty was not quite the person to rule my establishment! But when I questioned her, she replied that she only knew M. de Chavigny by sight: it was Lebel who had engaged her, and had promised her forty francs a month.

'Where do you come from, and what is your name?'

'I come from Lyon. I am a widow, and my name is Dubois.'

Together we passed in review the other servants. There was a chef named Rosier, who was to be paid eighty francs a month; two footmen, and an apothecary's apprentice, who was to give me my baths, and prepare the divers medicaments for my assumed malady.

Then I went round the garden, and into the porter's lodge: he had a large family, and daughters who were not to be despised. I was delighted with my cook, my butler, my housekeeper, and even the scamp le Duc, who waited at table.

After supper I begged my too beautiful housekeeper (she had kept me company at table, and had behaved very well) to tell me her history.

The history of Madame Dubois.

'There is little to tell, sir. I was born at Lyon, from there I went with my parents to Lausanne. My father died when I was fourteen. Three years later I entered the service of Lady Montague, and some time after I married her old footman, Dubois. We went to England, where after three years of married life I lost my husband at Windsor. The English climate did not agree with me. I returned to Lausanne, and entered the service of another English lady. She became jealous of me, and imagined I wished to supplant her in the affections of the young Duke of Rosburi.[1] She dismissed me,

[1] It is probable that Casanova, who was very vague about English titles, is alluding here to James, second Earl of Rosebery, who was born in 1728; he died young, and was succeeded by Neil, third earl. Casanova, with fine impartiality, calls him sometimes *Lord*, and sometimes *Duke*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

but gave me several handsome presents. For the last two years I have been living with my mother, supporting myself by doing needlework. When Lebel asked me if I would enter the household of an Italian gentleman, I consented; it was in the hopes that you would take me on to Italy.'

'You would not have come, perhaps, had you seen me first?'

'No, certainly not, for no woman will take me into her service after I have left yours.'

'And why not, if you please?'

'Do you think, sir, that you can keep a housekeeper as young as I am, without setting people talking?'

'No, for you are too pretty, and I am not made of stone; but I do not mind, if you do not.'

'You do not mind, of course, but it is different for me. I am in a dependent position, and cannot set myself above prejudices.'

'That is to say, Madame Dubois, that you would be glad to return to Lausanne?'

'No, not now, for that would do *you* harm in people's estimation. They would think we had got on badly. I have decided to remain, and I do not think I shall repent of my decision.'

'I am glad to hear that, but I have two conditions to add to the compact, my dear Dubois: you must not be melancholy, and you must not have scruples.'

'I am never melancholy, so you need have no fear on that score; but be so good as to explain what you mean by scruples.'

'In the ordinary acceptation of the word, scruple means a superstitious inclination to see harm in what is actually quite innocent.'

'When I am doubtful about a course of action, I give it the benefit of the doubt; furthermore, I am responsible for my own actions alone.'

'Bravo! I see you have read a great deal.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Her opinions on literature.

'It is what I enjoy most: life would be dreadful were it not for books. Do you understand English?'

'Not a word.'

'That is a pity. English books would amuse you.'

'I do not like novels.'

'Nor I; but do you imagine there is nothing else but novels to be found in English literature?'

She spoke quite tartly, and I thought it charming of her. I was not in love, but interested, the young woman argued so well. She was elegant, witty, distinguished. I was anxious to see Lebel, and question him about her.

When the cloth was removed she asked me if I put my hair in papers at night.

'That is a matter which concerns le Duc,' I answered; 'but if you like, I will give you the preference.'

She acquitted herself of the task admirably.

'I see,' said I, 'that you are going to look after me as you did Lady Montague.'

'Not altogether; and I want to ask your leave to have the concierge's daughter to sleep with me.'

'Certainly! You are very discreet, I see, my dear. You can rest assured that I shall do nothing to make you less so.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXIII

THE MALICIOUS WIDOW

A self-invited guest.

NEXT day, just as I was sitting down to dinner with my housekeeper, a carriage drove into the courtyard, and the terrible widow stepped out of it. I was vexed, but common politeness compelled me to go forward to receive her.

'I was far from expecting this honour, madame.'

'I can quite believe that. I have come to ask you to do me a service, and to invite me to dinner.'

'Pray come in; dinner is just ready, as you see. Allow me to present Madame Dubois to you.' Then turning to my charming housekeeper, I said that madame would do us the pleasure of dining with us.

Dubois did the honours beautifully, and the arrogant widow was obliged to be exceedingly civil to her. I did not say ten words during the meal, nor pay any attention to the detestable creature, but I was curious to know the nature of the service she wished me to render her. As soon as Dubois left us, she said, without any preamble, that she wanted me to give her two rooms in my house, for three weeks, or a month!

I answered that it was quite impossible.

'You cannot refuse me,' she answered; 'the whole town knows that I have come here on purpose to solicit your hospitality.'

'Well, the whole town shall know that I have refused it you, that is the long and the short of the matter. I wish to be absolutely alone here; any sort of society would inconvenience me.'

Digitized by Microsoft ®

'I should not inconvenience you in the least; you need not even know that we are under the same roof. I shall not be offended if you never inquire after my health, nor will I inquire about yours; my servant will wait on me, and prepare my food in the smaller kitchen. I will only walk in the garden when I am sure you are not there. Tell me now if in decency you can refuse me?'

'If you were acquainted with the most ordinary usages of society, madame, you would not persist in asking me such a thing, after the formal refusal I have given you, and which I reiterate.'

She remained silent, but determined. I was choking with rage. I walked up and down the room, and had a mind to have her turned out as a mad woman. But I remembered that she had influential relations at Soleure, and that if I treated her discourteously, I might make an implacable enemy capable of wreaking some horrible vengeance; and that, moreover, Madame de —— might disapprove of violent measures.

'Well, madame,' I said at last, 'you can have the apartment you have solicited with so much importunity, but I warn you that one hour after you are installed in it, I shall return to Soleure.'

'I accept the apartment, and I will occupy it to-morrow. As for your threat to return to Soleure, you will not carry it out; you would make yourself the laughing-stock of the whole town.'

She rose and went off without even saluting me. I felt I had behaved like a fool. I ought to have treated the whole thing as a joke, refused to listen to her seriously, and led her back to her carriage, laughing the while. But it was too late now.

I went early next morning and told M. de Chavigny my adventure.

He had been aware of her intention to visit me, but he burst out laughing when he heard she had been successful.

'Your excellency is amused,' said I; 'but I see nothing to laugh at.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'So it seems. But if you take my advice you will at least appear to think so. Seem totally unaware of her presence in the house; I assure you that will be the best way of punishing her. People will say she is in love with you, and that you disdain her. Go and tell this story to M. de ——, and stay and dine with them.'

Advice from M. de Chavigny.

M. de —— teased me good-humouredly over 'my conquest,' but when I told him the truth of it, he grew pale with indignation, and said that I should be quite justified in appealing to the government to have her turned out.

'I do not wish to use such drastic measures,' I replied; 'for I should not only disgrace her, but myself as well, by proving that I was not master in my own house.'

'I quite agree with you,' said madame; 'and I think you have done well in yielding to her. I will go myself and congratulate her on her success, for she spoke to me about her intentions.'

I went home to supper with Dubois, and discussed philosophy with her. She read and enjoyed Locke.

The widow arrived next morning as Dubois and I were taking our chocolate. I heard her carriage drive up, but did not move from my chair. She went to her room, accompanied only by her maid.

M. de Chavigny came at two o'clock, and we were joined later on by two Jesuit fathers, who were passing through Soleure.

M. de Chavigny was one of those men whom the French government employed as emissaries to the powers she wished to flatter and use in her own interest. M. de l'Hôpital was another; he won the heart of Elizabeth Petrovna, and his *confrère*, the Duc de Nivernois, did absolutely what he liked with the English cabinet in 1762.

De Chavigny invited me to dine with him the next day, to meet M. de Chauvelin and his wife. The dinner was very gay, and I was a good deal teased about my Zurich disguise in honour of the amorous widow, whose devotion had led her

Digitized by Microsoft®

to follow me to the country. That was the turn M. de —— gave to it.

'We will pay you a visit, M. de Casanova,' said De Chauvelin. Before I could reply, the ambassador said: 'Yes, we will, for I want him to lend me his fine rooms to give you a ball next Sunday.'

In this way the accomplished courtier stopped a proposal that was on my lips, to give the ball myself, which would have been awkward, as the ambassador alone had the right to entertain these illustrious visitors. On returning home I found a letter from the widow:—

The widow's letter.

'The ambassador has invited me to his ball on Sunday. I have answered that I am not well, but that if by then I have recovered, I will accept his invitation. It seems to me that, being in your house, I must either be introduced by you or not appear. If you do not wish to do me the pleasure of escorting me, I shall say I am ill. Forgive me for breaking the conditions agreed upon, but the case is an exceptional one.'

This is the answer I sent her:—

'Your expedient is delightful, madame. We will say you are ill. In consonance with the conditions you made yourself, I shall not have the pleasure of introducing you at the ball which his excellency is good enough to give in my rooms.'

The first persons who appeared on Sunday were M. and Madame de ——. She was very civil to Madame Dubois, and did not seem surprised that I should present my housekeeper to her. She said I must positively take her to see the widow, and I had to consent. We were received with every appearance of cordial friendship. When we had gone round the garden, Madame de —— begged me to take her to see her nurse.

'And who is your nurse, madame?' I asked.

'The wife of your concierge,' answered her husband. 'I will wait for you here.'

'Tell me,' said she, as soon as we were alone, 'are you not in love with your pretty housekeeper?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

The longed-for guest from Soleure.

'No, for I am only in love with you.'

'And I like to think it, but I can't help seeing how pretty she is.'

The excellent nurse was delighted to see Madame de ——, whom she called her child. She insisted on making us some lemonade; as soon as her back was turned our lips met, but alas! never was beverage more quickly prepared.

'Was it made beforehand, then?' cried I, as the good woman came back.

'Oh no, sir; but I am very quick at such things.'

The naïveté of the answer sent Madame de —— off into a fit of laughter. We were obliged to return to the house, where we found M. de —— and the widow *en tête-à-tête*. She offered us some fruits and preserves, and especially pressed on us a certain quince marmalade, which we both refused to touch. Madame de —— pressed my foot under the table, and when we came away she told me I had been wise not to take anything, as the widow was suspected of poisoning her husband.

The ball, the supper, the refreshments, and the guests were all delightful. I only danced one minuet with Madame de Chauvelin, and spent the rest of the evening talking to her husband. I made him a present of my translation of his little poem, 'The Seven Deadly Sins.'

At the end of the week I received a letter from Madame d'Urfé, telling me she had spent two days at Versailles on my business, and had succeeded in obtaining the pardon of the Swiss officer. She sent me a copy of the king's letter.

I told the good news to M. de Chavigny, and begged him to announce it personally to M. de ——, so as to give it more importance. He sent for the gentleman, who after expressing his gratitude, actually asked me how much he owed me.

'Nothing, sir,' said I, 'but your friendship, which I value more highly than all the gold in the world. If you wish to give me a proof of it, come and pass a few days with me, for I am desperately dull in my solitude.'

'That is a small thing to ask,' he answered. 'For more than

Digitized by Microsoft®

a year I have been moving heaven and earth to obtain what you have arrived at in fifteen days.'

De Chavigny gossips about Madame d'Urfé.

After he had left us de Chavigny made many philosophical reflections on the court of a monarch where nothing was in itself easy or difficult; what was refused one moment was granted the next, what was withheld from justice was accorded to favouritism, or mere importunity. He had known Madame d'Urfé well, and had even paid his addresses to her at the time when the regent was in love with her. It was he who had given her the nickname of Egeria, because she said she had a familiar spirit who directed her actions, and who companioned her when she was alone.

The following week, according to their promise, M. and Madame de —— came to visit me. My heart thrilled with joy when I saw the object of my affection descend from her carriage. I led my guests to their apartment. It was on the ground floor, on the opposite side to mine. The bed-chamber opened into an alcove, containing two beds, separated by a partition in which was a door of communication. The alcove opened into two small dressing-rooms, the first of which had a door leading into the garden. I had keys to all the doors, and I told my beloved that I could come to her at any hour; but a favourable occasion did not present itself till towards the end of their visit.

The widow leaves his house.

As I was leaving my room next morning I met the widow. She seemed unusually sprightly, and said, 'I must thank you, sir. I must thank you with all my heart. I have come to take leave of you, for I am going back to Soleure to-day.'

'Wait a quarter of an hour, madame; you can leave with my other guests.'

'Not a moment, not an instant. I have said good-bye to Madame de ——. Farewell, do not forget me.'

After breakfast we went for a turn in the garden, and Dubois drawing M. de —— to one side, I was able to have a few minutes' talk with his wife. She was rather downcast. I asked her if she had slept well.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I did not go to sleep till four o'clock,' she said. 'I waited for you. What prevented you from coming?'

I was too horrified to speak. I could only look at her in stony silence. A frightful thought came to me, and chilled my very marrow. I should certainly have fallen senseless to the ground, had I not leaned against a tree. My first conjecture was that Madame de —— was seeking to mislead me, but I dismissed this as unworthy of her. I felt that she would have been wanting in delicacy had she told me, merely to shield herself, that she had waited for me in vain. I could not get rid of the horrible conviction that her place had been usurped by the infamous widow. But how had she discovered our appointment?

I was in a most unenviable state of mind. I cursed my own inconceivable weakness for having admitted the serpent into my house.

M. de —— came to me, and inquired affectionately if I were ill. 'My wife,' he said, 'is uneasy about you, and has sent me to see what is the matter.'

I answered that I was better, and we resumed our promenade in the garden. The kind Dubois managed to linger behind with M. de ——.

'I was not joking just now, dear friend,' said my adored one. 'Tell me what prevented me from seeing you last night?'

Before I could answer, my housekeeper's little maid came up bearing a letter from the widow. I put it in my pocket, saying I would read it at my leisure. Dinner was now announced, but I could not eat. I swallowed a cup of coffee.

A discussion with Madame de ——

When we were once more together in the garden, madame said to me: 'I am certain that that wicked woman inveigled you, and I greatly fear for my own reputation. This is my first intrigue, and it will be a lesson to me. I think you used to love me. Don't let me suppose that you have become my enemy. Tell me what has taken place, before you read the creature's letter.'

'Well, then, my sweet lady, I will tell you all. I was on my

Digitized by Microsoft®

way to you; as I entered the ante-room a woman seized me by the arm, and laid her hands on my lips to inspire silence. I thought that it was you, and did not speak one word.'

'But how could the monster have guessed that you were to meet me at that hour?'

'I cannot tell. One thing I know, that I am determined to stab her to her black heart, and kill myself afterwards.'

'Do you consider that in so doing you will ruin my good name, and make me the most miserable of women? Be calm, dear friend, it was not your fault. If possible, I love you all the better for it. Give me the letter, let me read it first.'

'Take it.'

She returned it to me, after having perused it twice, telling me to read it when I was alone. She and her husband returned to Soleure that evening. As soon as they had left, I hastened to my room. Here is a copy of the fiendish widow's epistle:—

'I left your house, sir, well pleased at having revenged myself on you for the marks of disdain you had heaped on me. I have unmasked you and your beautiful prude, who can no longer give herself airs of superiority towards me, or drape herself in a mantle of false virtue. You won't think her so wonderful any more, since you mistook me for her. I have done you some service in curing you of your absurd infatuation. I expect no gratitude for this. I even permit you to hate me, provided you leave me in peace. But in the future if you make yourself in any way obnoxious to me, I assure you I will publish the whole story. I have nothing to fear; I am independent, and my own mistress. I can afford to laugh at the whole world. Your beloved, on the contrary, has to maintain her reputation. If you would like to know how I outwitted you, it was very simple. It was the disposition of the rooms you gave your guests betrayed you. No one was in my secret, not even my maid. You can bury this history in silence if you like. I would advise you to do so.'

He finds out how he has been duped.

The effrontery of this miserable woman surpassed everything I had ever heard of or imagined. However, I thought the matter over seriously, and came to the conclusion that I had

Digitized by Microsoft®

best hold my tongue. I supped with my housekeeper, but felt so ashamed of myself that I did not venture to look her in the face.

He takes counsel with Dubois.

When Dubois came to bid me good morning, I noticed an air of constraint about her; and on my pressing her for the reason, she answered: 'I have something to confess. When you have heard it, you must either pardon me or send me away at once.'

'What the devil have you done? Tell me at once.'

'I have robbed you.'

'Robbed me? How? When? What? Can you return what you have taken? I did not think you capable of such a thing. I never forgive a thief or a liar.'

'Lord, sir, how hasty you are! I am sure you will forgive me when you know all. I robbed you about half an hour ago, and I will return the stolen article this very minute.'

'You are a strange creature, my dear. Well, I grant you plenary indulgence. Come, tell me what all this means?'

'Here is what I took.'

'What! the monster's letter? Have you read it?'

'That is my theft.'

'Little witch, you have committed a great crime, but I forgive you. Take this, and this, as the seal of my pardon, but be careful in future not to read my papers, or to touch them even; they contain secrets which do not concern me alone. And now, let us forget what this letter contained, and speak no more of it.'

'On the contrary, it is about this letter that I wish to speak to you. The immodest creature who wrote it has Madame de —— in her power; let us try and devise a means to checkmate her. I deserve your confidence, believe me.'

'You are right, dear friend,' said I, 'let us find a way of protecting a woman who, except for one single little trifling slip, has never deviated from the path of honour.'

'To begin with, then, can you trust le Duc?'

'My dear, he is a bit of a scoundrel and a rake, witty, audacious,

Digitized by Microsoft ®

ignorant, and a most brazen liar. I am the only person who can manage him. He has one precious quality, that of blind obedience. He will do anything for me. When we are travelling and have to ford a river, he will undress, without my telling him, and swim over first, to see if I can pass in safety.'

'Why, he is a treasure. Then I have the pleasure of announcing to you, dear friend, that your beloved Madame de —— is in no danger. Sit down, and write to the impudent hussy that she is a liar; that you never left your room, and that you are going at once to make inquiries, and find out who it really was she saw. Let your letter be sent off at once—in an hour or two you will write another, or rather you will copy what I write for you.'

'My sweet Dubois, I begin to see daylight.'

He turns the tables on the malicious widow.

Here is the *billet-doux* that, by her advice, I addressed to the infernal hag:—

'The impudence of your letter consorts well with the rest of your character, and the perverse imagination which led you to pass three nights alone in an anteroom to ascertain the truth of facts existing only in your own disordered imagination. Learn, execrable female, that I did not leave my room all night. The Lord knows whom it was you saw. I shall find out, if the person really exists, and is not another creation of your satanic genius. You may thank Heaven that I did not open your letter until my guests had departed. Had I done so, I should, in my wrath, have rushed after you, and made it impossible for you to commit fresh infamies.'

Dubois thought some of the expressions a little strong, but we did not change them. Two hours after this first letter had been despatched, I wrote a second :—

'My valet has confessed that he was in the garden when he saw you enter Monsieur ——'s apartments. At first he suspected you of nefarious designs, and waited an hour for you to come out with your plunder; but as you did not

Digitized by Microsoft®

reappear, and had left the door open, he followed you, with the intention, he declares, of unmasking you. You mistook my servant for me—"by night all cats are grey"—but I must warn you that he is furious, and means to pay you a visit, and I shall not prevent him. I advise you to be gentle, patient, and generous with him, for he is resolute and revengeful—or, like the Spaniard he is, he will publish the whole affair. He will make his own conditions. I should advise you to accept them.'

Before this second letter had reached its destination I got the answer to my first. My excuse, said the widow, was a very ingenious one, but would in no wise profit me, for she was sure of her facts.

The following day I sent for le Duc. I asked him if he could ride into Soleure for me. On his answering yes, I explained the business I wanted him to transact for me. We agreed that he was to ask six hundred francs, but that if she refused to give as much. I would make up the sum. The scamp entered into the spirit of the thing, and it was easy to see by his droll remarks that he made a pretty shrewd guess at the state of affairs. When he had gone, Dubois came out laughing from behind the curtains where she was hiding. Very shortly after, a footman brought me a letter and a packet from the widow.

'Either what you say is true, or I am the victim of that fertile imagination of yours, by this time notorious throughout Europe; but in any case I must accept facts which I am not in a position to prove false. I beg you to remit to your valet the accompanying twenty-five louis. Remember that if this unsavoury joke becomes public, I can turn it in a direction little calculated to please you, and I will force a certain honest man we know of to open his eyes. For the rest, as I hope never to see you again, I am going to Lucerne to stay with my family. Be so good as to let me know if you receive this.'

Dubois dictates more letters.

I read this to my Dubois, who advised me to return the money immediately, and dictated to me the following reply:—

'Our messengers crossed. I could not prevent my servant

Digitized by Microsoft®

from going to you, but I think this time you will not keep him two hours. I return the twenty-five louis, which you can give him yourself. I wish you a pleasant journey, and you can rest assured I shall avoid all occasions of meeting you. Le Duc has only spoken to me of his misadventure, and if you treat him well he will keep silent, the more so as his vanity is anything but flattered by what has happened.'

As the hours went by and le Duc did not return, I became very uneasy, although Dubois tried to quiet me by saying that the widow was probably not at home. There are some people so fortunately constituted that the mere possibility of calamity does not trouble them. I was like that until the age of thirty, and my imprisonment in 'The Leads.' Now that I am approaching my second childhood, everything looks black. Even a wedding seems a gloomy feast to me. At Prague, when Leopold the second was crowned, I said to myself, '*Nolo coronari.*'

About half-past nine my housekeeper saw le Duc in the moonlight coming along at a sharp trot. She ran behind the curtains again, for she wanted to hear everything the Spaniard said.

'I am dying of hunger, sir,' were his first words. 'I had to wait for that woman until half-past six. When she came in I was on the stairs. She told me to go away, she had nothing to say to me. "May be, madam," I answered, "but I have two words to say to you." "Follow me, then," she said. When we were alone I told her my errand. She listened patiently, and then went away for some minutes. When she returned, she handed me a packet, saying it contained twenty-five louis, which I could have, but that if I valued my life I had better keep my mouth shut. I promised I would be silent, and here I am.'

I spent the next morning writing an account of all that had passed to Madame de ——, and I sent her copies of the widow's letters, so as to set her mind at rest. I received a few lines in reply, saying that she and her husband, with M. de Chavigny, would visit me the following week.

Digitized by Microsoft®

My experience in this matter had already warned me that I could no longer hope to win Madame de ——. There are certain things which a woman cannot forgive a man. The very first *tête-à-tête* I had with her sufficed to confirm my suspicions. When I asked her if I might be allowed to cherish a hope that all was not over—

'Ah, my dear friend,' she said, 'let us think no more of that, I beg of you. I love you, and you would indeed be ungrateful if you ceased to love me; but let us stop there——'

Madame de —— bids him not to hope.

'I understand, and I am very miserable.'

'I am more miserable than you. Accursed widow! She has gone, and in a fortnight we are leaving for Bâle, where we shall stay till the end of November.'

I said, 'There is nothing for me but submission; my star has been unpropitious ever since I came to Switzerland. But at least, I have been able to shield your honour.'

'You have conquered the esteem and affection of my husband, and we shall always be good friends.'

'As you are leaving, I think I had better go first. I shall go to Italy, passing through Berne and Geneva.'

Acting on the advice of M. de Chavigny, I gave a reception and supper at Soleure before leaving, at which all the notabilities of the town were present.

M. Lebel brought me my bills, which I paid. I kept him to dine with us, and was pleased to see that he and Dubois seemed very good friends. Indeed, on leaving, he asked my permission to embrace her *à la française*. She did not say no. His acquaintance, she said afterwards, might be useful, as he was in a position to recommend her should she ever leave my service; though, indeed, she was now no longer my servant, but my beloved mistress. At four o'clock next morning we started on our journey.

He leaves Soleure.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXIV

A MEMORY OF HENRIETTE

I LIVED happily at Berne with my dear Dubois, and we agreed never to part. She promised to forgive me beforehand any infidelity I might commit, always provided I took her into my confidence. That, I consider, is the type of woman with whom a man can live happily; but such happiness was not for me. After we had been in Berne about three weeks, Dubois received a letter from Soleure. It was from Lebel. She gave it me to read, and sat down in front of me so as to study my face as I read it. He asked her if she would marry him.

Lebel proposes to the housekeeper.

'I deferred my proposition,' he said, 'until I had put my affairs in order. I find I am rich enough to live at Berne, or elsewhere, without working.'

He ended by saying that anything she had would be settled on her, and that furthermore he would constitute her a dowry of a hundred thousand francs.

'Dear friend,' said I, 'you are mistress of your destiny; but if you leave me I shall be the most miserable of men.'

'I will write,' said she, 'and tell him, politely but plainly, that I love you, that I belong to you, and that therefore I cannot accept the proposal he so kindly makes me.'

'Excellent. But yet, dear heart, I own it—this letter saddens me.'

'And why, my beloved?'

'Because I have not a hundred thousand francs to offer you, now—this very moment.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I despise them, dearest; and were you a beggar, I should be glad to share your poverty.'

We fell into each other's arms. We were happy in our mutual love; yet somehow, I know not why, a touch of melancholy stole into our hearts. It is absurd to say that passion is augmented by depression and languor. It is not so. Laughter and lightness of heart feed love best. The next day she wrote to Lebel, telling him that, though his proposition flattered her, she loved me too much to leave me. At the same time I addressed a letter to M. de Chavigny, half sentiment, half philosophy. I did not deny that I adored the woman Lebel desired for his wife, but I added that as a man of honour I would rather die than stand in the way of her permanent happiness. Lebel did not answer Dubois, but M. de Chavigny wrote me a letter of four pages; he spoke as a philosopher and a man of the world. Were I, he said, able to assure my mistress's independence at my death, I should be justified in refusing to give her up, but I was young and had no intention of binding myself indissolubly. I ought, therefore, to consent to a union which would secure her happiness.

'Sooner or later you will both of you feel,' said he, 'that you were wrong to let this opportunity slip; your love will turn to friendship, and mutual remorse will overtake you both. Meantime, there is no hurry. Lebel can wait.'

He does not know what to say.

I showed the letter to Dubois, who read it attentively.

'What do you think of it, my dear?' I asked.

'I think the ambassador is right; he says there is no hurry. I don't myself believe that you and I shall ever be indifferent to each other, but there is no knowing?'

'Indifferent? Never!'

'Friends, then, which is worse. Yes, de Chavigny is right: remorse may come to torture us when love has dwindled away.'

'Then, adorable woman, let us get married to-morrow, and counteract our natural depravity!'

'Yes, my dear, we will marry, all in good time; but don't let us be in a hurry, lest, indeed, marriage prove the grave

Digitized by Microsoft®

of love. Let us go to Lausanne, which is a little town where you will be fêted and made much of while you are there. I must stay with my mother. The Duc of Rosburi, who used to pester me with his attentions, is there; and I am well known to all the nobility and gentry of the place, so that my presence in your hotel would give rise to scandal.'

I agreed with her in all she said. One must always be careful of appearances; so the next day she went off to Lausanne, and it was arranged I was to join her there later.

'When you leave Lausanne,' she said, 'I will join you at Geneva, and from thence we can travel about together as long as love lasts.'

He visits the great Haller.

I arranged to stay at Roche on my way to Lausanne, so that I might visit the celebrated Haller, to whom I had a letter of introduction.

He was a big man, six feet tall, and broad in proportion—a physical and intellectual Colossus. He received me with great affability, and opened his mind, answering all my questions precisely and modestly. Indeed, I think the latter attribute was rather overdone; he had a way of showing me scientific marvels, and at the same time appearing by his manner to seek instruction from me. He was a great physiologist, a great doctor, and a great anatomist, and had made numerous discoveries in microcosmy.

Some time previously, Frederick the Great had proscribed the study and use of Latin in his dominions. Haller wrote to him, saying that a sovereign who should succeed in suppressing the language of Cicero and Virgil would only raise an everlasting monument to his own ignorance. Men of letters must have one common language, and certainly of the dead languages Latin is the best, as neither Greek nor Arabic are adaptable to the genius of modern times.

In the three days I spent with this justly celebrated man we discussed every subject but religion, although I should much have liked his opinion on this point.

When I told him I was looking forward to seeing M. de

Digitized by Microsoft®

Voltaire, he said I was quite right to do so; and he added, though without bitterness—

'M. de Voltaire is a man who deserves to be known; although, contrary to the laws of physics, many people have found him greater from a distance.'

M. Haller's opinion of M. de Voltaire.

When I bade him farewell he asked me to write and tell him what I thought of the great Voltaire, and that was the beginning of our correspondence. I have twenty-two letters from Haller, the last written six months before his death.

I went straight to my friend's house when I arrived at Lausanne. I found her with her mother, but was rather surprised to see Lebel there as well. Dubois, with a cry of joy, sprang into my arms, and kissed me tenderly. I asked Lebel how the ambassador was, and how long he had been in Lausanne. He answered me very amiably and very politely that his master was well, and that he had only been a few hours in the town; that on going to pay his respects to the mother of Madame Dubois, he had been agreeably surprised to find the daughter there.

'You know,' he added, 'what I want. I must leave here to-morrow; but, as soon as you decide, write to me, and I will come and take her to Soleure, where we will be married.'

Nothing could be clearer or more straightforward than this. I said I would let Dubois do as she liked. She interrupted me, and cried that she would never leave me unless I sent her away. Lebel said he must have a more definite answer, and I told him that in ten days or so we would let him know our decision.

Meantime, I presented all my letters of introduction and was well received everywhere. It was a continual round of dinners, suppers, balls, and routs. I got tired of it, and wanted to get off to Geneva. Every one pressed letters of introduction to M. de Voltaire on me; one would have thought he was generally adored; but no, he was detested, because of his satirical humour. 'But, ladies,' said I, 'you all played in his pieces; was he not grateful, and affable to you at rehearsals?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No, indeed; he was for ever scolding us. Nothing was ever right: wrong pronunciations, wrong intonations, wrong inflexions, and I don't know what all! He frightened us. If one of us laughed amiss, if one of us only pretended to cry in Alzire——'

'But did he insist on real tears?'

'Certainly; he was very particular about that. I said one day that his words were not in themselves moving enough!'

'And then he laughed?'

'Much worse—he sneered.'

'And yet you all forgave him?'

'On the contrary, we packed him off. He left the house he had hired, and hid himself in the one where you will find him. He won't come to our parties now!'

'So you still invite the man you dismissed?'

'We can't do without him, he is so clever; but we wanted to give him a lesson, that was all. When you see him ask him what he thinks of us at Lausanne. He will laugh; that is his way.'

I often saw Lord Rosburi, the man who had vainly made love to Dubois. I never knew such a silent young man, yet they said he was no fool. He bowed oftener than he spoke, and when he did answer a question, in good enough French, he looked as if he wished his interlocutor at the devil. Once, when I was dining with him, I asked him some details about his own country. He answered me civilly, in five or six little sentences, blushing like a girl. But the celebrated Fox—a lad of twenty—who was there too, said something to him in English once, which actually made him laugh. Eight months later I saw the Duke again at Turin. The wife of a banker there had managed to unloose his tongue.

He meets Charles James Fox at the age of twenty.

On the tenth day of my sojourn at Lausanne came a letter from Lebel to the mother. I read it aloud to the two women. He begged her to impress on me that if I found it difficult to separate from her now, how much more so would it be later on. He in no way wished to withdraw his proposal, he said,

Digitized by Microsoft®

but he should like to be able to say he had received his wife from her mother's hands in her mother's house.

'Write to Lebel,' said Dubois bravely, 'to fetch me at once, or to give up all thoughts of me.'

Then there was a silence.

'If I tell him to think no more of you, 'tis I who must marry you, and at once.'

'No!'

So saying, she rose and left the room.

He gives up Dubois for conscience' sake.

For a quarter of an hour I turned the matter over in my mind, weighing the pros and cons—and still I felt that my love was not equal to the sacrifice. She might never have such a chance again! I took advantage of a sudden movement of generosity, and, taking my pen, wrote to Lebel that the widow Dubois, mistress of her own actions, had decided to accept his offer; that I had no right to oppose the match, and must congratulate him on a piece of good fortune, which, nevertheless, I envied him. I begged him to come at once to take her from her mother's hands.

Having signed the letter, I took it to my housekeeper.

'Read this, dear,' said I, 'and, if you approve of it, put your name beside mine.'

She read it several times, while her mother burst into tears. Then she looked at me sadly and tenderly, took the paper and signed.

As soon as the letter was despatched by a trusty messenger, I took her in my arms.

'Farewell,' I said, embracing her sadly. 'Farewell; we will not see each other again till Lebel is here.'

I went back to my inn devoured by grief. My recent act of self-abnegation acted as a stimulus to my love, and I had a violent spasm of regret which made me have to take to my bed. On the evening of the fourth day from the sending of the letter, Lebel arrived.

In the last interview we had together she put her old wedding-ring on my finger, and asked me never to part with

Digitized by Microsoft®

it. I gave her a ring and a roll of bank-notes to the value of a hundred louis. My horses were waiting at the door; she came downstairs with me, and whispered to me that Lebel had her esteem but not her heart, and away I went.

I alighted at the Hôtel des Balances at Geneva. It was the 20th of August 1760. I happened to go idly up to a window in the inn, and my eyes fell on a pane of glass on which some one had scrawled with a diamond, '*Thou too wilt forget Henriette.*'

A memory of Henriette inspires.

My hair stood on end, as the recollection of the day when Henriette wrote those words, thirteen years before, flashed into my mind. We had lodged in that very room when she left me to return to France. A thousand memories crowded on me. Sweet, noble, true Henriette, whom I had loved so dearly, where was she now? I had never heard of her. I had never tried to hear of her. Comparing myself as I was at the moment of reading these words with the old self who had written them, I was forced to admit that I had been more nearly worthy of her in the past than I was now. I could still love passionately, but some of the delicacy and power of idealisation, which alone justifies the excesses of passion, had passed from me. But it seemed to me as though the memory of Henriette gave me back something of all these; and had I known where to look for her, I should have started then and there in quest of her, in spite of the strict prohibition she had imposed on me.

After dinner I went with M. Villars-Chandieu to Voltaire's house. He was just rising from the table as we arrived, surrounded by a little court of lords and ladies, and I was formally presented.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXV

VOLTAIRE

'M. DE VOLTAIRE,' said I, 'this is the proudest day of my life. I have been your pupil for twenty years, and my heart rejoices to see my master.'

Conversation with Voltaire.

'Sir, honour me in the same way for another twenty years, and at the end of that time bring me my fees.'

'Most willingly, if you will promise to wait for me.'

This Voltairean sally raised a laugh, but I was not put out of countenance. I expected some such speech, and I was on the look out for my revenge.

Some one then presented to him his recently arrived Englishmen.

'English, are they?' said Voltaire; 'I wish I was.'

I thought the compliment mistaken, for the Englishmen must needs express the wish that they were French; and it is allowable surely for a man to put his own nation first when it comes to choosing.

Voltaire spoke to me again, saying that as I was Venetian, I must know Count Algarotti.

'I knew him in Padua seven years ago, and what most attracted me in him was his professed admiration of M. de Voltaire.'

'You flatter me; but surely his claim to general esteem does not rest on the fact of his admiring any particular person?'

'That is how he made his name. He constituted himself an admirer of Newton, and made it possible for ladies to talk

Digitized by Microsoft®

learnedly about light. He has not succeeded as completely as de Fontenelle in his *Plurality of Worlds*, still he has succeeded.'

'Do the Italians approve his style?'

'No, for it is full of Gallicisms.'

'But do not these French expressions embellish your language?'

'They spoil it; just as French, interlarded with Italian or German, even though M. de Voltaire himself wrote it, would be horrible.'

'You are right. The integrity of a language must be maintained. May I ask to what branch of literature you devote yourself?'

'To none; but I read enormously, and I travel to improve my knowledge of human nature.'

'That is one way of learning it; but the book is unwieldy. You would do it more easily by reading history.'

'Yes, if history did not lie. Besides, history bores one, while the world as it goes is more interesting. Horace, whom I know by heart, is my guide.'

'You are fond of poetry?'

'I am devoted to it.'

'Have you written many sonnets?'

'A dozen which I value, and two or three thousand, perhaps, which I have forgotten.'

'The Italians have a mania for the sonnet form; and yet its prescribed limits and length make it a veritable Procrustean bed; you have few good ones, and as for us we have none, but that is the fault of our language.'

'And also of the French genius, which imagines that an expanded thought necessarily loses force and brilliancy.'

'You are not of that opinion?'

'Pardon me; it is only necessary to carefully select the thought to be expressed. A *bon mot*, for instance, is not matter for a sonnet; it is only good for an epigram.'

'Who is your favourite Italian poet?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Ariosto; but I cannot say I love him *more* than the others, for he is the *only* one I love. All pale before Ariosto. When I read what you said of him fifteen years ago, I predicted that you would retract it all when you had read him.'

'I have read him, but when I was young, and knew your language only superficially. I was prejudiced by Italian *savants* who adored Tasso, and I unfortunately published a criticism which I thought was mine, but which was only an echo. Now I love your Ariosto.'

'O M. de Voltaire, I breathe again! But for pity's sake have the book excommunicated in which you turn that great man to ridicule.'

'Useless, for my books are all excommunicated. But I will give you a proof of my recantation.'

Voltaire recites Ariosto to him.

He then recited from memory two long extracts from the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth cantos, without missing a line; and I cried out, when he had finished, that all Italy should hear of this! Greedy of praise, he next day gave me the translation he had made of the stanza beginning—

'Quindi avvien che tra principi e signori.'[1]

Madame Denis, Voltaire's niece, asked me if I thought her uncle had chosen some of the poet's finest lines.

'Yes, madame, but not *the* finest.'

'You think, then,' said Voltaire, 'that it was his more human lines which won for him the title *Divine?*'

'Yes, certainly.'

[1] Voltaire translated the stanza as follows:—

> 'Les papes, les Césars, apaisant leur querelle,
> Jurent sur l'Évangile une paix éternelle;
> Vous les voyez l'un de l'autre ennemis;
> C'était pour se tromper qu'ils s'étaient réunis;
> Nul serment n'est gardé, nul accord n'est sincère.
> Quand la bouche a parlé, le cœur dit le contraire.
> Du ciel qu'ils attestaient ils bravaient le courroux:
> L'intérêt est le Dieu qui les gouverne tous.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'And which are those lines which you consider the best of all?'

'The thirty-six last stanzas of the twenty-third song, in which he describes how Roland went mad. Since the beginning of time, no one has described the symptoms more accurately.'

'Perhaps M. Casanova would recite them to us,' said Madame Denis.

He recites Ariosto to Voltaire.

When I had finished, tears were in all eyes; every one was sobbing. M. de Voltaire and Madame Denis fell on my neck.

'It is odd,' said Madame Denis, 'that Rome has not put the song of Roland on the Index!'

'Rome was so far from condemning it,' said Voltaire, 'that Leo the Tenth excommunicated beforehand any one who should dare to censure it. The two great families of d'Este and Médicis upheld Ariosto. Without their protection it is more than likely he would have been interdicted.'

Then some one spoke of *L'Écossaise*. Voltaire said that if I would play in it at his house, he would himself play the part of Montrose. I began to excuse myself, but he would not hear of my leaving next day.

'Did you come to talk to me, or to hear me talk?'

'To talk to you, certainly; but, above all, to have you talk to me.'

'Then stay at least three days longer. Come and dine with me every day, and we will have long discussions.'

I could not refuse, and, wishing the company good night, I withdrew.

Next morning young Fox came to see me, with the two Englishmen[1] I had seen the preceding evening. We played cards, and I lost fifty louis; after this we went round the town in a band, and dined together with Voltaire, where we saw the Duc de Villars, who had just come for the sake of consulting

[1] In 1767 Charles James Fox's travelling companions were Lord Fitzwilliam and Mr. Uxedale Price—boys both. In 1768 he travelled with Lords Kildare and Carlisle by Parma and Bologna to Florence and Rome. Casanova's dates, as usual, do not coincide.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Dr. Tronchin, who for the last ten years had been keeping him alive by artificial means. Voltaire tried to draw me out on the subject of the Venetian government, but seeing that the subject was distasteful to me, he took my arm and led me into his garden. The river ran at the end of the main walk.

'That is the Rhone,' said he, facetiously; 'the Rhone, which I am sending as a present to France!'

By and by the Duc de Villars and the famous Dr. Tronchin[1] joined us. The doctor was polished, eloquent, and a learned man, a pupil of Boerhaave, whose memory he cherished. He had neither the jargon, the charlatanism, nor the self-sufficiency generally characteristic of the faculty. His theory of medicine was based on diet, and to order a strict regimen in those days evidenced some strength of mind. I was assured, though I could hardly believe it, that he had cured a consumptive patient with the milk of an ass, having previously subjected the animal to thirty potent frictions of mercury, administered by four strong porters!

As for Villars, he was the exact opposite of Tronchin; in face and figure he looked like a woman dressed up as a man, and a seventy-year-old woman at that. He was thin and withered, his cheeks were plastered with paint, his lips covered with carmine, his eyebrows painted, his teeth were made of ivory, and his head was covered with an enormous wig strongly scented with *ambre*; in his button-hole he wore an immense bunch of flowers, which reached to his chin. He affected slow and graceful gestures, and spoke in so low a voice one could not always hear what he said. He was very polite and very affable, and affected in manners, as the mode was under the Regency. He was governor of Provence, and his back was eaten away by cancer. He would have been dead and buried

[1] Member of a Huguenot family who took refuge in Geneva at the time of Saint Bartholomew. He was sent at sixteen to England to Lord Bolingbroke, a relation of his, and was educated partly at Cambridge and partly in Holland under Boerhaave. He was the first to practise inoculation, and was consulted by all the celebrities in Europe. He died in 1781.

Digitized by Microsoft®

many a long year, in the strict order of nature, but Tronchin kept him alive by feeding his sores with slices of veal. Without this nourishment the cancer would have perished, and he would have died with it. This may be called an artificial existence!

I accompanied M. de Voltaire to his bedroom, where he changed his wig and put on another cap; he was never seen without a cap, for he was very subject to colds. I saw on his table the *Summa* of Saint Thomas and the *Secchia Rapita* of Tassoni. He opened a cupboard, and I saw about a hundred great sheaves of papers.

'There are nearly fifty thousand letters there,' said he, 'all of which I have answered.'

'Have you kept a copy of your replies?'

'It is my valet's duty to copy them.'

'I know several booksellers who would give a good deal for these treasures.'

'Yes; but beware of booksellers when you want to publish anything, especially if you are not known; they are more dangerous than the pirates of Morocco!'

'I shall have nothing to do with these gentlemen until I am old.'

'Then they will be the scourge of your old age!'

We then returned to the salon, where for two hours Voltaire displayed all the resources of his brilliant and fertile mind, delighting his audience, in spite of his caustic humour, which spared no one. Yet accompanied by his peculiarly sweet smile, his sallies lost their bitterness.

His household was maintained on a generous footing, and his table was liberally spread, which is more than one can say of poets in general. He was sixty-six years old, and had a hundred and twenty thousand francs a year. It was wrongly said that he enriched himself by cheating his publishers; on the contrary, they cheated him, with the exception of the Cramers, whose fortune he made. He cared more for fame than anything else, and would often give away his works, on condition they should be printed and circulated. During

Digitized by Microsoft®

the few days I was with him I witnessed one of those acts of generosity; he made a present of *La Princesse de Babylone*, a charming story which he wrote in three days.

He dines at *Les Délices.*

I dined at *Les Délices*, but Voltaire was absent. Madame Denis, however, more than made up for his absence. She had plenty of taste, tact, and intelligence, and hated the King of Prussia, whom she called a villain. She questioned me about my pretty housekeeper, and congratulated me on having married her off to an honest man. Although I know now she was right, I was then far from being of her opinion; the wound was too recent.

M. de Voltaire appeared about five o'clock with a letter in his hand.

'Do you know the Marquis Albergati Capacelli and the Count Paradisi?' he asked.

'I know Albergati by reputation; he is one of the forty at Bologna, where the forty are fifty!'

'Mercy, what an enigma; well, he has sent me Goldoni's plays, some Bologna sausages, the translation of my *Tancrède*, and he says he is coming to see me!'

'He won't come, he is not so foolish.'

'Foolish! what do you mean? Is it foolish to come to see *me*?'

'He knows he would be risking too much; but if he came you would see what a fool *he* is, and all illusion concerning him would be at an end.'

'And Goldoni?'

'Goldoni is the Italian Molière.'

'Why does he call himself the poet of the Duke of Parma?'

'Probably to prove that he has his weak side as well as any other man. He also calls himself a barrister, though he is none; he is the author of some good comedies, and that is all. He does not shine in society.'

'I have been told that he is poor, and would leave Venice, but that he fears to displease the managers of the theatres where his plays are acted.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'There was some talk of giving him a pension, but the project fell through; they were afraid the moment his living was secured he would leave off writing.'

'Cumes refused to give Homer a pension, for fear that all blind men would ask one!'

We passed the day together. He thanked me effusively for the *Macaronicon* I had sent him, and presented me to a Jesuit named Adam, whispering to me, 'Not Adam, the first man!'

I was told that they played backgammon together, and when Voltaire lost he would throw dice and dice-box at the Jesuit's head. If all the members of that order were treated with as little consideration we should fairly neutralise them, but no such luck!

Conversation with Voltaire.

The next day I looked forward to spending happily with Voltaire, but I was disappointed, for the great man was in the vilest of tempers, bitter, caustic, and quarrelsome, though he knew that it was my last day. He thanked me ironically for my present of Merlin Cocci's book. 'You meant well, I am sure,' he said, 'but I can't thank you, for I have wasted four hours over it.'

I mastered myself sufficiently to reply calmly that perhaps he would come round to my way of thinking some day, and in support of this remark I quoted several examples of erroneous first impressions.

'All that is very true,' he answered, 'but as for your Merlin, I give him up. I put him on a par with the *Pucelle* of Chapelain.'

'Which every one admires, in spite of its faulty versification. Chapelain was a poet, though he wrote bad verse. I appreciate his genius.'

My frankness evidently vexed him. As for *La Pucelle* I knew that there was a disgusting poem of the same name in circulation, attributed to Voltaire, but that he disowned it. I thought that for this reason he would discontinue the argument, but on the contrary he became more emphatic, and I kept pace with him.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Chapelain,' I said, 'at anyrate presented his subject agreeably, without shocking the modesty or the piety of his readers, and on this point my master, Crébillon, agrees with me.'

'Crébillon! much he knew about it! And by what right, may I ask, do you call him *master*?'

'He taught me French, in less than two years, and as a mark of gratitude I translated his *Rhadamiste* into Italian alexandrines. I am the first Italian who has dared to use that metre.'

'The first! I beg your pardon, that honour belongs to my friend, Pierre Jacques Martelli.'

'I am sorry to have to contradict you.'

'But I possess his works, printed at Bologna.'

'But not in alexandrines; his verses have all fourteen feet, and the alternative masculine and feminine rhyme is not observed. Nevertheless, I must own that he thought he was writing in alexandrines, and his preface made me split with laughter. Perhaps you have not read it?'

'Not read it, sir! I have a mania for prefaces; I never miss one, and Martelli proves that his verses produce on Italian ears the effect which alexandrines produce on ours.'

'That is the laughable part of it; your masculine verses have twelve feet, and the feminine ones thirteen. All Martelli's lines have fourteen feet. He must have been deaf, or had a very bad ear.'

'You follow our theory of versification uncompromisingly?'

'Yes, in spite of all difficulties.'

'And what is the effect of your innovation?'

'It has not been a success, for no one knows how to recite my verses; but I hope to recite them myself, before our literary coteries.'

'Do you remember any of your *Rhadamiste*? I should be glad to hear it!'

I recited the scene which ten years before I had recited to Crébillon. Voltaire listened with pleasure, and when I had finished he repeated some pages from his *Tancrède*, which he

Digitized by Microsoft®

had not yet published, and which was rightly considered a masterpiece.

Had we stopped there everything would have been well, but we fell to discussing Horace. He said Horace was a great writer, and had laid down precepts which would never grow old. On which I answered that he himself had violated one of these precepts, though in a masterly way.

'Which one, if you please?'

'You do not write *contentus paucis lectoribus*.'

Voltaire on Horace.

'No, but if Horace had had to fight the hydra of superstition, as I have, he also would have written for the whole world—not for a mere section of it.'

'You might, I think, spare yourself the trouble of combating what you will never succeed in destroying.'

'The work I cannot finish; others will. I shall have the credit of being the first.'

'Very good, and now suppose you do succeed in destroying superstition, with what will you replace it?'

'I like that! When I have delivered humanity from a ferocious monster that devours it, what shall I put in that monster's place, say you?'

'Superstition does not devour humanity; it is, on the contrary, necessary to its existence.'

'Necessary to its existence! That is a horrible piece of blasphemy which the future will avenge. I love mankind; I would like to see it, as I am, free and happy. Superstition and liberty cannot go hand in hand. Do you think that slavery makes for happiness?'

'What you want then is the supremacy of the people?'

'God forbid! The masses must have a king to govern them.'

'In that case then superstition is necessary, for the people would never give a mere man the right to rule them.'

'Don't speak of kings; the name implies despotism, which I hate as I hate slavery.'

'What would you have, then? If you admit one man as ruler, that man must be king.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I want a sovereign ruling a free people, and bound to them by reciprocal conditions, which should prevent any inclination to despotism on his part.'

Voltaire's republicanism, Casanova's royalism.

'Addison says that such a sovereign, such a chief, is impossible. I agree with Hobbes, between two evils one must choose the lesser. A nation freed from superstition would be a nation of philosophers, and philosophers do not know how to obey. There is no happiness for a people that is not crushed, kept down and held in leash.'

'Horrible! And you are of the people! If you had read me you would see that I prove Superstition to be the arch-enemy of kings.'

'If I have read you! I have read you and re-read you, especially those parts where I differ from you. Your master passion is love of humanity. This love blinds you. Love humanity, but love it as it is. Humanity is not susceptible to the benefits you wish to shower on it; they would only tend to make it more wretched and more perverse. Do not seek to destroy the beast which you say devours it; it loves the beast. Do you not remember how Don Quixote had to defend himself against the galley-slaves when he tried to set them free?'

'I am sorry you have such a bad opinion of your fellow-creatures. By the way, do you consider that you enjoy liberty in Venice?'

'Such freedom as can be enjoyed under an aristocratic government. We are not as free as the English, but we are satisfied.'

'Even when they put you in "The Leads"?'

'My imprisonment was an act of despotism, I own, but I know, too, that I abused my liberty. I sometimes think the government was right in shutting me up without the usual formalities of a trial.'

'Nevertheless you escaped!'

'I was within my rights, as the government was within its rights.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Admirable! but according to that no one in Venice can be free.'

'Perhaps not, but to consider oneself free is to be free.'

'There I cannot agree with you: we look at liberty from a different standpoint. The aristocracy, even members of the government, are not free in your country. For instance, they cannot even travel without permission.'

'True, but it is by virtue of a law they have imposed upon themselves. Would you say that an inhabitant of Berne is not free because of the sumptuary laws, when he is actually his own legislator?'

'Well, let the people everywhere have the privilege of making their own laws.'

Suddenly, without any transition, he asked me where I last came from.

'From Roche. I did not want to leave Switzerland without having seen Haller. In my travels I pay homage to the great men of the countries I pass through. I kept you to the last as a *bonne bouche*.'

'Were you pleased with Haller?'

'I spent three of the happiest days of my life with him.'

'I congratulate you.'

'I am glad you do him justice. I am sorry he is not so fair towards you.'

'Ah, ha! perhaps we are both of us mistaken.'

The quickness of this repartee raised a hearty laugh among the listeners.

We spoke no more of literature, and I remained silent until after Voltaire had retired, when I then left, thinking, fool that I was, that I had reduced this intellectual athlete to reason. But I cherished an enduring spite against him, and for ten years criticised everything he wrote. I am sorry for it to-day, though on re-reading my censures I think I was right on many points. I ought to have held my tongue. I ought to have reflected that but for his satirical habit, which made me hate him, I should have considered him sublime.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I spent part of that night and part of the following day writing down my conversations with Voltaire. I had matter enough to make a volume, and only give a small fragment here. The next day I left for Aix-en-Savoie.

Aix is an ugly village, but there are mineral springs there which attract a good many people towards the end of the summer. I was dining quietly and quickly, for I wanted to go on to Chambéry, when a crowd of fine people came in and sat down to the tables. From their remarks I gathered they were there for the waters.

I had finished while they were still at the first course. I approached one of the ladies, and congratulated her on the effect of the treatment. Her appearance, I said, would revive the appetite even of a man who had just dined.

'I defy you to prove it,' she answered.

Whereupon I seated myself beside her. She handed me a piece of the roast which had just been served her, which I devoured like a fasting man. I continued to eat everything she offered me, and told le Duc, who was behind my chair, to order some champagne. I offered it first to the lady and then to the other guests.

'You are possessed of some extraordinary power,' I said to her, 'for I have never in my life eaten two dinners in one day.'

'You only did it from pique; you won't eat any supper.'

A wager with La Zeroli.

'I'll wager you what you like that I will.'

'Let us wager a good supper.'

The other guests entered into the joke, and I told le Duc to tell my coachman I should not leave that evening.

'I am to order the supper,' said the lady.

'Agreed—it is only right that who pays should order. I warn you beforehand I mean to eat as much as you do, and I shall win.'

I had a large, bare, uncomfortable garret assigned me, but the host told me, with many apologies, that he had no other room vacant. As I was leaving my room a man accosted me;

Digitized by Microsoft®

bowing politely, he informed me he was my neighbour, and offered to show me the village, beginning with the springs. He was a tall, thin creature, about fifty years old, who might have been handsome once, but whose excessive politeness should have roused my suspicions. He told me the names of the people I had seen at dinner.

'I am the only one,' he said, 'who has really come here for the waters. I am consumptive, and grow thinner and thinner each day. If this place does me no good, I shall not live long.'

'Then all the others come here to amuse themselves?'

'And to gamble. They are all professional players.'

'Are they French?'

'They are Piedmontese or Savoyards. I am the only real Frenchman here. I come from Lorraine. My father, who is over eighty, is the Marquis Désarmoises. He goes on living just to spite me, for, as I married without his permission, he has disinherited me.'

'But in spite of your father's rigour, you live quite at your ease?'

'On the contrary. I have a small pension which I hand over to my wife, but I am skilled in most games, and win, on the whole, more than I lose. I am a man of honour: I don't harm any one, and I can depend on my sword! The gentleman who took the bank as you left the dining-room is the Marquis de Prié; you might have seen him at Venice, where he was ambassador. The lady you spoke to is the wife of the Chevalier Zeroli; all the others are counts, marquises, barons. They are all gamblers, as I said, and very sharp, for they are all in league. They think they have got a fine catch in you, and you had better be careful.'

He loses at faro.

We returned to the inn, where we found the company playing at different games. I lost forty sequins at faro, to Zeroli, after which supper was announced. The lady paid for the supper with the best possible grace, and we all became exceedingly lively. I ought to have left then and there, but I had not the strength of mind.

Digitized by Microsoft®

After supper the Marquis de Prié made a bank of about three hundred sequins. I laid fifty gold lisbons in front of me, and modestly announced that when I had lost them, I should go to bed. At the third deal I had broken the bank.

'I will make another bank of two hundred louis,' said the marquis.

'I would accept your challenge,' said I, 'but I have decided to leave to-morrow early.'

As I was going to bed, Désarmoises came to me and begged me to lend him three hundred francs. I was expecting as much, and I gave them to him. He thanked me effusively, and told me Madame Zeroli had pledged her word to make me stay at Aix.

I smiled, and told him my carriage was ordered for five o'clock in the morning.

'I wager you will not get off,' he answered, and left me, laughing.

At five o'clock in the morning the coachman came to tell me that one of the horses was ill. I sent le Duc to order post horses; the landlord returned with him to say it was impossible to give them me, as the Marquis de Prié had engaged them all. I told him I would dine at his house, but he must find me horses for two o'clock.

I went down to the stable, where I found my coachman weeping beside one of his horses, which lay unable to move on its litter. I believed his story and paid him handsomely, and then went off to the springs.

And here I must relate a most extraordinary and romantic adventure which befell me, and which is every word of it true.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SECOND M. M.

The Nun of Chambéry.

As I drew near the fountain I saw two nuns coming towards me. Their veils were down, but by their figures and their way of walking, I judged one to be young and the other old. So far there was nothing to be surprised at, but their habit struck me, for it was the same as that worn by my dear M. M., whom I had last seen on the 24th of July 1755, five years previous to the time at which I am now writing. This fact excited my curiosity. The nuns turned across the fields, and I doubled, so as to cut in front of them and meet them face to face. Imagine my surprise when I perceived that the younger one, who was walking ahead, and who had raised her veil, offered to my astonished eyes the living image of M. M.! I made a step towards her, when, lowering her veil, she turned to one side and took a by-path, so as to avoid me.

I took into account all M. M.'s possible reasons for this course of action, and retracing my steps, I followed her from a distance until I saw her enter a mean, little, lonely house. This was enough for me. I went back to the springs to gather what information I could.

'M. M.,' I thought, 'must have escaped from her convent. She must be mad to wear her religious habit, or perhaps she has had a dispensation from Rome to come here for the waters, which would account for her habit, and for the nun who is with her. Perhaps the waters are only a pretext. She may be in trouble, in which case I will do what I can for her. I will show her that I am worthy of her love.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

At the springs I met the doctor, who told me the waters of Aix were the best thing in the world for me. I asked him if he was attending the pretty nun I had just seen.

'She is taking the waters,' he said, 'but she speaks to no one. She stays with a peasant woman some little way out in the country.'

I went back to the cottage, where it seemed as though the god of love himself had been my messenger, and flown before me, for, as I drew near, the peasant woman came out.

'Sir,' she said, without waiting for me to speak, 'the young nun begs you to come back this evening at nine o'clock, when the lay sister will be asleep, and she can speak to you freely.'

My heart leapt with joy. I gave the woman a louis, and promised I would be there precisely at nine.

The moon was shining brightly as I went for the third time that day to the cottage. I had taken my pistols with me, and wore my sword, for I had not quite laid aside suspicion. About twenty paces from the house I was met by the peasant woman, who told me the nun could not come downstairs. I must get in through the window by a ladder. As there was no light in the room, I hesitated, but a voice which I thought I recognised cried out: 'Come up, do not be afraid.'

They mutually mistake each other.

The window was not very high above the ground, and in another moment I had clasped the nun in my arms, and thinking I clasped my dear M. M., I covered her face with kisses. 'Why,' I asked in Venetian, 'are you in the dark? Tell me how you came here, my heart? Quick, quick, I am longing to know what has brought you to Aix?'

The voice which answered was not that of M. M. It resembled hers, but yet it was not hers, and the words I heard were even more puzzling.

'I understand hardly any Venetian,' it said, 'and you do not need a light to tell me what M. de Coudert has decided to do for me in my present most painful position.'

'You surprise me, madame. I do not know M. de Coudert.

Digitized by Microsoft®

What! you are not a Venetian? You are not the nun I saw this morning?'

'I have made some mistake. Yes, I am the nun you saw this morning, but I am a Frenchwoman. In the name of God, sir, I implore you be discreet, do not betray me! Go away, I must have nothing to say to you! Speak low, for if the lay sister wakes I shall be lost.'

'Madame, I am discretion itself. The cause of the mistake lies in your extraordinary resemblance to a nun of your order who was, and always will be, most dear to me. This is why I followed you. I beg you to pardon the effusiveness of my greeting.'

'You astonished, but did not offend me. Ah, why am I *not* the nun in whom you are interested? I am on the brink of a precipice.'

'If money, madame, is of any use to you, I shall be honoured by your accepting ten louis.'

'Thank you; it is not money I need. Allow me to return you the louis you sent me this morning.'

'Madame, I implore you not to think I could be so wanting in respect to you. I gave the louis to the peasant woman for herself. But you excite my curiosity; will you tell me what the sorrow is that money cannot redress?'

'Perhaps God has sent you to assist me—perhaps after all you can give me some advice?'

'I am entirely at your service, and will listen to you with the greatest interest. Let us sit down.'

'Alas! there is no seat here but the bed.'

'We will stand then—but go on.'

The story of the second M. M.

'I come from Grenoble. My relations forced me to take the veil at Chambéry. Two years after my profession M. de Coudert made my acquaintance. I received him in the convent garden at night. After a while I found myself in a terrible position. M. de Coudert bribed a doctor to say I should die if I did not go to Aix; the waters here, he declared, were the only remedy for the illness from which I was supposed to

Digitized by Microsoft®

be suffering. A princess, a friend of M. de Coudert, was let into the secret; she obtained permission for me from the Bishop of Chambéry to absent myself for three months from the convent. But the three months have almost expired, and yet I cannot make up my mind to go back as I am. The lay sister, whom the abbess has charged to take care of me, is the sourest of creatures; she has orders not to let me speak to a soul, and to prevent me from showing myself in public more than is absolutely necessary. I raised my veil this morning so that you should see if I was the person you were looking for, and fortunately she did not notice it, otherwise she would have made me suffer for my indiscretion. She wants us to return to the convent in three days, for she thinks my dropsy is incurable. She would not allow me to speak alone to the doctor, whom I might have won over to my side by confiding in him. I am only twenty-one, yet I long for death as a relief.'

'Dry your eyes, my dear sister, and tell me how did you propose to arrange matters without the lay sister's knowing the truth?'

The story of the second M. M. continued.

'The woman with whom we are lodging is an angel of goodness; I took her into my confidence, and she promised that when the time came she would give the sister a sleeping draught, which would keep her quiet until all danger of discovery was past. She has already procured the drug from Annecy; indeed, it is thanks to a small dose of it that we are able to meet to-night. The sister is fast asleep in her room, which is under this.'

'Then why was I not admitted through the door?'

'Because of the landlady's brother, who is inquisitive.'

'What made you think I came from de Coudert?'

'I wrote to him some days ago, and told him of my distress. I painted my misery in such vivid colours that I am sure he will find means of helping me. Drowning men catch at straws. And when I saw you I jumped to the conclusion that you were a friend of his sent by him to save me.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Are you sure he received your letter?'

'The landlady posted it at Annecy.'

'You ought to have written to the princess.'

'I did not dare.'

'I will go and see her myself; I will go and see Coudert. I will go to the bishop if needs be to obtain a prolongation of your stay here, for you cannot return to the convent in the state you are in. You must decide for yourself though, for I can do nothing without your consent. Will you trust yourself to me? I will bring you some clothes to-morrow in which you can disguise yourself, and I will take you to Italy; and as long as I live I swear to take care of you.'

Her only answer was a fit of violent sobbing, that went straight to my heart.

I took her hand, and told her I would return the following night. I gave the peasant woman another louis, saying, that at my next visit, I should prefer to enter by the door and not by the window, adding that she must on the same occasion administer a second dose of opium to the lay sister.

I went to bed well pleased with my evening's adventure, and congratulating myself on the performance of a good action for its own sake. As soon as I was convinced that it was not my own dear M. M. who had received my ardent embraces, I felt ashamed of having been so effusive. I left without even kissing my new friend's hand.

After dinner at the inn, it was now my turn to take the bank against the company. A smile of satisfaction passed over the assembled faces when I installed myself with a pile of gold and silver before me, about a thousand louis in all.

'Gentlemen,' I said, 'I warn you that at eight o'clock precisely I leave off play.'

Some one suggested that, perhaps, the bank would not hold out so long as that, but I ignored this, and begging Désarmoises to act as croupier, I began to deal slowly. There were eighteen or twenty punters against me, all professional gamblers; at each deal I called for a fresh pack.

Digitized by Microsoft®

By five o'clock I had lost considerably, when we heard a carriage stop at the door; it was three Englishmen who had come from Geneva, and were changing horses, before going on to Chambéry. They came into the room a moment after, and I recognised Mr. Fox and his two friends, whom I had met at Berne a fortnight before. My croupier asked them to join us, and they began by playing ten louis at a time on two or three cards, double or quits. They swept up the stakes every time, so that my bank was seriously endangered. I put a bold face on it, however, and even encouraged them to go on. At the third deal the Englishmen lost, and just then the landlord came to tell them their horses were harnessed.

He plays with the English friend of Fox.

While I was shuffling a new pack of cards, the youngest Englishman drew a paper from his pocket-book; it was a letter of credit.

'Will you let me stake the value of this letter on one card,' he said, 'without your knowing what its value is?'

'Yes, provided you tell me on whom it is drawn, and that the sum does not exceed what I have in my bank.'

He looked at the gold in front of me.

'My letter is not as valuable as your bank; it is drawn on sight on Zappata of Turin.'

I acquiesced. He cut and laid the letter on an ace; his two friends went shares in the stake.

I drew, and drew again and again, but no ace. I had only a dozen cards left in my hand.

'Sir,' said I, with the greatest calmness, 'you are at liberty to withdraw now if you like.'

'No—go on.'

I drew again—no ace! I had only eight cards left.

'My lord,' I said, 'two to one the ace is here; I tell you again that you can withdraw if you like.'

'No; you are too generous—go on.'

I drew and I won! I put the bill in my pocket without looking at it, at which the Englishman laughed, shook hands, and went off; while I enjoyed the effect of the bold game I had

Digitized by Microsoft®

played on the others. In a minute or two young Fox came back, and drawing me aside, asked me, laughing, to lend him fifty louis to continue his journey. I gave them to him with pleasure; he paid me back three years afterwards in London.

Every one was dying to know the value of the letter of credit, but I did not satisfy their curiosity; it was for eight thousand francs, Italian money.

These Englishmen had brought me luck, for after this fortune favoured me; and I left at eight o'clock having cleaned out everybody, except three ladies who had won a few louis. I had won over a thousand louis. I gave twenty-five to Désarmoises, and he jumped for joy. I then locked up my money, put my pistols in my pocket, and went off to my rendezvous. The good peasant let me in, telling me that all was safe, and that she had not needed to renew the dose of opium, for the lay sister was still asleep. At this, I must own, I felt frightened.

Upstairs I saw the poor nun, with her veil down, sitting on a sack stuffed with straw, which the peasant woman had set along the wall as a sofa; a candle stuck in a bottle lighted up the gloomy hole of a room she was in.

'What have you decided to do, madame?' I asked.

The crime of the nun of Chambéry.

'Nothing, for something awful has happened. The lay sister has been sleeping for twenty-four hours!'

'You must send for a doctor at once. She might die in convulsions, or from a fit of apoplexy, this very night!'

'We thought of sending for a doctor, but did not dare, for whatever happens he will say we poisoned her.'

'Good heavens, I am so sorry for you! But as a matter of fact, I fear it is too late to help her. It is no use calling a doctor. All things considered, it is better to bow to the laws of Providence and let her die. Death is natural at her age. The harm is done now, and there is no remedy.'

'We must at any rate think of her soul, and send for a priest.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What would be the use of a priest, since she is unconscious. Her soul is in no danger. An ignorant priest would do more harm than good, either from stupidity or malice. Time enough to call a priest when she no longer breathes. You must say she died suddenly. You must cry a good deal. Give him plenty to drink, and he will only think of calming your grief, without troubling himself about the dead.'

'But must we let her die?'

'We must leave her to nature.'

'If she dies I will send an express to the abbess, who will send me another lay sister.'

'Yes; and in that way you will gain ten days at the least. Do not distress yourself, madame; we must submit ourselves to the will of God. Let the landlady come up, and I will tell her how to behave in these delicate circumstances. The honour, perhaps the life, of all three of us depends on her.'

The country woman appeared. I impressed on her the necessity of prudence. She took me well enough, and recognised her own danger. She promised not to send for a priest until she was sure the sister was dead. I forced her to take ten louis, which I told her to expend in any way that might be useful to us in our difficult position.

Seeing that she was likely to grow rich by my generosity, she knelt and kissed my hands, and, with tears, promised to obey me.

The nun wept bitterly, and accused herself of the lay sister's murder. She saw hell yawning before her feet! I tried to quiet her, but her grief only became more violent, and at last she fell fainting behind the straw sofa.

I called the country woman, and, remembering the famous powder which had served my turn so well with Madame de ——, I pushed a good pinch of it into her nostrils. Then the country woman came with vinegar. 'Rub her forehead,' I said. We undid her coif and veil, her long black hair streamed out; she opened her big black eyes, and there and then I fell violently in love with her. The woman, seeing her out of

Digitized by Microsoft®

danger, left us, and I took her in my arms and kissed her passionately.

'Please let me put my veil on again,' she said, 'or else I shall be put under the ban of the Church.'

I laughed, and kissed her the more.

'You may laugh, but I tell you that the abbess has threatened to excommunicate me if I even let myself be seen by a man.'

'Do not be afraid of her, my beautiful one; she is powerless.'

Then seeing that she was weak and exhausted, I summoned the peasant woman, and recommending her to her care, I bade them good night, promising to return next evening.

I could not have abandoned an unfortunate creature who depended on me; but there was no merit in my devotion now, for I was head over ears in love with this new, black-eyed M. M.

I was determined to do anything and everything, rather than let her return to the convent in the state in which she then was. It was as if God had thrown me in her way. It was He who had sent La Zeroli to keep me from leaving Aix. It was He who had willed I should gain all that money. I have always chosen to trace the finger of God in all that happened to me. Yet cheap philosophers have accused me of atheistic tendencies!

No one dared challenge me to play that evening, and I slipped off unnoticed, after enjoining le Duc not to leave my room for a moment while I was away.

He pacifies the conscience of the nun of Chambéry.

I found my nun in bed, with two candles burning on the table by her.

'Are you ill, madame?'

'I have been ill, but thank God I am better now. Our Blessed Lady has heard my prayers, and helped me in my trouble; but tell me, are you a man or an angel? I am afraid I love you more than it is permissible to love any human being.'

'If you could know how happy you make me in saying so! But how is the lay sister?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'She still breathes, but we have lost all hope of her recovery. Her face is strangely disfigured. I fear me, we have committed a great crime, and God will punish me for it.'

'No, my dear, God will forgive you, for you meant no harm. You must worship the Divine will, which does everything for the best.'

Though I spoke cheerfully, I was very anxious to have done with this exceedingly risky affair. I knew we were not out of the wood yet, nor should be until the poor lay sister was dead and buried.

The next evening, when I went at dusk to the cottage, my nun told me the sister was dead, and was to be buried next day.

'To-morrow,' she said, 'is the day on which we were to return to the convent. I have written to the abbess, and I suppose she will send me another sister, unless she tells me to put myself in the care of my landlady.'

'What did the priest say?'

'That the lay sister died of cerebral lethargy, which brought on an apoplectic stroke. I would like to ask him to say fifteen masses for her, if you will allow me.'

'With pleasure. They shall be the reward of his convenient ignorance.'

The burial of the lay sister.

The landlady told me that the dead woman was an awful sight to see, and that she was having her watched by two women, who kept her sprinkled with holy water lest that witches, in the shape of cats, should come and tear her limb from limb. I told her she was perfectly right, and then asked her where she had bought the laudanum.

'It was sold me by a respectable woman, whom I have known for years,' she said.

'And when you went to the foundling hospital, were you recognised?'

'No, no one saw me do what I had to do. And now, kind sir, you must know that the poor sister's funeral will only cost six francs, and will be paid for out of two louis which were

Digitized by Microsoft®

found on the dead woman. The rest will go to pay for masses, so perhaps she will be forgiven for having so much money in her possession in spite of her vow of poverty.'

'What! do you mean to say she might not have two beggarly louis?'

'Certainly not,' interposed my nun; 'we may have nothing but what the abbess gives us.'

'How much are you allowed here?'

'Ten sols, Italian money, a day. But since you came I have lived like a princess, as you will see at supper; for though my good landlady knows that whatever is left over of the money you gave is for her, she spends it on me lavishly.'

'She knows she will not lose by it, my dear!' So saying I gave the woman another ten louis, telling her to spare no expense in making the invalid comfortable.

The good woman declared I had given her a fortune, and that she would buy cows with it.

Now that it was all over, I expressed my astonishment that the lover of my nun should have left her in such embarrassment. She replied that she feared he had not received her letter.

'That is possible. But tell me about him. Is he rich? Is he handsome?'

The nun describes her lover.

'Rich, yes; handsome, no. He is very ugly, humpbacked, and at least fifty years old.'

'How could you fall in love with such an object?'

'I never loved him, but he aroused my pity. He threatened to kill himself, and I believed him. I promised to meet him in the garden at night, meaning to beg him to leave me in peace. He wept, he flung himself on his knees; and at last I gave way, on condition that he would not kill himself, and that he would never ask me to meet him again.'

'And did he not?'

'Yes, often, but I never consented; and my confessor made me promise not to meet him, on pain of refusing me absolution.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I was deeply moved, and remained silent for at least a quarter of an hour, absorbed in thought. I saw clearly that the misfortunes of this interesting woman arose from her candour, and perfect innocence, and misdirected compassion. She was pious, but more from habit than conviction. She abhorred sin, because she had to purge herself of it by confession, under pain of eternal damnation, and she did not wish to be damned. She had plenty of good common sense, though very little mental activity, but that was because she had never been called upon to exercise it, and was ignorant as only a nun can be.

The landlady now brought in our supper, and laid the cloth on a little table. Everything was new—linen, plates, glasses, knives, and forks. The wine was good, and the cooking delicious, for everything was simple. Game, meat, fish, cream, cheese, and fresh fruit. I spent an hour and a half on these good things, chatting with my nun, while I drank a couple of bottles of wine. The landlady promised that such should be my daily entertainment.

Two days later there came a letter from the abbess, in which she said she would send two lay sisters to fetch my nun, and that she was probably well enough to make the return voyage on foot, and save money which could be put to better use. As the bishop was absent, and it was necessary to obtain his permission for the sisters to leave the convent, it would be eight or ten days before they could start, and in the meantime she was not, under pain of excommunication, to leave her room, or to speak to any one but her landlady.

After reading this, I asked her if she would prefer me to discontinue my visits, as I did not wish her to do violence to her conscience for my sake.

'The abbess,' she answered, 'is very free with her orders and her excommunications; as for the latter, I hope God will not confirm them. I enjoy your visits, and I should be miserable if they were to cease. But I wish you would tell me, if you can, whom it was you took me for when you first saw me.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Madam, I will tell you. I can do so without indiscretion, now that I know you share my conviction that all flesh is weak, or rather strong, stronger sometimes than the spirit, and that it subdues all, even reason, to its dominion. I will tell you a love-story which extended over two years, the heroine of which was the most beautiful and intelligent nun in Italy. Had she met with the same misfortune which befell you, I should have taken her to Rome and thrown myself at the feet of the Holy Father, who would have dispensed her from her vows, and my dear M. M. would to-day be my wife.'

'Great God! My name is M. M.! Is it true that I am so like her?'

He shows the portrait of the first M.M. to the second. Her naïve comment.

'Judge for yourself,' said I, drawing the portait of M. M. in her nun's habit from my pocket-book.

'Yes, though our eyes are different, it is my face, my dress, and it is to this likeness that I owe all my present happiness; but, God be praised, you do not love me in the same passionate way that you loved her.'

'I will show you another picture I have of her'; and I gave her the one in which M. M., having discarded her religious costume, appeared as Venus.

'How pretty she is! Was it to please you that the painter gave her such long hair?'

'No; Italian nuns are not obliged to cut it off, only to hide it.'

'We have the same privilege; but you won't like my hair, it is black.'

She took off her cap, and let her thick ebony tresses fall on her white shoulders.

'You are more beautiful than your sister M. M.,' I said.

She blushed and hastily replaced her cap, gathering round her shoulders her coarse linen camisole, the rude texture of which horrified me; but when I expressed my grief at seeing her lovely skin covered with such an unworthy material, she laughed, saying she was accustomed to it, it was such as all the sisters wore. She laid her head on my shoulder; but

Digitized by Microsoft®

suddenly, when I was making her the prettiest speeches, she turned her head away and closed her beautiful eyes and slept. It was a real sleep—the claret she had drunk had made her heavy. She spoke at hazard in her dreams, and I answered her without awakening her.

It was broad daylight when I returned to my inn, and after having my head dressed, I repaired to the fountain, where I met the taciturn Duke of Rosburi, with his tutor, Mr. Smith, and two other compatriots, just arrived from Geneva. He came up to me, saying, 'How do you do?' and walked away without adding another word.

In the evening I found my mistress in tears. The landlady's nephew had arrived that morning from Chambéry, where he had heard from a lay sister of his acquaintance in the convent that the other lay sisters were to leave for Aix the next day.

'But the abbess said in her letter they would not start for at least ten days!'

'She has thought better of it, no doubt.'

'How unlucky we are! Come, make up your mind, follow me to Rome, where I will procure a dispensation for you; you shall be my wife, and I will do all I can to make your life happy.'

'No—no—my dear friend, I have lived my life; let me go back to the tomb.'

After supper I asked the peasant woman if she could count on the discretion of her nephew, and if so, to send him at once to Chambéry to find out if the lay sisters had started, in which case he was to manage to get back to us two hours at least before their arrival. I sent now to le Duc, to shut up my bedroom, and to tell every one I was ill, at the same time warning him I should not be back for ten days at least. I meant to spend every moment with my beloved. I shall never forget the long hours passed in that little cottage! There was something about it mysterious and solemn. Every kiss that I gave her might be the last!

Digitized by Microsoft®

The good woman served us our meals in the garret, which we were afraid to leave even to go downstairs. And at last the messenger came: it was four o'clock in the afternoon; at six, at the latest, he said, the lay sisters would be there.

The second M. M. returns to her convent.

We parted: I cut off a lock of her hair, swearing I would wear it always against my heart. I forced her to accept a rouleau of fifty louis, promising that if she had no occasion to spend them she should return them to me in less than two years, for I would visit her in her prison before that time expired.

At break of day I was on my road to Chambéry. About half a league from Aix I saw my angel coming along, walking very slowly. As the two lay sisters approached me they begged for alms in the name of God. I gave them a louis and they passed on. My poor saint never raised her eyes!

I returned to the inn, where I ordered le Duc to get me a carriage at once, and hastily throwing my clothes into my trunks, I left without saying good-bye to a single soul.

'Double pay if you go as fast as I wish,' I cried to the postillion, and we started off at a hand-gallop.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXVII

MADEMOISELLE DE ROMAN

I STOPPED to change horses at Chambéry, and from there went on to Grenoble, where I intended to stay at least a week. At the *poste-restante* I found several letters, among others one from Madame d'Urfé inclosing an introduction to an officer named Valenglard, quartered at Grenoble, and who, she said, would introduce me to the best people. I called at once on this gentleman, and he promised to do all he could to render my stay at Grenoble agreeable. I told him I found the inn uncomfortable, and that I wished he would find me a more convenient lodging.

The inn at Grenoble.

'I think I might get you rooms in a house just outside the town,' he said; 'the concierge is a good cook, too; shall we go and see?'

I liked the house, and I took an apartment in it, consisting of three rooms. I ordered supper for two, telling the concierge I was very particular and not sparing of my money. I sent for my carriage, and in an hour I was installed.

M. Valenglard took me to the theatre after dinner. He wanted to introduce me, but I begged him to wait until I had observed the ladies more closely.

My vanity was excessive in those days! I considered all the women of Europe as forming part of one vast seraglio destined for my pleasure! While at the theatre my eyes were attracted by a tall dark girl, exceedingly simply dressed, who looked at me once and then obstinately withdrew her eyes from me. It was enough to pique me. I told the baron I should like to know her.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'She is of good family,' he said, 'but poor. I will introduce you to her aunt when we leave the theatre.'

He did so. The aunt was civil, and after the usual interchange of compliments, the baron and I returned to my house to supper.

The two daughters of the concierge-cook, as pretty girls as one would wish to see, waited on us. Valenglard grumbled when he saw more than fifteen entrées put on the table.

'The man is making fun of us!'

'On the contrary, he has guessed what I like. Do you not find the food excellent?'

'Certainly—but——'

'Don't be afraid. I like to live extravagantly.'

We had exquisite wines; some ratafia at dessert which was better than the Turkish *visnat* I had drunk seventeen years before at Yusouf-Ali's. When my host came up after supper I told him he was worthy of being head cook to Louis Quinze.

'Go on as you have begun, but let us have ices every day; put two more candelabra on the table. I think those are *tallow* candles, if I mistake not! I am a Venetian, sir, and accustomed to *wax*.'

I gave the baron my letter of credit on Zappata, endorsing it with the name of Seingalt, by which Madame d'Urfé had introduced me. Then I took him in my carriage, and was agreeably surprised to find, on returning, that the concierge's daughters were sitting up for me. Le Duc knew I could well dispense with his services when there were pretty girls in the house! They took off my boots, dressed my hair, and brought me my dressing-gown, after which they bade me good night.

At eight o'clock one of the girls brought me my chocolate, saying le Duc was unwell.

'I must go and see the poor fellow. What are you called, my dear?'

'Rose, sir, and my sister is Manon.'

The latter came in at that moment with my shirt, the lace

Digitized by Microsoft®

of which she had been ironing. She told me shyly that she was accustomed to dress her father's hair.

'I am glad to hear it; you can dress mine until my servant is better.'

'And I,' said Rose, laughing, 'will shave you.'

They were delightfully serious about it. Manon arranged my hair, and Rose shaved me admirably. But Rose refused to kiss the cheek she had made so smooth, so I said I would not let her do it any more. Then she complied.

When my toilet was finished, I went up to see le Duc. I found the scoundrel in a smart dressing-gown, sitting up in bed, with a rosy face that betokened anything but illness.

'What is the matter with you?' I asked.

'Nothing, sir; I am having a good rest. I had a fancy to be ill yesterday, and so here I am.'

'What possessed you to have such a fancy?'

'The sight of the three pretty girls. By the by, they are keeping me waiting a long time for my broth; I shall have to get angry and scold them for neglecting me, I fear.'

'Le Duc, you are a rascal.'

'Must I get well then, sir?'

'Have done with this nonsense; it wearies me.'

Just then the door opened, and a third young woman, whom I had not yet seen, and who was better looking even than the others, came in with the broth.

'I will have my dinner in bed,' said my Spaniard.

'It shall be brought up to you,' answered the girl, and left the room without looking at either of us.

'That girl has the airs of a princess,' said le Duc; 'but she doesn't take *me* in. Isn't she pretty, sir?'

'You are an insolent ape. Get up at once: you will wait upon me, and after that you will dine downstairs; and let me have no more of this. Do you hear?'

The fellow grinned, and I could not help laughing myself; he was an impertinent creature, but brave as a lion and faithful as a dog.

After dinner I went with Valenglard to call on Madame

Digitized by Microsoft®

He composes a horoscope for Mlle. de Roman.

Morin, the aunt of the pretty brunette. We found her surrounded by her seven children. The eldest daughter, who was neither handsome nor ugly, was twelve years old that day, she told me. For want of something to say, I asked if she had ever had her horoscope cast. She said No, and while we were discussing the science of astrology the niece came in.

Mlle. Roman-Coupier was then about seventeen, her hair and eyes jet black, her complexion was pale, her eyebrows well marked, her mouth small, and her teeth white and regular. She was gay, unpretentious, and good-humoured. Her behaviour was so natural, and at the same time so reserved, that I had some difficulty in taking her measure. I invited them all to dine and sup with me next day, and returned to my house building castles in the air.

Rose told me that as soon as my back was turned le Duc had sent for a carriage, and had gone off in it, dressed like a lord, with a sword at his side. He had some visits to pay, he said.

As soon as I was alone I began to compose the horoscope I had promised Madame Morin. I wrote eight pages of quackery, laying particular stress on what had already happened to the child. I had gathered a few notions about her past in my conversation with her parents, and I arranged these adroitly, guessing the rest.

At midday my guests arrived, and at one o'clock we sat down to table. It was a most sumptuous dinner. Le Duc, dressed like a king's chamberlain, stood behind my chair, and the three girls waited. After dinner I produced the horoscope. Madame Morin and her husband were delighted, and we discussed the past, present, and future of the wonderful child, till I was heartily sick of her; but I had my reward when we all went into the garden and I was free to devote myself to the pretty niece. A cold wind coming down from the Alps drove us all indoors. Before leaving she gave me a scrap of paper, on which was written the year, day, and hour of her birth. I guessed that she wanted me to cast her horoscope, and I told her aunt that in two days it would be ready; if they would then do me the honour of supping with me I would have

Digitized by Microsoft®

it ready; and that I would invite some people to meet them, and after supper we would dance a cotillon. Madame Morin asked permission to bring two ladies with their daughters. I begged her to invite their cavaliers too. I ordered supper for a large party, and took pains with my little fête.

Madame Morin came early with her daughters and niece. The latter wore her everyday dress, but she would have looked well in anything. She asked me if I had remembered her horoscope, and I took her hand and said she should have it to-morrow. I kissed her, but she bade me desist, without her serenity being ruffled for a moment.

The portrait of M. M.

The ladies went into my bedroom and examined my jewels and knick-knacks. Madame Morin picked up something, and carried it to the window to see it better. It was the portrait of my nun. I ran to her, and begged her not to look at it.

'It is like some one I know,' she said.

I felt myself turn pale with apprehension.

'Madame,' I said, 'it is the portrait of a Venetian whom I once loved very dearly. She was a nun, and her initials were M. M.'

'And I have a niece whose initials are M. M., and who is a nun of that very order; she is in a convent at Chambéry. I will add that she was taking the waters at Aix while you were there!'

'I wish I had seen her.'

'If you go back to Chambéry you can pay her a visit. Say that you come from me.'

'Madame, I promise, but not until I return from Italy, and I will not show her that portrait, for it would shock her; and I will keep it more carefully locked up in future.'

The good lady did not suspect the truth, and I breathed more freely.

At eight o'clock all my guests were assembled, and I opened the ball with a lady M. de Valenglard assigned to me; but all the *contredanses* I danced with Mlle. Roman, whose simple attire fascinated me.

The supper, which was composed of all the delicacies of the

Digitized by Microsoft®

season, was well served; but what delighted the ladies most was the enormous quantity of wax candles with which the dining-room was decorated.

The destiny of Mlle. Roman-Coupier.

When the last carriage had rolled away, I sat down to work at the horoscope I had promised Mlle. Roman. It told her that fortune awaited her in Paris, where she would be beloved by the king, but that he must see her before her eighteenth birthday, for after that age her destiny would be changed. To invest my prediction with an appearance of veracity, I gave a list of all the most important things which had befallen her up till then, and which I had heard either from herself or from her aunt; the rest I compiled from a calendar and a treatise on astrology. The uncle and M. Morin were immensely struck by it, and I was in hopes they would ask me to escort her to Paris. I am not sure that I was not already calculating the profits which would accrue to me from the enterprise!

The king would fall in love with her at first sight, of that I was convinced; and though at that very moment I should have been jealous of any man, king or commoner, whom she favoured, I knew I should not mind passing her on after a given time.

What gave a really sacred colour to my prophecy was the prediction that a son should be born of her union with Louis who would bring glory and honour to France.

It is impossible to describe the excitement and effervescence of my four friends as they read, re-read, and discussed the marvellous horoscope. Mlle. Roman took it all quite seriously, assuming that she had no say in the matter. She listened anxiously, but said never a word. Morin, observing my gravity, dared not laugh; De Valenglard was excited, and fervently credulous. Madame Morin looked on it as something supernatural, and kept repeating that her niece was certainly more worthy than the fanatical Maintenon of becoming first the mistress, and then the wife of a monarch.

'La Maintenon,' she said, 'would never have been anybody if she had not left America and come to France. If my niece does not go to Paris, the horoscope cannot be accused of untruthfulness. She must go, but how? The journey seems

Digitized by Microsoft®

impossible. I may be no judge, but it seems to me my niece has more chance of winning the affection of a king than Maintenon had. She is young, and a good girl; Maintenon was past her prime, and before she turned pious she had certainly not kept both her legs in one stocking! Still it will all end in smoke; there are too many difficulties in the way.'

'No,' said Valenglard, with a comic gravity; 'no, it will not end in smoke; one must accomplish one's destiny.'

'But,' said the aunt, 'it says that the king must see her before she is eighteen, and she is nearly that now. What are we to do? Where are the hundred louis to come from? The journey will cost quite that. And when she gets to Paris, is she to go to the king and say, "Here I am, sire." And with whom is she to travel? Not with me! If she could once get there, she could go to her Aunt Varnier's, who lives in the Rue Richelieu, and knows everybody in Paris.'

'If you go to Paris,' said I to Mlle. Roman, 'you must not speak of the horoscope to your aunt or any one.'

'I won't speak of it to any one, but I shall never go to Paris, and I shall never see the king. It is all a beautiful dream.'

She wishes to fulfil it.

I took a rouleau of fifty doubloons out of my pocket, and putting them in her hand, told her they were bonbons.

'They are gold!' cried the aunt. 'The money-changer will give you a hundred and fifty louis for them.'

'You must keep them, mademoiselle, and promise to pay them back when you are rich.'

I was sure she would refuse my present, but I admired the way in which she controlled herself, and kept back her tears. We went out into the garden, and I led her away from the others.

'Tell me,' she said, 'are not you teasing me?'

'No, it is serious, but everything depends upon *if*. *If* you do not go to Paris, none of it will come true.'

'You must feel very sure of it, or you would not risk your money. Why should you offer me such a large sum?'

'For the pleasure of furthering your happiness, and in the hope that you will let me love you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'If you love me, I have no need of the King of France. It is not he who can make me happy. If you only knew what I really want——!'

'What do you want?'

'A kind husband to take care of me. Suppose when the king sees me he thinks I am not pretty, but ugly, what then? Besides, if you love me as you say you do, why do you trouble about the king?'

'Because I cannot offer you the position you deserve.'

After this I dared stay no longer with her, and I determined not to push the matter further.

Madame Morin, coming up at that moment, told me she could not allow her niece to take the money; if it was truly her niece's destiny to go to Paris, it could be managed some other way.

'Madame,' said I, 'I am not in a position to make you such propositions as I could wish, and as I do not want to stand in your niece's light, I have decided to leave here to-morrow.'

He leaves Grenoble.

Without fatuity on my part, I think she really cared for me; but it had to be, and I kissed her mother and her and bade them both a sad good-bye.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXVIII

INTERVIEWS WITH THE POPE

I VISITED Avignon, Marseilles, Nice, and stopped some time at Genoa. Thence I went to Pisa, where I made the acquaintance of an Englishman, who sold me his travelling carriage, and introduced me to Corilla, the celebrated poetess. She was good enough to improvise for me on several subjects which I suggested. She charmed me, not so much by her grace and beauty, as by the pretty things she said in the prettiest way.

I lodged in Florence at the Carrajo, in an apartment overlooking the Arno. I bought a carriage, and hired a footman and a coachman, whom I put in Signor de Bragadin's livery, red and blue.

He meets Teresa Lanti, whom he abandoned at Rimini.

Then I cashed a letter of credit, made a toilet, and went to the opera, where I took a stall so as to examine the actresses at my ease. Imagine my surprise when, in the leading singer, I recognised Teresa! Teresa, whom I had known and loved in 1744, when she was travelling disguised as a boy with her pretended mother and brothers, and whom I should certainly have married, had I not been arrested at Pesaro.

I had not seen her for seventeen years, and I had not answered her last letter; but she was as beautiful as ever. Presently, at the end of a song, she looked at me, and never took her eyes off me again. As she left the stage she made a sign to me with her fan. I left my seat, my heart beating wildly; at the back of the stage I saw my Teresa standing,

Digitized by Microsoft®

on the top of a small staircase, telling a porter to let me pass. We faced each other silently for a moment. At last I took her hand and laid it on my heart.

'See!' I said. 'Feel what I feel!'

She answered: 'When I first saw you I thought I should faint. Unfortunately I am engaged to supper to-night, but I shall not be able to sleep for thinking of you afterwards. Come and see me to-morrow morning at eight o'clock. Where do you live? what name do you go under? how long have you been here? how long are you going to stay? are you married? O cursed supper! Go—go, my friend, they are calling me. Farewell, till to-morrow.'

When I returned to my place I remembered she had told me neither her name nor her address. A well-dressed young man was sitting next to me, and I asked him if he could tell who the actress was who was playing *Mandane*.

'You have not been in Florence long, sir,' he answered.

'I have only just arrived.'

'Then your ignorance is excusable. Well, sir, her name is the same as mine, for she is my wife, and I am Cirillo Palesi, at your service.'

I bowed. I did not like to ask where he lived, for fear he should think me impertinent. Teresa married to this handsome young man! And I had addressed myself to him of all people in the world! On leaving the opera I questioned one of the servants, and learned from him that she had only been married ten months, and that her husband had neither fortune nor profession; 'but,' he added, 'she is rich enough for both, rich and most perfectly respectable, so there is nothing to be done there!'

A visit to Teresa.

At break of day I was at the door of the first woman I had ever loved. An old servant came and asked if I was M. Casanova. Madame had told her she expected me.

Presently the young husband appeared in a dressing-gown and nightcap, and politely announced that his wife would be down in a moment; then looking at me fixedly, he said—

Digitized by Microsoft®

'But surely it was you who asked me my wife's name yesterday evening.'

'Quite so, sir; I had not seen her for many years, and did not know she was married. By good luck I addressed myself to her husband. The friendship I feel for her I shall be glad to extend to you, if you will allow me.'

Then in came Teresa. We fell into each other's arms, like two lovers who had been long parted. She told her husband to sit down, and drawing me on to the sofa, cried freely; so did I. When we were calmer, our eyes fell on the poor husband, whom we had forgotten, and who was the picture of comic astonishment. We both burst out laughing, and Teresa, who knew how to manage this puppet, said—

'My dear Palesi, you see before you the man who was a father, and more than a father, to me. To this generous friend I owe everything. O happy hour, for which I have longed for ten years!'

At the name of father, his eyes grew rounder; for Teresa, though perfectly well preserved, was only two years younger than I.

'Yes, sir,' said I, 'your Teresa is my daughter, my sister, my cherished friend. She is an angel, a treasure, and your wife.' Then addressing myself to her: 'I did not answer your last letter because——'

'I know. You were in love with a nun. You were shut up in "The Leads." I heard at Vienna of your marvellous escape. I heard of you in Paris and Holland. It is only lately that I have lost trace of you. When I tell you everything that has happened to me in the last ten years, you will be amused. However, I am happy now. This is my dear Palesi, a Roman, whom I married a short time ago. We love each other dearly, and I hope you will be his friend as you are mine.'

At these words I embraced Palesi. He was awkward, for he did not know what to make of this man who had been father, brother, friend, and perhaps lover of his wife, all in one.

He recovered himself sufficiently to ask me if I would take

Digitized by Microsoft®

a cup of chocolate with them, and when I accepted, he left the room to prepare it himself.

As soon as we were alone, she flung herself into my arms.

'O my dear love, you who made my heart beat for the first time, hold me, hold me to your heart! To-morrow we will be brother and sister, but for to-day let us be lovers only. You must know that I am still in love with my husband, and never mean to deceive him. But I must acquit the debt I owed to you, my first love. Then we will forget everything, except that I am married, and that we are fast friends. You look sad?'

'I find you bound, while I am free. I have come too late. But your will shall be law to me. Only tell me what you wish me to do. I must not speak of the past before your husband, I suppose?'

Her adventures.

'No, he knows nothing of my affairs, beyond what every one knows, that I made my fortune at Naples, where I am supposed to have gone at the age of ten years. It is an innocent deception which does no one any harm. I tell people I am twenty-four; do I look much older?'

'Not a bit, though I know you are thirty-two.'

'You mean thirty-one, for I was fourteen when I knew you.'

'I seem to think you were fifteen.'

'Well, so be it, between ourselves; but tell me, I beg you, can I pass for twenty-four?'

'You look even younger than that.'

'Now tell me, my dear Casanova, do you want money? I am in a position to return you what you gave me, and with interest. Everything I have is settled on me. I have fifty thousand ducats at Naples, and an equal sum in diamonds. Tell me quickly, for the chocolate will be here in a minute.'

I was about to fling myself again into her arms, when the chocolate came. Her husband appeared, followed by a maid, bearing three cups on a silver-gilt tray.

While we were drinking it, Palesi descanted, wittily enough, on his surprise when he recognised the man who had made him

Digitized by Microsoft®

get up so early as the same person who had accosted him at the theatre the night before, and asked him his wife's name. He was too well bred to ask questions as to how, when, and where I had known his wife.

Palesi was only about twenty-three years old. He was fair-haired: much too pretty for a man. He was so gay and entertaining I could not dislike him, even had I desired to do so.

At ten o'clock all the other actors and actresses came in for rehearsal. Teresa received them graciously, and I could see she enjoyed great consideration among them. Two of the actresses remained to dinner, one named Redegonde, and a *figurante* called Corticelli, who was very pretty; but I was too full of Teresa to pay much attention to either.

The Abbé Gama.

After dinner, a little stout abbé, a veritable Tartufe, came in, bowed to Teresa in the Portuguese fashion, and sat down by her. It was the Abbé Gama, whom I had known at Rome. He recognised me and embraced me. He gave me news of old friends, and I was listening with interest, when an unexpected apparition absorbed all my attention. A boy of fifteen or sixteen entered the room, and after saluting the company, kissed Teresa. I was the only one who did not know him, but I was not the only one who looked surprised. Teresa intrepidly presented him to me, saying—

'This is my brother.'

This brother of hers was my living image, if anything a little fairer than I. I knew at once who he was. Nature could not have been more indiscreet.

It seemed to me she might have arranged our meeting without so many witnesses. I tried to catch her eye, but she avoided my glance. The boy was staring at me so hard, he could not listen to what she was saying. People's glances wandered from my face to his. Anybody with eyes in their head must be aware of the youth's parentage.

He spoke the Neapolitan dialect perfectly, but he also spoke Italian, and talked well. His manners were excellent. His mother said that music was his passion.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You shall hear him on the harpsichord,' she said, 'for though he is eight years younger than I am, he plays far better.'

Women are much cleverer than we are at wriggling out of difficult places.

When we were alone, I congratulated Teresa on her good-looking brother.

'He is yours, and the joy of my life. The Duke of Castropignano brought him up. It was he, if you remember, who took me away from Rimini. When the child was born he was sent to Sorrento, where the duke had him baptized by the name of Cæsar Philip Lanti. He stayed at Sorrento till he was nine. He has always looked upon me as his sister, but I used to hope that we should meet again, you and I, and that then you would not refuse to acknowledge him, and marry his mother.'

'And now you have put it out of my power to do so.'

'Alas, yes! fate has ordered it otherwise. When the duke died I left Naples, well off, as you know. Your son possesses a capital of twenty thousand ducats, and if I have no children by Palesi, he will inherit all I have.'

She led me into her bedroom, and opening a coffer showed me some diamonds, and other jewels of value, besides a quantity of fine silver plate.

Césarino.

'Give Césarino to me,' said I. 'I will show him the world.'

'Ah no! Ask me for everything else, but leave me my son. Do you know, I never kiss him for fear I may forget and betray myself. What do you think people will say in Venice when they see Casanova rejuvenated by twenty years?'

'Are you going to take him to Venice for the *Ascenza*?'

'Yes; and you, where are you going?'

'To Rome, and to Naples, to see the Duke of Mantalonia.'

That day was among the happiest of my life, and God knows I have had many happy ones. Césarino won my heart. He was mischievous, lively, charming, as only a Neapolitan can be. He sat down to the harpsichord, and sang Neapolitan

Digitized by Microsoft®

songs which made us die with laughing. Teresa had only eyes for him and for me, but from time to time she caressed her husband, saying—

'There is no happiness except in the company of those one loves best.'

I invited all my friends in Florence to dine with me, and had ordered a sumptuous dinner at my inn. La Corticelli, the pretty *figurante* I have already mentioned, accompanied by her mother and brother, were the first to arrive. The old woman told me that she never allowed her daughter to dine with strangers unless her brother and she were included in the invitation.

'You can take her away then at once,' said I, 'or you can accept this ducat, and go and dine with your son wherever you choose, for I don't want either him or you.'

She took the ducat and went away, saying suavely that she was sure she was leaving her daughter in good hands.

The daughter made such amusing comments on her mother's behaviour directly her back was turned, that I took to her then and there. She was only thirteen, and so slight that she did not look more than ten. She was well made, lively, quick, and extraordinarily fair for an Italian.

Another of my guests was the actress Redegonde, from Parma. She was really the sister of my footman, and it was comical to see the gravity with which the tall fellow stood behind his sister's chair.

He visits Sir Horace Mann at Florence.

I called for Abbé Gama, and we went together to Marshal Botta's to dine. Here I met the English resident, the Chevalier Mann, the idol of Florence. He was very rich and, though English, very amiable, intelligent, and a lover of the arts. I paid him a visit at his house, and saw his beautiful gardens, furniture, pictures, and choice books.

On my return I found a letter from De Valenglard of Grenoble. He said that the pretty Mlle. Roman, determined to verify my prophecy, was now actually in Paris with her aunt.

About this time a Russian named Iwanoff wrote to me

Digitized by Microsoft®

from Pistoia asking me to cash a draft for him in Florence, which city, for certain reasons, he was afraid to visit. He had no money, he said, and could not leave his hotel till he had paid. Scenting trouble, I took a post-chaise and drove out to Pistoia. I advised him to give the bill to his landlord to take to Florence and change at the banker's, Signor Sasso-Sassi.

Imagine my surprise on receiving a visit from the banker a few days later. The bill, it seems, was false. The landlord had been obliged to reimburse the money; he declared he never would have had anything to do with it but for me, and that I must refund him two hundred crowns.

Naturally I refused. The following day I was summoned by the head of the police to appear before him. He was exceedingly polite, but decreed that I must pay the two hundred crowns, as the landlord had agreed to cash it on my recommendation.

He is sent out of Florence.

The upshot of this was, that I was to leave Florence in three days, and Tuscany in six. I could appeal to the Grand Duke, and if he pronounced in my favour, should be allowed to return, but not otherwise.

I wrote on a piece of paper:—

'I bow to your iniquitous decision, but the matter will not end here.'

I said good-bye to Teresa with a heartiness that must have given her poor husband a headache, and left the next day, and in thirty-six hours was in Rome.

Interview with Cardinal Passionei.

Among my letters of introduction was one for Cardinal Passionei. When I presented it, his eminence expressed a wish to hear, from my own lips, the story of my escape from prison.

'The story is a long one, monseigneur,' I answered, as usual.

'So much the better. I am told you are an excellent *raconteur*.'

'But must I sit on the floor while I tell it, monseigneur?'

'Certainly not, your clothes are too good.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

One of his servants brought me a stool without arms or a back. This put me so out of temper that I told my story quickly and badly, in a little quarter of an hour.

'You write better than you speak,' was the cardinal's comment.

'I can only speak well when I am comfortable.'

'And are you not comfortable here?'

'No, monseigneur; no man, and above all, no learned man, could put me out of countenance, but your stool——!'

'You like your ease?'

'Indeed I do!'

'Look, here is my funeral speech on Prince Eugène; I make you a present of it. I hope you will not find my Latin faulty. The Holy Father will give you an audience to-morrow at ten o'clock.'

This was, of course, equivalent to a dismissal.

I determined to make him, the cardinal, a handsome present. I possessed a copy of the *Pandectarum liber unicus*, which had been given me at Berne, and which I did not know what to do with. It was in folio, in perfect condition, beautifully printed and bound. The cardinal would value the book, as he was a collector. This was a fair exchange for his funeral oration, and I hoped that the next time he would give me something better than a stool to sit upon.

First interview with the Pope.

I had known his Holiness the Pope while he was only Bishop of Padua, and after having kissed the sacred cross on his sacred slipper, he laid his hand on my shoulder, and reminded me that I used to always leave his assemblies as soon as he began to say the Rosary.

'Most Holy Father, I have far worse sins than that to reproach myself with, and that is why I have come to prostrate myself at your feet and beg for absolution.'

He gave me his blessing, and asked what he could do for me in Rome.

'Intercede for me that I may return to Venice in safety.'

'We will speak to the ambassador, and let you know what he says. Do you often go to see Cardinal Passionei?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I have been to him three times. He gave me his funeral oration on Prince Eugène, and I sent him the *Pandectes* as a mark of my gratitude.'

'He will send Winckelmann to offer you a price for it.'

'That would be treating me as a bookseller. I won't have it.'

'Then he will return you the volume. We know his ways.'

'If his eminence returns me the volume, I shall return him his oration.'

At this his Holiness began to laugh, and hold his sides.

'We should like to know the end of this, without others being informed of our innocent curiosity.'

After he had said this, an elaborate blessing, full of unction, gave me to understand that the audience was over.

As I left the palace I was accosted by an old abbé, who asked if I were not Signor Casanova, who had escaped from 'The Leads.' I replied that I was he.

'Heaven be praised,' said he, 'that I see you in good health.'

'To whom have I the honour of speaking?'

'Don't you know me? I am Momolo, the Venetian boatman, and many a time have I taken you in my gondola.'

'You have become a priest since then?'

'Not at all, but the cassock is everybody's uniform here. I am principal *scopatore* (sweeper) of our Holy Father the Pope.'

'I congratulate you, but you must not mind my laughing.'

'Laugh away. My wife and daughter laugh each time they see me in my habit and cape. Come and see us; here is our address, behind the Trinità dei Monti.'

The Abbé Winckelmann called on me, told me I had entirely won the good graces of the cardinal by my present, for the book was a rare one, and in better condition than the copy in the Vatican library, adding—

'The cardinal wishes me to ask what he owes you for it.'

'Nothing; I am not a bookseller. The volume was given to me, and I can only part with it on the same terms.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'He will return it.'

'He is at liberty to do so if he chooses, but if he does, I shall return his oration. I will accept nothing from a person who refuses a present from me.'

The next day, back came my book. I immediately sent the cardinal his sermon, with a note, saying I had found it a masterpiece, though I had only had time to glance through it.

A supper with the Holy Sweeper.

In the evening I went with my brother John to see Momolo, the *scopatore santissimo.* He had an elderly wife, four daughters, the eldest of whom was twenty-four, and two sons, all desperately ugly. Though the poor man was only paid two hundred Roman crowns a year, he insisted on our staying to supper.

'On condition,' said I, 'that you will let me send to my house for six flagons of Orvieto wine.'

I despatched a note to my secretary Costa, and he by and by appeared with the wine and a glazed ham.

I saw the girls admired Costa, so I asked if he might make one of the party. Costa went into the kitchen and helped mother Momolo to fry the polenta.

A large table was covered with a clean cloth, and we sat down to two enormous dishes of polenta, and a huge saucepan full of pork cutlets. We had just begun when some one knocked at the door.

The four girls made a face.

'It is Maria and her mother,' one of them said. 'Who asked them to come, I wonder? They might have stayed at home.'

'They are always poking their noses in,' said another.

'My children,' said the good old father, 'they are hungry, and they shall share what we have.'

Good old Momolo rose from table and opened the door to the two guests. A very pretty girl came in, followed by her mother. Both seemed ashamed of their importunity, and said timidly they would not have taken the liberty of coming had they known there were strangers there.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The good Momolo told them they had done quite right, and placed chairs for them between my brother and myself. I looked at Maria and saw that she was charming.

Mariuccia.

Every one began to eat; the polenta was excellent, the cutlets delicious, the ham perfect. In less than an hour the table was cleared. We began to talk about the lottery; the girls had all a small share in some number. Mariuccia said if she had anything to risk she would put it on number twenty-seven.

'Here are forty crowns,' said I to Momolo; 'put twenty on twenty-seven in five parts, which I will present to the young ladies, and put twenty on one part, which I will keep for myself.'

I shook hands on leaving with my pretty neighbour, and from that moment I knew what would happen.

My brother told me on the way home that, unless I was as rich as Crœsus, I must be quite mad. I said I was neither one nor the other, but that Mariuccia was lovely, and he agreed.

I supped with the painter Mengs next day. He had a sister living with him, who was violently in love with my brother. She was good and full of talent, but very ugly, so he did not reciprocate. Mengs' wife was pretty, a good mother, and devoted to her husband, though he was anything but amiable. He was obstinate and cruel, and when he dined at home, never left the table sober. Away from home he drank nothing but water. His wife posed for all his nude figures. When I asked her once how she could undertake such hard work, she answered that her confessor had imposed it on her as a duty; 'for,' he said, 'if your husband had another woman as model, who knows what might happen, and the sin would lie at your door.'

The next day I went again to pay my court to the Pope.

'The Venetian ambassador tells me,' he said, 'that you must present yourself to the secretary of the Tribunal if you want to return to your country.'

'Holy Father, I am prepared to do so, if your Holiness will

Digitized by Microsoft®

give me a letter of recommendation. I dare not risk being shut up a second time.'

'You have a very handsome coat on. You did not put it on to say your prayers in.'

'True, Holy Father, nor to go to a ball in either.'

'We have heard the story of your exchange of books with Cardinal Passionei. Own that you pampered your own self-love, somewhat!'

'Yes, and I also humbled a greater arrogance than my own.'

He laughed, and I begged him to allow me to present the *Pandectes* to the Vatican library. A benediction was my only answer, but in papal language this means, 'Rise, this favour is granted you.'

'We will send you,' he said, 'a mark of our particular affection.' Then another benediction told me I was dismissed.

I was curious to know what form the mark of particular affection would take, and fearful lest it should prove to be a blessed rosary, which I should not have known what to do with.

While we were at dinner that day Costa brought in the winning numbers of the lottery; twenty-seven had come out fifth, and a prizewinner.

I went to tell Monolo the good news, but found all the girls looking gloomy, for I had presented my ticket to Mariuccia, and she had consequently won five times as much as they had. They cheered up, however, and we supped again on polenta and pork. On leaving the house I managed to ask Mariuccia if she could not give me a moment's interview. She told me to meet her next morning at eight o'clock outside the Trinità dei Monti.

Mariuccia was tall, as white as a white rose leaf, with blue veins that showed here and there. She had ash-coloured hair and blue eyes. She was only eighteen.

She had told me not to speak to her in the street, so I followed her till she came to an immense building that was falling to ruin. Up and up she went, till she reached the

Digitized by Microsoft®

He meets Mariuccia among the ruins of Rome.

top of a staircase, which seemed built out into the air; here she sat down and I beside her, and made her a declaration of love.

'Tell me what I can do for you,' said I, 'for I want above all things to make you happy.'

'Take me out of the misery in which I live with my mother, a good woman, but so devout as to make my life a burden to me. She doesn't like me to wash myself, because I have to touch my body with my own hand, and also because cleanliness makes me more pleasing to men. If you had given me the money I won in the lottery as a present, she would have made me refuse it. There is a young man, a hairdresser, who has seen me at Momolo's. He says if I had a dowry of four hundred crowns he would marry me and open a shop. I told him I was poor, that I had only a hundred crowns, which my confessor keeps for me; but now I have two hundred, and you can give me two hundred more. Take the money to my confessor, who is a good man, and will not tell my mother.'

'I will take them to him to-day, but to-morrow you must come and see me and hear how I have prospered. I will tell you this evening where I live.'

I left the hovel of a palace where we were as the clock struck nine. I was shivering with cold, and had only one idea in my head—to take an apartment somewhere where I could receive her without its being known. In a small narrow street, inhabited entirely by poor people, I found a room which was tolerably clean. I paid the woman of the house three months in advance, and gave her money to buy furniture, and, above all, fuel. I ordered her to light a big fire and keep it burning whether I was there or not.

I then went off to the priest. He was a French monk, about sixty years old.

'Reverend Father,' said I, 'I met at the house of Momolo, the *scopatore santissimo*, a young girl named Maria, whose confessor you are, with whom I fell in love. I offered her money. She told me that, instead of trying to ruin her, I should

Digitized by Microsoft®

do far better if I helped her to marry an honest fellow who would make her happy. I told her I would give her mother two hundred crowns for her. She begged me not to do so, as her mother would believe the money was the price of her sin. She asked me to bring it to you instead. Here it is; will you take charge of it? I shall go to Naples the day after to-morrow, and I hope when I come back I shall find her married.'

Mariuccia is disposed of.

The honest priest took the money, telling me he had known Maria for five years.

'She is as innocent and pure as a dove,' he said. 'Her mother is a saint, and as soon as I have made some inquiries about the young man, I will arrange the marriage, and no one shall know of it.'

At eight o'clock next morning I met Maria at the church, and she followed me to my lodgings. She was shy, and confused, and humble. I soon reassured her, and told her that her marriage was a settled thing. She left me, thanked me with all her heart for what I had done for her, and begged me to believe that, though she was poor, and I generous, she nevertheless loved me for my own sake.

While I was at table that day a messenger from the Holy Father was announced. He remitted to me the Cross of the Order of the Golden Spur, with the diploma and patent sealed with the great pontifical seal; therein my quality of doctor of civil law declared me *protonotaire apostolique extra urbem.*

I had nothing to pay for my diploma, whereas Mengs had given twenty-five Roman crowns for his. I hung my cross on a wide crimson ribbon over my shoulder. I was silly and vain enough to buy a cross set with rubies and diamonds, but I never dared to wear this one at Rome. When I went to thank the Pope, I wore the plain cross modestly at my button-hole.

Five years later, when I was in Warsaw, Czartoryski, the Russian prince palatine, asked me why I sported that miserable thing. 'It is a rag,' he said, 'which only charlatans wear.'

The Popes know this, yet they continue to give this decoration to ambassadors, who hand it on to their valets.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Momolo's second daughter had fallen in love with my secretary Costa. I told him that, if on my return from Naples I found the marriage arranged, I would defray the expenses of the wedding.

He loved the girl, but he did not marry her then, for he thought I had designs on her; he was a rare fool, though there are plenty like him. He married her the following year, after he had robbed me; but I will speak of that later.

Journey to Naples.

The next day I went off in my fine carriage with the Abbé Alfani, who was willing to act as my secretary, preceded by le Duc on horseback, and arrived at Naples to find the whole population in a commotion, for Vesuvius was all but in eruption. At the last station but one the postmaster insisted on reading me his father's will. The good man had died during the outbreak of 1754, and he said that God was reserving a still severer punishment for the wicked city, and that this punishment would fall during the winter of 1761. I calmly went on my way and paid my respects to the Duke of Matalonia, whom I had known in Paris. He came forward to meet me, embraced me, and presented me to his wife. She was a daughter of the Duke of Bovino's. I told him I had come to Naples on purpose to see him. 'Then,' he said, 'you must be my guest'; and before I could reply, 'Go,' said he to a servant, 'fetch Signor Casanova's luggage from the hotel, and if he has a private carriage, put it in the coach-house here.' He added, 'Do you know that I have a son?' The child was sent for, and I duly admired him, saying how like he was to the duke. A monk, who was sitting at the right hand of the duchess, remarked that the boy was not in the least like the duke. He had hardly pronounced the words when the duchess turned quickly round and boxed his ears. The monk received his correction with a good grace. I kept the whole table in a roar with my witticisms, and in half an hour was a favourite with every one except the duchess, who cut the ground from under my feet whenever she could. She was beautiful but too haughty, and could be deaf, dumb, and

The Duke of Matalonia.

Digitized by Microsoft®

blind when she wished. For two days I tried to make her speak, and then gave it up in despair.

Next day the duke took me with him to pay my court to the king. I wore a coat of rose-coloured velvet, embroidered with gold spangles, and the signal honour of kissing a little nine-year-old hand covered with chilblains was mine.

On my return to Rome I sent Costa to inform Momolo that I meant to sup at his house, and that I had ordered a good supper for twelve people. I knew I should meet Mariuccia then, for Momolo had noticed that I delighted in her company.

The carnival in Rome in 1760.

The carnival was just beginning. I hired a superb landau for the week. This make of carriage is much favoured by the Romans, who love to be drawn up and down the Corso, from eight in the evening till midnight, during the eight days the festival lasts.

Carnival time has been a period of licensed madness for centuries. The races are the oddest part of the entertainment. Barbary horses gallop riderless through the streets to Trajan's column. The carriages are drawn up in close file on each side, and the footways are crowded with masks and sightseers of all classes. As soon as the *barberi* have passed, the carriages circulate slowly, and the masks, afoot or on horseback, press into the middle of the roadway. People pelt each other with real or imitation sweetmeats; pamphlets and lampoons, satirical allusions, fly from mouth to mouth. The greatest licence reigns, for this mob is composed of all that is most exquisite and all that is most abject in Rome. At the stroke of midnight the cannon of the fort of Saint Angelo announces the retreat, and in five minutes not a carriage or a mask is to be seen. The crowd has trooped off to fill the theatres and the opera, to see the rope-dancers and the marionettes. The restaurants and cafés are not forgotten, for during these eight days all Rome eats, drinks, and rejoices.

Momolo and his family received me with cries of joy, and after I had been with them a few minutes Maria came in,

Digitized by Microsoft®

followed by her saintly mother, who told me I must not be surprised to see her daughter so gorgeously dressed, for she was going to be married in three or four days. Of course I congratulated her, and asked who was the happy man.

'A young man who is going to open a hairdresser's shop. Worthy Father Saint-Barnaby arranged the marriage; he has made up Maria's dowry of four hundred crowns from a fund he has at his disposal.'

In the course of the evening I told the girls that Costa would take them to the races the following day in my landau, and that they might choose themselves some dress from the costumier, for which I would pay.

'And what about Maria?' one of them asked.

'Signorina Maria is going to be married. She must not be seen in public without her future spouse.'

The cunning Mariuccia pretended to be vexed at this speech, which her mother loudly applauded.

The next morning at seven o'clock I was at our usual trysting-place. Maria followed me, and we were alone in our little humble room that Love glorified for us. In the course of the interview she told me she was to be married on the following Monday.

'When shall we see each other again, my angel?'

'On Sunday, the eve of my wedding-day. We can be together for a long time,' she said, and went away smiling.

On my way home I met a carriage drawn by four horses, going at a great rate. A young man, who was inside, called out my name, and bade the coachman stop.

Lord Lismore and his mother.

I recognised Lord Talon.[1] I had known him in Paris. He was the son of the Countess of Lismore. This lady was separated from her husband, and lived with Monseigneur de Saint-Albin,[2] one of the bastards of Philip of Orléans, Regent

[1] There is no such English or Irish title.

[2] Son of the Regent and the actress La Florence. His father, however, did not own him till towards the end of his regency. The child was brought up by Coche, the Regent's *valet de chambre*. He took holy orders, and was made Archbishop of Cambray.

Digitized by Microsoft®

of France, and the unworthy successor of the great Fénelon in the archbishopric of Cambrai.

Lord Talon was a man of the most unbridled passions, and given over to every form of vice. I knew that his fortune was not equal to his title, and was astonished to see him in such a turn-out, and wearing the blue ribbon. He told me he was going to dine with the Pretender, but that he would sup at home, where he invited me to join him.

I was pleased to see the poet Poinsinet there,[1] a tiny little man, ugly, lively, and amusing, of some dramatic talent.

'What are you doing in Rome?' said I, 'and where is Lord Talon?'

'In the next room; but he is not Lord Talon any longer. His father is dead, and he is the Earl of Lismore. You know he is attached to the Pretender's suite. I left Paris with him, glad enough to get to Rome without its costing me anything.'

'Then he is rich now?'

'Not yet, but he will be, for his father has left an immense fortune. It is true that all his estates have been confiscated, but they will be restored to him.'

'Then he is only rich in prospect. But how has he become a knight of the Order of the King of France?'

'You are joking. What he wears is the blue ribbon of the Order of Saint Michael, of which the late Elector of Cologne was Grand Master. My lord, who is an accomplished violinist, was at Bonn, and played a concerto of Tartini's to the elector, who conferred the ribbon on him as a mark of his satisfaction.'

The orgy at Lord Lismore's.

We found my lord in the supper-room with a numerous company: seven or eight women, all handsome; three or four men who were to play women's parts in the Roman theatres; and five or six abbés, more impudent and immodest than the girls themselves. These girls were not, strictly speaking,

[1] Poinsinet obtained a certain reputation for his plays, but a greater one for his *naïveté* and innocence. He was the favourite butt and dupe of all the practical jokers of his time. Thackeray thought fit to devote many pages to him in his *Paris Sketch Book.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

courtesans. They were *dilettanti* in music, painting, and obscene philosophy. I was, I say, a mere novice among them.

'Where are you going, Prince?' asked Lismore of a good-looking man who was making for the door.

'I am not very well, my lord. I must get out in the air.'

'Who is that prince?' I asked of Poinsinet.

'The Prince of Chimay. He is a sub-deacon; but as his family is nearly extinct, he is soliciting permission to marry.'

We sat down, twenty-four, and it is a fact that we emptied a hundred bottles of wine. Every one was drunk, except myself and Poinsinet; the latter only drank water. And then began an orgy such as I had never dreamt of. No pen could describe it; only the most debauched imagination could conceive it. The only effect the scene produced on me was a deep sense of disgust and degradation. Fortunately, for myself as well as others, they did not try to drag me into their antics. My life was in danger, for I should certainly have drawn my sword had Lismore, who was furiously drunk, attempted to treat me as he did poor Poinsinet. I left the house, glad to have escaped so easily; and though I promised to respond to any future invitation, I was firmly resolved never to cross the threshold again.

Lismore came to see me next day, and we went to the Villa Medici together. I congratulated him on having come into his fortune, but he laughed, and said he had not fifty piastres in the world; his father had left nothing but debts, and he himself owed three or four thousand crowns.

'I am surprised that the people here trust you.'

'They trust me because they know I have drawn a bill of exchange on Paris for two hundred thousand francs. In four or five days the bill will come back protested, but I shall be off before then.'

'If you are sure that it will be protested, you had better leave to-day. As it is for an important sum, they may anticipate its arrival by an express.'

'I have just one faint hope,' he explained. 'I wrote to my

Digitized by Microsoft®

mother that if she cannot pay the money into the bank on which I have drawn the bill, I am a lost man. You know she is very much attached to me.'

'Yes, but I also know she is far from rich.'

'M. de Saint-Albin is, though, and *entre nous* I believe he is my father. In the meanwhile my creditors are quiet enough. Those people you saw at my house last night would give me all they have if I asked them, but I won't abuse their confidence. The only person I shall cheat is a Jew, who wants me to pay him three thousand sequins for this ring, which is only worth a thousand.'

'He will follow you wherever you go.'

'I defy him to.'

The ring was a solitaire straw-coloured diamond of nine or ten carats. Lismore left me, begging me to keep his counsel. This extravagant rattle-pate in no way excited my pity. I looked on him as a man doomed to expiate the punishment he was laying up for himself, unless indeed he had the courage to blow out his brains.

At Momolo's I saw the affianced husband of my pretty Mariuccia. He was talking to Tecla, Momolo's daughter, telling her that she was the one he preferred, only that she had not been able to help him to start the shop, so he thanked Providence that he had come across Maria.

On Sunday at seven I met Maria alone for the last time. Everything was arranged for the wedding, she told me, and Father Saint-Barnaby had given her twenty piastres for a present.

'I know I shall be happy,' she said; 'my betrothed adores me. But I am glad you did not accept his invitation to the dinner; people would have talked.'

'Tell me,' said I, 'have you confessed everything?'

'Not yet; and besides, I don't think I can have offended God, since I acted throughout from the purest of motives.'

'You are an angel. Promise to christen your first child after me.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

She promised, and we parted swearing everlasting friendship.

Before leaving Rome I went to pay my homage to the Holy Father on Monday evening when all the town was at the races.

He received me most graciously, expressing surprise that I should have absented myself from the carnival at its height. I told him that the greatest pleasure for me, or for any other Christian, was to present my respects to Christ's Vicar on earth. He bowed his head with proud humility, but I could see he was pleased. He kept me an hour, talking of Venice, Padua, and Paris. I gathered that the dear good man would have liked to become personally acquainted with those cities. I renewed my petition for his apostolic protection to enable me to return to my native country.

'My son,' he answered, 'commend yourself to God; His grace will work more than my prayers.'

Then giving me his blessing, he wished me *bon voyage*, and I saw the Head of the Church did not count much on his own powers of intercession.

On Shrove Tuesday I went on the Corso, riding a fine horse, and handsomely disguised as a Punchinello. I had an enormous basket of sweetmeats in front of me, and two sacks of *dragées*, which I showered on all the pretty women. I was invited to sup at Momolo's, and there I was to see Maria for the last time. She came as a bride, and I fancied, but perhaps it was only fancy, that her husband was more reserved with me than formerly. Maria managed to have a moment's conversation with me alone, and spoke most highly of her husband. He was all that was gentle, loving, and kind, she said, and she meant to make him happy. I drew from my pocket a fine gold watch, which I gave to the hairdresser; then placing on his wife's finger a ring, worth at least six hundred francs, I wished them both health and happiness.

Last meeting with Mariuccia.

As I was dressing next morning I received a note from Lord Lismore, begging an interview.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He showed me a letter from his mother. In it she told him that the banker, Paris de Monmartel, had informed her that a bill had been drawn on him for two hundred thousand francs by her son, and he begged her to deposit the money. She had replied that she would let him know in three or four days whether she could do so or not, but she warned Lismore she had only asked for this delay so as to give him time to get to some place of safety, as it was absolutely impossible for her to meet the bill.

Lord Lismore's distress.

'You must disappear at once,' said I.

'Help me to do so; buy this ring of me. You would not know it is not mine if I had not told you.'

I took the ring to a jeweller.

'I know this stone,' he said, 'it is worth ten thousand Roman crowns.'

At four o'clock I took Lismore five hundred crowns in gold, and fifteen hundred in notes on a banker in Amsterdam.

'I will ride away as soon as it is dark,' he said. 'I will take nothing with me but a small portmanteau containing a few necessaries, and my dear blue ribbon.'

Ten days after I had the diamond re-set at Bologna.

The disappearance of Lord Lismore made a sensation. The English tailor was ruined, the Jew who owned the ring was in despair, all the crazy fellow's servants were turned out of doors almost naked, for the tailor had seized their liveries.

Poor little Poinsinet came to me in a terrible state; he had only one shirt and a riding-coat over it, the landlord had taken everything else.

'I haven't a sou in the world,' said the poor votary of the Muses. 'I haven't another shirt to my back, and I know no one. I feel like jumping into the Tiber.'

I soothed his grief by offering to take him with me to Florence. I warned him I should leave him there. He said he had friends there, and his spirits rose so at my proposition that ten minutes after it was made he was writing verses at my table, where he remained busy till we left. My brother

Digitized by Microsoft®

John gave me a beautiful onyx: it was a cameo representing Venus at the bath. It was a veritable antique; with the aid of a magnifying glass I could read the name of the sculptor, Sostratus, who flourished twenty-three centuries ago. Two years later I sold it in London to Dr. Marti, who gave me three hundred pounds for it. He presented it to the British Museum, where no doubt it is at this moment.

Return to Florence.

We arrived, after two days' travelling, at Florence. I at once went to see Sir Horace Mann, the English resident, but I read consternation not pleasure on his face, when I told him my affair with the police was still unsettled. He told me I was foolish to return to Florence, and that he should be seriously compromised if I stayed at his house. I told him I was merely passing through, and returned to my hotel. I had not been there an hour, when a police agent came, and told me the auditor wished to see me next morning.

Sir Horace Mann is not pleased to see him.

I determined to leave rather than obey, and gave orders for my carriage to be ready at daybreak. I called on my dear Teresa, but she was at Pisa; La Corticelli, however, was at home, and welcomed me with kisses, and all sorts of Bolognese antics. She knew how to make me laugh, but I never cared for her seriously. A sudden fancy seized me. I told La Corticelli to come back to the inn with me; there I ordered a post-chaise and horses, and without more ado we set off for Bologna, leaving instructions for le Duc and Costa to follow in my carriage, and to bring Corticelli's mother and brother along with them.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXIX

TO BOLOGNA, MODENA, PARMA, TURIN, AND CHAMBÉRY

He runs away with La Corticelli.

La Corticelli was wrapped in a warm quilted mantilla, but the madman who was carrying her off had not even a cloak, and it was piercingly cold, and we were going in the teeth of the wind in an open chaise.

But I would not stop anywhere along the road for fear we should be overtaken, and obliged to go back. Whenever the postillion showed signs of slackening his pace, I promised him additional pay, which made him whip up as though the devil had been behind him. I thought at times he should be blown over the Apennines. I was chilled to the very marrow. The postillions thought I was a prince running off with an heiress; we heard them discussing it while they were changing horses. This amused La Corticelli so much, that she was in fits of laughter all the way. In five hours we covered forty miles; we had left Florence at eight o'clock, and one hour after midnight we arrived at a post-house belonging to the Pope. I had no more cause to fear. Every one was asleep, but we made such a noise at the door that in a few minutes we had the landlord and the servants out of bed. They lighted a fire, but said there was nothing to eat in the house. I told the host I would rummage the larder myself if he did not find me something, and he went off grumbling, to return with eggs, butter, macaroni, and ham. We made an excellent supper, and eat like wolves, and drank chianti and monte pulciano;

Digitized by Microsoft®

then we were shown into a room, containing a bed big enough for six.

At Bologna.

We slept till one in the afternoon, and as we were sitting down to dinner my carriage drew up. Behind it was a two-horse *calèche*, containing an old woman and a young man.

'Here's mamma,' cried La Corticelli, 'now we shall have some fun.'

In came the Signora Laura, like a whirlwind.

'I had prepared supper for you, as you had ordered,' she said, 'six bottles of wine, which you will have the goodness to pay for, for I am a poor woman. I waited, and waited in vain; I was in despair. At midnight I sent my son to the inn; imagine my distress when I heard that you had gone, but no one knew where. Not one wink did I sleep all night, I did nothing but cry. In the morning I went to the justice of the peace, and told him you had eloped with my daughter, and I begged him to send after you and arrest you, but the brute only laughed at me. "Why did you let her go out alone?" he said. "She is in good hands, and you know all about him!" I found your valet, who told me you had gone to Bologna. I came after you as quickly as I could, and here I am; now let me tell you, sir, that this is beyond a joke.'

I believe that the woman, mercenary hypocrite as she was, had been really alarmed, so I soothed her as well as I could, and promised to pay her expenses and give her a present over and above, and after a while she quieted down. She finally went back to Florence, leaving her daughter in my care.

I spent eight days at Bologna with La Corticelli. When mid-Lent came I bade her farewell; she had an engagement as second dancer at Prague. I promised to fetch her thence, and take her to Paris with her mother; and I went on to Modena, where I arrived the evening of my departure from Bologna, and one of those sudden caprices, to which I have always been subject, decided me to make a stay of at least a few days there.

I went to visit next day a picture-gallery, and when I came

Digitized by Microsoft®

back I found an official waiting to see me. He brought me an order from the government to go on at once, or at most only to remain one night longer in Modena. I sent for my landlord, and made the official repeat the intimation in his presence.

He is ill received at Modena.

'Now go,' said I. I questioned my host, and he said the man was in the police sent by the *borgello.*

'Is the *borgello* governor of Modena?'

'The nobility know him; they even dine with him, for he is the manager of the opera, and they like to be in his good books. You had better go and see him, you will find him quite amiable.'

Instead of going to see the scoundrel, however, I called on my old friend, the Abbé Testa-Grossa, whom I had known in Vienna in 1753. He was a man of humble birth, but much intellect; he was old enough to rest on his laurels. The Duc de Modena had covered him with honours. He received me most kindly, but shook his head as soon as he heard of my adventure.

'You must leave the town,' he said, 'for this man may put a still greater slight on you.'

'I will go, but will you kindly explain to me this extraordinary proceeding.'

'The *borgello*,' he answered, 'has probably seen your name on the list of arrivals and departures, which is submitted to him every evening. He remembered that you had the hardihood to escape from "The Leads," and as he disapproves of such a proceeding, he determined to rid Modena of such a bad example.'

'I accept the explanation, but tell me, do you not blush to call yourself a subject of the Duke of Modena? What a disgraceful state of affairs, and how contrary to morality!'

He agreed with me, and we parted.

As I was getting into my carriage next morning, a sturdy-looking fellow, from twenty-five to thirty years of age, came up, and politely asked me for a moment's private conversation.

'If you will stay three days at Parma,' he said, 'and give

Digitized by Microsoft®

me your word of honour to pay me fifty sequins when I give you proof positive that the *borgello* is dead, I will shoot him for you before he is twenty-four hours older.'

'Thank you, but I think we must let the animal die a natural death. Here is a crown to drink to my health.'

I am thankful now that I refused his offer, but I must own that had I felt sure he was not laying a trap for me, I should have promised him the fifty sequins. It was prudence alone which kept me from committing a crime.

He flies to Parma.

I went to Parma next day, and put up at the Hôtel de la Poste, under the name of the Chevalier de Seingalt, a name which I still bear. A man is perfectly free to adopt any name he likes, so long as it does not belong to any one else. I had used the name for some two years, but generally joined to my own family name.

At Parma I dismissed my valet Costa, but to my sorrow took him back a week later; his father was a poor violin-player, as I had been myself, and had a numerous family to support. My Spaniard, le Duc, was delighted when I sent Costa away, and correspondingly grieved when I re-engaged him.

'He is not a rake,' he said, 'and is sober, and avoids bad company; but I believe he is a thief, and the more dangerous because he pretends to be scrupulously honest in trifles. Remember what I say, sir, when he robs you; he is only waiting for a chance to make a big haul. I am different. I am a bit of a scoundrel, as you know, but honest in the main.'

He was more sharp-sighted than I was, for six months after Costa stole fifty thousand crowns from me. Twenty-three years passed before I saw him again; he was then valet to Count Hardegg, and I was sorely tempted to have him hanged. I proved to him that I could easily do so, but he begged me with tears and prayers to have pity on him. When I asked him what he had done with the money and jewels he took from me, he told me he had lost all in a gambling-house which he had set up; the year he left me he married Momolo's daughter, and deserted her and her child.

Digitized by Microsoft®

At Turin I found the Abbé Gama, and we lodged in the same house. He told me that in the month of May I should be furnished with letters of credit, and sent on a political mission to Augsburg, where the ministers of the belligerent Powers would be in conference. The idea of this mission pleased me mightily, and I assured him I should be ready.

He goes to Turin.

Turin is the city above all others where the fair sex is most charming, and where the police are the most in the way. The town is small and densely populated, and full of spies.

Désarmoises, whom I had known at Aix, was in Turin, and naturally constituted himself my guide. One very pretty girl attracted my attention. When I asked him who she was, he said: 'That is the famous Lia, a Jewess of invincible virtue; the most fascinating men in Turin have laid siege to her in vain. Her father is a well-known horse-dealer, and it is not difficult to gain entry to his house; but there is nothing to be done.'

The Jewess Lia.

The more difficult the enterprise, the more I longed to undertake it.

I went with Désarmoises to the horse-dealer's, and asked him if he had a good saddle-horse. While he was talking his daughter appeared; she was about twenty-two, tall and slim, with superb black hair, and a complexion of lilies and roses. Absorbed in the contemplation of her charms, I did not even see the horse which was brought up for my inspection, nevertheless I pretended to examine it very closely. I had it trotted, and then galloped up and down; finally, I told the dealer I would come next day and try it myself. It was a fine dapple-grey, and worth about a hundred sequins.

'He is very quiet,' said Lia; 'and if I were rich I would not sell him.'

'You have ridden him then, mademoiselle? I should like to see you mount him to-morrow.'

The following morning I found her attired in the dress of a postillion, and we went for a long ride together. On our return I told her that I would buy the horse, but only to make her a present of it. She thanked me modestly for my present,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and begged me to repeat my offer in her father's presence. Old Moses found the bargain to his liking; and after having taken my money, and given me a receipt for it, invited me to breakfast with them next day.

After breakfast, Moses, who was as avaricious as the rest of his nation, offered to sell me a phaeton and pair.

'You had better show them to the gentleman,' said Lia.

Without a word Moses left the room.

'I will look at them,' I said, 'but I shall not buy them, for I have no use for them.'

'You can take the lady you love for a drive.'

'That would be you, then; but perhaps you would not dare to come.'

'Why not, in the country?'

'Very well, Lia, I will look at them.'

'You can have them for four hundred sequins, if you buy them now,' said Moses; 'but after Easter the price will be five hundred.'

Lia got in, and I took my place beside her. I told her I would buy them, but only on condition she would accept them, and give me her love in return.

'You are frank,' she said, 'so am I. I am a respectable girl, and not to be bought.'

'All women are to be bought, my dear Lia, only their price varies; with some it is a matter of time and attention; but I am in a hurry, so I offer presents and gold.' I promised her father I would think the matter over, and give him an answer in a day or two. It was easy to see that Lia took me for a spendthrift, a dupe, but I had no intention of spending money, unless I was sure of its equivalent.

Lia dupes him.

I remained away for nearly a week, then the wily Jewess, meeting me in Turin, beguiled me back to her home. She laid her traps so well that I parted with three hundred and eighty sequins, and became the possessor of the carriage, without having obtained the smallest favour in return. I was so cross with her, that I swore I would never see her again, and sold

Digitized by Microsoft®

phaeton and horses to the Chevalier de Brézé for thirty sequins less than I gave for them.

About this time I became acquainted with a Madame R., a fashionable milliner and dressmaker, who had several pretty girls in her employ. Following her advice, I hired a small furnished house outside the city, where for some time I amused myself very well indeed; but the cursed Jewess, coming into the shop one day, I fell again under her spell, and bought all the lace, gloves, and silk on which she cast covetous eyes. She accepted my presents graciously, and invited me to accompany her to a Jewish wedding. As Jews are not allowed to show themselves in the streets of Turin during Holy Week, I invited Moses and his daughter to spend that period with me, and entertained them most lavishly. The old man had a ring he wanted to sell me for six hundred sequins, but I was too sharp for him, and told him I would talk about it with Lia, when he was busy with his affairs. He went off, leaving us alone in the house, and this time the bargain was satisfactorily concluded. Lia evidently expected me to present her with the ring, but I preferred to see it on my own finger.

On Easter Monday morning, I was summoned to appear before the head of the police.

He is summoned to appear before the head of the police at Turin.

This functionary I found seated at a long table, with about twenty other persons standing round him. He was a man of some sixty years or so, of most sovereign ugliness, his enormous nose half eaten away by an ulcer, and covered with black plaster. He had a wide coarse mouth, and little cat's eyes, surmounted by thick white eyebrows. This disgusting individual addressed me.

'You are the Chevalier de Seingalt?'

'That is my name. In what can I be of service to you?'

'I have sent for you to inform you that you must leave Turin within three days.'

'And as I do not admit your right to give the order, I reply that I shall stay as long as I please.'

'I shall have you turned out of the town by force.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Good. I shall not resist, but I advise you to think twice. One cannot, with impunity, turn any man out in a well-governed city when he is not breaking the law in any way, and when he has a hundred thousand francs deposit at his banker.'

'May be, but you have three days' time to pack up your baggage and withdraw your money from the bank. You had better obey; it is the king's command.'

'As you mention his majesty's name, I shall appeal at once to him, and feel sure he will deny all knowledge of your unjust proceedings.'

'You reason well, but you will have to obey.'

'Yes, I reason well, no thanks to you, and I shall not obey.'

With these words I turned on my heel, and left the room. I was furious, but after an instant's reflection, I went off to the Chevalier Raiberti and told him the whole story. He advised me to address myself to the Chevalier Osorio, minister of foreign affairs, who was a Sicilian, and a man of intelligence. He received me very well, and promised to speak to the king for me. The upshot was, I received permission to remain in Turin as long as was necessary for me to finish my business.

'But,' I objected to Signor Osorio, 'I have no business here, beyond amusing myself and spending my money, while waiting for instructions from the Portuguese Court, for I am to represent his Most Christian Majesty at the Congress of Augsburg.'

'Do you really believe the Congress will take place?'

'Can any one doubt it?'

'Some people think it will end in smoke. However, I am glad to have been of use to you, and shall like to hear how the head of the police likes your victory.'

This functionary received me with an impassable face.

'I am told,' he said, 'by Chevalier Osorio, that you have business which will keep you here some time; be so good as to tell me how many days will be necessary for you to arrange your affairs.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I cannot say, I am waiting for instructions from Portugal; nevertheless, I think I shall be able to leave for Paris in about a month. If that is not long enough, I shall have the honour of informing you.'

I remained in Turin until the middle of May, having received through Gama a letter for Lord Stormont, who was to represent England at the Augsburg Congress. It was with this nobleman that I was to act in regard to my mission.

As I wanted to see Madame d'Urfé before going to Germany, I wrote to her for a letter of introduction to M. de Rochebaron, of Lyons, at the same time informing her of my plans.

He visits Madame Morin at Grenoble.

And as I intended to pass through Chambéry on my way to Paris, I wrote to Madame Morin, reminding her of her promise to introduce me to the convent where her niece, my charming M. M. number two, was incarcerated. She replied that she was at my disposition any day I would send a carriage for her. She arrived, and was preceded by le Duc, who announced their coming with much cracking of his whip.

The first piece of news she gave me was that Mlle. Roman[1] had become the favourite of Louis Quinze, that she lived in a beautiful house at Passy, and that she expected

[1] Needless to say, contemporary accounts of this lady make no mention of Casanova as the occasion of her introduction to the King of France. It happened quite otherwise. Anne, who according to her birth certificate, dated 20th June 1737, was the daughter of J. J. Roman-Couppier and Madeleine Armand, his wife, was the mother of the only child Louis XV. ever recognised. She was handsome, but, according to Madame Campan, 'colossal in size,' and the king appeared quite small by her side. She would not submit to the Parc-aux-Cerfs, and a house was given her in the Grande Rue at Passy. Her son was born in 1762. The register of Saint Pierre de Chaillot calls him 'Bourbon, fils de Louis de Bourbon et de demoiselle Anne Couppier de Roman, dame de Meilly-Coulouge' (this from an estate the king had given her). There was great consternation at this quasi-royal recognition. For more than five years she enjoyed exceptional favour, and used to go to Versailles in a chariot drawn by six horses, but she became *exigeante*, and the king determined to be rid of both. The boy was taken away and educated without the secret oı his birth being revealed to him. A sister of Mlle. Roman's, who had been established in Paris for years, and who had acquired a most unsavoury reputation there (probably the aunt of the *Memoirs*) found a husband for her in the person of Gabriel de Svian, Marquis de Cavanac, a broken-down nobleman. The king at first refused to

Digitized by Microsoft®

soon to present the king with a pledge of their love. She was therefore on the high-road to become Queen of France, as my oracle had predicted.

'At Grenoble,' said Madame Morin, 'everybody talks of you and your wonderful gift of prophecy; if you were to come again, you would have all the world at your feet. Every one believes in astrology, and M. de Valenglard is triumphant; he has bet a hundred louis to fifty that my niece will have a son.'

'He will win the wager, rest assured.'

'Are you certain?'

'Why should the horoscope be wrong in the end, when it has proved so correct in the beginning? I am going to Paris, and I hope you will give me a letter to Madame Varnier, which will procure me the pleasure of seeing your niece.'

'You shall have it to-morrow.'

After dinner we went to the convent. The second M. M. came down to the parlour, much surprised at the unexpected visit of her aunt; but it taxed all her presence of mind not to betray herself. Her aunt presented me, and she said quite naturally that she had seen me several times at Aix, while she was drinking the waters, but that probably I should not recognise her, as she always kept her veil down. I admired her quickness, and she seemed more beautiful than ever. We

sign the marriage contract, but eventually yielded, though he would not receive the bride. On the accession of Louis XVI. Madame de Cavanac produced her son's certificate of birth and baptism, and from this time the boy was treated almost as a prince of the blood. He was sent to the seminary of Saint Magloire, and received the tonsure from the hands of the Archbishop of Paris. He was known as the Abbé de Signy, and when about twenty-five years of age was sent to join Cardinal de Bernis in Rome. Arsène Houssaye says de Signy had a son and that the Abbé de Borie, who was curé of Saint Philippe du Roule, and died in 1870, was his grandson. De Signy was neglected by his royal relatives, and died of smallpox in 1787, in almost destitute circumstances. La Roman, when she became Madame de Cavanac, became exceedingly dissipated, and, after a terrible scandal, divorced her husband, whom, although he was not the offending party, a *lettre de cachet* exiled within forty-six leagues of Paris. Madame de Cavanac, after wandering over France and Spain, died at Versailles in 1808, ruined and forgotten.

Digitized by Microsoft®

passed an hour talking of Grenoble and her friends there, then she left us to fetch one of her pupils, to whom she was much attached, and whom she wished to introduce to her aunt.

I seized this opportunity to tell Madame Morin that I was astonished at the likeness between her and my friend at Venice, and I begged her to let me breakfast next day with her niece, and to present to her from me twelve pounds of excellent chocolate which I had brought from Geneva.

'You had better give it to her yourself,' she answered, 'for though she is a nun, she is also a woman; a present is always more acceptable to us from the hand of a man than from the hand of a woman.'

M. M. returned with the superior, two other nuns, and the young pupil, a pretty girl from Lyons.

I was obliged to play the humbug with these good ladies. Madame Morin said I wished to offer them some particularly good chocolate I had, and they invited me to breakfast with them the following day.

Chocolate, the biscuits, and preserves were served very daintily and coquettishly. I asked M. M. if it would be possible for me to give a dinner for twelve people in the convent, six on one side of the grating and six on the other. She said she thought it could be managed, and this half-sacred, half-profane meal was fixed for the next day.

He dines with the second M. M. in her convent.

We went to the convent at eleven o'clock, and at the stroke of noon dinner was announced. The table was covered with a dazzlingly white cloth, and ornamented with little vases of artificial flowers, each one of which was perfumed according to its nature. The cruel grating was even slighter than I had dared to hope, and I had M. M. on my left hand; le Duc and Costa waited on one side, and lay sisters on the other. The abundance of the dishes, the excellence of the wines, and the joyous and, it must be owned, slightly equivocal character of the conversation, engaged us for more than three hours.

After coffee we went into another parlour, where we stayed until nightfall; we then took our leave after many and long

Digitized by Microsoft®

farewells, pressing of hands, and assurances of kind remembrance. I told M. M. in a loud voice that I hoped to have the pleasure of seeing her again, as I meant to stay in Chambéry after her aunt had gone back to Grenoble.

I only allowed twenty-four hours to elapse before returning to the convent, and this time M. M. came alone to the grating. After thanking me for the fête I had contrived for her pleasure, she said that the sight of me had awakened old memories, and she feared my coming would trouble her newly acquired peace.

'I am ready, my love, to climb the walls of your convent garden.'

'Alas! it is impossible; believe me, you are already watched. They are convinced that we knew each other at Aix; let us forget everything, dear friend, and spare ourselves the torment of vain desires.'

'Give me your hand.'

'No, no, all is over between us. I still love you, I shall always love you, but I shall not be at rest till I know you are gone; your going will be the best proof of your affection.'

'It is horrible! You are in perfect health, you are more beautiful than ever, you are young and eager; I cannot understand how, with a temperament like yours, you can resign yourself to a life of abnegation.'

If I had not known M. M. at Aix her piety would have surprised me, but that was her character. She was passionate, but she loved God as a generous Father, and believed that He had forgiven her for yielding to temptation, and was determined to sin no more.

I returned to my inn, somewhat sad at heart, for I saw that she would have nothing more to do with me, and that all was over between us.

Through Chambéry and Lyons to Paris.

From Chambéry I went to Lyons, and from there to Paris, when I stopped at the Hôtel du Saint Esprit, situated in the street of that name. Before going to her I wrote to Madame d'Urfé, and sent the letter by Costa; he was a good-looking

Digitized by Microsoft®

fellow, and spoke French vilely, so I was sure she would take him for some supernatural being. He brought me back word that she was expecting me to dinner next day, with the greatest impatience.

'Tell me, how did she receive you, and what did you do when she read my letters?'

'She looked at me through a looking-glass, saying words I did not understand; then she walked three times round the room, burning incense on a hot plate; then she marched up to me and looked at me smiling, and told me to wait for her answer in the ante-chamber.'

Madame d'Urfé and the son of Madame Cornelys.

In the morning I went to my dear Madame d'Urfé, who received me with open arms. The young d'Aranda, she said, was well; she would have him to dine with us next day.

I assured her that the operation by means of which she would be born again in the form of a man could be performed as soon as *Quérilinte*, who was one of the three chiefs of the Rose Cross, was freed from the dungeons of the Inquisition in Lisbon.

'That is why,' I said, 'I have to go to Augsburg next month. There is, as no doubt you know, to be a congress there, and I am to represent his Most Christian Majesty the King of Portugal. This is only a pretext; I have letters to Lord Stormont, who is the plenipotentiary of the King of England, and he will use his influence to have the adept set at liberty. I shall require a good letter of credit, madame, and a lot of watches and snuff-boxes, so as to be able to make handsome presents, for we shall have to deal with profane powers.'

'I will see to all that, dear friend; but you need not hurry, the congress will not assemble till September.'

'It will never assemble, madame, believe me. If after all it should take place, I shall be obliged to go to Lisbon. In any case, I promise you we will meet again this winter. I must spend at least fifteen days in Paris now, to demolish a little plan of Saint Germain's.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Saint Germain ! he dare not show himself in Paris.'

'I know he is here at this very moment, but in hiding.'

This was a mere guess, but a lucky one.

Madame d'Urfé complimented me on the charming girl I had sent up from Grenoble, meaning Mlle. Roman.

'The king adores her,' she said, 'and she will soon make him a father. I went to see her at Passy, with the Duchesse de Lauraguais.'

'Her son will be the saviour of France, and thirty years hence there will be extraordinary happenings, but unfortunately I cannot be more explicit until after your transformation. Did she mention me to you ?'

'No, but you can easily see her at her aunt's, Madame Varnier.'

He drives in the Bois with Madame d'Urfé.

About four o'clock we went for a drive in the Bois de Boulogne. When we were near 'Madrid' we alighted and walked in the wood.

She pointed out a certain tree to me.

'Eighteen years ago to-day,' she said, 'I fell asleep on the very spot where we now are. During my sleep the divine *Horosmadis* came down from the sun and kept me company. When I opened my eyes I saw him mounting up to heaven. He removed his daughter from my care ten years ago, doubtless to punish me for having so far forgotten myself and him as to allow a mortal to succeed him in my esteem. My divine child *Triasis* resembled her father.'

'Are you sure that he was not M. d'Urfé ?'

'No ; M. d'Urfé never forgave me for my relations with *Anaël*.'

'*Anaël* is the spirit of Venus ; did he squint ?'

'Badly ; how did you know that ? And do you know also that he, *Anaël*, left me because of my unworthiness ? I was unfaithful to him with an Arab.'

'The Arab was sent you by the genius of Mercury, who hates *Anaël* ; but do not be disturbed, all this has rendered you the more apt for the grand transformation.'

Digitized by Microsoft ®

We were walking towards the carriage, when all of a sudden Saint Germain stood before us! He turned back hastily at sight of us, and disappeared among the trees.

'Did you see him?' I asked. 'He is working against us, but we are stronger than he.'

'I am thunderstruck! I shall go first thing to-morrow to Versailles, and tell the Duc de Choiseul. I wonder what he will say.'

The next day I called on Madame Varnier, who showed me a letter from her niece containing these words: 'I am dying to meet the Chevalier de Seingalt again, it will be one of the happiest moments of my life. Arrange for him to be at your house the day after to-morrow at ten in the morning. If this is impossible let me know.'

Madame d'Urfé told me that de Choiseul, on hearing of our meeting with Saint Germain, only laughed, and said: 'I am not surprised, as he passed the night in my library.'

The Duc de Choiseul was a man of ability—a man of the world. He could keep state secrets, but no others. He was naturally expansive, and in this respect differed from most diplomatists, who think they must make mysteries out of trifles. He had made as if to disgrace Saint Germain in France, so as to be able to keep him in London as a spy; but Lord Halifax was not deceived, the ruse was too transparent.

He visits Mlle. Roman-Couppier.

I had been waiting at Madame Varnier's a quarter of an hour when the beautiful brunette came to me. There was something impressive in her *embonpoint*, it imposed respect; but she was no more arrogant than she had been at Grenoble, when she was poor and pure.

'People think I am happy,' she said, 'and envy me, but how can one be happy when one has lost one's self-respect? I only laugh now with my lips, not with my heart. At Grenoble, when I was so poor as to be almost in want, I laughed unconstrainedly. I have diamonds, laces, a superb house, carriages and horses, a fine garden, servants to wait on me, and a companion, who despises me perhaps. I am treated

Digitized by Microsoft®

like a princess, and the court ladies come and visit me on a familiar footing, yet not a day passes without my being subjected to some mortification or other.'

'How mortified?'

'I am continually solicited for favours, which I have to refuse, pleading my complete want of influence. I dare not ask anything from the king.'

'But why? Are you afraid of him?'

Her story.

'No, but in my lover I always see my sovereign. Ah! simplicity, not luxury, is the secret of happiness. I love the king, and I am in daily terror of offending him. I always feel that he is doing too much for me, therefore I cannot ask anything for others.'

'But I am sure the king would be glad to prove his love for you by granting favours to those in whom you are interested.

'Perhaps, but I cannot get over my timidity. I have a hundred louis a month pin-money. I give it all away in alms and presents, and I have to be economical to make it last. I know that the king only cares for me because I never tease or importune him.'

'And you love him?'

'How can I help it: he is kind, gentle, handsome, gay, and tender—what can a woman want more? He is always asking me if I am pleased with my furniture, my wardrobe, my domestics, my garden, if there is anything I want changed. I thank him, and tell him everything is perfect; then I see he is pleased, and so I am.'

'Does he ever speak of his child?'

'He tells me to take every possible care of my health, and I flatter myself that he will recognise my son as a prince of the blood-royal; the queen being dead, he ought to do so in all conscience.'

'He will do so.'

'Ah! how I shall love my son! I know it will be a boy, but I don't say so to any one. If I told the king about the

Digitized by Microsoft®

horoscope I am sure he would want to know you, but I dread gossip.'

'And so do I, dear friend; keep silence on that point, and let nothing interfere with the happiness which I am thankful I procured for you.'

She wept, and she went out, kissing me, and calling me her best friend. When I was alone with Madame Varnier, I said that instead of casting Mlle. Roman's horoscope, I should have done better to marry her.

'She would have been happier, I fancy. You did not take into account her timidity and her want of ambition.'

'I assure you, madame, I did not speculate on her courage or her ambition. I lost sight of my own happiness in thinking of hers; but it is too late now to look back.'

My brother Francis, the painter, who was married and settled in Paris, had invited me to sup with him and Madame Vanloo after the opera. When I arrived she greeted me demonstratively.

'You will meet Madame Blondel and her husband,' she said.

Madame Blondel was my old sweetheart, Manon Baletti.

'Does she know I am here?'

'No, it is a little surprise I have prepared for her.'

'I am glad you did not include me in the surprise; we will meet again, madame, but for the present I must bid you adieu, as I will never willingly meet Madame Blondel.'

Madame Vanloo afterwards told me Manon had begged her to thank me for my discretion, but that her husband had expressed regret at not meeting me.

News of Manon Baletti.

'They are a strange couple,' said Madame Vanloo. 'He lives at the Louvre, and she and her baby have an apartment in the Rue-Neuve-des-petits-Champs; he sups with her every evening; he treats her like a mistress, so as to maintain the first warmth of their love. He says that he never had a mistress who was worthy of being his wife, so he considers himself lucky in having found a wife worthy of being his mistress.'

Digitized by Microsoft ®

The pretty haberdasher of the Rue des Prouvaires, to whom I had been so much attached, had left Paris. A certain M. de Langlade had run away with her, and her husband was living in misery. Camille was ill, Coraline had become the Marquise de la Marche, and daughter-in-law of the Prince de Conti. She had a son whom I met twenty years later, bearing the cross of Malta and the name of the Chevalier de Montréal. Many other young persons whom I had known had disappeared into the provinces, there to figure as worthy widows.

Such was Paris in my day: women, intrigues, and principles went out of fashion as rapidly as coats and gowns.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

AVENTUROS

PORTRAIT OF CASANOVA BY THE PRINCE DE LIGNE[1]

He would be a very fine man if he was not ugly. He is tall, built like a Hercules, but with an almost African complexion; his eyes are bright, truthful-looking, and intelligent, but they indicate an uneasy susceptibility and a revengeful ferocity; it would seem easier to make him angry than to make him laugh. He seldom laughs, though he makes others do so. He has a way of saying things which reminds one of Harlequin and Figaro.

He knows everything, excepting the things which he prides himself on knowing—such as dancing, the rules of the French language, good taste, and the ways of high society. In the same way, it is only his comedies which are not comic, his philosophical works in which there is no philosophy, all the others are full of it, and of depth, character, piquancy, and originality. He is a mine of science and learning, but wearies one with quotations from Homer and Horace.

His witty sallies have a flavour of Attic salt. He is sensitive and grateful; but when he is displeased, is grumbling, bitter, and altogether detestable. No sum which one could give him would atone for a little joke at his expense. His style is like that of old prefaces—long, diffuse, and heavy—but if he has anything to tell —his adventures, for instance—he tells them so amusingly and dramatically that one is quite carried away. He beats *Gil Blas* or the *Diable Boiteux* in interest. He believes in nothing except what is least worthy of credence, being superstitious on many points. Fortunately, he is high-minded and delicate, for when he says, 'I have sworn to God,' or 'God so wills it,' there is nothing can stop him. He wants everything, and covets everything, and after having possessed everything, he knows how to do without everything.

[1] See de Ligne's *Mémoires et Mélanges historiques et littéraires*, Paris, 1828, vol. iv. p. 291.

Digitized by Microsoft®

His head is always running on women and little girls, and in his head they have to remain, which makes him furious. He rages against the fair sex, against himself, against Heaven, against Nature, but, above all, against the year 1725. He makes up for this failure of power, as well as he can, by eating, and drinking enormously. As he can no longer be a god in the gardens or a satyr in the forests, he will be a wolf at table: he lets nothing pass him, begins gaily and finishes sadly, grieving that he cannot begin all over again.

If he sometimes uses his superior intelligence to get the better of foolish men or women, it is, he says, to make those around him happy. In the midst of the disorders of a stormy youth, and a most adventurous and somewhat equivocal career, he could show a strong sense of delicacy, honour, and courage. He is proud because he is nothing. If he had been a landowner, a financier, or a great nobleman, he would have been more easy-going; as it is, no one must contradict him, and no one must laugh at him; every one must read his books and listen to his stories. You must never tell him that you have heard an anecdote before; listen to it as though for the first time. Do not forget to salute him respectfully, or you will make an enemy for life. His prodigious imagination, the vivacity which is his birthright, his travels, the many parts he has played, his courage in the absence of all moral and physical support, make up an extraordinary personality, good to know, and worthy of the consideration and friendship of the small number of people of whom he condescends to ask it.

Digitized by Microsoft®

EXTRACTS FROM THE 'MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCE DE LIGNE'

FRAGMENTS RELATING TO CASANOVA

CASANOVA was a man of high character, intelligence, and knowledge, who had seen the world. In his *Memoirs* he writes himself down an adventurer, the son of an unknown father, and a third-rate Venetian actress. I have drawn his portrait in my works, and called him *Aventuros*.

The merit of his *Memoirs* lies precisely in their cynicism, but it is this very cynicism which will prevent their ever being given to the world, though they are full of dramatic turns, of comedy, vivacity, philosophy, of original, sublime, and inimitable things.

I will try and set down here what I remember of the things he told me.

When he returned from his ridiculous expedition to Constantinople, he met his two brothers, likewise come back from travelling in foreign lands.

'What have you learned?' he asked them.

'Directly they opened their mouths,' he said to me afterwards, 'I saw that one would turn out a fool and the other a maniac: the fool, however, developed a genius for painting, and became the most celebrated painter of battlepieces of his time, and took the place of Lebrun, van der Meulen, and Bourguignon. His prophecy as regards the other, who died at Dresden, was more accurate.

One day he saw his mother on the boards, and made up his mind that she was a detestably bad actress. He went up to her dressing-room, embraced her (he had not seen her for years, and she did not know what had become of him), and there and then persuaded her to abandon the theatre.

'You will get along very well,' he told her, 'for one of the little women I loved when I was fifteen has married a procurator, and I share his wealth and his pleasures; the child has not forgotten her first sweetheart.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Epigrams, ballads, sarcasms, indiscretions, criticisms of the direction of his beloved republic of Venice, Casanova treats us to them all—love, jealousy, imprudence, rope-ladders, bribed boatmen, adventures of every sort. He plays the great lord in a grey lustrine coat embroidered with flowers, with a large Spanish lace collar, and a hat with a feather, a yellow waistcoat, and crimson silk breeches, as he is represented on the frontispiece of his work on his escape from 'The Leads.'

This book is worth reading. The style is odd, and somewhat barbarous, but lively and interesting, and bearing the stamp of truth on every word. A great number of Venetians have assured me of the truth of the story.

Some time after his flight from prison the fancy seized him to add the name of *Seingalt* to his own; it would give him, he said, more the appearance of a gentleman, and he would be beholden to no sovereign in Europe for it.

After having wandered about the world for seventeen years, he determined to try his fortune in Russia. 'Who knows,' said he, 'I shall perhaps obtain some situation at the Court of the Great Catherine—librarian, secretary, diplomatic agent, tutor to some young nobleman, or lover to the Empress! There are two or three French hairdressers and an Italian pastry-cook filling such employment at Petersburg. I am worth as much, or more, than they.'

At the close of one of the long Northern days that have no night, Catherine was walking with some of her ladies in the summer gardens, when she saw an extraordinary-looking man examining the statuary with a mocking air. She guessed at once that it was the man whose name had been made known to her through the reports of her police.

'That statue does not please you, sir?'

'No, madame; it is out of proportion.'

'It is a nymph.'

'It does not look like one, madame! Where are the usual attributes?'

'Are you not the brother of the painter?'

'Yes, madame; how does your Majesty know that? and how comes she to be familiar with a wretched dauber like my brother?'

'He is a genius, sir, and I think a great deal of him.'

'He has a good eye for colour, madame, and a fair sense of composition, but drawing is not his strong point, and his pictures are unfinished.'

'Have you seen the little wooden house Peter the Great built—the first in Petersburg?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Yes, madame; he ought to have gone to Italy instead of to France for his architect.'

His criticisms on his brother were literally just. I have often reproached Francis with the cannon or pistol fired off in the middle of his pictures, so that the smoke might cover their imperfections.

By these means one could take his Turks' turbans to mean anything or nothing. All his horses had Roman noses; but this was from principle, as his model was made that way.

This Casanova, the painter I mean, was a most singular man. One day when I was speaking of his pictures in the Palais Bourbon, I said laughingly, 'Why did you represent my great-grandfather as running away at full speed on a big grey horse after the battle of Lens, when every one knows that he was made prisoner at the head of the infantry, after having done marvels in leading the cavalry?' He did not answer.

Thirty years after he painted a large picture which was sent to the Russian empress. It was the portrait of the Emperor Joseph, surrounded by his generals, Lacy, Laudon, Haddik, who all had a right to be there, but imagine my astonishment when I recognised myself among them! All my comrades were jealous. 'Why did you put me there?' I asked.

'To make amends for a wrong,' said Casanova, 'which I did to a Prince de Ligne in 1648.'

Marshal Pellegrini said, in a droll voice, 'My comrade, my countryman, for I come from Verona, put me in too, I implore you, if you only squeeze me into a little corner!'

'There is no more room, your excellency.'

'My friend, if I am hidden by the frame, if only the end of my nose shows, I should be happy. I beg you put me in.'

And he got in by sheer importunity.

I cannot remember all the places where Jacques Casanova went in his double character of knight-errant and wandering Jew, but after many years of this existence he began to find the gates of cities, courts, and castles closed to him. I remember, however, that he went to Vienna, where his brother was established, and profited by the complaisance of the Emperor Joseph, who received all sorts of people.[1]

'It seems to me,' said Joseph, who never forgot a detail, 'that you were the friend of Signor Zaguri.'

[1] From this point the *Memoirs* of de Ligne deal with a time posterior to the *Memoirs* of Casanova, which finish in 1774. The prince was writing what he remembered from reading Casanova's manuscripts, which is a further proof that the original *Memoirs* were carried much further than those we possess.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Yes,' answered Casanova, 'he was a Venetian nobleman.'

'I don't think much of his nobility. I do not care for people who buy titles.'

'And how about those who sell them, sire?'

Joseph changed the conversation; it was easy to see he was displeased at this bold reply, which was, nevertheless, just. I think it was soon after this that Casanova went to Paris for the last time. My nephew, Waldstein, met him at the Venetian ambassador's, and took a great liking to him. Waldstein pretended to believe in magic, and to practise it: he began to talk about the clavicula of Solomon, and of Agrippa.

'How strange that you should speak to *me* of these things,' cried Casanova; '*O! che bella cosa, cospetto!*—how familiar all these things are to me!'

'If that is so,' said Waldstein, 'come to Bohemia with me, I am leaving to-morrow.'

Casanova, who had come to an end of his money, his travels, and his adventures, took Waldstein at his word, and became his librarian. In this quality he passed the last fourteen years of his life at the Château of Dux, near Toeplitz, where for six succeeding summers he was a constant joy to me, because of his enthusiastic liking for me, and his useful and agreeable knowledge.

It must not be supposed, however, that he was content to live quietly in the haven of refuge that the kindness of Waldstein had provided for him. It was not in his nature. Not a day passed without a storm: something was sure to be wrong with his coffee, his milk, his dish of macaroni, which he insisted on having served to him daily. There were constant quarrels in the house. The *chef* had spoilt his polenta; the coachman had given him a bad driver to bring him over to see me; the dogs had barked all night; there had been more guests than usual, and he had been obliged to eat at a side table; a hunting-horn had tortured his ear with discordant sounds; the *curé* had been trying to convert him; Count Waldstein had not said good morning to him first; the soup, out of *malice prepense,* had been served to him too hot, or too cold; a servant had kept him waiting for his wine; he had not been introduced to some distinguished person who had come to see the lance which pierced the side of the great Waldstein; the count had lent some one a book without telling him; a groom had not touched his hat to him; he had spoken in German and not been understood; he had got angry and people laughed at him. The fact of the matter was, that people laughed at him for many reasons. When he showed his French verses they laughed. When he declaimed Italian verses with much

Digitized by Microsoft®

gesticulation, they laughed; when he came into the salon and bowed in the style which Marcel, the famous dancing-master, had taught him sixty years before, they laughed. When at all the balls he danced a minuet in a grave and stately manner, they laughed. When he put on his befeathered hat, his cloth of gold coat, his black velvet vest, his buckles with paste diamonds, worn over rolled silk stockings, they laughed.

'*Cospetto!*' said he; 'low scoundrels that you are! You are all Jacobins, you are wanting in respect to the count, and the count is wanting in respect to me when he fails to punish you.'

'Sir,' he said one day to the count, 'I wounded a great Polish general in the belly. I may not be a gentleman by birth, but I have raised myself to the position of one.'

The count laughed, which was another grievance.

One morning the count went into his room with a pair of pistols in his hand, and looked at him seriously, though he was inwardly dying with laughter. Casanova burst into tears, and fell on his shoulder. 'What!' he said, 'should I kill my benefactor—*O che bella cosa!*'

Then, thinking that he would be suspected of cowardice, he took up the pistols and returned them gracefully to the count, holding his hand at the level of his eyebrow, as one does in a minuet; then he wept a little more and fell to talking of magic and macaroni.

All the mothers in the village complained of his talking nonsense to their little girls!

He managed to involve the count in a quarrel with the monks at the Abbey of Ossegg, which he called, for some reason known only to himself, *Calvados*. When he got indigestion from overeating, he declared he was poisoned by the Jacobins! He bought a quantity of cloth on credit from the count's factory at Oberleitersdorf, and flew in a rage when asked for the money.

He could not endure so much persecution! God ordered him to leave Dux! By the way, he always pretended that everything he did was by God's order. God ordered him to ask me for letters of introduction to the Duke of Weimar, who is very fond of me, for the Duchess of Gotha, who does not know me, and for the Jews in Berlin.

He went off secretly, leaving a tender, proud, honest, and irate letter behind for Waldstein, who laughed and said he would be sure to come back some day.

Poor fellow, they did not offer him a place as tutor, or librarian, or chamberlain, but kept him cooling his heels in the anterooms, and he revenged himself by proclaiming loudly that all Germans

Digitized by Microsoft®

are stupid. The excellent and amiable Duke of Weimar received him marvellously well, but he instantly became jealous of Goethe and Wieland, and declaimed against them and the literature of the country of which he knew nothing! At Berlin he launched his diatribes against the ignorance, superstition, and dishonesty of the Hebrews I had sent him to, which did not prevent him from borrowing money from them and giving them bills drawn on Waldstein in exchange. My nephew laughed, paid them, and embraced him when he returned. As for Casanova, he laughed and wept at the same time, and said that God had told him to take a six weeks' voyage, to go off without saying a word, and then come quietly back to his room at Dux. He told us all that had happened to him, including these little contrarieties, which he dignified with the name of humiliations.

A week after he returned there were fresh disturbances. The strawberries were handed to every one before him at table, and none left for him; and worse still, a portrait of himself which had disappeared from his room, and which he flattered himself had been taken by an admirer, suddenly reappeared, hung up in an inferior and degrading position. Thus he went on, agitating himself, grieving, groaning over the conquest of his ungrateful country; talking to us of the League of Cambray and the glories of the ancient and superb city of Venice, which had hitherto resisted all Europe. His appetite began to diminish, he ceased to regret life, and he ended nobly enough, at peace with God and man.

Printed by T. and A. Constable, (late) Printers to Her Majesty
at the Edinburgh University Press

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft®

BINDING SECT. MAY 25 1978

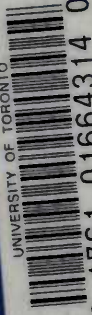
PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

D 285 .8 C32 1902 v.1
Casanova de Seingalt, Giacomo Girolamo
The memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt

26

Digitized by Microsoft®



Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft®

INTERNET ARCHIVE

Digitized for Microsoft Corporation
by the Internet Archive in 2007.
From University of Toronto.
May be used for non-commercial, personal, research,
or educational purposes, or any fair use.
May not be indexed in a commercial service.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

21
334

Digitized by Microsoft ®

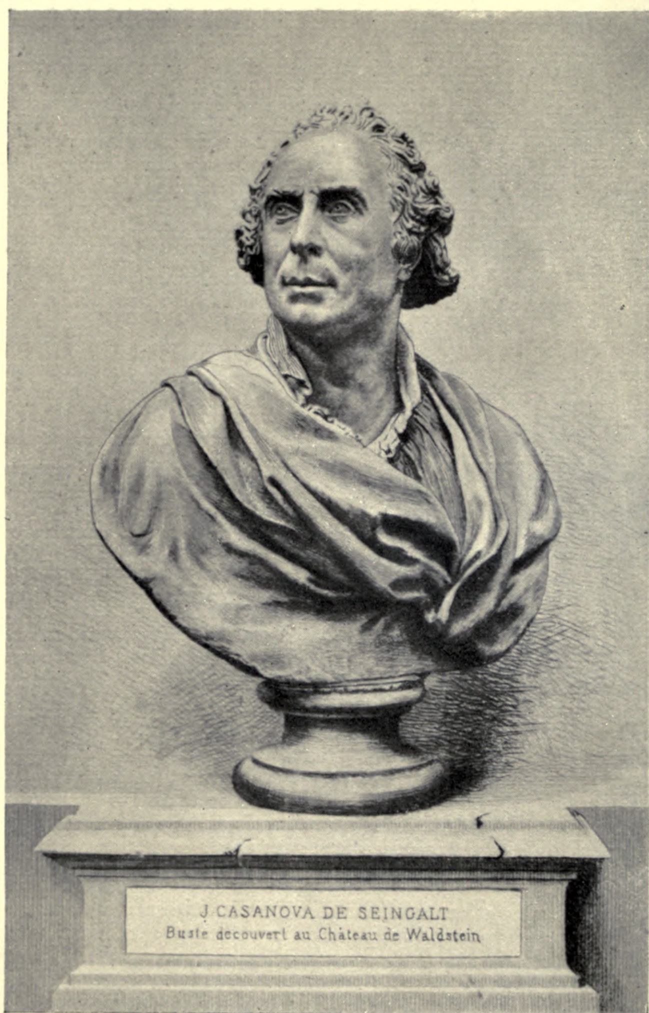
Digitized by Microsoft®

THE MEMOIRS OF
JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®



Digitized by Microsoft ®

THE MEMOIRS OF
JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

THE PRINCE OF ADVENTURERS

A New and Abridged Edition, with Introduction, Two Portraits, Notes, and Appendices

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

LONDON
CHAPMAN AND HALL
LIMITED
1902

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

535m

The Prince of Adventurers

THE MEMOIRS OF JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

A New and Abridged Edition, with Introduction, Two Portraits, Notes, and Appendices

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II

59625
20/6/0

LONDON
CHAPMAN AND HALL
LIMITED
1902

Digitized by Microsoft ®

D
285
.8
C32
1902
V.2

Edinburgh: T. and A. Constable, (late) Printers to Her Majesty

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CONTENTS

FRONTISPIECE—J. CASANOVA DE SEINGALT, from the Bust discovered in the Château de Waldstein.

CHAP.		PAGE
XXX.	A COMPANY OF PLAYERS, ...	1
XXXI.	THE GRAND OPERATION, ...	13
XXXII.	THE SPANISH LADY, ...	28
XXXIII.	THE IMAGE OF WAX, ...	51
XXXIV.	CLEMENTINA, ...	67
XXXV.	HE WINS AND LEAVES CLEMENTINA, .	79
XXXVI.	THE REINCARNATION OF THE MARQUISE, .	92
XXXVII.	HENRIETTE AGAIN, ...	113
XXXVIII.	HIS BROTHER THE ABBÉ, ...	129
XXXIX.	ENGLAND, ...	135
XL.	ENGLISH CUSTOMS, ...	152
XLI.	THE LODGER, ...	163
XLII.	THE STORY OF THE FAIR PORTUGUESE, .	178
XLIII.	THE RECALL OF MISS PAULINE, . . .	192
XLIV.	THE STORY OF MISS CHARPILLON, . .	200

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAP.		PAGE
XLV.	THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE,	223
XLVI.	THE TALKING PARROT,	235
XLVII.	THE HANOVERIANS,	252
XLVIII.	THE GREAT FREDERICK,	269
XLIX.	THE GREAT CATHERINE,	284
L.	THE DUEL WITH BRANECKI,	300
LI.	A LETTRE DE CACHET,	331
LII.	SPAIN,	341
LIII.	WELL-MERITED DISGRACE,	362
LIV.	MONSIEUR AND MADAME CAGLIOSTRO,	377
LV.	A PLEA FOR PARDON,	397
LVI.	MISS BETTY,	405
LVII.	SOCIETY IN ROME AND NAPLES,	421
LVIII.	THE UNFINISHED EPISODE,	434
LIX.	HIS VIEWS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION,	450
LX.	WAITING FOR A PARDON,	462

LETTERS WRITTEN TO MASTER FAULKIRCHER BY HIS BEST FRIEND JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT, 10th January 1792, ... 474

INDEX, ... 485

Digitized by Microsoft ®

ERRATA

Vol. i.	page	334,	for	'Xantes' read 'Zante.'
,,	,,	344,	,,	'rhine wine' read 'Rhine wine.'
,,	,,	374,	,,	'Lyon' read 'Lyons.'
,,	,,	349,	,,	'Manheim' read 'Mannheim.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

MEMOIRS OF

JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT

CHAPTER XXX

A COMPANY OF PLAYERS

One day, in the *foyer* of the Comédie Française, I met little Poinsinet.[1]

'What has become of Lord Lismore?' I asked.

'He wrote to his mother, and told her he was going to India. He said if you had not been kind enough to give him a thousand louis, he would have been thrown into a Roman prison.'

'I was interested in him; I should like to go with you to see his mother.'

'I will introduce you, and I am sure she will ask you to stay and sup with her.'

I found my lady, who was still beautiful, with M. de Saint-Albin, Archbishop of Cambrai, her superannuated lover, who spent the whole of the revenue of his see on her. He was the son of the Regent and an actress. He had supper with us, but he only opened his mouth to put something in it; as for my lady, she talked of nothing but Lismore,

[1] Antoine Alexandre Henri Poinsinet was the son of the notary to the Dukes of Orleans, and succeeded largely through influence. He wrote the scenarios to numerous comedies and lyric tragedies, one of which, called *Le Cercle, ou une Soirée à la mode*, was played at the Théâtre Français. He was the butt of the literary and aristocratic society into which he forced himself for years, no trap seemed too evident, no misapprehension too gross, for him to fall into. Thackeray dilates on him in his *Paris Sketchbook*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

whom she lauded to the skies. I held my tongue; for though I knew him to be a worthless scamp, it was not my place to say so.

I had nothing more to do in Paris, and I was only waiting for the clothes I had ordered to be finished, when an unfortunate occurrence obliged me to precipitate my departure. I do not like to speak of this occurrence, for it very nearly cost me life and honour, not to mention a hundred thousand francs.

I was walking in the Tuileries gardens when I met La Dangenancour, a well-known dancer. The last time I was in Paris I had tried in vain to make her acquaintance, but this time she accepted my advances. I invited her to dine with me at Choisy,[1] and while walking in the garden before dinner we were joined by two adventurers and their female friends. We all dined together; but just as we were about to return to Paris I missed a ring which I had taken off my finger to show one of the men, Santis. It was a pretty miniature set in diamonds, and had cost me twenty-five louis.

I asked Santis politely to return it to me. He replied that he had already done so.

He persisted in his assertion, and his friend, a Portuguese named Xavier, declared he had seen him hand it to me.

'You lie!' I cried; and seizing Santis by the cravat, I told

[1] Choisy, a village about seven miles from Paris, was a great resort of pleasure-seekers in the seventeenth century. The superb château was built in 1682 by *la grande Mademoiselle*. At her death it passed first into the hands of the legitimate, and then the illegitimate, sons of Louis XIV. The Duc de la Vallière sold it to Louis XV., who spent enormous sums on it, chiefly to please the Duchesse de Châteauroux, who was fond of the place. The original building was too small to contain all the favourites and their followers whom Louis gathered there. He built another and smaller château beside the original building, and here took place some of the most scandalous of his orgies. Both these monuments of royal vice, with their precious furniture and priceless paintings, were swept away by the Revolution. The large outbuildings, now forming part of a porcelain factory, are all that remain. The very name Choisy-le-Roi is menaced, for an enterprising mayor has already petitioned Government to suppress the obnoxious word *King*, and remove this painful stigma from the inhabitants of a free and Republican village.

Digitized by Microsoft®

him he should not leave the house till I had my ring again. The Portuguese came to his friend's rescue, but I fell back and drew my sword. The hostess rushed in screaming, and the girls shrieked too. Santis then said, if I would step aside with him for a moment, he would explain everything. Thinking he was ashamed to give the ring back before so many people, I followed him into the garden. Xavier jumped into the carriage with the girls, and they drove off to Paris.

In the meantime the adventurer, pretending to laugh, said it was all a joke, that his friend had the ring in his pocket, and would give it me back when we got to Paris.

'This is another lie,' said I; 'your friend said he saw you hand the ring to me. Do you think I am green enough to be taken in with such a story?'

Saying this, I tried to lay hold of his watch chain; but he whipped out his rapier and made a pass, which I parried; then pressing on him, I ran him through the body. He fell, calling for help. I sheathed my sword, and without paying any attention to him, I stepped into my *fiacre*, and drove away. I got out at the Place Maubert, and went a roundabout way to the Hotel of the Holy Ghost, where I was staying. I was sure no one would come to look for me there, for even the host did not know my name.

I spent the rest of the day packing, then went to tell Madame d'Urfé of my adventure. I begged her to confide what she intended for me to Costa, who would join me at Augsburg. I ought to have told her to send it me by one of her servants, but my good genius had abandoned me that day; besides, I trusted Costa.

He leaves for Strasbourg precipitately. His reasons.

I had four post-horses put to my carriage, and never stopped till I got to Strasbourg, where I met Désarmoises, whom the reader will remember I had last seen at Turin, and le Duc. Having nothing to detain me in Strasbourg, I wanted to cross the Rhine at once, but Désarmoises persuaded me to go with him to see a lady who, he declared, had postponed her journey to Augsburg simply for the pleasure of seeing me, and of

Digitized by Microsoft®

travelling with me if it could be arranged. Her name was Renaud; she was a dancer whom I had met eight years before at Dresden. We left together the following day, she in her carriage with her maid, and I in mine with Désarmoises; but at Rastadt we changed, and she and I went on together. We became very friendly; she told me all her affairs, and I told her as much of mine as I wanted her to know. Speaking of Désarmoises, she said I ought to prevent him using the title of marquis, to which he had no right.

His reasons for adopting a title.

'And while we are on this subject,' she added, 'I would advise you to renounce false names and false qualities. Why do you call yourself Seingalt?'

'Because it is my name, my dear; but that does not prevent those who knew me in former years calling me Casanova. I am both Casanova and Seingalt. You understand that, don't you?'

'Yes, I understand. Do you know your mother is at Prague, and very badly off? Her pension has been cut off on account of the war.'

'I know, but I do not neglect my filial duties; I have sent her some money.'

'I am glad to hear it. Where will you lodge at Augsburg?'

'I shall take a house, and if you like you can be the mistress of it, and do the honours.'

'That will be delightful. We will give good suppers, and pass our evenings playing cards. I will engage to find a good cook—a Bavarian, say—and we will cut a fine figure at the Congress.'

We went to 'The Three Moors' at Augsburg, but they could not take us in there, as the whole hotel was retained by the French minister. My banker, M. Carli, found me a nice furnished house with a garden, which I took for six months.

La Renaud had to go to Munich, and persuaded me to go with her. We stayed at 'The Stag.' As my business and hers were quite distinct, I hired a carriage and footman for her, and one for myself.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Gama had given me a letter for Lord Stormont, the English minister to the Bavarian Court. His Britannic Excellency received me very well, and told me that when the time came he would do what he could; Lord Halifax had already spoken to him of my mission. I also had a letter for de Folard, the French minister, who invited me to dine with him. During the four fatal weeks I spent at Munich, his house was the only one I frequented. I say fatal weeks, for during that time I lost all my money. I was obliged to pawn over forty thousand francs' worth of jewellery, which I have never been able to redeem; and worse than all, I ruined my health. My assassins were La Renaud and Désarmoises, both of whom owed so much to me.

A confession of weakness.

I have done many a foolish thing in my life; I confess it as candidly as did Rousseau, and with less vanity than he; but the worst thing I ever did was to go to Munich when I had no earthly business there. But I had come to a crisis in my life. The evening I had spent with Lismore, my party at Choisy, my trust in Costa, my connection with Désarmoises, my *liaison* with La Renaud, my inconceivable idiocy in letting myself be cheated at faro at a court where the players were renowned throughout Europe for their skill in manipulating the cards to their own advantage—yes, I had been going *crescendo* from folly to folly since my departure from Turin!

I played every day, and it soon became difficult for me to pay my debts. When I had exhausted my credit at the bankers I had recourse to the Jews. Désarmoises and La Renaud were my intermediaries, and the latter soon succeeded in making herself mistress of all I possessed. This serpent, newly crept out of hell for my discomfiture, emptied my pockets, and undermined my health. I was completely under her sway. The two accomplices played into each other's hands. Désarmoises shared his profits with La Renaud. He invited all sorts of people to my rooms, and entertained them at my expense; the most scandalous scenes, which I was powerless to prevent, took place there every night.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The Dowager Electress of Saxony, who had at first shown interest in me, mortified me deeply on the last two occasions on which I presented myself to her.

'Every one knows, sir, that you are living with La Renaud, and the conduct of your establishment is doing you an immensity of harm. Perhaps it is done without your authority, but I advise you to put a stop to it at once.'

Anxiety with regard to the offerings of the marquise.

She little knew how I longed to do so, and how my hands were tied! A month had passed since I left Paris, and I had no news of Madame d'Urfé or of Costa. I fancied that my dear friend was dead, or that some one had opened her eyes to certain facts, which would have amounted to the same thing, so far as I was concerned.

I could not go to Paris, to see for myself; my purse was empty. I was troubled; I was beginning to feel the depression that comes of increased age. The careless confidence of youth, the sense of self-reliance was gone, and yet experience had not taught me wisdom. But my strength of character was not entirely broken down. I took a sudden resolution one day, said farewell to La Renaud, and went off to Augsburg, thankful that Désarmoises had decided to stay behind with the unworthy creature he had introduced to me. My servants preceded me, and I found my pretty little house all ready. I went straight to bed, determined not to leave it till I was dead or cured. The celebrated surgeon Kefalides undertook to do the latter. I followed his advice, dieting myself severely, taking baths and mercurial frictions, but at the end of six weeks I was worse than before, and as thin as a lath.

Two varieties of the medical treatment of the day.

I would have nothing more to do with Kefalides, and it was Doctor Algardi who prepared me ninety pills, composed each one of eighteen grains of manna. I took one every morning, with a large glass of milk and water; I took more milk and water in the evening, and some barley broth. I had no other nourishment for two months and a half. Thanks to this heroic treatment, I recovered.

It was during my illness that I learned Costa had gone off

Digitized by Microsoft®

with the diamonds, watches, snuff-boxes, linen, and embroidered clothes which Madame d'Urfé had sent me by him. Fortunately the letter of credit for fifty thousand francs which she gave me at the same time had been confided to other hands, and arrived just in time to relieve me from the poverty into which my misconduct had plunged me.

Costa goes off with the booty.

Then I discovered that le Duc was robbing me. I would have forgiven him, but in so doing I should myself have been compromised. I kept him, however, till my return to Paris at the beginning of the following year.

Towards the end of the month of September, when it was definitely settled that the Congress would not take place, La Renaud passed through Augsburg, but did not dare to come near me, for fear that I should force her to give up certain things of mine she had appropriated. Four or five years later she married an individual named Böhmer, the jeweller who gave Cardinal de Rohan the famous diamond necklace for Marie Antoinette. She was in Paris when I went back there, but I did not go to see her. I should have slit Désarmoises's ears for him, but he wisely kept out of my way, and died poverty-stricken in Normandy.

La Renaud becomes the wife of Böhmer, of diamond necklace fame.

Then I began to enjoy myself. Anna Midel, my excellent cook, had been idle too long; she had enough to do now to satisfy my appetite, which was gluttonous. For three weeks I was furiously hungry, and could not eat enough; my guests watched me with stupefaction, and my doctor predicted I should die of indigestion, but indeed the more I ate the stronger I grew.

One morning a woman, ugly, but lively and talkative as only an Italian can be, presented herself at my house, and begged me to intercede for her and her company with the magistrates of the town. She was ugly, as I have said, but she was a compatriot and poor, so without even asking her name I promised to help her, and I obtained the favour she demanded.

A company o comedians.

I went to the first performance, and saw that the leading actor was a Venetian; twenty years before he and I had been

Digitized by Microsoft®

schoolfellows at the Seminary of St. Cyprien. His name was Bassi, and, like me, he had abandoned the priesthood. Fate had made an actor of him, and judging from appearances, not a successful one; he seemed miserably poor. I felt a kindly interest for the companion of my youth, and went behind the scenes when the curtain fell. He presented me to his wife and to his daughter, a pretty girl about fourteen; then calling up the other members of the company (of which he was the director), he introduced them to me as his friend. These good people, seeing me wearing an order and ribbon, took me for a famous cosmopolitan charlatan who was then in Augsburg, and for some reason best known to himself Bassi did not undeceive them. When the comedians had exchanged their theatrical rags for their everyday rags, the ugly Signora Bassi laid hold of my arm, and told me I must go home to supper with them. I let myself be persuaded, and by and by we arrived at their abode, which was much as I had expected to find it. An immense room on the ground floor served as kitchen, dining-room, and dormitory. One-half of a long table was covered with a torn and dirty cloth, on the other half was a kettle, in which the dishes left from dinner were being hastily washed for supper. A candle-end, stuck in a bottle's neck, lighted this hole of a place, and Signora Bassi snuffed it continually between her finger and thumb.

The humours of the Bassi troupe.

One of the actors, who played assassin and highwayman, and was therefore allowed to wear immense moustaches, acted as cook and butler; he served us an enormous dish of warmed-up meat, floating in a quantity of muddy liquid dignified by the name of sauce. The famished family tore the meat up with fingers and teeth, for lack of knives and forks, and then sopped up the gravy with huge hunches of bread. A big pot of beer was passed from hand to hand, and in spite of all this squalor, every one was gay. 'In what, after all, does happiness consist?' I asked myself. The cook then brought a second dish, full of bits of fried pork, and the banquet was over. I had excused myself from partaking of it.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Scenes under his management.

After supper Bassi told me his adventures, which were in no way extraordinary, while his daughter sat on my knee. He said he was going to Venice for the carnival. I wished him good luck, and when he asked me what my profession was, I answered thoughtlessly that I was a doctor.

'That is as good a trade as any,' said he, 'and I am glad to say I can make you a present which will be of much use to you.'

'And what may this present be?'

'A recipe for Venetian treacle; it will cost you four sous a pound to make, and you can sell the same quantity for two florins.'

'I shall be delighted to have the recipe. And now, tell me, are you doing well here?'

'I must not complain for a first performance. I have paid all expenses, and given each actor a florin. But I don't know how I am going to manage to-morrow, for my actors have struck, and refuse to play unless I give them each a florin in advance. I haven't a sou in my purse, and nothing to pawn. It will injure them as well as me, though, for I am certain to make fifty florins to-morrow.'

'How many are there of you?'

'Fourteen, including my own family. Can you lend me ten florins? I will pay you back to-morrow.'

'Certainly, but on condition you all come to supper with me at the tavern near the theatre.'

The poor devil was beside himself with gratitude, and undertook to order the supper at a florin a head. I wanted a hearty laugh, and knew that the sight of the fourteen hungry creatures stuffing themselves would furnish it.

But next evening there were only between thirty and forty people in the theatre; and poor Bassi, after paying the orchestra and the lighting, had to come to me for another ten florins. I told him we would talk about it after supper.

The repast lasted three hours. I ordered several bottles of marquisat wine, principally to please the soubrette, a girl

Digitized by Microsoft®

from Strasbourg, with a pretty figure, a delicious voice, and an indescribable way of pronouncing Italian.

Before leaving the inn, I made the following speech :—

He subsidises the company for a week.

'Gentlemen and ladies, I take you into my service for a week at the rate of fifty florins a day for the entire company, but you must play for my benefit, and must pay the expenses of the theatre. You must let the seats at a price which I decide. If the takings amount to more than fifty florins, you will share the profits among you. Furthermore, five persons of the company, whom I shall choose, must sup with me every evening.'

My proposition was received with cries of joy. Pen, ink, and paper were sent for, and an agreement was drawn up and signed then and there.

'For to-morrow,' I said, 'we will have the tickets at the usual price. I invite you, Bassi, and your family to supper to-morrow. Bring the soubrette with you, and her dear harlequin, from whom, I see, she does not like to be parted.'

Poor Bassi had no better luck next night. He brought me ten florins, all that was left when the expenses had been paid.

'Courage!' said I, 'things will mend in a day or two.'

We had a good supper, and I amused myself with little Bassi and the soubrette, without noticing poor jealous harlequin, who did not like the liberties I was taking with his sweetheart. She did not like them either, for she wanted harlequin to marry her. I tired of his sulky face at last, and took him by the shoulders and turned him out of the room. The scene then became painful, for the pretty soubrette wept bitterly, while Bassi and his wife laughed at her, and told her it was harlequin who had been rude to me in the first instance. She was inconsolable, however, and declared she would never sup with me again, unless I made it up with her lover. I said I would do as she wished, and a present of four sequins restored harmony.

I ordered Bassi to put up posters next day, announcing that the prices for the theatre would be two florins in the pit, a ducat in the boxes, and nothing at all in the gallery, which

Digitized by Microsoft®

was to be opened gratis to the first comers. He looked somewhat scared, and protested that we should not sell one ticket.

'May be,' I answered. 'You will ask the police to give us twelve men to keep order. I will pay them.'

'We shall want them. All the scum of the town will come for the free seats.'

'We shall see. At any rate, it will give us something to laugh over at supper.'

I went to see harlequin in his garret, and soothed him with two louis, and a promise to respect his mistress.

Bassi's poster set the whole town in a roar. He was treated as a madman; but when it was known that it was I who was the enterprising speculator, tongues wagged more busily than ever. When the evening came, the galleries were crammed, but the boxes and pit were empty. Only half a dozen of my friends were there, and a strange young man whom I strongly suspected of being a woman in disguise. The actors surpassed themselves, and the gallery applauded frantically.

The supper that night was most uproarious; every one was wild with excitement, except poor modest harlequin, who hid his face in his hands and remained motionless. Finally, I emptied my purse on the table, while my guests scrambled over one another to clutch at the spoils. Then I went back to my hotel and slept heavily. I was awakened by my servant bringing me a citation to appear before the burgomaster immediately. I was curious to know what he could want with me, as I was sure I had not in any way transgressed the laws of the town.

On appearing before him, the worthy magistrate addressed me in German; but as I could not speak a word of that language, he began to speak in Latin; not the Latin of Cicero, but the pedantic speech taught in the German universities.

'Why,' he asked, 'do you go under a false name?'

He justifies his territorial appellation.

'My name is not false. Ask the banker Carli, who has just cashed a cheque for fifty thousand florins signed with it.'

'I know, but your name is Casanova, and not Seingalt. Why do you take this name?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Because it pleased me; and by taking it I have made it so completely my own, that if any one else dared to use it I would use all possible means to prevent him.'

'How can you prove the name belongs to you?'

'Because I am the author of it, but I am Casanova as well.'

'No, sir, you must be one or the other. You cannot have two names at the same time.'

'Spaniards and Portuguese often have half a dozen.'

'But you are an Italian; and besides, how can one be the author of a name?'

'It is the easiest thing in the world. The alphabet belongs to everybody, that is undeniable. I took eight letters of this common property, and combined them so as to produce the word Seingalt. The word pleased me, and I have adopted it as my name, firmly persuaded that no one else has ever borne it before me, and no one can bear it without my consent.'

'It is an extraordinary idea, and you back it up with reasoning which is more specious than valid. Your name can only be what your father's was before you.'

'You are wrong, I think. The name which you yourself inherit has not existed always. It was fabricated by some one of your ancestors, who did not receive it from his father. You must agree with me, Herr Burgomaster.'

The Burgomaster is persuaded.

'I do, but it is a new idea.'

'On the contrary, it is as old as the hills. I can bring you to-morrow a string of names, all borne by living people, and all invented by them for their own use and pleasure.'

'But you must admit that the law forbids false names.'

'False names, yes, but nothing is more real than mine. Your own honoured name, which I have not the pleasure of knowing, is not more really yours; for, after all, it is possible that you are not the son of your father.'

He laughed, and showed me to the door, saying he would speak to my banker about me. I was going there myself, and naturally hastened to get there first. Carli laughed, and said the burgomaster was a good sort of man, stupid, but good-natured enough.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXI

THE GRAND OPERATION

I REACHED Paris the last day of the year 1761, and went straight to an apartment in the Rue du Bac, which my good kind Madame d'Urfé[1] had engaged for me, and which she had furnished with the greatest elegance and taste. The rooms were hung with superb tapestries which had belonged to Réné of Savoy, and on which were represented scenes illustrating the great operations of magic.

Paris, December 31, 1761.

I was three weeks in my beautiful lodgings without going anywhere or seeing any one. I wanted to convince the good lady that I had returned to Paris solely to fulfil the promise I had given her, that I would by spells and enchantments cause her to be re-born, and in the form of a man.

The preparations for the grand operation took three weeks. We had to pay a separate devotion to the genius of each of the seven planets on days specially consecrated to them. Then I was to go to a place, the locality of which would be miraculously disclosed to me, where I should find a virgin,

[1] The d'Urfés came from Suabia. It was not until they had been many years in France that their name was corrupted from the original Wulfe into d'Urfé. They became possessed of vast estates in le Forez, a district of Auvergne, among others Champoly (Puy de Dôme), where their historic château is built on the summit of a mountain. This château was begun early in the thirteenth century by Wulfe the Valiant, a crusader, son-in-law of Guy, Comte de Forez. It was called Ulphi—in old documents *Ulphiacum*. The next change was Urphé. It is a regular fortress, and was formerly protected by a deep moat, thick walls, and battlemented towers. Two of these latter are still standing, and are known as 'd'Urfé's towers.' The château now belongs to the Montbrison family. The views from it are very extensive, embracing the mountains of Dauphiné and Savoy.

Digitized by Microsoft®

the daughter of an adept. This virgin would bear a son, the secret of whose birth would be known only to the brethren of the Rose ✠ Cross.

Her son would be born alive, with a 'sensitive soul.' This, translated into plain language, means that he would be sentient, but not intelligent. Madame d'Urfé was to receive him into her arms at the moment of his birth, and was to keep him in bed with her for seven days and seven nights. At the expiration of this period she would die, while holding her mouth pressed to the child's mouth, and her soul would, at the moment of death, pass from her body into his, and be then, and not till then, endowed with intelligence.

The ceremonial of the grand operation.

After this transmigration, I was to have charge of the child and bring him up, as his tutor and guardian of his inheritance. All she had was to be his. When he was three years old, Madame d'Urfé would regain consciousness.[1] I should then fully initiate her in the grand science.

The sublime madwoman, who believed absolutely in the feasibility of it all, was burning with impatience to see the virgin who was to be the chosen vessel. I had hoped that the directions of the oracle would inspire her with a certain repugnance, as, after all, according to them, she had herself to die, and I counted on her natural love of life to postpone the climax. But she was so terribly eager that I was obliged to make a pretence of keeping my vow, and to go in search of the mysterious virgin.

A person of not too scrupulous a morality, and whom I could rely on to follow my instructions, was necessary to me. I bethought me of La Corticelli. She must have been in Prague for the last nine months; and I had promised her, when I last saw her at Bologna, that I would join her there before the end of the year. But I had just come from Germany, and my memories were not of the pleasantest;

[1] Madame de Créquy mentions a significant clause: that the marquise was to make arrangements with her children with regard to her inhumation, which was of course to be a nominal affair.

Digitized by Microsoft®

besides, it was a long journey. I decided I would send her the money for her travelling expenses, and arrange a place of meeting nearer Paris.

To Metz in search of La Corticelli. Jan. 25, 1762.

I chose Metz. M. de Fouquet, a great friend of Madame d'Urfé's, was governor of the town, and her nephew, the Comte de Lastic,[1] was there with his regiment. I left Paris with an ample letter of credit, a well-filled purse, and laden with presents from my faithful old friend.

I had dismissed le Duc on arriving in Paris; I really could not forgive him. I deposited him in the Rue Saint-Antoine with his trunk, and without a character or certificate, although he implored me not to abandon him. I never heard of him again, and I often regretted him, for he was an excellent servant. I ought, perhaps, to have remembered the important services he rendered me at Stuttgart, Soleure, Naples, Florence, and elsewhere, but I was vexed at the effrontery with which he had compromised me before the magistrate at Augsburg. I should have been disgraced and convicted of theft if I had not turned the tables on him, and so proved his guilt. I thought I had done a good deal for him in saving him from the clutches of the law.

I would not engage another servant; my confidence was deeply shaken by the way the last two had served me.

On reaching Metz, I sent fifty louis to La Corticelli, telling her to come with her mother as soon as she could, and holding out, as an inducement, a promise to make her fortune, though I did not say how.

I wiled away the time of waiting in company with a dear little actress named Raton. She was so amiable and so gentle, I was sorry I had sent for the Italian, but it was too late to change; and on returning from the theatre one evening, I was greeted by the news that 'my wife, my daughter, and a gentleman had arrived from Frankfort, and were waiting for me.'

[1] The de Lastics, like the d'Urfés, were of an old Auvergnat family. It is said that the young Comte Harold de Lastic was the first French officer killed in the Franco-Prussian war.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Imbecile!' said I, 'I have neither wife nor daughter.'

This denial did not prevent all Metz from believing that my family had joined me.

La Corticelli flung her arms round my neck, laughing, as was her wont, and her mother gravely presented the gentleman who had accompanied them from Prague. He was an Italian named Monti. Having no further use for him, I recompensed him, and sent him back by the coach to Frankfort.

I found La Corticelli improved. She had grown, and her manners were better.

'Why did you let your mother say she was my wife?' I asked. 'Do you think it is flattering to me? She ought to have said she was your governess, if she did not wish to speak the truth.'

'She would rather be whipped than pass as my governess. She thinks a governess is something disgraceful.'

'She is an ignorant fool, but she must be made to obey. How smart you are! Have you made your fortune?'

'I found a generous friend at Prague. Now tell me all about this part you want me to play?'

'You will know all in good time.'

The mock descendant of a family.

The next day we left Metz for Nancy, from whence I wrote to Madame d'Urfé, telling her I was returning with a virgin, the last scion of that noble family of Lascaris[1] which had once reigned at Constantinople. I begged her to arrange one of her country houses for our reception. We should have to remain there some time, preparing and executing our cabalistic ceremonies. She answered that everything was ready for me

[1] Theodore Lascaris, son-in-law of the Emperor Alexis III., when driven out of Constantinople by the Crusaders in the twelfth century, founded a new empire, which lasted until the expulsion of the Latins from Byzantium in 1260. One of Theodore's descendants, Eudoxia, married the Count of Vintimille, and his descendants took the name of Lascaris, though they had really no right to it, as Eudoxia died childless, and the count was succeeded by the children of his second wife, Renée of Savoy, who married Jacques d'Urfé in 1554, and brought the name of Lascaris into the family.

Digitized by Microsoft®

at Pont-Carré,[1] an old château about four leagues from Paris, and that she would welcome the *princess* with all the marks of the warmest friendship. 'The more so,' she added, 'as the Lascaris family is closely allied to ours, and that I am to be re-incarnated through the instrumentality of this fortunate maiden.'

I felt it was necessary, if not to damp her ardour, at any rate to hold it somewhat in check, and I told her that for certain reasons Mademoiselle de Lascaris must be treated as a countess, not as a princess. She would be accompanied by her governess, and we would arrive Monday in Holy Week. I passed twelve days at Nancy, drilling La Corticelli in her rôle, and struggling with her mother, who strongly objected to be the humble servant of the Comtesse de Lascaris. I had great difficulty in overcoming her objections, and it was only by alternately bribing and threatening that I finally triumphed. I have bitterly repented my persistency; the mulishness of this woman was inspired by my good genius to prevent me from committing the worst action of my life.

The feudal reception of La Lascaris.

On the stated day we arrived at Pont-Carré, the drawbridge was let down, and Madame d'Urfé received us, standing in the doorway surrounded by her retainers, like a general surrendering his garrison with all the honours of war.

The dear woman, who was only mad from excess of intelligence, greeted the 'princess' so warmly, that the latter would have been much astonished had she not been forewarned. She took her in her arms tenderly, and called her her beloved niece, explaining to her the connection between the houses of Lascaris[2] and d'Urfé, which permitted her to give herself the title of aunt.

[1] This château, which came to the marquise from her own side of the family, and from which they took their territorial title, was in the forest of Armainvilliers, in the department of Seine-et-Marne.

[2] Casanova was no doubt aware of the history of the Lascaris family when he chose this surname for his accomplice, one of the names borne by all the d'Urfés, and his suggestion of an accidental choice of it is probably only an attempt to throw a little dust in our eyes. He had the grace in his old age to be ashamed of

Digitized by Microsoft®

To my great surprise, my feather-brained little Italian listened to all this with complaisance and dignity, and never once laughed, though, God knows, it was funny enough!

Madame then conducted us to her apartment, where she went through mysterious fumigations, incensing the blessed maiden, who accepted her homage with the calm dignity of a goddess. This ceremony concluded, she flung herself in the priestess's arms, and was again embraced.

At table the countess was gracious and chatty. Madame d'Urfé was so captivated by her that she did not notice her bad French. As for Madame Laura, who only spoke Italian, she was given a comfortable room, where her meals were served to her, and which she only left to go to Mass.

Pont-Carré was a sort of fortress, which had sustained more than one siege during the civil wars. It was square, as its name implies, with four battlemented towers, surrounded by a wide moat The rooms were very large. The air was infested with venomous gnats, who devoured us, leaving blisters all over our faces. I had agreed to stay there for a week, and I could find no pretext for shortening my visit, so was forced to make the best of it. Madame had a bed placed in her room for her 'niece.' On the fourteenth of April I supped soberly, and a quarter of an hour later madame appeared, escorting the virgin Lascaris. She sprinkled her with perfumes, covered her with a superb veil, and gravely presented her to me.

On the nights succeeding the countess slept with her aunt; on the last day of the month I was to question the oracle.

The oracle is crossed by d'Aranda.

I deemed it prudent to say that the little Aranda, who was with us at Pont-Carré, had spoiled the combination by staring at us all over the top of a screen!

the manner in which he treated Madame d'Urfé, and he is unwilling that one should know how cunningly he laid all his plans to entrap her.

It is hardly likely that a *grande dame*, as his unfortunate old dupe undoubtedly was, would have received his *protégée* with such marks of honour had she not really believed her to be a descendant of the pseudo-royal house of Lascaris.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Madame d'Urfé was in despair, but the oracle consoled her by saying that what had been impossible in France during the April moon might be possible in another country during the May moon; but that the curious youth, whose influence had been so contrary, must be sent away for at least a year.

Aranda was immediately despatched to Lyons.

I had a reason for getting rid of Aranda. I saw that La Corticelli was taken with him, and that her mother was favouring their intrigue, and was very angry at my opposing her daughter's inclinations.

The question now was to find a place where the spell could be repeated. We fixed on Aix-la-Chapelle, and in five or six days everything was ready for the voyage.

La Corticelli was very angry with me for having sent away the object of her caprice, and began to behave very rudely to me. She even went so far as to threaten me if I did not bring Aranda back.

'It does not become you to be jealous,' she said, 'and I am my own mistress.'

To appease her and her mother, I promised to take them back to Bologna after our sojourn at Aix-la-Chapelle, but I was far from easy in my mind.

La Corticelli is presented to the Margrave of Baireuth and the Duchess of Würtemberg.

Madame d'Urfé, the supposed countess, a favourite waiting-maid named Brougnole, and myself, travelled in a berline; la Signora Laura and another maid came after us in a cabriolet; two servants in livery were on the box of the berline. We stayed one night at Brussels, and one at Liége. At Aix we found a numerous and distinguished company. A large ball was given, at which Madame d'Urfé presented my Countess of Lascaris as her niece to the two princesses of Mecklembourg. The 'Countess' received their attentions with ease and grace; she particularly attracted the Margrave of Baireuth and the Duchess of Würtemberg and her daughter. These ladies took such a fancy to her that they kept her by them all the evening. I was on thorns for fear she should betray herself. She danced with such grace that she excited the admiration

Digitized by Microsoft®

of the whole party. Every one complimented *me* on her fascinations. I suffered a perfect martyrdom, for I fancied these compliments were ironical, and that people had discovered the opera dancer in the disguised countess. As soon as I could speak to her alone, I begged her to dance like a young lady, and not like a ballet-girl; but she was proud of her success, and declared that she would not dance badly to please me or any one else.

All this so disgusted me, that I would have got rid of her then and there had I known how, but I swore to myself that she should lose nothing by waiting. Be it a vice or be it a virtue, the desire for vengeance once aroused in my heart, I never rest until it is satisfied!

The medium has convulsions.

The day after the ball Madame d'Urfé gave La Corticelli a case containing a beautiful watch set with brilliants, a pair of diamond earrings, and a ring with a rose diamond weighing fifteen carats; the whole was worth sixty thousand francs. I took the case into my possession, for fear she should go off without my consent. On the day of the full moon I breakfasted with Madame d'Urfé, but she was very downcast. It was precisely on that day, at three minutes past four, that the spell was to be repeated, and the divine Lascaris, the chosen vessel, was in bed pretending to have convulsions!

I pretended to be terribly put out, but secretly I was glad, for I saw a chance of revenging myself on the perfidious Corticelli, and told madame that the subject had been tampered with by an evil spirit, and that I must seek a better. Then I went up to see La Corticelli.

'So you are ill, my dear,' said I; 'it seems you have convulsions?'

'I am perfectly well, but I shall continue to have them until you give me back my jewel-case.'

'You are becoming spiteful, my poor child; your mother is advising you badly. As for the jewel-case, if you behave like this, you will never have it.'

'I will reveal everything.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You will not be believed, and I shall send you back to Bologna without any of the presents madame has made you.'

'Give me back my jewel-case at once, or I will tell that old madwoman of yours the whole story, no matter what happens!'

I looked at her for a minute or two, and left the room without a word. I closeted myself with Madame d'Urfé, and we spent the afternoon putting questions to the oracle, and obtaining replies, each one more obscure than the other. She gathered from it all, however, that poor Lascaris had gone mad; that she had been spoilt by a black spirit, an enemy of the Rosicrucians; and that should she have a child, it would be a gnome.

Madame asked what we must do now, and was told she must write to *Selenis*, in the moon.

Madame d'Urfé corresponds with the Moon.

This nonsense ought surely to have cured her; but she received the answer jubilantly. She was acquainted with the ceremonies of moon-worship, and knew what to do. To begin with, we must wait till the moon was in its first quarter. This was so much time gained. In the meanwhile we agreed that Lascaris was mad, and that we would pay no attention to anything she might say in her delirium. Her mind was possessed by an evil spirit, who inspired her. Still, as we considered her to be pitied rather than blamed, we allowed her to join us at table, but she slept with her governess.

As I had lost heavily all the time I was in Aix, I was obliged to pawn La Corticelli's jewels to pay my gambling debts; and should have been in a sorry plight had I not met an Englishman named Martin, who invited me to go halves with him in his bank. I could always make more out of Englishmen than French or Germans. Things went so well that in eight or ten days I redeemed the jewels, paid my debts, and pocketed a good round sum.

La Corticelli was furious with me. She told madame everything, the whole history of her life, and how we had become

Digitized by Microsoft®

acquainted; but the truer her tale, the more did the good lady believe her insane.

This is how I managed the correspondence between Madame d'Urfé and the moon. On the appointed day we supped in a garden outside the town. In a room on the ground floor I had prepared everything, and had in my pocket the letter which was to come down from the planet. In the room was a large bath full of tepid water, mixed with essences, in which we were to plunge the moment the moon rose, one hour after midnight.

When we had burnt aromatic spices, and repeated certain mysterious prayers appropriate to the worship of Selenis, I hid my letter in my left hand and led madame to the bath, by the side of which was an alabaster cup full of spirit of juniper, which I set on fire, pronouncing cabalistic words which I did not understand myself, and which she repeated after me. She then handed me her letter addressed to the moon, and I burnt it. She declared she saw the characters she had herself traced mounting up a stair of moonbeams.

Selenis replies on glazed green paper.

After about ten minutes my letter appeared on the surface of the water. It was written in a circle, letters of silver on glazed green paper. Madame d'Urfé received it with unction, and laid the precious epistle on a white satin cushion, while we perfumed ourselves. Then I told her to read it. She obeyed, but was grieved to find that her hypostasis was postponed until the coming of *Quérilinte,* whom she was to meet with me, at Marseilles, in the spring of the following year.

Next night there was another ball; and La Corticelli, eager to humiliate me, danced as it is not permissible for a well-born young person to dance. She pirouetted, cut capers and cross-capers, threw up her leg; in fact, went through all the antics of a ballet-girl. I was in agonies. An officer who perhaps did, or did not, know that I passed as her uncle, asked me if she was a professional dancer. Another said he had seen some one very like her at Prague during the carnival. I saw I

Digitized by Microsoft®

must hasten my departure from Aix, or the miserable girl would cost me my life.

This time we travelled madame and I alone, La Corticelli with her mother and the two maids following us. We did not start without difficulty. Tears, prayers, insults, curses, all were showered on me, but I remained inexorable, and madame only laughed at the follies of her pretended niece.

We went from Aix to Liége, and from there to Luxembourg, through the Ardennes. The Ardennes form one vast forest, whose legends of ancient chivalry have furnished Ariosto with his finest pages. The necessaries of life in this wild country are hardly to be found; and what we call vices, virtues, morality, immorality, are equally wanting. The town of Bouillon[1] in my day was the freest city in Europe; and the Duke of Bouillon was so proud of his jurisdiction, that he preferred his prerogatives to all the honours of the Court of France.

We stayed some time at Sulzbach, where madame had friends, and where I should have been terribly bored but for cards. La Corticelli was now trying to regain her jewellery by way of my favour. She dared not ask me for it point-blank.

Among the visitors at Sulzbach was a Madame Saxe, who would have been charming had she not had a jealous officer always attached to her petticoat strings. This officer, whose

[1] Bouillon, 'the freest city in Europe,' was situated in a deep gorge of the Ardennes. In Casanova's day it possessed about 4000 inhabitants, contained tanneries, oil and cloth factories, and did a flourishing trade in cattle and ironmongery. Godfrey, leader of the first crusade, inherited the title of Duc de Bouillon from his uncle, but sold the duchy in 1095 to the Bishop of Liége to meet the expenses of his Eastern expeditions. In the fifteenth century Bouillon was captured from the bishops by the Seigneurs de la Marck, but Charles V. compelled them to return it. Finally, in the reign of Henri II., and by the treaty of Câteau-Cambresis, it was given to the La Tour d'Auvergne who had married the heiress of the La Marcks. It remained in this family till the Revolution. Napoleon used it as a prison and a salt depôt in 1814; in the re-division of land it fell to the share of the Low Countries. (Madame d'Urfé was aunt to the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne).

Digitized by Microsoft®

name was d'Entragues, liked to play picquet, and she made a point of sitting constantly at his side. He was a handsome man, though too thin. He came up to me one day after dinner and asked me if I wanted my revenge, for the previous night I had lost heavily.

'I don't care about it,' I answered; 'we are not a match. I play for my pleasure, but you play to win.'

'Do you mean to be offensive?'

'Not at all, but each time we play you give up after an hour or so.'

'You ought to be glad; for as I play better than you, you would lose considerably if I continued.'

'I am not so sure of that.'

'I can prove it.'

'Done—but the first who leaves the table loses fifty louis.'

'I accept, but money down.'

A gambling bout *à l'outrance.*

I ordered the waiter to bring cards, and I laid down four or five rouleaux of a hundred louis each. We began at five louis a hundred, having each one put fifty louis to one side for the wager. It was three o'clock when we sat down, and at nine d'Entragues said we had better go to supper.

'I am not hungry,' I said, 'but you are free to go if you like, only I shall pocket the hundred louis.'

He laughed, but his friend Madame Saxe looked cross. I paid no attention to her. All the onlookers went to supper, came back, and stayed with us till midnight, when they left us alone. D'Entragues now saw what manner of man he had to deal with, but he said not a word, and I only opened my lips to score. We played on quite quietly.

At six o'clock in the morning the water-drinkers began to reappear; they congratulated us on our persistency, but we were absorbed in our game. The louis were piled up in a heap on the table.

At nine Madame Saxe arrived and Madame d'Urfé. The ladies advised us to take a cup of chocolate. D'Entragues consented, and thinking I was worn out, said—

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Let us agree that the one who first asks for something to eat, or absents himself from the table for more than a quarter of an hour, or goes to sleep in his chair, loses the bet.'

'Agreed,' said I, 'and I adhere to any other condition you choose to propose.'

The chocolate was brought in; we took it, and then continued the game. At twelve we were called to dinner; we answered together that we were not hungry. At four o'clock we agreed that each should take a cup of broth. At supper-time things began to look serious. Madame Saxe proposed we should share the wager. D'Entragues would have agreed to this, but I refused. He had won a hundred louis, and might have renounced the wager with a profit, but he was avaricious. I did not despise the money, but my honour was what I had at stake. I was still fresh; he looked like a dug-up corpse. As Madame Saxe still insisted, I told her I was sorry to have to refuse her, but I had determined to win or die at my place. I had two ends in view—to frighten d'Entragues by my resolutions, and to spoil his play by making him jealous. Madame Saxe looked at me with hate in her eye, and went off; but Madame d'Urfé said to d'Entragues, 'My good sir, how I pity you!'

We played all night. I watched the face of my adversary more closely than I watched his cards. I saw it get haggard and drawn; he made mistakes, confused his hand, counted badly—I was no less worn out than he. I felt myself growing weaker. I hoped each moment to see him fall down dead before I expired myself in my chair. At daybreak he left the room for a moment. On his return I told him he had been away more than a quarter of an hour. This little squabble brightened me up; it changed my thoughts and my tactics. At nine o'clock in came Madame Saxe. I had been winning.

'Now, sir,' said she, 'it is for you to give way.'

'Madame, if it is to please you, I am ready to withdraw my bet.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

The words, pronounced in a tone of exaggerated gallantry, excited the jealous d'Entragues, who replied in his turn that he would go on till one or other of us fell dead.

'You see, most amiable lady,' said I, making eyes at her, which in my then state must have been somewhat languid and dull, 'that I am not the intractable one.'

They brought us some broth; but d'Entragues, who had reached the last stage of weakness, turned sick directly he had swallowed it, rocked on his chair, and, covered with sweat, fell fainting on the floor. He was carried to bed. I gave six louis to the marker, who had marked for forty-two hours, put my gold in my pocket, and walked down to the apothecary's, where I took a slight vomitive. I then went to bed and slept till three, when I got up and had dinner.

D'Entragues did not appear till the next day. I expected him to pick a quarrel with me, but I was mistaken. He came and embraced me.

'It was a mad wager,' he said, 'and you gave me a lesson I shall remember all my life.'

La Corticelli disappoints him.

A few days after this we went on to Basle, where we should have stayed longer but for an event which seriously annoyed me. I had made it up with La Corticelli to a certain extent, and I came in one night about one o'clock, and not feeling sleepy, I took a candle and went to find her. As I was passing through Madame Laura's room, the old lady laid hold of my dressing-gown, and begged me not to disturb her daughter, who, she said, had been ill all the evening and had need of sleep. I pushed the old woman aside, and entering the daughter's room, found her, and not alone. I had a good pair of pistols in my pocket. I began to laugh, and asked who was the lucky mortal I was about to throw out of the window?

Trembling with terror, poor Corticelli caught me by the hand and begged me to forgive her. 'It is a young nobleman whose name I don't know,' she said.

'A young nobleman whose name you don't know, wanton!' cried I. 'Well, he shall tell it me himself.' I grasped one of

Digitized by Microsoft®

my pistols, and seizing the boy's arm, 'Who are you, fine sir, if you please?'

'I am the Comte de B——, canon of Basle.'

'And this is how you fulfil your ecclesiastical functions?'

'O sir, I beg you to pardon me and madame; I am the only guilty one.'

I sat still and watched them for a quarter of an hour in absolute silence. Neither moved. It was my revenge. Then I said to the boy, for he was little more, 'Now go—and be more careful in future,' and gently pushed him out of the door. Next day I told La Corticelli to pack up her trunks and not to leave her room until the carriage came.

She is dismissed.

'I shall say I am too ill to travel.'

'Say what you like; no one will pay the slightest attention to you.'

I went to Madame d'Urfé and told her the night's adventures, and we decided that I should escort the countess and her governess to Geneva, and from there send them back to Italy.

I never spoke once to my companions during the journey, or even looked at them. At Geneva, where I stopped as usual at the hotel where I had stayed with Henriette, I hired a carriage to take them to Turin. I told them I should see them there in the course of a few months; and if I had good reports of the daughter's conduct, I would reward her. She begged me to give her the three splendid dresses and a fur mantle which madame had ordered for her. I said we would talk about that at Turin. I felt no pity for her; besides, she was far better off than she was when she came to me. She had plenty of clothes, linen, jewellery, and a fine watch I had given her, besides money.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXII

THE SPANISH LADY

The departure of La Corticelli took a weight off my mind. The first person I visited was the town councillor whom I had not written to since I left Florence, and he actually shed tears of pleasure at seeing me. He asked me to sup, and told me that Monsieur de Voltaire had sold his house, *Les Délices*, to the Duc de Villars, and had gone to live at Ferney. When he had left me, I sat down to write some letters, amongst others one to Madame Lebel, my former housekeeper, to tell her I would go and see her at Lausanne if she was still there. I also wrote to Ascanio Pogomas, otherwise known as Giacomo Parsano, a Genoese poet, whom I had known at Leghorn, and who was then at Berne. My evil genius inspired this act; it occurred to me I could present him to Madame d'Urfé as an adept; he had an imposing face and figure.

He writes to his bad angel, Pogomas.

In the course of a day or two I received an express letter from Madame Lebel, begging me to go to Lausanne, where she and her husband would meet me at her mother's house.

Madame Lebel is one of the ten or twelve women whom I have tenderly loved. As my wife she would have made me perfectly happy, had fate reserved that happiness for me; but perhaps, with a character like mine, I was right in not attaching myself irrevocably, although now, in my old age, my very independence constitutes a kind of slavery. If I had married a woman clever enough to direct me—to subjugate me—I should have saved my money, I should have had children, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

I should not be as I am to-day—alone in the world, and penniless!

I timed my journey at Lausanne so as to arrive about an hour before Lebel and his wife would be there. The good mother Dubois was astonished to see me. After she had got over her surprise, I gave her two louis to get us a good supper.

He revisits an old love at Lausanne.

At seven the married couple appeared, bringing with them an infant of eighteen months, who was my living image. I gave the child a superb gold watch with my portrait, to be kept for him till he was grown up. I saw that child again at Fontainebleau when he was twenty-one. We remained two hours at table, during which I related to them in detail all that had occurred to me since I last saw them. As for their history, its lack of incident was the best guarantee of its peaceful character. Madame Lebel was beautiful still. I did not find any change in her; the change was in me. She thought me looking far less fresh and spirited than when we parted. She was right; La Renaud had blighted me, and the faithlessness of La Corticelli had caused me much wearing annoyance. After the tenderest protestations of affection, husband and wife went off to Soleure, and I returned to Geneva.

A few days later I returned to Lyons, expecting to find Madame d'Urfé there, but she had gone to Berne, where she had property. She had left a letter for me, in which she said she would be glad to see me as soon as possible, so I set off at once. She received me as she always did; and I told her that I should be obliged to leave her shortly and go to Turin to meet Frederic Gualdo, who was then chief of the Rosicrucians. I added that he would come to Marseilles with me, and then she would be perfectly happy. These somewhat vague directions prevented her from returning to Paris, at any rate until she had seen us. The oracle also told her that she must await further instructions at Lyons.

I wanted fifty thousand francs, and Madame d'Urfé said she would require fifteen days in which to procure them. We

Digitized by Microsoft®

spent this time at Lyons, where I made the acquaintance of Madame Pernon, the wife of a rich merchant. I laid out a great deal of money at her husband's shop, and supplied myself with a rich and elegant wardrobe.

When the money arrived, Madame d'Urfé handed it over to me, with three beautiful dresses which she had promised to Countess Lascaris; but which, I can assure you, La Corticelli never laid eyes on. One of these dresses was composed of very rare and perfect sables.

He leaves Lyons for Turin.

I left Lyons equipped like a prince, and started for Turin, having stayed one day at Chambéry to see M. M. number two. At Turin I found La Corticelli and her mother lodging with a respectable-looking woman named Pacienza. They were both as meek as lambs, but I was careful never to be alone with the daughter. Frederic Gualdo, *alias* Pogomas, whom I had destined to play the part of the Rosicrucian, had one of those singular faces which inspire, not respect, but a certain ill-defined uneasiness, which is neither more nor less than a natural presentiment. Sooner or later the owner of the face proves to be either a cunning scoundrel or a cold-hearted pedant.

The god of dancing.

The dancing academy of the celebrated Dupré[1] was then at the zenith of its reputation; and as I had promised to do something for La Corticelli, I gave her lessons. The idea pleased her, and I accompanied her to the school. All the dancers, male and female, of the opera were there, the latter accompanied by their mothers, who made a background of

[1] Dupré, who for his talents and his stature was surnamed the Great, was one of the most celebrated dancers of the eighteenth century. He was a superbly handsome man. A contemporary wrote of him—

'Ah! je vois Dupré qui s'avance!
Comme il développe ses bras!
Que de grâces dans tous ses pas!
C'est ma foi! le Dieu de la danse!'

It is difficult to realise any masculine dancer exciting such world-wide admiration and enthusiasm as he did. On retiring from the stage (with a pension), he founded a school of dancing at Turin. It was evidently not a success, for after some time he disappeared, and the date and place of his death are unknown.

Digitized by Microsoft®

worthy women rolled up in shawls and muffs. Dupré told me that if La Corticelli would take pains, she might become a *virtuosa*, for she had wonderful natural gifts.

The quondam Countess Lascaris minced about, giving herself the airs of a favourite, and showing off before the other girls, who whispered and tittered when she laid her hand on my sleeve, saying she wanted ribbons for this and laces for that. I paid Dupré for three months' lessons in advance; it was weak, I own; but I wanted to pose as a *grand seigneur* before all these young women. There was one among them who interested me particularly. She was tall, with fine delicate features, and was dancing with a man who, when he had occasion to find fault with her, spoke so grossly and harshly, that my blood boiled. I had noticed a woman among the parents whom I instinctively felt must be the mother of the girl I was watching. I was right. She told me she was from Lucca, and was a widow, and poor.

A ball at Dupré's.

'How is it you are poor, young and beautiful as you are, and with a daughter like that?'

She gave me a significant glance, and at that moment the girl, who was called Agatha, came up and asked her for a handkerchief to wipe her face.

'Allow me to offer you mine, signorita.'

Mine was white, and perfumed with essence of rose; and when she handed it back, I said, 'You cannot return it without having had it washed, my pretty lady.'

She smiled. The ice was broken, and we made acquaintance.

I persuaded Dupré to give a ball at my expense. All the dancers were invited, and only professionals were to be allowed to dance; but tickets were issued at a ducat each, which admitted ladies and gentlemen to supper and as onlookers. Agatha had no dress to appear in, so I asked Madame Dupré to buy her one from me. It was a rich Lyons silk, trimmed with point d'Alençon. The innocent girl, and her equally innocent mother, had no idea of its real value. I had the

Digitized by Microsoft®

The earrings of Agatha.

privilege of assisting at her toilette that day at Dupré's, and I noticed that her earrings were sadly out of keeping with the rest of her toilette. So drawing the diamond pendants which Madame d'Urfé had meant for La Lascaris from my pocket, I fastened them in her ears.

'You'd say they were diamonds,' said La Dupré.

So they were, but I said they were paste.

When I got to the ball I found her dancing with Lord Percy, the son of the Duchess of Northumberland, a wild young fellow who was spending immense sums on the most senseless excesses. I had great difficulty in getting Agatha away from him; he wanted her to dance with him all the evening.

We danced minuets and country dances, then the ladies partook of refreshments liberally. The popping corks of champagne bottles made a continuous rumble. It was magnificently done. Madame Chauvelin sat down by Agatha and complimented her on her diamond earrings.

'Not diamonds, only paste,' said the candid Agatha; 'and it was Monsieur here who lent them to me.'

Madame Chauvelin laughed out. 'M. de Seingalt is taking you in, my dear!'

Agatha blushed, for my silence confirmed Madame de Chauvelin's assertion, and every one could tell that I was courting her.

Next day the mother of Agatha came to see me, and took chocolate with me. She wanted to know if the earrings were real or not. I assured her that they were, and that I meant to give them to Agatha. She kissed me, and promised to further my suit with her daughter. Thinking over it all when she had left me, I put her down as the most sensible of all the dancer's mothers I had ever known, and I thought of her almost as tenderly as I did of Agatha.

A few days after the ball Madame de Saint-Giles, who at that time was the leader of society in Turin, and whose every word was law, sent for me. After talking of indifferent

Digitized by Microsoft®

matters for a little while, she led the conversation round to La Corticelli, who, she told me, had spread a report that I owed her money, and that I had given diamonds which belonged to her, and which were a present from Madame d'Urfé, to another dancer.

'La Corticelli lies,' said I; 'and as you know Madame d'Urfé, be so good as to write to her. If that noble lady tells you that I am wrong, be assured I will pay whatever may be claimed of me. I have a hundred thousand francs in the bank here, which more than represents the value of the earrings. You can take my word for it, however, that I had a perfect right to dispose of the jewels as I thought fit.'

Earl Percy of Northumberland.

Madame de Saint-Giles did not accept my explanation; and after again trying to persuade me to settle with Corticelli then and there, she lost her temper, and told me she would make me sorry for not having listened to her; she would publish the whole story, and it would not be to my credit. I answered that I never regretted my actions, and that threats never influenced me.

About a week after, some one sent me a manuscript account of what had taken place between La Corticelli, Madame d'Urfé, and myself; but it was so badly written, so badly put together, and so full of absurdities, that no one could read it without yawning. I did not see Corticelli again till we met in Paris six months later.

The pretty Agatha had by now earned her earrings. She was so gentle and so tender, and I was so much in love with her, that if it had not been for the unforeseen event which I am about to relate, I should probably never have parted with her. As it was, I was the agent of Providence in the advancement of her fortune. It will be objected that Providence might have chosen more moral means, but why try to restrict Providence to the narrow circle of prejudice? She has her own methods, which may seem to us obscure, because we are shortsighted.

The young earl was now desperately in love with my

Digitized by Microsoft®

mistress. He followed her about wherever she went, behind the scenes at the theatre, at rehearsals. He visited her every day, and did not neglect any of the usual means of seduction. She invariably returned his presents, and kept me informed of all that took place, and we used to laugh over his infatuation together. I was sure of her love, so his efforts rather flattered my vanity than otherwise. Lord Percy himself was at last so convinced of her fidelity that he changed his tactics and attacked her through me.

He tries to drive a bargain for Agatha.

Frankly and boldly, as is the way of men of his nation, he came one morning and asked me for some breakfast. I received him *à la française*, that is to say, with politeness and cordiality, and put him completely at his ease. Then he told me he loved Agatha, and proposed an arrangement which made me laugh heartily, but did not offend me, because it was so very English.

'I know,' he said, 'that you have been very attentive to Redegonde, the pretty dancer. She is mine. Will you take her in exchange for Agatha, and what do you want over and above?'

'You are as amiable as you are amusing, my dear lord, but you must own it would take a mathematician to work out this sum! How much does Agatha outvalue Redegonde? Redegonde has qualities, no doubt, but she is not to be compared to Agatha!'

'I know that, so I ask you to name your own surplus.'

Lord Percy was immensely rich. I might have asked twenty-five thousand guineas, and I am sure he would have given them; but I did not care for Redegonde, so I would have none of his bartering. I have never regretted my conduct in this affair. To-day even, when a hundred thousand francs seems a treasure to me, I congratulate myself on my delicacy.

I put the question by. I told him I had great sympathy for him, and that the exchange might therefore come about naturally in the course of time, but that the principal factors would have to be consulted.

'As for Redegonde,' he said, 'I am sure she would consent.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I am not so sure of Agatha.'

'That is my business. What I want to know is, does my project please you, and how much do you want to balance things; for, as I said before, your Agatha is worth more than my Redegonde.'

I was amused at it all; but though I was for the present devoted to Agatha, I knew myself, and I resolved to act for the best as regarded her future.

I told Agatha about it that evening when she came to supper, and she laughed heartily.

'Tell me, my dear, would you care for the exchange?'

'I would do as you wished. If his offer is excessively to your advantage, I would advise you to accept.'

I knew she was joking, but I would have preferred a different answer. I became serious, and she pensive.

The next day I breakfasted with my Englishman, and told him Agatha was willing, but I must see Redegonde.

'Let us all go masked to the ball at the theatre,' he said. 'We will leave together and sup at a house which belongs to me, then we can settle the affair.'

We met each other as agreed, and after the ball Lord Percy's carriage took us to his house. The first person I saw in the dining-room was La Corticelli.

I was indignant. I called Lord Percy aside, and told him it was a trick unworthy of a gentleman.

He replied, laughing, that he had expected me to thank him, as he was giving me two for one.

It was impossible to be angry with him. 'You are mad,' said I, and taking Agatha by the hand, we left the house. I would not use his carriage, and we returned home in sedan chairs. Lord Percy held his tongue about the trick he had tried to play me, and you may be sure I did not mention it; but he did not renounce his pretensions to Agatha. I have already said he was very rich; he spent money lavishly, sparing nothing for his pleasures; and in a country where gold is always scarce, his guineas opened every door to him.

Digitized by Microsoft®

One evening Agatha told me that the manager of the Alexandria theatre had offered to engage her as second dancer for the carnival.

'He offers me sixty sequins,' said she, 'and I have promised him an answer to-morrow morning. Do you advise me to accept?'

'If you love me, Agatha, you will refuse all engagements for a year. I shall not let you want for anything, and I will get you the best masters, so that you will then be able to command five hundred sequins a year.'

'But sixty sequins is a good price.'

'You can have them without dancing. Tell the manager you are not going to appear on the boards for some time.'

'As you like, but I think I had better put him off by asking an exorbitant sum.'

'Very well; tell him you want five hundred sequins.'

She came to me next day, and in fits of laughter said the manager had not refused what she asked; he had simply said he must think it over. The following afternoon he brought her the contract, according to her conditions, to sign.

I had a suspicion that it was Agatha who was being paid for, and not her talents, and I asked the manager what surety he could give that the salary would be duly paid. He mentioned a well-known banker. I had no more to say, and the contract was written out double and perfectly correct. The mystery was soon explained; Lord Percy was behind the manager.

The compact is ratified by Agatha.

I might still have been an obstacle in the Englishman's path, but the contract was signed for a year, and I was obliged to return to France to join Madame d'Urfé; and now that peace was declared, I wanted to go to England. I decided to give up Agatha, but I made Percy settle a good sum on her. I was curious to see how he would manage to gain her affection, for he was not prepossessing. We supped together every evening, always with Agatha and her mother, and I saw that Lord Percy's constant attentions were producing

Digitized by Microsoft®

their effect, so I made up my mind to leave for Milan sooner than I had intended.

'My lord,' said I, 'you know I am deeply attached to Agatha, and that she is happy with me, but I am your friend; and as you adore her, I will do what I can to promote your happiness without any question of exchange or reward. I will leave you in possession of the dear girl, if you will promise me never to abandon her; and if you should have to leave her at any time, for any reason, to give her two thousand guineas.'

'My dear friend,' said he, 'I will give her them at once if you like.'

'No, for I don't want her to know anything of this arrangement.'

'Very well; I will give you a paper in which I will agree to pay her this sum when we part.'

'Unnecessary; your word as an Englishman is sufficient. But as we are none of us masters of the future, promise me that you will take measures to insure this sum to her at your death.'

'I give you my word.'

Conclusion of the bargain between the Venetian and the Englishman.

From that moment the Englishman fell more and more deeply in love, and made the handsomest presents to Agatha and her mother, presents which under other circumstances I should not have allowed her to accept. She listened attentively to my advice as to her conduct with her new lover, and it is to these counsels that she largely owed her happiness, for he made her fortune for her. She did not leave the stage, however, for some time.

I was not a man to take gifts from another, but Lord Percy found means to make me a splendid present.

I told him I thought of going to England, and should be glad if he would give me a letter of introduction to the Duchess his mother. He drew a portrait of this lady, surrounded with superb diamonds, from his pocket, and handed it to me, saying—

'There, my dear friend, is the best letter of recommendation

Digitized by Microsoft®

I can give you. To-morrow I will write to my mother that you will present it to her in person, unless, indeed, she begs you to keep it.'

'Her Grace, my lord, will see that I aspire to that honour.'

There are some ideas which would never occur except to an Englishman!

I parted from Agatha with tears, but her grief was greater still.

I had met at Count Borromeo's house a certain Count A. B. who conceived a violent liking for me. He dined and supped with me often, and on several occasions I lent him money. One day, in a burst of confidence, he told me that without my help he must have died of hunger, as he was absolutely destitute of money just then. He was in the service of Spain, his wife was a Spaniard, a Barcelonese, and, according to him, a sparkling brunette of twenty-five or twenty-six years old. He invited me to stay with them at Milan, an invitation I ought to have refused, knowing them to be poor, but I was curious to see this Spanish lady. She wrote the most witty letters, and I pictured her sensible as an Englishwoman, passionate as a Spaniard, gracious and caressing as a Frenchwoman.

The Spanish countess.

But she was quite different from what I had expected. She was pretty, but too small, and too serious. She had written asking me to bring her two pieces of taffetas; and when I told her I had executed her commission, she thanked me, saying her chaplain would reimburse me. We were four at supper; the count was gay, but the little lady maintained an obstinate silence, only answering our remarks with a slight smile. She never raised her eyes from her plate, but found frequent fault with the food, addressing her complaints to the chaplain.

After supper the taffetas was brought in; it was to make her a domino with paniers, according to the extravagant fashion of the day.

When the count accompanied me to my room, he begged

Digitized by Microsoft®

me to pardon his wife's Spanish taciturnity, assuring me I should like her extremely when we were better acquainted.

My room was large and comfortable, but the rest of the house was poorly furnished. The servants' livery was worn and shabby, the table linen was patched, the dinner service was in earthenware, and the same girl was lady's-maid and cook. Clairmont, my French valet, whom I had recently engaged, told me he was miserably lodged in a little room leading out of the kitchen. The chaplain was one of those domestic priests so common in Italy, who are boarded and lodged in the house, and who perform in return a hundred little services. This one said Mass in a neighbouring chapel in the morning, occupied himself with the housekeeping, and was the very humble servant of madame.

He came to me in the morning and asked me to say he had paid me three hundred francs for the taffetas if madame should question me.

'That is strange advice from one of your cloth,' said I. 'Do you advise me to tell a lie? No; I shall tell her the truth.'

'You do not know the lady, sir, and you do not know the ways of the house; however, I will speak to her husband.'

The count was as frightened of his haughty wife as the poor priest was; and to pander to her vanity, he agreed to say that he and I had settled for the silk between us.

I was writing letters in my own room when the husband and wife came up to present to me the friend of the family, Marchese Triulzi, a man of about my own age, tall and well made, with pleasant manners. He said that he had come for the pleasure of meeting me, and also to warm himself by my fire. 'There is only one fireplace in the house,' he said, 'and that is in your room.'

My valet Clairmont had been unpacking my things, and had spread them out on two chairs. Among them were some ladies' cloaks, and a superb dress in crimson *gros de Tours*, trimmed with sable, which Madame d'Urfé had ordered for La Corticelli. As all the chairs were occupied, the marchese

Digitized by Microsoft®

drew the stiff little countess to him and made her sit on his knee like a doll. She blushed, and tore herself away.

'Old as you are,' she said, 'have you not learned the respect due to a woman like me?'

'Truly, countess,' he said, 'I do respect you, and so I could not allow you to stand while I sat!'

He then turned to me, and looking at the clothes, asked if I was expecting some lady?

'No,' I said; 'but I hope I shall find some one in Milan worthy of these presents.'

The dinner at the house of the Spanish countess.

'You had better stay and dine, marchese,' said the count; 'and as you swear by your own cook, send for your dinner.'

The marchese agreed, and the whole meal came from his house—linen and china, wine, valets, and all. This served to explain his footing in the house to me. He did all the talking, and did not spare the countess; but I saw that his raillery was only intended to correct her absurd haughtiness.

After dinner they went off to the opera in his carriage, and the count and I went in mine. The first person I saw there was my dear Teresa Palesi, whom I had left in Florence. I determined to pay her a visit as soon as I could escape from my host.

In the morning Clairmont informed me that a young woman wished to speak to me. A tall well-made girl came in, and offered me her services, to wash and mend my linen and lace. I admired her deeply.

'Where do you live, signorita?'

'In this house, on the ground floor, with my parents.'

'What is your name?'

'Zenobia.'

'Your name is as pretty as you are. Will you let me kiss your hand?'

'No, for my hand is engaged. I am to be married before the end of carnival to a tailor.'

'Is your betrothed handsome and well to do?'

'No; I am just marrying him to have a house of my own.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'A very good reason, and one which I highly approve. Go and fetch your tailor; I have some work for him.'

I had only just finished my toilet when she returned with her future husband, a little shrivelled-up creature.

'Well, sir, so you are going to marry this charming girl?'

'Yes, my lord; we have already been called in church, and are to be married in ten days.'

'Why not to-morrow?'

'You are in a hurry, illustrissimo.'

'I should be if I was in your place. Now, look at this silk; I want you to make me a domino to wear at the ball to-morrow, and here are ten sequins on account, on whatever your bill may be.'

He meets Teresa Palesi again.

He went off joyfully, leaving his sweetheart behind. I spent half an hour chatting with her, gave her my laces to mend, and then drove into Milan to see my dear Teresa, who received me with speechless emotion, for we had never ceased to love each other tenderly, and told me she was no longer living with her husband, who had become impossible. She made him an allowance on condition that he remained in Rome. Cesario, she said, was with her in Milan. She was practically free, and I loved her as dearly as I had done eighteen years ago, but I was now quite incapable of concentrating my affections on any one woman.

The Countess A. B. began to be a little more friendly, and at dinner that evening teased me about my long absence.

'I know where you passed the afternoon,' she said. 'The lady has a lover who will abandon her if you visit her too often.'

'Then I will take his place, madame.'

'You do well to devote yourself to women who appreciate your presents. I know you only bestow them after they have proved their predilection for you.'

'A rule, madame, from which I never deviate, for I find it is a sure means of never being disappointed.'

'Your friend is evidently of your way of thinking; only a mercenary person would put up with a Greppi.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I did not wince at this name, which was that of my banker; indeed, I was glad that Teresa should have such a wealthy and powerful protector.

We were interrupted by the arrival of Triulzi, who had come to fetch madame to take her to the play. I went with her husband to a gambling-house, where I lost twenty ducats, and then on to the opera, where I lost two hundred more. I could not help laughing at the poor count's distress; he little knew that I had a hundred thousand francs deposited with the very Greppi whom his wife despised so.

The countess, who knew of my losses, asked me if I wanted to sell my sable dress.

'I am told,' she said, 'it is worth a thousand sequins.'

'That may be, madame, but I would rather sell anything else.'

'The Marchese Triulzi would like to buy it to make a present of it.'

'I am sorry I cannot oblige him.'

She said no more, but I could see she was vexed.

As I left the opera I met Teresa in her sedan chair. She bade me to supper with her; and placing my carriage at the count's service, I took a chair and followed her. What a happy evening we spent! I asked her if it were true about Greppi? She said he was only a friend, and that, moreover, as she was rich, she intended to remain independent.

The countess haggles for the sable dress with Casanova.

The tailor brought me my domino next afternoon, and the countess asked me if I would be kind enough to take her to the ball in my carriage, and she would do without Triulzi. I took this as an advance on her part; and as soon as we were side by side, I told her that the sable robe was at her disposition if she would be kind to me in return?

'You insult me, sir, and I am the more astonished because you of all people ought to know better.'

'My dear countess, there is no insult in admiration. Forgive me if I am too bold; make me happy, and wear the dress, which will become you mightily.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I could only forgive you if I loved you, and your gross behaviour is more calculated to make me detest you.'

'My manners are the outcome of my temperament. I cannot brook delay; waiting cools my ardour. You would rather see me timidly adoring, I suppose?'

'No matter what you were, I could never care for you.'

'We are agreed on that point; I do not, and I never could, care for you.'

'And yet you would spend a thousand sequins on me.'

'Not for love of you, but because I want to humiliate you, and mortify your insupportable pride.'

God knows what the proud Castilian's answer would have been, but just then the carriage stopped at the theatre door. We separated; she went to her box, and I to the gaming-table, where I spent four hours neither winning nor losing, but the last half-hour I lost heavily. On the road home the quarrel began again.

'I know you lost at the tables to-night, and I am glad. The marquis will give you a thousand sequins for the dress. You had better accept his offer; it may bring you luck.'

'It would bring you luck as well; for, of course, he intends the dress for you.'

'Perhaps.'

'You will never get it so. You know the only way to obtain it. I don't care a pin for the money.'

'And I don't care a pin for you or your dress.'

'The same to you.'

Negotiations are broken off.

We continued to exchange courtesies of this kind till we reached the house.

The count came into my room to condole with me.

'Triulzi would give you a thousand sequins if you liked,' he said; 'that would set you up again.'

'For the sable dress, eh? I would rather give it to your wife, but she says she won't take it from me.'

'I am surprised, for she is wild about it. You must have

Digitized by Microsoft®

wounded her pride somehow. Take my advice; sell it to Triulzi!'

'I will think about it, and give you an answer to-morrow.'

I rose early next morning and called on Greppi the banker. I drew out a thousand sequins, at the same time begging him not to mention my private concerns to any one. On returning I found the count seated in front of my fire.

'My wife is furious with you,' he said, 'and she won't tell me the reason.'

'The reason is that I will not let any one give her that sable robe but me. She won't accept it from me, but I do not see why she should be furious about it.'

'It is foolish of her, no doubt, but listen to me. You seem to despise the money, and I congratulate you on being able to do so. The sum would make *me* happy. Sacrifice vanity to friendship, take the thousand sequins from the marchese, and lend them to me.'

I burst out laughing at this proposition, and the poor count blushed with shame. I embraced him, adding maliciously—

'I will sell the dress to Triulzi, but I won't lend you the money; I will give it to your wife. But, remember, she must make herself agreeable. Now I hope you quite understand me, and if you can arrange it that way, my dear count, I am willing that she shall wear the dress.'

'I will see,' said the poor husband, and left the room.

My valet Clairmont came in to announce a visitor. It was a young Venetian named Barbaro, whom I had known intimately in bygone times. He also had been a prisoner in 'The Leads,' and was an exile from his country.

'I saw you losing last night,' he said, 'and for the sake of our former friendship I have come to propose to you a means by which you can make a great deal of money. But you must let me present you to several rich young men who are fond of cards, and who generally lose.'

'Where am I to meet them?'

'In one of the best houses of Milan. If you consent, I will

Digitized by Microsoft®

take the bank, and am certain to win. I only want you to furnish the funds to start the bank.'

'I imagine you are a very good dealer?'

'I am.'

This was as much as to tell me he cheated.

'My dear compatriot,' said I, 'I cannot accede to your proposal till I have seen the company you want to introduce me to.'

I sent for my carriage, and we drove to a house on the outskirts of Milan. Here he introduced me to a handsome old man, a respectable-looking lady, and two young girls—cousins. He announced me as a Venetian, in disgrace with the state, but a bachelor, and rich enough to snap my fingers at their lordships. I certainly had every appearance of wealth. My costume was gorgeous; my rings, snuff-boxes, chains, my watch set with diamonds, my diamond and ruby cross, which I wore on a wide crimson ribbon, gave me an appearance of importance. The cross was the Order of the Spur which the Pope had given me. I had carefully removed the spur, so that no one could guess what it really was; and one would no more say to a gentleman, 'What order is that?' than one would say to a lady, 'How old are you?'

I left off wearing this cross in 1765, when the prince palatine of Murcia told me to get rid of the rubbish! It was he who knocked away the first stone from the arch supporting the kingdom of Poland.

The old man of the house was a marchese; the two cousins each bore the title of marchesa; they were very beautiful. I wanted to find out more about them, as I had no confidence in Barbaro. In half an hour visitors began to arrive, on foot and in carriages, several well-dressed ladies and equally well-dressed young men. We were about twenty in all. We sat round a large table and played a game called 'Bankruptcy.' When I had lost a few sequins, I left with Barbaro.

'I will lend you two hundred sequins,' I said; 'but as I don't want to lose them, you must find me security for them. You

Digitized by Microsoft®

must give me half your profits, but be careful not to let any one know I am interested in your game. If I think any one suspects us, I will punt against you and ruin you.'

'You can rely on my discretion; besides, it is to my advantage to have people believe the bank belongs to me.'

I met Triulzi at the opera that evening.

The marchese buys it for her.

'*À propos de rien*,' said he, 'I hear you have decided to let me have the sable robe. I am very much obliged to you, and will give you the fifteen thousand francs whenever you like.'

'You can send for the dress to-morrow morning. By the bye, I saw the young ladies at church, who interest me immensely—two cousins, the Marchesa Q. and the Marchesa F.'

'I know them; they are of very good family, and I have never heard a word against them except that they are poor. I have been told that one of them has a lover, but it is a secret. I can introduce you to them if you like.'

Triulzi's servant came in the morning and carried off the much discussed dress. It was a Friday, and the marquis dined with us. He sent a superb fish dinner, and arrived soon after himself, with the dress in a basket. He presented it ceremoniously to the proud Spanish lady, who was profuse in her thanks. He laughed like a man who was used to these little things; but told her that if she was wise she would sell it again, as every one knew she was too poor to wear such a costume. This not very flattering remark drew down on his head a torrent of abuse. 'Why,' she asked, 'had he been such a fool as to give her a dress which she could not wear?'

During the dispute the Marchesa Menafoglio was announced. The dress spread out on the table attracted her eyes at once, and she said, 'I would like to buy that.'

'I did not buy it to sell again,' replied the countess with acrimony.

'I beg pardon,' said the other lady, and changed the conversation. But when she had gone, the Spaniard gave vent to her anger, and fell foul of Triulzi, who retorted with the most stinging sarcasms wrapped up in exquisitely

Digitized by Microsoft®

polite form; till at last, baffled and worn out, she went to bed.

Triulzi handed me the fifteen thousand francs, and took his leave. When he had gone, the count told me, if I had nothing better to do, I might keep his wife company, as he had some business to attend to.

'My dear fellow,' said I, 'I have the thousand sequins in my pocket, and if she is reasonable I will give them to her.'

I went up into my room and deposited the gold Triulzi had given me, and took the notes I had drawn that morning in their place. This was a piece of foolish ostentation. I was anxious to prove that the marchese's money was nothing to me, for I had plenty besides.

Zenobia just then brought me my ruffles. I was fool enough to suggest that she should send her tailor packing and live with me. Luckily she was not such a fool as to imagine I meant what I said.

I found madame in bed. After I sat down beside her I inquired tenderly after her health, and complained of the cold.

'Are you not going out?' she said. 'You have your *robe de chambre* on, and your hair is not done?'

'I would rather stay with you, if I may.'

'Will you sacrifice your gambling to me this evening?'

'Willingly. I have already lost heavily, and I don't want to lose the money the marchese has just handed me for the dress you would not accept from my hand.'

'It would be a pity to lose such a sum.'

'It will not be lost, for I intend to give it to you. But I feel very chilly. May I shut the door?'

'No; I prefer it open.'

'Then I will say good-bye, madame. I am going back to my nice warm fire.'

'You are a very bad man; but you can stay, you amuse me.'

I stayed, but—was it because I remembered the bought dress, or was it because I remembered the fair Zenobia, the

Digitized by Microsoft®

tailor's betrothed, who had been busy mending my linen? Be it as it may, the beautiful Spaniard found me insensible to her fascinations.

The humiliation of the Spanish lady.

How deeply she was mortified only a woman could say, and I did not behave generously.

'It is not my fault, madame, if your charms have so little power over me. Here are fifteen thousand francs to console you.' So saying I laid them down on the table and left her.

I was detestable, I feel it; but my instinct served me, as the sequel of the story will show.

Her behaviour at dinner next day astonished me. She was so serenely affable and polite that I was sorry for having insulted her so outrageously. When her husband left us alone, I said that I knew I was a monster, and that I feared she must hate me.

'You a monster! On the contrary, I am most grateful to you. I can't imagine what you can possibly have to reproach yourself with?'

I took her hand, and was carrying it to my lips, when she bent down and kissed my cheek. I blushed crimson with shame and repentance.

There was a masked ball at the opera that night. I wore a costume in which I flattered myself no one would recognise me. I even changed my snuff-box, watch, and purse. The contents of the latter, to wit seven hundred Venetian sequins, I lost in less than an hour. Every one expected to see me beat a retreat after this; but taking another purse from my pocket, I began to stake doubles or quits. Luck was with me. I soon broke the bank, and rose from the table the richer by two thousand eight hundred and fifty-six sequins. As I went downstairs two pretty female masks accosted me, telling me that '*Messer Grand*'[1] was waiting for me at the door. From this I concluded that they had penetrated my disguise, though I had no clue to their identity. One of them asked me for a pinch of snuff. I handed her my box, at the same time press-

[1] The Grand Inquisitor.

Digitized by Microsoft®

ing a spring, which disclosed a painting in the lid. They both looked at it, then—

'For shame!' they said. 'As a punishment for your impertinence, you shall never know who we are.'

Vexed with myself for having offended them, I followed them; and meeting Barbaro, learned from him that they were the two charming cousins—the Marchesa Q. and the Marchesa F.

Towards the end of the evening a mask dressed as a Venetian boatman was invited by a Venetian peasant-girl to dance the *forlana*[1] with her; and to prove that he had a right to wear his dress, he accepted, but acquitted himself so badly he was hissed. I have always been passionately fond of the *forlana*, and I asked the peasant if she would try it with me. She accepted, a circle was formed round us, and we danced it twice. This is enough for any man; but a young girl, dressed as a shepherdess, and wearing no mask, asked me to dance it with her. I had not the courage to refuse, and went through the performance again. She danced divinely, and made a double turn round the circle three times. I was exhausted and out of breath, but it seemed as if she could go on for ever. At the end she whispered my name in my ear. Surprised and delighted, I asked for hers. She said she was a Venetian, and that I should know who she was if I would go and see her at the 'Three Kings.'

'I am there with my father and mother, who are old friends of yours.'

'You will see me on Monday.'

The wedding of Zenobia.

Tired as I was, I was only able to sleep for a couple of hours, for we were all going to Zenobia's marriage—count, countess, marquis, and myself. The wedding dinner was to be at a country house called the 'Apple Gardens.' There were about twenty guests in all, good plain country people. They were a little disconcerted at first, but we soon put them at their ease. There were many pretty girls among them, but I was too much taken up with the bride to pay attention to them. The dinner

[1] *Forlana*, so called because it is the national dance of the peasants of Friuli.

Digitized by Microsoft®

lasted three hours; it was abundant, and the wines exquisite, but no one knew that I had provided the funds. We all sang, or recited poetry; and we rose from table in the highest of spirits. Everybody embraced his or her neighbour, and I could not help laughing when I saw the haughty countess offer her cheek to the wizened little tailor. Dancing began when the fiddles arrived. The bride opened the ball by dancing a minuet with the bridegroom. She danced gracefully, if not well; but the tailor, whose legs were made only to be crossed, was so comical, I thought the countess would die a-laughing. After the minuets refreshments were handed about, with a profusion of *confetti*, a coloured sweetmeat which they make at Milan better than they do at Verdun.

When the ball was over, I asked the tailor if I should take his wife home in my carriage. He was a man of sense, and looked flattered. Less ambitious than Cæsar, he was satisfied to come second with a beautiful woman.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE IMAGE OF WAX

I WAS going to the opera next night, and should most probably have finished the evening at the gaming-table, but I met Cesarino, and spent two delightful hours talking with him. He opened his heart to me, and begged me to speak to Teresa for him. He had a strong desire to be a sailor, and he assured me he felt convinced that if his mother would allow him the funds necessary to engage in commerce, he should make his fortune. I promised I would do what I could.

After supping soberly with the dear youth, I went to bed. I remained in my room next day, and did not see the countess until after dinner. Her husband had gone to San Angelo ; and as she was alone, common politeness compelled me to pay my respects to her and to apologise for not having presented myself at table. She was very amiable, and told me I was to do exactly as I liked in her house. I was sure she was playing a game, but I wanted her to think me her dupe. I said fatuously that when Lent came I would make up for the dissipations of the carnival, which had engrossed me to her detriment.

The Spanish lady studies revenge.

'I hope so,' answered the perfidious Spaniard, with one of those enchanting smiles peculiar to a woman who is possessed of the lust of revenge. At the same time, she offered me a pinch of snuff, and took one herself.

'But what is this, dear countess?' I asked. 'This is not snuff!'

'No ; a powder which is good for headaches. It makes one's nose bleed.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I was vexed, but said laughingly that I was not suffering from migraine, and that I did not like my nose to bleed.

'You will not bleed much,' she said, still smiling, 'and it will do you good.' She had hardly spoken when we both sneezed three or four times running, and a moment after a drop of blood fell on my hand. She took up a silver bowl which was on the table.

'Come nearer,' she said, 'for I am beginning to bleed too.'

So there we were, holding our heads over the same basin. In a few minutes the bleeding ceased, and we washed ourselves with cold water in another basin.

'The mingling of our blood,' she said, 'will cause a great sympathy between us, perhaps a friendship which will end only with the death of one of us.'

I did not pay much attention to her words, but the reader will see how short a lease she gave this friendship. I asked her to give me a little of the powder, but she refused; neither would she tell me its name, declaring it was a friend who had given it her. On leaving her I sought an apothecary, and described the powder and its effects to him, but he knew no more than I did. He could only say that euphorbia sometimes did produce bleeding of the nose; but it was not a question of 'sometimes,' the result had been immediate. This little incident gave me food for reflection. Madame was Spanish, and she evidently hated me—two reasons for attaching importance to what had occurred. The following day Clairmont informed me that a Capuchin friar wished to speak to me. I told him to give him alms and send him away; but the monk refused the money, saying he must see me alone.

The Capuchin friar to the rescue.

He was an imposing old man. I went to meet him, and offered him a chair with a low bow, but he took no heed of my civilities.

'Sir,' said he, still standing, 'pay attention to what I am going to say to you. If you despise my warning, it may cost you your life. When you have heard me to the end, do exactly what I tell you to do, but you must not ask me a

Digitized by Microsoft®

single question, for I cannot answer. You will guess, no doubt, that my silence is due to the inviolable seal of confession, which all Christians must respect. My vow and my good faith are above suspicion, for I have no interest to serve in seeking you. I am impelled to speak to you. I have no doubt it is your guardian angel who uses me to your salvation. God will not abandon you. Tell me if my words move you, and if I can safely tell you what is in my heart.'

Under the seal of confession.

'Be assured, reverend father, that I have listened to you with attention and respect. Speak; your words not only move me, but inspire me with a kind of terror. I promise to follow your advice if there is nothing in it contrary to honour and common sense.'

'Good; but you must also promise me that however this affair turns out, you will not compromise me by any indiscretion. You will not speak of me to any one. You will not say to any one that you know me or that you do not know me.'

'I swear it to you on my faith as a Christian. But speak, I implore you; I am burning with curiosity.'

'You must go alone, to-day, before noon, to such and such a square, such and such a house, ring at the left-hand door on the second floor. Tell the person who opens it that you wish to speak to Madame ——. You will be admitted without difficulty; I do not even think your name will be asked; but if it is, give an assumed one. When you see Madame —— speak to her quietly and gently; try and gain her confidence. She is poor; give her two or three pieces of gold; this will win her to you. Then tell her with assurance that you will not leave the room till she gives you the little bottle which a servant gave her last night with a letter. Be firm if she refuses, but do not make any noise. Do not allow her to leave the room or to call in any one. If needs be, promise her double the sum the other party is to pay her, if she will give you the bottle. The amount will not be serious, but anyhow your life is of more value to you

Digitized by Microsoft®

than all the gold of Peru. I cannot say more, but tell me before I go that you will obey me.'

'Yes, reverend father, I will be directed by the angel who has brought you hither.'

'So be it, and God bless you.'

I did not feel inclined to laugh, ridiculous as the worthy priest's conjuration appeared. There is a lingering remnant of superstition in me which I have never been able to get rid of. Besides this, the Capuchin looked honest and trustworthy. I took the paper on which I had written down the address, put two small pistols in my pocket, and set out for the mysterious house. Clairmont accompanied me as far as the square, when I bade him wait.

Discomfiture of the sorceress.

I was admitted into the presence of a hideous old woman. I gave her two sequins, whereupon she said she knew I was in love, and that it was my own fault if I was unhappy, but that she would give me something to help my case. I knew by this I was speaking to a supposed sorceress. The famous Bontemps of Paris had used much the same language to me. But when I told her I would not leave the room without the famous bottle and all that went with it, her face became horrible to see. She trembled violently, and tried to leave the room, but I opened my pocket knife and brandished it at her head. But when I offered her double the sum which had been promised her by my enemy, she quieted down.

'I shall lose six sequins,' she said, 'but you will gladly give me twice that amount when you see yourself, for now I recognise you.'

'Who am I?'

'You are Giacomo Casanova the Venetian.'

I drew twelve sequins from my purse and laid them on the table. The old woman was moved to tears.

'I should not have caused your death,' she said, 'but I should have caused you to love madly and to suffer.'

'Explain yourself.'

I followed her into a small room filled with extraordinary

Digitized by Microsoft®

things—bottles and phials of all sizes, stones of all colours, metals, minerals, nails, both large and small, pincers, a furnace, and a quantity of formless and hideous statuettes.

'Here is your bottle.'

'What is in it?'

'Your blood mixed with that of the countess, as you may read in this note.'

I then understood what it was all about, and I wonder now I did not burst out laughing. Instead of that, however, my hair stood on end at the thought of the abominable Spaniard, and a cold sweat covered my body.

'What would you have done with the blood?'

'I should have anointed you with it; you shall see how.'

She opened a casket about two feet long, in which was a naked wax figure lying on its back. My name was written on it; and although it was clumsily and badly made, my features were recognisable. The image wore a cross and order like mine. Certain parts of the figure were most monstrously out of proportion, and I could not help laughing, it was so ill modelled.

'Laugh away!' said the witch, 'but it would have been the worse for you if I had bathed you in that blood, according to certain rites I alone know, and it would have gone harder still with you if I had then laid your image on a burning brazier.'

The burning of the image.

'Well, it belongs to me now. Here are your twelve sequins! Now light a fire, and I will melt down this little monster; as for the blood, allow me to throw it out of the window.' The old woman was delighted to see me melt the wax, as she doubtless feared I should carry all these things away as evidence against her. She said I was an angel of goodness, and besought me to pardon her and not to tell any one what had passed. I swore that not even the countess should know. Then the old hag offered, for another dozen sequins, to make the countess fall madly in love with me. I told her I did not care about it, and advised her to give up her hideous trade, which sooner or later would bring her to the stake.

In spite of the money this nonsense had cost me, I was not

Digitized by Microsoft®

sorry to have followed the advice of the Capuchin, who seriously believed I was a doomed man. I think he must have got wind of the affair from the confession of some servant who had taken the blood to the sorceress. I was determined that the countess should never guess I had discovered her little plot, so I was more polite to her than ever. It was lucky for me that she pinned her faith in witchcraft, or she might have had recourse to hired assassins to revenge her.

I made her a present of a fine mantle; and as I was kissing her hand—

'I dreamt,' said I, 'that you were so angry with me you hired ruffians to murder me.'

She blushed violently, and said she had not taken leave of her senses. After that I left her very pensive, plunged in a gloomy reverie. Whether she thought better of it or not, I cannot tell, but at any rate she gave me no further cause for complaint.

The masquerade.

The reader will remember the two pretty cousins to whose house Barbaro had taken me, and whom I had met again at the masked ball. I had become very friendly with the brother of one of them, an officer, and through him was now an accepted visitor at the house. The girls were consumed with a desire to go to a grand masquerade which was to be given in Milan, and in which their parents would not allow them to take part. I offered to manage it for them, but they declared that some one would be sure to recognise them. I was determined to carry it through. I hired an apartment of four rooms, in a lonely street; and when I had got so far in my preparations, asked permission of the young lieutenant.

'I see no objection; only a certain young nobleman, a great friend of mine, and an admirer of my cousin, ought to be of the party.'

'With all my heart. Be ready, all of you, on Sunday, at twilight. We will meet, sup together, after that we will disguise ourselves and go to the ball. How tall is your sweetheart? What kind of man is your cousin's friend?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'My sweetheart is two inches shorter than my sister, and is plumper. My friend is built much as you are; if you were dressed alike, you might be taken one for the other.'

'Now leave me to think it out.'

I had need of a trustworthy person and a tailor. Naturally, I thought of Zenobia and her husband. I told the tailor to take me to the best *costumier* in Milan.

'Show me, sir, the handsomest dresses you have for men and for women.'

Beautiful clothes spoilt.

He spread out a dozen before me. I chose a blue velvet suit lined with white satin, and a sulphur-coloured velvet suit lined with satin of the same tint, two pairs of breeches in velvet pile, with coats and waistcoats of embroidered silk. I then chose for the ladies a flame-coloured satin, and a lilac satin, and a striped *peau-de-soie.* I bought two men's shirts, three ladies' smocks, and handkerchiefs, and several odd yards of velvet, silk, and satin. I paid two hundred ducats for all these things; but only on condition that if any one found out where I had bought them, the *costumier* was to take them back, no matter in what condition they might be, and return me my money. When we got back to my rooms, I locked the door on the tailor and told him I would blow out his brains if he breathed a word to any one of the work I was going to give him. I then spread the finery on the table; and taking up a dagger, I made cuts and tears in the coats and breeches in every direction, laughing the while at his piteous face when he saw me thus spoil good clothes. I then handed him the odds and ends of stuff.

'Here, my good fellow,' said I, 'is the work I have cut out for you. Now fall to and patch them up with as much taste and as striking a contrast as you can, so that each patch produces its effect. You have no time to lose. I will have your meals served to you here, but you won't leave this room till all is finished. I am going to fetch your wife, so that you can work together—and you may sleep in the next room.'

'But for the love of God, sir, why have you treated these

Digitized by Microsoft®

fine clothes like that? And are you going to use the dresses in the same way?'

'Precisely.'

'What a pity! My wife will weep over them.'

'I will console her.'

On my way to fetch Zenobia I bought five pairs of pearl-grey silk stockings, two beaver hats, two caricature masks for the men, and three natural ones for the women, and three plates in painted porcelain. I put Zenobia and my purchases into a sedan chair, and so back to my rooms, where we found the tailor busy.

A woman's imagination is always more lively than a man's. As soon as Zenobia grasped my idea, she fell to with a will, and slit and tore the dresses so that they should incite admiration in spite of their raggedness. They were the most ill treated about the throat, shoulders, and arms, so that the batiste chemises would be visible underneath, and the fringed petticoats would allow quite half of a pretty leg to be seen.

The work was done by Saturday; the ball was to be on Sunday. I dismissed the tailor with six sequins, but kept his wife to wait on my three beautiful beggar women, whom I had not let into the secret.

'You, sir,' said I to the young officer, 'must have a carriage with four horses, and it must take all four of you outside one of the gates and bring you in at another. You can walk to the ball from my rooms, and return to them in sedan chairs. In this way we shall put people off the scent.

I had determined to dress myself as a Pierrot; there is no disguise which better destroys one's identity, as it hides the colour of the skin. Ten years ago I wore the very same costume in the convent at Murano. The tailor made me a fine new suit, and in the pockets of the trousers I put the new purses, each containing five hundred sequins. By seven o'clock on Sunday the table was set for supper. At five minutes after the hour they arrived. My friend's friend, the marchese, was charming, young, handsome, rich,

Digitized by Microsoft®

very much in love with the pretty cousin, whom he treated with great respect. The lieutenant's mistress was charming, and devoted to her lover. After supper I said—

'As I am not going to be with you, I must tell you your rôles. You are to represent five beggars—two men and three women—in rags.'

The beggars.

I was secretly amused at their dismal faces when I made this announcement, and went on—

'You will each of you have a platter in your hand, and you will go arm in arm through the ballrooms, asking for alms, and playing your beggarly parts. Now come along and put on your rags!' So saying, I flung open the bedroom door. The first thing they saw was the beautiful Zenobia standing among the piles of rich but ragged raiment.

'Ladies,' said I, 'here are your dresses, here are your chemises, your stockings, and your handkerchiefs. On this toilette table are sundry other articles which may be useful to you. Here are your masks, and here are the plates to receive the alms. These garters will show your abject poverty, and the holes in the stockings will prove you have not even the means to buy silk to darn them with. These bits of string will fasten your shoes instead of buckles, and we will make holes in your shoes, which you will carefully wear down at heel.'

While I was rattling this off, I saw admiration take the place of disgust on their faces.

'Now, gentlemen, here are your ragamuffin's clothes. I forgot to lacerate the beavers, but that is easily done. What do you think of them? Now, ladies, we must leave you. Shut the door, because you must change your smocks.'

The marchese was enthusiastic. 'What figures we shall cut!' he cried. 'Magnificent! these superb clothes all torn and tastefully patched—a gorgeous piece of burlesque!'

In half an hour we were ready. The torn stockings, the broken shoes, the fine lace ruffles all in jags, the long floating hair, the beautiful porcelain plates cracked on purpose, all

Digitized by Microsoft®

made up an *ensemble* of the most sumptuous misery. The girls were longer in dressing than we were. On account of their head-dresses, they let their hair stream down their backs in most admired disorder. That of Marchesa Q. was the longest; it fell below her knees. Their white arms, shoulders, throats, and legs peeped through the holes in the costumes. We could not suppress our cries of admiration.

A scene at the masquerade.

I showed them how to move their heads piteously but not awkwardly, how to use their handkerchiefs so that the holes and the fineness of the cambric would be noticed. We put on our masks and started. I went in first; and as there were twenty other Pierrots, no one took any notice of me. Five minutes later every one was running to the door to see the curious cortège. The marchese was between the two cousins, who were walking slowly and stiffly. The Marchesa Q., with her flame-coloured dress and her magnificent hair, attracted great attention. The gaping crowd pressed closer. The orchestra struck up a minuet. Three masks in dominoes invited my three beggar girls to dance with them. They refused, showing as an excuse their slippers down at heel.

After following them about for some time I went into the card-room, where I saw Canano, who was playing for high stakes. A man of about my height and figure was playing against the bank, double or quits. He won three times in succession; then gathering up his money left the table, and I slipped into his vacant chair.

'I believe that was the Chevalier de Seingalt,' said a lady, when he had left the room.

'No,' answered some one, 'for I have just met him in the hall dressed as a ragamuffin, with four others.'

I went on quietly putting sequins on a card without counting them. I lost six or seven times in succession. I heard some one whisper to Canano—

'That is not Seingalt; he does not play that game; besides, he is dancing.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Then the luck turned; my card turned up three times, and I won more than I had lost. I put the lot, double or quits, on one card, won, and ceased playing, for I saw the bank was in distress. Canano paid me; and while he was shuffling the cards some one cried, 'Here come the beggars!'

Canano looked fixedly at the marchese, and suddenly asked him for a pinch of snuff. 'Now,' thought I, 'they will find out who it is!' but to my joy, the marchese modestly drew a paper screw of snuff from his pocket and handed it to the banker. Every one burst out laughing, and the marchesa stretched out her hand and begged alms of the banker.

He stakes on the hair of the marchesa.

'I can't feel sorry for any one with such glorious hair,' said Canano. 'If you will stake it on a card, I will count it as a thousand sequins.'

She took no notice of the compliment, but held the plate to me, and I dropped a handful of sequins in it and into those of her companions.

'Pierrot seems to like beggars,' said Canano, laughing.

The ragged crew then bowed low and went off.

The Marchese Triulzi, who was beside him, said, 'The ragamuffin in straw colour is certainly Casanova.'

'I am sure of it,' said Canano; 'but who are the others?'

'We shall find out; but their disguise is really expensive, for all the things are new.'

I had won in all two thousand five hundred sequins, for which Canano gave me a note of hand, which I put carefully in my pocket. I went to a box on the third tier, where I had given my friends rendezvous.

'Our pockets are full of dragées,' said the girls; 'every one loaded us with sweetmeats.'

'You have made us all so very happy,' said the lieutenant's sweetheart.

'*La fin couronne l'œuvre*, mademoiselle, and I hope the end will be better than the beginning.' Saying this, I gently pressed the marchesa's hand, and felt her fingers tremble in mine.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Let us go down now, I want to dance, and as a Pierrot I know I shall make you all laugh.'

We put on our masks, and I went down first. After playing tricks on the harlequins and columbines, I recognised Teresa in a domino, and invited her, awkwardly, to dance a country dance.

'You are the Pierrot who has just broken the bank?' she said. I nodded, and she put her arm through mine.

I danced like a madman, keeping time and step always, so as not to spoil the figure, but throwing in many queer capers. After the dance I took her back to the box where the banker Greppi was waiting. Then I took a sedan chair and went back to my rooms, where I was soon joined by the beggars. The young ladies changed their costumes, and the lieutenant accompanied them in chairs to the gate, where their carriage was to meet them. The marchese remained with me. He told me politely that he would like to reimburse me at least one-half of the money I had spent on their entertainment.

The beggars sup with the marchese.

'I was afraid you were going to humiliate me by some such request,' I answered.

'I had no intention of humiliating you, and I will not insist. Now it is I who am humiliated.'

'No—for I count on your good sense. You see, money is no consideration to me, and I give you my word of honour you shall pay all the expenses of the next fête.'

The carnival lasts four days longer at Milan than anywhere else, which shortens Lent by almost a week. There were three more masked balls to take place; before the last one the lieutenant came to see me.

'The marchese,' said he, 'invites you to sup with him, and the beggars; but as he has a surprise in store for us, he wishes me to ask you to lend him your rooms for some hours beforehand, and to allow your amiable waiting-maid to assist him.'

'Willingly,' said I. 'Tell the amiable marchese that everything here is at his disposal.'

On the appointed evening, when we were all assembled, the marchese told us we had better dress before supper.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Ladies,' said he, pointing to an enormous bundle, 'here are your things. Madame Zenobia will assist you while we dress in the other room.'

He took up another packet, and when we three were alone he opened it. We all burst out laughing when we saw women's clothes—chemises, embroidered slippers with high heels, superb garters, and richly laced nightcaps. Nothing was forgotten, silk stockings with red and yellow clocks, stays, petticoats, fichus, fans, workbags, rouge-box, masks, gloves, all was perfect! We helped each other to dress, and when all was done we looked shabby enough, except the young officer, who might have passed for a pretty woman.

We opened the door, and saw the three girls standing with their backs to the chimney-piece dressed in men's clothes, looking like three young pages, minus the effrontery. We men on the other hand presented ourselves with affected modesty and an air of timid reserve, which ill accorded with our inches. After two hours at table we rose, and gloom overcast the two beautiful cousins. They did not at all like going to the ball in this guise, and said so.

'Very well,' said I; 'we will play games, make punch, and amuse ourselves, and when we are tired we will go to sleep!'

On Shrove Tuesday, as there was no ball, I went to the tables, where I lost all the money I had about me. I was just leaving when a woman, disguised as a man, gave me a card and made signs to me to play on it. I laid it down before the banker, telling him I would stake a hundred sequins on it. I lost, and lost nine hundred more in succession, for which I gave a note, payable next day. As I was leaving the rooms the ill-omened mask, accompanied by another mask, came up to me, and the latter, taking my hand, whispered that if I would go to the inn of the 'Three Kings' next morning, I should meet an old friend.

'Who is the friend?'

'Myself.'

'And who are you?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Follow me to the end of the arcade,' he said, 'and you will see.'

A meeting with Croce.

When he took off his mask I recognised Croce. I knew he had been banished from Milan, and I understood his reasons for not giving his name in public.

'I am surprised to see you here,' I said.

'I should think so; I only dare come because it is carnival time and I can remain masked. I am trying to force my relations to pay me my due; but they put off as long as they can, in hopes that I shall be obliged to go away.'

'But shall you leave even if they have not paid you?'

'I shall be forced to. Give me twenty sequins, so that I can go off on Sunday morning. My cousin, who owes me ten thousand francs, will perhaps refuse to give me a tenth of it; if he does, before I leave I shall kill him.'

Your masked friend here has made me lose a thousand sequins, which I don't know how to pay.'

'I know. I am an unfortunate wretch, and bring bad luck to all my friends. It was I who told her to give you the card.'

'Is she from Milan?'

'No; she is from Marseilles, and is the daughter of a rich commission agent. I fell in love with her, and she eloped with me. Unfortunately for her, I had plenty of money then, but lost it all at Geneva. Help me to get away, I implore you.'

Touched with compassion, I went back and asked Canano to give me twenty sequins, which I handed to Croce.

Early on Monday morning Clairmont brought me an unsigned letter, which read as follows—

'Sir,—Have pity on a most unfortunate creature! M. de Sainte-Croix has gone away and left me. He has not paid his bill here. God alone knows what will become of me. Come, I implore you, if it is only to advise me!'

I dressed hastily and ran to the 'Three Kings,' where I found a young woman of most interesting appearance. I read in her face candour, modesty, and injured innocence. She begged

Digitized by Microsoft®

pardon for her boldness; and begged me to dismiss a woman who was sitting in the room with her.

'I do not know what she wants,' she said, 'for I only speak French, but she has been here for the last hour. I think she wishes me to understand that she can be useful to me, but I do not feel inclined to accept her help.'

'Who told you to come here?' said I to the woman.

'A man-servant, who said that a young foreign lady was here all alone and in great distress. I came out of kindness; however, I see I am not wanted. I leave her in good hands, and I congratulate her,' and with a cunning smile the creature withdrew.

The poor girl then told me in a few words what I already knew—that she had left her home with Croce, who called himself M. de Sainte Croix. She added that he had been at the tables ever since receiving my twenty sequins, and that on Sunday morning he had disappeared, leaving no address.

'He has left Milan, I am sure,' she said, 'and what am I to do. The landlord is clamouring for his bill. If I sell everything I might manage to pay it; but what would become of me then?'

'Would you dare to return to your father?'

'Yes, sir, certainly; my father would forgive me if I declared myself willing to enter a convent.'

'Well, then, I will take you to Marseilles myself, and meantime I will find some honest people who will look after you.'

Croce leaves his victim to Casanova.

I paid the bill, which was modest enough; then I left the poor girl, telling her to keep her door locked and to receive no one till my return. I went to Zenobia and asked her, in the presence of her husband, if she could find a little corner for my protégée.

'I will give her my place,' cried the tailor, like a good fellow, 'she can sleep with my wife. I will take a room near by, and she can stay as long as she likes.'

I wrote a few lines to the young woman and sent them by Zenobia. The next day she was comfortably installed with

Digitized by Microsoft®

these good people, a little cramped for room perhaps, but quite happy, and looking extremely pretty.

I was in a most virtuous humour, but I apprehended some difficulty in maintaining that attitude during our voyage to Marseilles.

I had nothing more to do in Milan, but I had promised the count to spend a fortnight with him at San Angelo, a country place belonging to his family. He had a married brother who lived there, and he was constantly telling me how delighted this brother would be to make my acquaintance.

On the fourth day of Lent I said good-bye to Teresa, Greppi, and the Marchesa Q., and the count and I set off for San Angelo. The countess did not care to join the party, but stopped at Milan with Triulzi. We arrived at San Angelo in three hours, and found that our hosts were waiting dinner for us.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXIV

CLEMENTINA

THE feudal château of San Angelo is at least eight centuries old, and without any positive style of architecture to guide one as to the exact date of its construction. It is composed of a ground floor divided into a number of small rooms, a second story containing several very large and lofty apartments, and above these a series of wide garrets. The walls, which time has cracked in several places, are of an immense thickness, and prove that our ancestors built for posterity, which is more than can be said of us; for we are beginning to build in the English fashion—that is to say, for the lifetime of one man. The stairs, which are flagged with large stones, are so worn in places that it behoves one to go up and down carefully. The floors are all of brick; and as they have been repaired from time to time, they form a kind of marqueterie more curious than agreeable to the eye. The windows are in keeping with the rest of the building; in some places the panes are missing altogether; and in others the sashes are too wormeaten to support the weight of glass, so they generally remain open, and have not even shutters. Fortunately, the climate is mild. As for the ceilings, there are not any, huge beams cross and recross the rooms, and birds' nests and spiders' webs do their best to make up for the lack of decoration. This Gothic palace—I cannot call it castle, for there is neither tower nor keep, only over the *porte cochère* an enormous escutcheon, which the family keep in good order with the greatest care—is a monument of the ancient nobility of the Counts of A. B., and

A description of a feudal castle.

Digitized by Microsoft®

they think it a great deal finer than the most magnificent dwelling of recent date. There are three or four suites of rooms in separate wings of the castle, which are in better repair than the others, and these suites are occupied by the actual owners, three in number—Count A. B., my friend; Count Ambrose, his brother, whose guest I was; and a third and younger brother, an officer in the Spanish Walloon Guards, just now away with his regiment, and whose rooms I occupied.

Count Ambrose came to meet me on the castle steps as though I had been a great lord; the two big doors were wide open; but I did not take undue pride to myself from this fact, realising that it would have been impossible to shut them without their falling to pieces!

The greeting of Count Ambrose.

The noble count, his cotton nightcap in his hand, and somewhat negligently dressed, greeted me in a dignified yet modest little speech. He said his brother was wrong to invite me to the contemplation of their poverty; that I should not find the comforts to which I was accustomed. At the same time, he added, I might count on finding a *Milanese heart*; this is a phrase which the good people of Milan use constantly. They are as a general rule honest, hospitable, and frank, very different from the Piedmontese or the Genoese.

Count Ambrose then presented me to the countess his wife and to his two sisters-in-law, one of whom was remarkably beautiful, but shy and awkward. The other was one of those women of whom nothing is to be said; she was neither ugly nor pretty; women such as she can be counted by the hundred. The countess had the face of a Madonna, of an angelic sweetness and candour. She was from Lodi, and had only been married two years. The three sisters were very young, very noble, and very poor. During dinner Count Ambrose told me he had taken her in her poverty because he set more store by character and morals than birth.

'She makes me happy,' he said. 'Though she brought me no fortune, she has taught me to consider everything which we do not possess as superfluity.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'That,' said I, 'is true philosophy.'

The countess smiled at him; and taking from the arms of a servant a charming baby of five or six months old, began to nurse it. I am sure if Raphael had seen her, we should have had another sublime picture from his brush.

Dinner at the castle.

The dinner would have been excellent without the made dishes, which were detestable. The soup, boiled salt pork, sausage, creams, vegetables, game, *mascarpon* cheese, preserved fruits, were all delicious; but his brother had told him I was a *gourmet*, and poor Ambrose had tried to give me some *entrées* that were simply abominable. Politeness compelled me to taste them, but I promised myself it should be the last time. After dinner I drew my amphitryon to one side, and told him his table was perfect with its ten natural courses, and had no need of made dishes. After that day we had the most simple and delightful fare.

There were six of us at table, all lively and talkative except the beautiful Clementina. This was the name of the young countess who had impressed me so. She only spoke when directly addressed, and always blushing deeply; but as it was only by speaking to her that I could get a glimpse of her bright eyes, I put many questions to her, until at last I saw that it really embarrassed her, so I left her alone, hoping to be better acquainted with her by and by.

Finally I was conducted to my apartment. There was glass in the windows, and curtains, but Clairmont told me he did not dare unpack. As there were no keys to either doors or wardrobes, he would not be responsible for my valuables, he said. I thought he was right, and I sought my host.

'I do not believe there is a key in the whole place, except to the cellar,' he said; 'but in spite of that, everything is perfectly safe. There are no thieves in San Angelo; and even if there were, they would not dare show their noses here.'

'I do not doubt you, my dear count,' said I; 'but it is my duty to suppose there are thieves everywhere. My own

Digitized by Microsoft®

valet might seize this opportunity to rob me, and I could not bring it home to him.'

'I quite understand; to-morrow morning the locksmith shall put keys to your doors, and you will be the only one in the house who deems it necessary to take precautions against robbers.'

I told Clairmont not to unpack my trunks till next day, and I went off with Count A. B. and his sisters-in-law for a walk, Count Ambrose and his wife remaining at home.

'We will go and pay a visit to a certain pretty penitent,' said the count. 'She is, or was, a Milanese Läis, who had such a reputation for beauty, that all the rich men of the city and of neighbouring towns came to pay her homage. The door of her house was opened and shut a hundred times a day. About a year ago the pious people began to cry scandal. Count Firmian had orders from Vienna to shut her up in a convent. Maria Theresa has no tolerance for mercenary beauty, and the beautiful sinner was compelled to make a general confession, and a lifelong penitence was imposed on her. Cardinal Pozzobonelli gave her absolution, and conferred on her the sacrament of Confirmation, changing her baptismal name of Teresa to that of Mary Magdalene. We are the hereditary patrons of a convent consecrated to penitents; it is a most inaccessible place, where the recluses live, deprived of all worldly pleasure, and subjected to every privation. They can only work and pray; they see no other man than the priest, who says mass daily in their chapel.'

This story touched me deeply; my eyes filled with tears. Poor Mary Magdalene! Barbarous Maria Theresa!

As soon as we were announced, the superior came to receive us, and we were shown into an immense hall, when I at once distinguished the celebrated penitent from among some homely and insignificant young women. As soon as we appeared the poor girls laid aside their knitting or their needlework, and rose to their feet. Magdalene impressed me in spite of the severity of her costume. What beauty! What dignity! My profane

Digitized by Microsoft®

eyes, instead of seeing the enormity of her sin, saw only her loveliness. Her beautiful eyes were fixed on the ground; but suddenly raising them, she looked at me, and cried 'Good God! What do I see! Holy Virgin Mary, come to my help! Horrible sinner! away!—leave this place—although indeed it is more fitting that you should be here than me.'

The Milanese Läis attacks Casanova.

The Superior said hastily, 'Sir, I beg you not to take offence; the poor creature is not in her right mind—unless, indeed, she has recognised you——?'

'I have never seen her until to-day, madame.'

'Then, sir, please to forgive her; she is not responsible.'

As a matter of fact, I thought her violent apostrophe showed more wit than madness. She resented being made a show of. Tears coursed down my cheeks; the count laughed. A moment later she broke out again, and begged the Superior to send me away. The abbess reminded her that she was the greatest sinner present, and the poor Magdalene left us, weeping bitterly.

Could I have entered Milan at the head of a victorious army, my first act would have been to release this unfortunate being from the female tyrant set over her. I would have thrashed the honey-tongued abbess with a horsewhip if she had tried to oppose me. She told us that poor Magdalene was not evil-natured, and she believed that if God would only keep her from madness she would become in time a saint like her namesake. 'She has begged me,' she said, 'to take the pictures of Saint Louis of Gonzaga and Saint Anthony of Padua out of the oratory, because they distract her thoughts from religion.'

On the way back to the château I noticed that Clementina, on my arm, smiled occasionally to herself. I asked her why?

'I am laughing at the surprise you showed when that poor creature told you you deserved to be shut up in a convent.'

'Perhaps you think so too?'

'God forbid! But, tell me, why did she attack you and not my brother-in-law?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Probably because she thinks I look a greater sinner than he.'

'That can be the only reason,' agreed Clementina.

In the evening we were joined by a lady and her daughter, and a young abbé, a relation of the count's. This latter displeased me greatly; he pretended he had met me at Milan, and he made sheeps' eyes at Clementina. I went to the window—how useful windows are!—and looked out till the count came and fetched me. I already loved Clementina.

Cards were brought in, and counters of different colours, and I took the bank, laying thirty ducats on the table before me. This was a great sum for such a company. At the end of three hours supper was announced; everybody had won except the poor abbé, who had lost about twenty sequins.

He went away after supper in a very depressed frame of mind. The count accompanied me to my room, and on wishing me good night told me I could sleep in peace; for if my door had no lock on it, neither had that of his sisters, who were my neighbours.

To my great surprise and astonishment, Clementina appeared in my room while Clairmont was putting my hair in papers.

Clementina mends his linen.

'Sir,' said she, 'as we have no waiting-maid to take care of your linen, I beg you to permit me to look after it.'

'*You*, charming countess!'

'Yes, sir, and please do not raise any objections. I shall be pleased to do it, and I hope I shall give you satisfaction. Give me the shirt you intend to wear to-morrow.'

'I must bow to your wish, countess.'

Clairmont and I dragged the trunk containing my linen into the room. I opened the trunk, and said, 'I want a shirt, a collar, a waistcoat, under-drawers, a pair of stockings, and two pocket handkerchiefs every day; the choice of them is indifferent to me. I leave you mistress of my wardrobe, as I would you were mistress of all else. More blessed than Jupiter, I shall now sleep peacefully. Adieu, charming Hebe!'

I sent Clairmont to tell the count I would do without locks on my doors. How could I insult them all so!

Digitized by Microsoft®

While Clairmont was dressing my hair next morning, Clementina came in with a basket.

'I hope you will be pleased with me,' she said.

I looked at her. There was not the slightest sign of false shame on her face; she had no idea that she had in any way derogated from her position.

The count came in just then, and thanked her simply for having taken such good care of his friend. He drew a letter from his pocket; it was from the abbé, begging him to ask me to wait beyond the time generally allowed for debts of honour, as he could not pay the twenty sequins for at least a week.

'Tell him, my dear count, to pay me when he likes; but tell him, at the same time, not to play this evening, as I should take no notice of his stakes.'

'But if he played ready money?'

'He would only be playing with my money until he has paid me. It is only a trifle, and I do not want him to distress himself about it.'

'He will be much mortified.'

'So much the better,' said Clementina; 'it will teach him not to play beyond his means.'

'Dear Clementina,' said I, when the count had left us, 'tell me if you are vexed at the way I have treated the abbé; if so, I will give you the twenty sequins, and you can hand them over to him. He can pay me before us to-night, and make a good effect.'

'Thank you,' she answered, 'but I am not sufficiently interested in the abbé to accept your offer. As I said before, it will be a good lesson for him.'

We continued to talk together. When the count returned, he professed to be surprised at finding us still *tête-à-tête.*

'I wish,' said he, 'that you two would fall in love with one another.'

'You wish to see us both miserable then,' said Clementina.

'And how so, fair countess?' I exclaimed.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I, because I should love a most inconstant man, and you, because you would be sorry for destroying my peace of mind.' So saying she ran off. The count cried—

'Dear Clementina is rather too romantic, but she will grow out of that.'

We then went to bid good morning to the countess, whom we found nursing her baby.

'Do you know, my dear sister,' said the count, 'the Chevalier is in love with Clementina, and she returns his affection.'

The countess a match-maker.

'I should be delighted,' said the countess, smiling, 'to be related to him by marriage.'

The word marriage is a magic word that often admits of a more flattering construction. I bowed low in acknowledgment, though I must admit that that particular word always touched a very sensitive chord in my heart.

After dinner we went to visit the lady who had joined us last night. We met a canon at her house who took the deepest interest in me, and who asked the name of the order of which I wore the cross and ribbon.

Had the worthy gentleman been a man of the world, he would never have put such an indiscreet query. There are a great many things which are never done in good society, and this is one of them.

A disquisition on orders.

The order of the Golden Spur is an order which is much derided, and it is positive torture to me to have it mentioned, whereas an allusion to my decoration would have pleased me mightily, if I could have said it was the Golden Fleece. I may say that my cross was a veritable cross to me, a real burden; but as it was very magnificent in appearance, and imposed on fools, I was never seen without it.

The Portuguese order of Christ is as much out of favour as the Golden Spur, because the Pope has the power of bestowing it as well as the king. No one thought anything of the Red Eagle until the King of Prussia became Grand Master of the order. Thirty years ago an honest man did not dare

Digitized by Microsoft®

to wear it, because the Margrave of Bayreuth sold it to any one who chose to give good ready money for it.

The blue order of Saint Michael is highly considered to-day, because it is only bestowed by the Elector of Bavaria, for formerly no one would wear it, because it could be bought for a small sum from the Elector of Cologne, and was worn by a crowd of people more fit to carry ladders on their backs than crosses on their breasts.

The craze for orders grows with the corruption of manners; the more unworthy one feels oneself to be, the more one is desirous of distinction. Thus the vanity of man and the venality of governments have caused these decorations to be no longer an honourable distinction. There are so many signs, cordons, and devices now, that the most accomplished courtier cannot flatter himself he knows them all. Besides the orders in the gift of crowned heads and small princes, there are those bestowed by all sorts of obscure chapters, private societies, academies, hunting associations, musical associations, pious associations, and amongst them all perhaps associations of conspirators and rogues.

Feminine decorations.

As for feminine decorations, every man of the world knows better than to ask the meaning of a closed locket, an aigrette placed in a conspicuous position, a portrait worn on the left side or the right, as a bracelet or in a ring. One must content oneself with loving and admiring all women without seeking to penetrate their little mysteries. It is now an accepted rule in polite society not even to ask a man what country he hails from. A Norman or a Calabrian is bound to offer an excuse for his nationality, in the same way that a man from the Pays de Vaud will always call himself Swiss. Neither must one ask a nobleman what his armorial bearings are, for fear of embarrassing him, should he not be conversant with heraldry. I remember when I first went to France, fifty years ago, I was considered impolite because I asked a young countess her Christian name; she did not know it! In London it is the height of rudeness to ask a person's religion. It may be

Digitized by Microsoft®

the same in Germany, for a Herrenhuter or an Anabaptist does not care to own to his faith. The surest way then of offending nobody is never to put a question at all, not even to ask a man if he has change for a louis.

Clementina was delightful during dinner. When I reproached her with filling my glass too often, she answered—

'You ought not to complain; you yourself gave me the name of Hebe!'

'Good; but don't you remember Jupiter dismisses her?'

'Yes, but I also know why, and I am not so clumsy.'

'Very well, then, instead of Jupiter, I will call myself Iolas. Now are you satisfied?'

'No; Iolas was old.'

'So was I yesterday, but you have renewed my youth.'

Her beautiful eyes flashed lightnings and chilled me. This is an everyday phenomenon. A great passion in man is a mighty conflagration, which is inaugurated by a corresponding degree of cold. The chill I felt then would have killed me if it had lasted a minute longer.

This little discussion proved that Clementina was well versed in mythology. When I had an opportunity I asked her sister where she had been educated.

'In the country, but she always shared my brother's studies with his tutor Sardini. It was she alone who profited by his lessons, for my brother did nothing but yawn.'

I begged her to let me see her library and her writings.

'I should be ashamed,' she said, 'and I have not studied at all for the last two years. We only see good people who talk of nothing but their houses and their harvests. You are the first person I have met here who cares for literature.'

'My dear,' said her sister, 'literature is out of your sphere, or the sphere of any woman. *Belles lettres*, poetry, and philosophy are no good in the mistress of a house, and your taste for science may prevent your finding a good husband.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I am quite prepared for that, and have made up my mind to die single, only it does not say much for men, that is all.'

I asked her so persistently to show me her books, that after coffee she took me to a little room leading out of her bed-chamber. She had only about thirty volumes in all, but they were well chosen.

She handed me a paper; and after glancing over it, I read aloud an anacreontic song, with my best and most expressive voice and manner. Every now and then I changed a word or a syllable; and far from being offended, she thanked me for the correction.

He buys the hundred best books at Lodi.

Next morning at daybreak I went to Lodi, without telling any one of my expedition. Then I bought about a hundred books, many of them translations from French, English, and Spanish, and gave them to Clementina, who was delighted, and sent for a carpenter and ordered him to make her a bookcase with glass doors and locks. Her pleasure more than repaid me.

Next day I rose early, and went to wish the sisters good morning in their room. The Countess Eleonora was dressed, but Clementina was still sleeping.

'My sister,' said Eleonora, 'was reading till three o'clock this morning. These books will drive her crazy. Let us play her a trick; lie down beside her.'

I lay gently down. The pretty sleeper stirred, and threw out an arm, thinking it was her sister by her side. When she turned and wished that mock sister good morning with a kiss, Eleonora's burst of laughter surprised her.

'Very pretty!' said she ironically, 'and I congratulate you both.'

'And I,' said I, 'have received the first kiss of my beautiful Hebe!'

'It counts for nothing; I thought I was kissing my sister.'

'No matter, the kiss has produced its effect. Iolas is rejuvenated.'

'Love watches us,' she said, 'and mocks our danger!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Let us lay down our arms before him,' said I.

'No,' said she, 'for he would turn and rend us. But if mere kisses can kill, then let us die!'

She then bade me leave her. She loved me, but she loved literature and learning better. This gave her absolute immunity from merely human passion. I went to my room, and wrote in *terze rime*, after the style of Dante, the account of my feelings. I read it to Clementina, and tears rolled down her cheeks, and I had the satisfaction of hearing her remark that she was now convinced that with regard to love and lover's vows, it was a case of 'All or Nothing!'

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CHAPTER XXXV

HE WINS AND LEAVES CLEMENTINA

CLEMENTINA'S calm and balanced demeanour proceeded, as I have said, from absence of feeling. I could not, try as I might, inspire her with a passionate desire for me such as I felt for her. I read to her from Ariosto the moving episode of Fiordespina, Princess of Spain, the lover of Bradamante, but it left her cold. I then resolved to try and foster passion in her by the almost infallible method of procuring for her new and unaccustomed pleasures. I decided to take the whole family to Milan and give them a sumptuous banquet at my rooms over the pastrycook's. I did not mean to tell them where we were going till we were well on the road, for fear my friend Count A. B. should deem it necessary to warn his wife of our arrival and present his sisters-in-law to her.

I wrote to Zenobia to have three dresses made of fine Lyons silk for three young women of condition. I sent her the measures, and described exactly how I wished them trimmed. That designed for the married sister was to be pearl-coloured, with a rich trimming of Valenciennes. The dresses were to be ready and spread on my bed by a certain day. At the same time I wrote to the pastrycook, ordering a sumptuous dinner for eight persons. I told the countess that I desired to have the honour of entertaining her and her family at dinner, but begged her not to ask any questions as to time and place. She and her good husband entered at once into the spirit of the thing, and agreed to follow wherever I should lead.

'Then,' said I, 'everybody must be ready to-morrow at eight

Digitized by Microsoft®

o'clock. You need take no thought of anything; the carriages will be here to the moment.'

I had included in my invitation the widow lady already spoken of and the good canon; this latter more especially, because as he lost more or less money to me every evening, it was in reality he who was defraying the expenses of the entertainment.

A visit to Milan as a bribe.

At eight o'clock we were all assembled at breakfast. Men and women alike could not help betraying their intense curiosity as to our destination. When the carriages arrived I put Clementina and the Countess Ambrose with her baby in mine. When all were ready,

'Now for Milan!' I cried.

'Milan! Milan!' exclaimed the guests, and off we started in the midst of laughter and acclamations. Neither of the sisters had ever been to Milan.

'What will my wife say, I wonder?' said Count A. B.

'Nothing, for she will not know, and in any case I am responsible. You will all dine with me at an apartment which I inhabit *incognito*.'

'My dear,' said the countess to her husband, 'you have been talking of taking me to Milan for the last two years; the Chevalier Seingalt has arranged it all in a few hours!'

'True, my dear, but I intended to give you a month there.'

'If you would like to stay a month,' said I, 'I will manage it for you.'

'Thank you, my dear sir; you are really a most extraordinary man!'

We arrived at Milan at midday. The baker's wife came out to meet us, and begged the countess to confide her child to her, at the same time pointing to her own baby, which she held at her magnificent breast. The countess accepted her offer with grace and dignity. This unpremeditated scene delighted me.

I led my guests to my apartments, where I found not only Zenobia, but Croce's mistress, who had put off her sadness, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

was really quite interesting. A letter of recommendation written by the Graces on the forehead of Beauty is never dishonoured, for every one who has eyes and a heart pays on sight.

'Here are two very pretty young women,' said the countess. 'Who are you, my dears?'

Zenobia answered, 'We are the humble servants of the chevalier, and have the honour to serve you, ladies.'

My humble servants took the ladies' cloaks and followed them into my bedroom, where the three dresses were spread out. The countess, pointing to the pearl-grey one, exclaimed, 'What a lovely robe! Who does it belong to, chevalier?'

The dresses for Eleonora and Clementina.

'To your husband, madame, to do what he pleases with. I hope that he will give it to you, and that you will not affront him by refusing it. Here, count, this dress is for you, and I will blow out my brains if you do not take it.'

'My dear chevalier, we love you too much to drive you to such an act. This proceeding is worthy of you. I take your beautiful present with one hand, and give it with the other to her for whom it is intended.'

'What, my dear husband, is this magnificent dress really for me? How can I thank you both? I absolutely must put it on for dinner.'

The two other dresses were less rich, but more brilliant. One was of pink and apple-green striped satin, trimmed with feather flowers in the best possible taste; and the other was in sky-blue satin, sprinkled with bouquets of flowers, and trimmed with a thick mignonette ruching. Zenobia told Clementina the green one was for her.

'And how do you know, pray?'

'Because it is the longest, and you are the tallest.'

Eleonora declared that she was dying to try hers on, which she did, and Clementina put on the green.

When we left the room I embraced Count Ambrose cordially, and asked his pardon for the presents I had dared to offer to his family.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You received me so well,' I said, 'that I could not but try to show my gratitude in some small measure.'

By and by the two pretty sisters reappeared in all the splendour of their new attire. They declared that the dresses fitted to perfection, and were lost in speculation as to how I obtained their measures so accurately.

The four eat three hundred oysters.

We sat down to table in excellent spirits. Everything was exquisite; but what crowned the feast was a hamper of oysters from the arsenal at Venice that my pastrycook had managed to get from the Duc de Modena's *maître d'hôtel.* We ate three hundred, for the ladies loved them, and the canon was insatiable, and we washed them down with endless bottles of champagne.

We spent yet another hour taking coffee and punch; then the ladies, donning again their morning costumes, took their places in the carriages. The dresses, packed in cardboard boxes, were put under the seat. Croce's mistress found an opportunity of telling me that she was very happy with Zenobia, and to ask me when I thought of leaving for France.

'You are to be at Marseilles,' said I, 'at the latest, fifteen days after Easter.'

I paid the baker a long bill, for we had drunk over twenty bottles of champagne, and we started on our homeward journey. The road seemed short: champagne, punch, and pleasure had made us all forgetful of distance. We did not reach the château of Saint Angelo till midnight, and we withdrew every one to his room, except myself and Clementina, who loved me now with her whole heart, and proved it.

Clementina's grief at parting.

'Do you imagine, dear Iolas,' she asked me, 'that I can live happily after your departure?'

'My dearest Hebe, for the first few days I know we shall both be miserable; but little by little we shall grow calmer, and even enjoy our regret in philosophic fashion.'

'A bitter sweetness, truly. I do not believe that philosophy can work such a miracle as that. You, sophist, will have, of course, certain consolations. Do not think I am jealous; I

Digitized by Microsoft®

should be ashamed to be; but I personally should feel myself contemptible were I to have recourse to those particular means.'

'Don't speak of it. My *consolations*, as you call them, are not worthy to tie your shoe-strings. One is the wife of my tailor, the other is a respectable young girl whom I am to take to Marseilles, where her home is, that she was foolish enough to leave with one unworthy of her. You will be from this hour, to the day of my death, the only woman to reign in my heart. I may, in moments of weakness, hold some other in my arms; remorse will avenge an infidelity in which my soul has no part.'

His consolations.

'I cannot understand how when I am with you, and loving me as you say you do, you can speak of the possibility of being unfaithful to me?'

'I do not believe in the possibility, my angel; I only suppose it.'

'I do not see much difference.'

What could I say? Clementina reasoned well, though I reasoned better than she, but that was because I was not in love for the first time. Such words in the mouth of a woman one would like to make happy for ever are only to be answered with kisses and tears.

'Take me with you,' she said; 'I am ready to follow you anywhere, and I should be happy, I know.'

'I could not so far dishonour your family.'

'Then you do not think me fit to be your wife?'

'You are fit for a throne, and it is I who am unworthy of so perfect a wife as you. I must tell you that I have nothing in the world; I may be a beggar to-morrow. Alone, I fear no reverse of fortune; but I should kill myself if I saw you exposed to privation after having thrown in your lot with mine.'

'Why do I feel it an impossibility that your luck should ever turn, and also that you can never be really happy away from me? Your love cannot be as great as mine if you have so much less confidence in its endurance.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'My darling, if I have less confidence, it is because I have more experience, and a far crueler experience than you, and one that makes me tremble for the future. Love, once touched by fear, loses in strength what it gains in reason.'

'That hard word reason! Must we then part?'

'Needs must, my beloved; but my heart will remain in your keeping. I shall adore you, though I leave you; and if fortune smiles on me in England, you will see me here again next year. I will buy land wherever you wish, and will settle it on you the day of our marriage; our children and the pleasures of literature shall occupy our lives.'

'What a dream! Why can I not go to sleep now, and only awake on the day when we realise these projects, or die if they are doomed not to be realised.'

'When you change your name for mine, dear one, you will be making a *mésalliance*. Will you mind that?'

'No, no; your hand and your name would be the height of my ambition. I shall never repent this. My whole family love you and cherish you. You cannot imagine how pleased I am when I hear them speak well of you; when they laughingly tell me I am in love with you, I answer that I adore you, and *you* know that I speak the truth.'

I cannot conceive now how a man like myself, free as the eagle in the air, could have made up his mind to leave such a prospect of happiness. But so it was. I only stayed seven days longer at San Angelo. From the good canon I had won, luckily, all the money I lost to the family; the last two nights I forced Clementina to go shares in my bank, and she gained a hundred sequins. The canon lost a thousand sequins, of which seven hundred remained, one way and another, in the hands of my friends, which repaid them for their hospitality. I promised to write, and to return the following year. I did correspond with them for some time, but I left off when misfortune fell upon me in London, and I lost all hope of seeing them again. As a matter of fact I never did, but I never forgot Clementina. Six years later, when I returned from

Digitized by Microsoft®

Spain, I learned that she had married the Marquis de N. three years after my departure, and was happy with him, and had borne two sons.

I gave Eleonora a fine cameo, bearing the image of the God of Silence, off my finger, and got into the carriage to go. All the family pressed round me, weeping and wishing me good-speed. All but Clementina. Pretending I had forgotten something, I rushed upstairs; she was lying sobbing desperately on the bed. I took her in my arms, and kissed her quivering lips for the last time. She never spoke. I laid her down again and tore myself away. I whispered to Eleonora to go to her sister, and without another word I flung myself into the carriage beside my friend Count A. B. We never spoke till we reached his house. We found his wife *en tête-à-tête* with the Marchese Triulzi.

He leaves Milan, 20th March 1765.

When I came to settle my accounts I found I was poorer by a thousand sequins than on my arrival in Milan, but I had been most extravagant. I got some letters of credit from Greppi for Marseilles, and one of ten thousand francs for Genoa, and after having kissed the hand of the beautiful Spaniard who had attempted my life, and thanked her for her hospitality, I left Milan, and have never been there since.

My travelling companion, who out of regard for herself and her family I will call Crosin, was charming. She looked very well bred, and her reserve showed she had been carefully educated. She passed as my niece, and I meant to hand her over to her father without seeking to gain her confidence or make her love me. She told me as we travelled that she was sure that M. de Saint Croix would never have abandoned her had he not felt sure that she had found an honourable protector in me.

'I admire your sentiments, mademoiselle, but I cannot share them. In my opinion, Croce (for that is his real name) behaved like a scoundrel; for, after all, he could not count on me with certainty. He did not love you, or he could not have left you in such a position.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'On the contrary, he adored me; but there was no alternative, he must either have abandoned me or killed himself and me.'

'Neither the one nor the other; he should have sold everything he possessed and taken you home. You could have gone quite cheaply to Genoa, and from there by water to Marseilles. But I am wrong to blame him, for I see you still care for him.'

'I own it, and I pity him. I shall never see him again, and I shall never love another man. My mind is made up. I shall go into a convent. My father will forgive me; I was blinded by love.'

Mlle. Crosin's explanation.

'You would have left Milan with Croce if he had asked you, even on foot?'

'On foot, and in rags. It would have been my duty to do so; but he loved me too much to expose me to fatigues and misery.'

'And if you should meet him again at Marseilles, you would rejoin him?'

'Ah, no—never. I am beginning to recover my reason and my liberty of thought, and the day will come when I shall thank God for letting me forget him.'

An hour after our arrival at Tortona an old priest came to invite me to breakfast with the bishop, to whom the Marchese Triulzi had given me a letter of introduction, and the invitation included 'the lady who was in my company.' The countess's letter did not mention any lady, but the bishop was a Spaniard, and too polite to leave my niece, real or supposed, alone at an inn. She was delighted when she heard we were to dine out together, and made a very fair toilet for a traveller. At noon the bishop's carriage came for us. He was a very tall old man, four inches and more above my height; and in spite of his eighty years he was fresh and alert, well preserved, and solemn, as became a Spanish grandee. When my niece was about to kiss his hand, according to custom, he withdrew it affectionately and offered her the magnificent cross in amethysts and

Digitized by Microsoft®

diamonds he wore round his neck to kiss. She did so, saying, 'This is what I love,' at the same time looking out of the corner of her eye at me to mark the double meaning of her words—the allusion to *la Croix.*

There were nine of us at table—four priests and two young noblemen, who were most attentive to my niece, and to whose sallies she replied as a woman used to society. I noticed that the bishop, though he often addressed her, never raised his eyes to her. He was a prudent old gentleman, who knew peril when he saw it, and preferred not to expose himself, After coffee we said good-bye, and at four o'clock we left Tortona for Novi. The next day we arrived at Genoa, where Pogomas had taken an apartment for us—four well-furnished rooms, with a good view, *very comfortable,* as the English say, and they know how to take life easy. I ordered a good dinner; I sent word of my arrival to Pogomas, whom all Genoa knew as *Parsano.*

I repaired to a certain Signora Isolabella's, and presented Triulzi's letter of introduction. She introduced me to the Marchese Augustino Grimaldi della Pietro, her *cicisbeo.* Her face was pretty, her voice sweet. She must have been about thirty. I will not speak of her complexion, for she was plastered with red and white, so badly put on that these layers of paint spoilt completely her beautiful, expressive eyes.

I went home to supper, and sat down expecting to make a satisfactory meal, but everything was detestable. I told Clairmont to send the landlady to me, but she declared it was no fault of hers, everything had been prepared by my cook.

'My cook!' I ejaculated.

'Yes, sir, the one Signor Parsano has engaged for you. If he had asked me, I could have found you a better and a cheaper one.'

Parsano engages his own brother as cook.

'Engage him for me to-morrow.'

'With pleasure, but you must first get rid of the one you have, for he has taken up his quarters here with his wife and children.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

When Parsano came next morning, he remonstrated with me for having dismissed the cook.

'I engaged him by your orders,' he said, 'for the whole time you remain in Genoa. He is to be paid four francs a day and his food.'

'Show me my letter.'

'Here it is—"Find me a good cook, whom I will keep all the time I stay in Genoa."'

'Be so good as to note the clause "*a good cook.*" The one you engaged is detestable.'

'He is a good cook, and he will bring an action against you.'

'You have signed a contract with him?'

'Yes. I was authorised to do so by you.'

The engaging of a cook.

'Bring the man up. I want to see him.'

When the cook appeared,

'Sir,' he said, 'I know my trade, as four thousand Genoese can testify.'

'That does not say much for their taste. The supper you gave me last night proves that you are only a spoil-sauce.'

Just then Don Antonio Grimaldi came in. When he heard the subject of our dispute, he laughed.

'My dear chevalier, don't go to law; you will only have to pay the expenses, for the documentary evidence is against you. The wrong is on the side of the man who engaged him without being certain that he knew his business, and that man must be either a knave or a fool.'

At these words Parsano interrupted, declaring loudly that he was neither the one nor the other.

'But you are the cook's cousin,' interposed the landlady.

This remark let in a flood of light on the subject. After telling the cook to withdraw,

'Parsano,' I said, 'do I owe you any money?'

'On the contrary, you paid me a month in advance. I am obliged to serve you for another ten days.'

'I make you a present of the ten days. You will either

Digitized by Microsoft®

leave me at once, or you will get rid of your cousin. Now understand me; you can go and think it over.'

About midday the landlady came up with the new cook, and gave me the contract Parsano had made with his cousin. This burlesque victory put me in good humour for the whole day.

At the house of Signora Isolabella that evening I observed that all the aristocracy of Genoa frequented her salons. Biribi, a regular cheating game if ever there was one, was just then the rage amongst ladies of quality, so every one was forced to play. It was prohibited at Genoa, which, of course, made it all the more popular. The prohibition naturally only applied to public rooms, as the Government had no control over private houses. A table was installed at Signora Isolabella's, whose owners went with it from house to house, and hostesses would invite their friends for the special purpose of playing. Though I hate the game, I was naturally obliged to do as others did.

He breaks the bank at biribi.

There was a portrait of the mistress of the house in the room in which the table was set, dressed as a columbine, and by chance one of the cards on the table was also a columbine; so out of pure gallantry I chose it, and staked on no other. Each player drew three consecutive numbers, the table was divided into thirty-six squares, and the winner was paid thirty-two times his stake, which, of course, gave an immense advantage to the bankers, who were three. The bank contained about two thousand sequins; the table, a fine tablecloth, and four silver candlesticks belonged to the bankers. At first I lost several times running, and every one was loud in their pity, then my card came up, and I won thirty-two sequins. I left them on the table, the card came up again, and I won a thousand. I again put fifty sequins on the columbine, and for the third time she came up. This broke the bank; and as there was not enough money to pay me, table, cloth, candlesticks, the whole paraphernalia, was handed over to me. It was my turn to be congratulated, and the bankrupt scoundrels were hissed out of the room. But when

Digitized by Microsoft®

the first transports were over, I saw that the ladies were much disconcerted, as there could be no more play. I told them to cheer up, I would take the bank, but with equal chances, that is, I would pay thirty-six times the stakes instead of thirty-two. Every one thought this delightful, and I kept them amused till supper-time, without much loss or gain. Before leaving I begged the signora to accept the table and appurtenances.

I met Parsano at the café a day or two after my success. Every one was talking of it, he said. 'But,' the rogue added, 'everybody says you must have been in connivance with the man who held the bag. You could not possibly have broken the bank otherwise.'

'My dear fellow, you annoy me with your repetition of idle gossip. Here, give this gold piece to your wife, and be off.'

The money gained below weight.

The piece was worth a hundred francs, Genoese money, and was one which the Government had recently issued. I thought no more of the matter; but while I was at dinner the following day I received a note, which I showed to Grimaldi:—

'I went to the bank to change the gold piece you gave me; it was weighed, and found to be ten carats below weight. I was asked where I got it. Of course I did not mention your name, so here I am in prison; and if you do not manage to get me out, I shall be tried, and as it is a hanging matter, I shall be forced to speak out. PARSANO.'

'It is a bad business,' said Grimaldi, 'such things lead to the gallows.'

'Well, let them hang the keepers of the biribi table; it will be a good riddance!"

'Signora Isolabella will be compromised, for biribi is strictly forbidden, as you know. I will speak about the matter to the State Inquisitors, and in the meantime write to Parsano to hold his tongue, and say that you will see no harm comes to him. The Government are very severe on coin sweaters, that is why you must be careful.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

We sent for a pair of scales, and on weighing the gold I had won we found each piece below weight. Grimaldi said he would have it broken up and sold to a goldsmith. Next day he brought me thirteen hundred sequins, the price of the gold. In the course of the next few days I lost over three thousand sequins to Grimaldi, one thousand of which I paid him then, for the other two I gave him notes. When these notes fell due I was in England, and in a very bad way, and was obliged to let them be protested. Five years later, when I was at Barcelona, a vile traitor persuaded him to have me arrested. This traitor was Parsano, who was then at Barcelona. Grimaldi had confidence enough in me not to continue the action against me, but it was a nasty business. I shall speak of it at greater length when I reach that period in my Memoirs; but I must here admit that every one who helped me in the perpetration of my follies with Madame d'Urfé betrayed me and turned on me, with the exception of a young Venetian girl, whom I shall speak of in the next chapter. In spite of my losses, I lived well, and was not lacking in money; for, as a matter of fact, I had only lost what I won at biribi.

Parsano's constant enmity.

My plans with regard to Madame d'Urfé were somewhat vague; I only knew I was to meet her at Marseilles. As for the miraculous virgin who was to be my acolyte, I had not troubled to look for her even. But coming events were written in the book of fate; and the destinies of a beautiful Venetian, whom up to that time I had never even heard of, were inextricably entangled with mine. It seemed as though Providence had taken me to Genoa solely for her benefit.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE REINCARNATION OF THE MARQUISE

Untimely appearance of his brother Jean.

On the Tuesday in Holy Week Clairmont came to tell me that a priest wished to speak to me who would not give his name. I ordered him to be shown in. As soon as he entered the room, he folded me in his arms and embraced me. This display of tenderness was highly displeasing to me. I took the abbé by the arm and led him to the window. He was my youngest brother, a ne'er-do-weel, whom I had never cared for, and had not seen for the last ten years.

I asked him what he was doing in Genoa, for he was ragged, dirty, and haggard, yet he was only twenty-eight, and had a magnificent head of hair.

'The story of my misfortunes, dear brother, is a long one.'

'How long have you been here, and who gave you my address?'

'The Count de B., whom I met at M. de Bragadin's.'

'Did you tell him you were my brother?'

'Yes, and he said I was your living image.'

'A great stupid lump of a fellow like you!'

'He did not think me that, for I dined with him.'

'In that costume! Really, you did me credit.'

'He gave me four sequins, which brought me here.'

'The more fool he. And now you are a beggar, I suppose? What do you want? I can do nothing for you. Why did you leave Venice, where, with your masses and your sermons, you could make enough to live like many another honest priest? I will go with you to your inn; but, mind now, you are to tell no one, above all, my servants, that you are my brother.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I ought to tell you that I am not alone at my inn, and it is alone that I must speak with you. . . .'

'I must first know that you are not with a band of thieves. But why that deep-drawn sigh?'

'I am ashamed to say I am with a woman.'

'A woman! and you a priest!'

'Forgive me; I was blinded by love and passion. I promised to marry her at Geneva. I dare not return to Venice, for I took her from her father's house.'

'And what do you propose to do at Geneva? They would not have you there; they would turn you out in three days. Come, we will go to your inn; I am curious to see the girl you have deceived. You can tell me your story afterwards.'

We went upstairs, into a miserable attic, where was a very young girl, tall, dark, handsome, and sprightly, who spoke proudly and without a trace of embarrassment.

A new charge.

'Are you the brother of this liar?' she said, 'this scoundrel who has deceived me?'

'Yes, fair lady, I have that honour.'

'Honour, forsooth! Then be good enough to send me back to Venice, for I won't stay any longer with that scoundrel I was fool enough to listen to, and whose fine stories turned my head. He was to find you at Milan, and there you would give us the money to take us to Geneva, where, he says, priests can marry by joining the Reformed Church. He swore you expected us, and would wait for us at Milan. Where he got the money to come on here with I do not know. Thank God, he has found you at last, otherwise I should have started to-morrow on foot begging my bread. He sold all my things at Bergamo and Verona. Cursed be the day I met him! Thank goodness, I have not listened to him! I have his promise of marriage in writing; you can put it in the fire if you like; but do send me back to Venice, or I swear I will walk there.'

My brother sat listening to this long tirade, his head in his hands. I felt at once that I was called on to take charge

Digitized by Microsoft®

of the girl, who was a regular Venetian, bold and courageous, as I like them, and I knew I should easily find some one to take her home.

'I promise to send you back to Venice,' I said, 'and in the company of some honest woman.'

'Remember,' interrupted the abbé in a plaintive voice, 'remember the oath you took to be always true to me; you swore it on the cross.' So saying, he advanced—to meet a sound box on the ear. He turned meekly away, and began to cry.

'My dear,' I said to the girl, 'you are a regular little devil; for my poor brother's misfortune is his love for you.'

'That is no fault of mine. It is not the first time I have boxed his ears; I began at Padua.'

'True,' said the young fool, 'but you are excommunicated for striking a priest.'

'What do I care for your excommunication! If you say a word, I'll give you another!'

'Calm yourself, my child,' I said; 'you are right to be indignant, but you must not strike him. Take up your bundle and follow me.'

'Where are you taking her?' said Jean.

'To my inn. You hold your tongue! Here are twenty sequins, buy some clothes, and give those rags to the poor. I will come and see you to-morrow. As for you, madame, I will send a chair for you, for you must not be seen in my company after having come here with a priest. I will put you in charge of my landlady.'

My brother's breath was taken away by the present of the twenty sequins, and he let us go without a word.

Marcolina, the beloved of his brother.

When Marcolina, as my brother's recalcitrant sweetheart was called, appeared before me in her fresh costume, I remained open-mouthed at her extraordinary beauty. She coolly asked Mlle. Crosin who she was in her blunt Venetian fashion.

'I am this gentleman's niece.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Then if I were his sister by marriage, you would be my niece too! I should have liked to be called aunt by such a pretty girl!'

'How is Marcolina?' asked my brother next day.

'Do not be uneasy about her. She is well clothed, well lodged, and well fed. She is with our niece and her waiting-maid.'

'I did not know I had a niece.'

'You don't know everything. In three or four days Marcolina goes back to Venice.'

'Let me dine with you to-day?'

'Certainly not, and I forbid you to come to my inn; your presence would only distress that poor girl.'

'Well, I will follow her to Venice if I'm hanged for it.'

'What will be the good? She hates you and beats you.'

'She will be as gentle as a lamb when she sees me in my fine clothes. But, tell me, if I let her return to Venice, and promise not to follow her, what will you do for me?'

'I will take you to Paris, and get you into the service of some bishop.'

'Good; take me to Paris, and I will go to our brother Francis, whose heart is not as hard as yours.'

'Very well, for the four or five days that we remain here you are not to leave this inn; you will be served with what you want to eat and drink. Our party will be a large one. I shall have with me, besides my niece and Marcolina, my secretary and my valet. We shall go by sea.'

By sea to Antibes.

I engaged a felucca to take us to Antibes, where we were to pass one night. Parsano and my brother met us at the boat, and we took provisions for three days. The little vessel was rowed by twelve men, and armed with two guns mounted on swivels and twenty-four muskets, so as to fight the corsairs if need be. Clairmont arranged my carriage and my trunks so skilfully that we were able to spread five mattresses. A serge awning covered the boat, from the poles of which he hung lanterns. Having warned my brother that I would have no

Digitized by Microsoft®

nonsense, or I would throw him into the sea, I allowed him to sup with us.

The wind being contrary next day, we were obliged to row all the time, and the following night the sea became so stormy that I resolved to put into Mentone. My two pretty friends were ill; and as for my unfortunate brother and Parsano, they could not hold their heads up. We all went to the inn. The landlord told me the Prince and Princess of Monaco were at Mentone, and I decided to pay them a visit. I had not seen the prince for thirteen years; it was he who had taken me to visit that abominable Duchesse de Rufé. He was a bachelor in those days, but was now married, and father of two sons. He had married the Marquise de Brignoles, a great heiress. I was kept waiting a long time in the prince's antechamber; and when at last he appeared, he greeted me coldly, though I addressed him as 'your highness,' a title no one gave him in Paris.

'It was bad weather that drove you in here?' he asked.

'Yes, prince, and with your permission I shall spend a day in your delicious town.' (I thought it anything but delicious!)

'As you please; the princess and I both like it better than Monaco.'

'I hope your highness will present me to the princess?'

Without even mentioning my name, he ordered a page who was standing by to present me to his wife, and the page, opening the door of a large room, said, 'There is the princess.'

She was at her piano, singing, but rose on seeing me and came forward. I was obliged to announce myself, which is always disagreeable; but her manners were so elegant that she speedily overcame my embarrassment. She was beautiful, as I have said, affable, and talented. Her mother, who knew the prince well, and knew that he would not make her happy, had opposed the marriage, but was obliged to give way when her infatuated daughter said—

Digitized by Microsoft®

'*O Monaco o monaca*' ('Either Monaco or a convent').

'O Monaco o monaca.'

We were talking on various subjects, when one of the waiting-maids ran into the room, laughing and screaming, the prince following close on her heels. The princess affected not to see, and continued her conversation with me. I met the prince again as I was leaving, and he asked me to go and see them whenever I was at Mentone.

'Oh, certainly,' I answered, and without another word returned to my inn and ordered a good dinner for myself and my party. As we were sitting, a dandified young officer, with frizzled hair and smelling of musk, passed by; and seeing us through the open door, had the effrontery to ask if he might join us. I replied coldly that he would be doing us a great honour, which conventional phrase may be taken to mean either Yes or No; but a Frenchman who has made the first step will never turn back, and is not easily put out of countenance. After having shown off his airs and graces before the ladies, he said that he was surprised that the prince had not asked me to dinner with my amiable companions. I answered that I had not judged it necessary to mention them to him.

An Italian Osric.

'Ah! now I understand! I am off at once to tell his highness of them, and I shall have the honour of dining with you all at the castle.'

We were still laughing at our self-invited guest and his impudence, when he reappeared, looking extremely pleased with himself. He transmitted to me a pressing request from the prince that I and my party would do him the pleasure of dining at the castle.

'I beg you,' I answered, 'to make my excuses to his Highness; and tell him that as the weather has become fine, we are going to profit by it, and leave as soon as we have made a hasty meal here.'

Our young Frenchman's face fell. He seemed deeply mortified, and left us with a low bow. Presently he returned to the charge; and addressing himself to the ladies, and completely

Digitized by Microsoft®

ignoring my presence, he told them that he had given such a vivid description of their charms to the prince that the latter had determined to dine with *them*!

'At his behest,' said the bold-faced scoundrel, 'I have told the landlord to add two places at table, for I shall have the honour to be of the party. In a quarter of an hour, ladies, the prince will be here.'

'Very good,' said I, without a moment's hesitation; 'but in order to receive the prince worthily, I must pay a visit to my felucca, and get a *pâté* I have there, which I know he will enjoy. Come, ladies.'

'You can leave them here, sir; I will keep them company.'

'Of course you would, but they also have some things to get from the boat.'

'Then may I come too?'

'With the greatest pleasure.'

I went on a little ahead, and meeting the landlord, I asked him what I owed him.

'Nothing, sir; I have just received orders to serve you with the best, and without charging you.'

'That is very handsome.'

He leaves Monaco hastily.

We went aboard the felucca; and while the officer was engaged in examining some of my appointments, I told the captain, in a low voice, that I wanted to start there and then.

'But the abbé, and your secretary, and two of my men are ashore!'

'No matter; they will come along and find us at Antibes; it is only thirty miles off, and they have money. Be quick.'

He unhooked the chain, and the felucca drifted at once from the quay. The officer came up and asked me what it meant.

'It means,' said I, 'that I am going to Antibes, and that I will take you with me, gratis, with pleasure.'

'Capital! but you are, of course, only joking?'

'Not at all; your society will be most agreeable.'

'The deuce! Put me ashore, I beg you. Pardon me, ladies,

Digitized by Microsoft®

but I haven't time to go to Antibes. Some other day I shall be charmed.'

'Put the gentleman ashore,' I said to the captain. 'Adieu, sir, and please thank the prince for having paid my hotel bill.'

The poor fellow stepped on to the quay, amid the laughter and ironical farewells of my sprightly companions. It was evident that he was in some dread of the prince's anger. We arrived at Antibes about six in the evening, and the following day Parsano and my brother turned up just as we were sitting down to dinner. We were all curious to know what had happened after our departure, and Parsano spoke.

The Prince of Monaco's officer is tricked.

'When we got back from our walk,' he said, 'we were surprised not to find the felucca. We went to the inn, where I knew you had ordered dinner, but all the landlord could tell us was that he was expecting the prince and an officer to dine with you. Just as I was telling him that his expectations were vain, for the boat had gone, the prince and his friend arrived. The former told the landlord in a rage that as he had let you go, he could go after you for his money. "Your highness," said the landlord, "the gentleman wanted to pay me, but I had received orders from you to charge him nothing, and I respected them." At these words the prince flung him a louis with very bad grace. I told him that we belonged to your party, and that you had not waited for us either. He laughed, and said that after all it was a good joke. "You can tell Signor Casanova from me," he said, "that I shall meet him again some day, and shall not forget the trick he has played on me."

'The landlord, who is a good fellow, laughed heartily when the prince had gone, and gave us a good dinner, as well as the two boatmen, saying the prince's louis would settle it all. After dinner we hired horses and went on to Nice, where we slept, and here we are.'

From Antibes we went to Fréjus, Luc, Brignoles, and Aubagne, where we spent the last night before getting to

Digitized by Microsoft®

He deposits 'his niece' at a friend's house in Marseilles.

Marseilles. By this time my 'niece' had become very dear to me, and I could not think of our approaching separation without shivering. But when we arrived in her native town I conducted her to the house of a friend, Madame Audibert. I sent my brother and Parsano to the Hotel of the 'Thirteen Cantons' with instructions to keep strict silence about me and my affairs, as I did not wish Madame d'Urfé, who had been waiting for me for the past three weeks, to hear of my advent through the mouth of others.

It was at Madame Audibert's that my niece had first met la Croix. This lady was intelligent. She had been fond of my niece from her childhood. It was through her that we hoped to induce her father to forgive her. It was arranged that I was to see Madame Audibert alone, leaving my niece and Marcolina in the carriage, and I rapidly recounted Mdlle. Crosin's misfortunes, and the happy chance which had brought her into my hands. I added that on the journey we had made the acquaintance of a rich and respectable young man, who was fully disposed to ask her hand in marriage within fifteen days.

'Go and bring her,' said Madame Audibert, 'and leave the whole affair to me.'

I made one bound to the carriage, and pulling her hood over her face, I gave my pretty charge into the arms of her friend. It was a delicious *coup de théâtre*. I wept from pleasure and regret. Clairmont brought up Mlle. Crosin's trunks, and I ordered the postillion to take me to the place where I had lodged before, and there I installed Marcolina.

We had visited the gambling-rooms at Antibes and San Remo; and Marcolina, beginning with twenty sequins I had given her, had come away with over a thousand ducats. I now gave her this money, which I had changed into gold. 'Take care of it,' said I, 'for a thousand ducats will gain you consideration in Venice. Do not weep, my angel, I leave my heart in your keeping, and to-morrow night I will come and sup with you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Hardly had I arranged my own rooms at the 'Thirteen Cantons' when Bourgnole, Madame d'Urfé's confidential maid, came to tell me, with her mistress's compliments, that she was alone, and impatiently awaiting me.

Our interview gave me fresh proofs of the extraordinary perversion of judgment exhibited in this poor woman, who, though in other respects most highly gifted and intelligent, was saturated to the point of mania with the falsest and most chimerical of doctrines. I contributed to her delusions, weaving a tissue of falsehoods, which had not even the appearance of likelihood. I delighted in it, and my heart had grown more and more hardened. I profited by the folly of a woman, who, indeed, had I not deceived her, would have fallen a prey to some one else. She deceived herself; but her error was her very life. I gave myself the preference, because between self and an unknown person it is self one always prefers, and because I thought that by taking advantage of the weakness of this enormously wealthy woman, I was not actually injuring any one, and was doing myself a great deal of good.

The joy of the marquise on seeing him again.

The first thing she asked me was, 'Where is *Quérilinth?*' And when I told her he was under the same roof as ourselves, she snatched her lace cap off her head and flung it up to the ceiling to show her joy.

'We ought to ask him to dinner. My house is open to him, chevalier, my table, my purse—everything.'

'Gently, gently, madame; you go too fast.'

'It is he who will rejuvenate me, in myself. My genius tells me so every night. Ask *Paralis* if the presents I have prepared are worthy to be offered to a Prince of the Rose-Cross by Semiramis.'

I did not know what these presents were; and I replied that before troubling *Paralis* with these questions, we must consecrate the offerings at the proper planetary hours, and that *Quérilinth* himself must not see them before this consecration. On this she took me into a neighbouring room and took

Digitized by Microsoft®

Madame d'Urfé's offering to *Quérilinth.*

from an escritoire seven packets. Each packet contained seven pounds of metal depending on each of the seven planets, and seven precious stones, each one weighing seven carats—diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, chrysolite, topaz, and opals. I was determined that this treasure should none of it pass into the hands of the Genoese; so I told my excitable friend that we must inaugurate the consecration by placing each packet in an expressly prepared casket. It was now Friday, and I gained twenty-four hours, which was necessary for the manufacture of the cases. For a week after this I dined with Madame d'Urfé and Parsano and my brother. She thought him an idiot, and he was hurt, while I was amused. She bought him, however, some beautiful clothes.

Then I made the oracle suggest that I should go and stay in the country for seven consecutive days, and Madame d'Urfé made no objection. Thus I obtained a little relaxation. One day I went to Madame Audibert's, who told me she had spoken to my niece's father. The good man had promised that he would fetch her next day, and take her to her aunt's house. There she could quietly await the coming of her future husband. She was a little anxious at not having received any tidings of the young man, but I cheered her up and promised I would not leave Marseilles without having danced at her wedding.

'It seems to me,' said Marcolina when I told her, 'that you travel for the express purpose of rescuing damsels in distress; but I notice that the said damsels must be pretty.'

'I am inclined to believe it,' I laughingly replied. 'It is certain that several women owe their happiness to me, and I cannot reproach myself positively with having caused the unhappiness of any one.'

'God will reward you, dear friend.'

Marcolina's appetite.

If Marcolina's beauty and gentleness delighted me, so did her really excellent appetite. I have always had a weakness for women with good appetites. For the matter of that, with the exception of the poultry, which is not worth a straw, one

Digitized by Microsoft®

finds excellent cheer at Marseilles, especially if one can accommodate one's palate to the garlic which they put in everything, and which, employed in moderation, is a good stimulant.

Two days later, when I went to visit Parsano, I found him in bed, a doctor beside him.

'Are you ill? What is the matter with you?'

'Something which will teach me to be more careful in future.'

'You are an old fool. What effect do you suppose this will have upon the marquise?'

'I don't care a curse for the marquise. Let me alone.'

The scoundrel had never dared to speak to me in this tone before, and I thought it better not to notice it. I went up to my brother, who was in the corner.

'Why did you follow Marcolina home from the theatre yesterday?' said I.

The brother's rebellion.

'I went to remind her of her duty. I have ruined myself for her. I cannot return to Venice. I cannot live without her; you have taken her from me; what right had you to take her?'

'The right of love, animal! The right of the strongest. She would not leave me now.'

'You have dazzled her with your showy ways.'

'You would have allowed her to die of hunger and misery.'

'You will leave her as you have the others. I would have married her.'

'Married her! renegade! and you a priest! As for me, I fancy I don't mean to part with her; but if I do, she will be very rich.'

'Do as you like, but at least I have a right to speak to her.'

'You have spoken to her for the last time, believe me.'

Saying so, I left the hotel, took a fly, and went off to find an advocate who would help me to get an abbé, a foreigner, arrested, a man who owed me money, although I had no documents to prove it.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You can,' said the lawyer, 'have him arrested if you deposit a certain sum as guarantee. How much does he owe you?'

'Twelve louis.'

'Come with me to a magistrate, deposit the twelve louis; you can then have him watched, and it will be impossible for him to leave the hotel.'

As I did not wish to have a scandal in the place, I persuaded my brother to come with me, on pretence that I would take him to Marcolina. I took him to the Hôtel Saint Baume, and told him to wait. I then returned to the 'Thirteen Cantons,' paid his bill, and took his baggage with me to the Hôtel Saint Baume. I told the landlord of the latter that I would be responsible for the abbé's bill, but only on condition that he did not allow him to leave the hotel. I had my gentleman safe.

'To-morrow,' said I, 'you will please to leave for Lyons, and thence for Paris. You will give me a paper acknowledging your debt to me, and I will give you twelve louis before you leave, and will tear up the paper as soon as you are *en route*.'

'I am obliged to do as you wish,' said he weeping, 'for you are stronger than I.'

I got rid of him so, but I came across him again in Paris a month later.

Parsano's rebellion.

Before returning to Madame d'Urfé, I had another interview with Parsano, and asked him why he was in such a devil of a temper.

'I am in a devil of a temper,' he answered, 'because I feel sure that you are going to lay hands on twenty or thirty thousand crowns' worth of gold and diamonds which the marquise meant for me.'

'Possibly, but it is nothing to you what I take or leave. I can prevent you getting anything at all. If you think you have cause of complaint, go and see the marquise yourself; I do not prevent you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'And I am to submit to being made a catspaw of by you without doing myself any good; but don't flatter yourself that I shall take it so meekly. I want two thousand louis.'

'Go and find some one to give them you.' So saying, I left the inn quietly and went back to the marquise, and when we were at dinner I told her that I had reasons for suspecting that some antagonistic influence was at work on *Quérilinth.*

'We will question the oracle about him after dinner.'

The oracle told us that seven salamanders had transported *Quérilinth* into the milky way, and that the man who lay at the inn of the 'Thirteen Cantons' was none other than our enemy Saint Germain, whom an evil spirit had infected, so that he would become the murderer of Semiramis, who would die of the same malady from which he was suffering. The oracle further said that Semiramis must trust in Paralisus-Galtinarde (your humble servant!) to get rid of the villain Saint Germain; that she must not doubt but that the regeneration would ultimately be accomplished, for the words of the spell would now be transmitted to me from the milky way by the real *Quérilinth,* on the seventh night of our adoration of the moon. The oracle declared that I was to initiate Semiramis two days before the end of the ceremonial, when a beautiful water nymph would assist in the rite of purification. The water nymph whom I spoke of was to be none other than my pretty Marcolina.

Parsano tries to betray him.

The following day Madame d'Urfé showed me a letter she had received from Parsano, written in very bad French, in eight closely written pages. He assured her that I, Casanova, was deceiving her; and gave her his version of the whole story if she would grant him an interview. He assured her that I had come to Marseilles with two girls of light character; he did not know where I had hidden them. I asked her when I handed back the letter if she had had the patience to read it to the end. She answered that she had looked through it, but that the negro, as she would persist in calling Parsano, wrote in *ostrogoth,* and that she could not trouble to puzzle

Digitized by Microsoft®

out his meaning. This indifference suited me, as I particularly did not want her to suspect my water nymph.

I drew a bill of exchange on the banker Bono of Lyons, at the same time telling him to pay the sum of one hundred louis to Parsano; but only if he presented the note himself, and on a given day, after which date the bill was to be considered null.

He dismisses Parsano.

'You are an infamous traitor,' I said to Parsano; 'and Madame d'Urfé would not even read your letter. I have read it, and this is the answer. You can go to the hospital here till you are well, in which case I will give you one month's wages, for I dismiss you now; or you can leave Marseilles within twenty-four hours and go to Lyons. If you decide on this, I will make you a present of my old travelling chaise and twenty-five louis; furthermore, of this bill for one hundred louis, which you cash at Lyons, provided you arrive there within three days. Now choose!'

After a moment's reflection he declared he would go to Lyons, though, he added, it would be at the risk of his life, as he was seriously ill.

I now applied myself to the instruction of my water nymph as to the rôle she had to play. She was always telling me that the one thing that would make her really happy would be a knowledge of French and a reasonable expectation of my taking her with me to England. I had never allowed her to expect that, but I felt very sorry to leave such a woman as she was. I told her I should need her help now.

'I will do anything and everything you wish, dear friend,' she said.

'Listen, then. I will have a pretty little jockey's livery made for you; so attired, you will take a letter to the marquise, while I stay and wait for an answer. If she speaks to you, you must make her understand by signs that you are mute. This is not all. I shall want you to assist at certain rites which we shall perform in a few days, and which I could not execute without your help. You will dress and anoint

Digitized by Microsoft®

the marquise with a certain unguent. I shall welcome her into the order three times solemnly, and you must not speak nor laugh, or I shall be undone.'

'How old is the marquise?'

'She is nearly seventy.'[1]

'My poor friend! I pity you!'

I had a little green velvet vest and breeches made for her, with garters of silver braid. I bought her green silk stockings, and morocco shoes of the same colour; a green net cap, in the Spanish style, with a silver tassel, covered her lovely black locks. She looked so beautiful in it, that if she had shown herself in Marseilles every one would have followed her.

All preparations being completed by the Saturday, the oracle fixed on the following Tuesday for the great work of the reincarnation of Semiramis. The time chosen was the hour of the Sun, Venus, and Mercury, which in the magician's planetary systems follow each other.

The jewels are offered to Selenis.

On Monday night, when the moon was at full, I led Madame d'Urfé to the seashore, followed by Clairmont carrying the box full of offerings of jewels, gold, and precious metals, the weight of which in all amounted to fifty pounds.[2] I told madame that the moment had come. Then I bade the valet to lay the chest at our feet and go back to the carriage and wait. We were alone. We proffered a short formal prayer to *Selenis*, flung the chest into the sea, to madame's great satisfaction, and still more so to mine, for the box contained fifty pounds of lead. The real treasure was safe in my private apartment. Then I went home; and while Marcolina tried on her jockey costume, I wrote on white paper, in sympathetic ink, the letter which she was to hand to the marquise—

'I cannot speak, but I can hear. I have risen from the Rhone on purpose to purify you. The hour of Oromases has struck!'

[1] She was seventy-three.

[2] 'The Italian Impostor,' says Madame de Créquy, 'with a certain refinement of delicacy, never asked the marquise for money, but only for gems wherewith to make the necessary constellations.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

After we had supped, we issued forth on foot and sneaked into the house of the marquise. No one saw us. I hid Marcolina in a cupboard; then, throwing on my dressing-gown, I went to Madame d'Urfé to announce that *Selenis* had fixed to-morrow at midday. She was anxious about the promised water nymph. I made the oracle chide her for her doubts, and she pronounced a penitential prayer.

This ridiculous old lady killed all my remorse. She would say solemnly, 'To-morrow, dear Galtinarde, you will be both father and spouse to me. Propound this enigma to the wise men!' I got back to my room and let out Marcolina. We slept like tops. I gave her breakfast and shut her up again.

At midday precisely, on Tuesday, I entered the apartment of Semiramis; she was not there, but everything, including the bath, was prepared. A few minutes afterwards she came in; painted like a miniature, and quite radiant; on her head was a cap of superb lace; and a blonde fichu covered what had been, forty years before, the most beautiful throat in France. She wore an old dress, very gorgeous; earrings of superb emeralds, a necklace of seven aquamarines of the finest water, and a large emerald pendant surrounded by twenty brilliants. On her finger was a ring containing an enormous carbuncle, which she valued at a million francs, but which I knew to be only an excellent imitation.

I went down on my knees to kiss her hand, but she took me in her arms and embraced me. Then we dined, and Clairmont served us. Brougnole had been sent out for the day. The *menu* was composed entirely of fish. The marquise was a little uneasy, for the promised Undine showed no signs of appearing. I pretended to be anxious too. I kept looking at my watches. I calculated the planetary hours; I kept saying, 'Mars still rules the hour; we must await the hour of the sun.'

The ceremony of reincarnation.

At half-past two the doors of a large wardrobe were flung open, and a beautiful nymph stepped forth smilingly. She knelt to Semiramis and laid a paper on her knee. The marquise unfolded it; it was blank.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I handed her a pen, telling her to consult *Paralis* as to this message. The answer was given—

'That which is written in water can only be read in water.'

'I understand,' she said, and plunged the paper in the bath; in a few moments the characters appeared—

'I am dumb, but not deaf; I have come from the river Rhone to purify you by water. It is the hour of Oromases.'

'Purify me then, O divine spirit,' said Semiramis.

Marcolina, who was perfect in her part, delicately assisted the marquise to put her feet in the bath. Then in the twinkling of an eye she divested herself of her pretty costume, and entered the water up to her knees.

He baptizes the marquise.

'O nymph,' said I solemnly, 'deign to wipe the feet of Semiramis and to be the divine witness of her baptism. I embrace her to the glory of the immortal Horomadis, King of the Salamanders.'

Semiramis had once been beautiful, but she was then as I am now; yet she was gentle and affectionate, and absorbed in the contemplation of the nymph, whom she devoutly believed to be more than human. When, the rite completed, the Venetian was about to leave us, Semiramis, in a fit of gratitude, fastened her own magnificent necklace round her throat. Marcolina thanked her with a kiss and went and hid herself in the press.

The marquise asked me if all had gone well. I replied it had, and that the sign of the sun was now in her soul, and that in the beginning of February her other self would be born of the same sex as that of her divine progenitor; but that, lest evil spirits should render our work in vain, she must now go to bed for one hundred and seven consecutive hours. The good lady admitted the wisdom of this precept; she was tired out with excitement. I bade her farewell, telling her I must go and sleep in the country, to complete my orisons to the moon, but that I would dine with her the following day.

She left me in my room—hers adjoined—and as soon as the coast was clear I liberated my pretty prisoner. When we felt

Digitized by Microsoft®

sure there was no danger of being seen, we went off in a closed *fiacre* to the 'Thirteen Cantons,' and took out and gloated over the case containing the offerings to the seven planets, which I considered I had well earned. We were both dying with hunger, and did full justice to the supper which awaited us.

'Look,' said Marcolina, 'at the beautiful necklace your old madwoman gave me. What is it worth?'

'A thousand sequins at least. When you go back to Venice, you will be worth some five thousand ducats, and can choose a husband from among the rich bourgeois.'

'Keep it, my friend, and keep me with it; I want nothing but you. That poor old lady—she is very nice, for her age, and I can quite believe that some fifty years ago she was the first beauty in France! But now she is simply ridiculous. Does she really think she is to be born again?'

'Indeed she does, and the hope makes her wildly happy.'

The marquise is satisfied.

Next day I found the marquise sitting up in bed, dressed with the greatest elegance, her head arranged like a young bride's, and wearing an expression of satisfaction such as I had never seen on her face before.

'I know, my well-beloved Galtinarde,' she said, 'that I owe all my happiness to you.'

'I am glad to have been able to contribute to that happiness, divine Semiramis; but, remember, I was only an agent.'

Thereupon she began to reason with extraordinary clearness, though, alas! the pivot of her argument was utter nonsense.

'Marry me,' she said, 'and you will be the guardian of my child. In this way you will assure my fortune to me, and you will be the master of what I shall inherit from my brother, M. de Pontcarré,[1] who is very old, and cannot live much

[1] The object of Casanova's machinations was only a d'Urfé by marriage. At the behest of the Regent, who took a special interest in Mlle. Jeanne Camus de Pontcarré, as she was called—his 'nymph Egeria,'—a member of his '*plus étroit intrinsèque*'—Louis Christophe de la Rochefoucauld, Marquis de

Digitized by Microsoft®

longer. If you are not there to look after me next February, when I am reborn as a man, into what hands may I not fall! I shall be declared illegitimate, and shall lose eighty thousand francs income, which you might hold for me. Think it over, dear Galtinarde. And I must tell you that I already have manlike instincts. I am in love with that nymph. Did you ever see anything so beautiful? What a pity she is dumb! She must have a triton for a lover. I might be her lover when I become a handsome young man. Dear Galtinarde, I beg you to consult the oracle as to whether you ought not to marry me. It seems to me I ought to sell everything I possess and invest the money safely, so as to assure myself a good income in my nonage; for, as a baby, of course I shall be quite ignorant and unable to direct my affairs. I shall have to be educated, and that will need money.'

'We must be guided in all things by the oracle,' I answered; 'but rest assured of this, you will be my son, and when you are grown up I will allow no one to insult your birth.'

This assurance pacified the divine idiot, as I called her. No doubt I ought to have tried to disabuse her, but this would

Langeac, married, in 1724, this fair, frail daughter of Nicolas Pierre Camus, Sieur de Pontcarré, first president of the parliament of Rouen, and of Marie Françoise Michelle de Bragelogne, his second wife. This accommodating personage had succeeded his maternal uncle, who died childless. The magnificent race of d'Urfé was nearly extinct. It had exhausted itself. *L'Histoire Généalogique de France* says, '*La maison des Seigneurs d'Urfé est des plus considérables du païs* [sic] *de Forez. Ils portent du vair au chef de Gueles.*' Claude d'Urfé was a collector, and brought books back from Italy, and statues, which his puritanical descendant, the Comte de Sommerive, defaced and mutilated. Anne d'Urfé was a distinguished sonneteer, and, according to Casanova, an adept. He certainly left books of magic, which the poor old marquise doubtless used. Her library, which the adventurer was free of, was collected by Claude and Jacques d'Urfé and Renée of Savoy, as he was aware. Honoré d'Urfé, who was born in 1567, fought in the wars of the League and wrote *Astræa*, a pastoral romance. His descendant, Claude Lascaris d'Urfé, complained to his brother, the Bishop of Limoges, 'Is the name of d'Urfé only to be known by that wretched book? Can't one of us do something fine, to put it out of people's heads?' But nobody did, and the last direct male descendant died childless in 1724, a Bailli of Forez and officer of the king. The family of D'Urfé is now merged in that of the La Rochefoucaulds.

Digitized by Microsoft®

have been impossible; and had I succeeded I should only have made her miserable. She had grown used to feed on chimeras.

He gets rid of the marquise temporarily.

I was much exercised in my mind as to how to get rid of Madame d'Urfé, who was sorely in my way at Marseilles; but luck came, as usual, to my assistance. She was anxious to know what her next move was to be, and begged me to question the oracle very precisely on this point. This was my opportunity. The answer was that she must spend some time in devotion to the water-spirits, and that at a place where two rivers met. As she herself suggested that Lyons was watered by the Rhone and the Saône, nothing was more natural than for her to go to that city. She was to throw a bottle full of sea water into the Rhone and the Saône, and that she could manage by herself. Her departure was fixed for the eleventh of May, and I promised to join her in a fortnight.

As soon as she had left, I took up my permanent residence with Marcolina at the 'Thirteen Cantons.' I was able to give her four hundred and sixty gold louis as her share of our earnings, which sum, with what she had won at cards, constituted a capital of fourteen thousand four hundred francs. With this little fortune she could calmly face the future.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXVII

HENRIETTE AGAIN

THE day after Madame d'Urfé's departure, Mlle. Crosin's *fiancé* arrived; and Madame Audibert, the young man, and myself went solemnly to visit the parents of the *fiancée*, 'my niece.' I felt nervous, as I had not yet seen Madame Crosin; but the worthy father was prepared docilely to receive me as his cousin, the Chevalier de Seingalt, who had taken such care of their daughter on her travels. The wedding day was fixed; Marcolina was invited to be present, and we decided that she might with safety accept, more especially as it was she who now addressed me as uncle. Her toilet for the occasion was elegant, but simple. The wedding banquet interested me because of the affection I felt for the bride. I was absorbed in the consciousness of a good action performed, I was the author of a comedy carried to a successful termination. All things considered, I thought the world was the better for my existence, that although I had not been born a king I was yet able to promote the happiness of others. The bride wished to take Marcolina to Genoa with her, promising to send her on to Venice in charge of some trustworthy person, but my dear would not hear of this project. 'I shall not go to Venice,' she said to me, 'until you send me there of your own accord.'

His 'niece' is married.

The day after the wedding I began to make preparations for leaving Marseilles. I kept the diamonds and precious stones which were among the planetary offerings, and took the money accruing from the metals to Rousse de Cosse the

He leaves Marseilles with Marcolina.

Digitized by Microsoft®

banker. As Madame d'Urfé was at Lyons, it was not likely I should want much money. I procured a letter of credit for Marcolina for the round sum of fifteen thousand francs, for I meant to send her back to Venice on the first good opportunity.

At five in the afternoon, when we were about a league from the '*Croix d'or*,' the shaft of my carriage broke, and it was impossible for us to proceed until it was repaired. The only house in sight was a fine one on our right, with an avenue of beautiful trees leading up to it. Clairmont went there to ask the whereabouts of a blacksmith. By and by he returned accompanied by two servants, one of whom begged me, with his master's compliments, to repair to the château and wait there till the wheelwright had mended the chaise. I accepted; and leaving everything in the charge of my faithful Clairmont, set out for the house with Marcolina. Three ladies and two gentlemen came forward to meet us; and one of them, in courteous style, congratulated himself on our little *contretemps*, as it procured for 'madame' the pleasure of placing herself and her house at our service. I turned to the lady of the house and thanked her, and hoped I should not impose upon her for long. She curtsied gracefully, but I could not see her face, as the mistral was blowing keenly, and forced her and her companions to keep their hoods closely drawn. Marcolina's lovely head was bare and her hair blowing about in disorder. She only answered with smiles to the compliments paid her. One of the men asked me if she were my daughter. I answered she was my cousin, and we were both Venetians. A Frenchman is so eager to flatter a pretty woman, that he is quite careless of the susceptibilities of a third party. He could not possibly have imagined Marcolina to be my daughter; for though she was twenty years younger than I was, I am generally given ten years less than my age.

The house in Provence.

As we drew near the house a mastiff rushed by, chasing a spaniel. Madame, fearing he would hurt it, sprang forward to its rescue, made a false step, and slipped. When her companion

Digitized by Microsoft®

raised her from the ground, she declared she had sprained her foot, and limped back to the house leaning on his arm. He returned after some moments' absence, and told us that the countess's foot was swollen and she had retired, but begged us to go up to her room. We found her in a magnificent bed in an alcove, darkened by heavy crimson satin hangings, and it was impossible to tell if she were young or old, pretty or ugly. I, the indirect cause of her accident, was in despair, and told her so. She answered in good Italian that it was a trifling price to pay for the pleasure of entertaining us.

'Your ladyship must have lived in Venice to speak my language so correctly.'

'No, sir; but I have had very intimate friends who were Venetians.'

A servant just then came in to say that the wheelwright said it would take four hours to mend the shaft, and he must take the carriage to his workshop. The countess declared that in that case we must positively sup and sleep at her house. I accepted gratefully, and sent word to Clairmont to bring our trunks up to the château. The table was laid in the countess's room, and I hoped to get a sight of her face at supper, but was disappointed, as she declared she would not take anything. All the time we were eating, however, she chatted with Marcolina and myself, speaking our language with fluency. The words 'my late husband' escaped her, and I concluded she was a widow, but I did not dare to question her. When Clairmont was undressing me at night, he told me her married name, but I was not enlightened.

The mysterious countess and Marcolina.

When the time came for us to retire, Marcolina declared that she was going to sleep with the countess, with whom her intimacy appeared to have progressed very rapidly. The countess seemed nothing loath, and agreed cordially.

I rose at daybreak, so as to hurry the wheelwright, and breakfasted in my carriage. When all was ready, I asked if the countess was visible. I was told that madame did not dare to receive me *en négligé*; but that she begged me, if I ever

Digitized by Microsoft®

came that way again, to do her the honour of staying at her house, whether alone or in company. This politely veiled refusal gave me displeasure; but I concealed it, and expressing my thanks to the gentlemen, and giving a louis to each servant, I called Marcolina, and we departed. I asked the Venetian girl how she liked the mysterious countess, and if she were young or old.

'She is simply charming,' she answered. 'She is thirty-three, and as beautiful as Mlle. Crosin. Look what she gave me!' and she showed me a superb diamond ring.

'But,' I said, 'I cannot understand why she would not let me see her face; it was treating me somewhat cavalierly.'

Marcolina now began to tease me, as usual, to take her to England. She confided to me that her uncle Matteo Bosè was footman to Monsignor Querini, the Venetian ambassador. To keep her quiet I promised to do so if possible.

We reached Avignon at sunset. I ordered supper, and fresh horses for five o'clock next morning. Marcolina, who hated spending the night on the road, was delighted that we were to stay at the inn.

'Are we at Avignon?' she asked.

'Yes, my dear.'

Marcolina discloses the identity of the countess.

'Then it is time for me to fulfil my promise to the countess! She made me swear not to tell you till we reached Avignon.'

'My dear child, how interesting! Speak, I beg you.'

'She gave me a letter for you. Can you forgive me for having kept it so long?'

'Certainly, you gave your word; but where is the letter?'

'Wait.'

She drew from her pocket a big packet of papers, which she slowly sorted through.

'This is my certificate of birth.'

'I see you were born in 1746.'

'This is a certificate of morality.'

'Keep it; it may come in useful. Come! come! Where is the letter?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I hope I haven't lost it!'

'God forbid!'

'Here it is. No; this is the written promise of marriage your brother gave me.'

'You can put that in the fire. *Where* is the letter?'

'Ah, thank God! here it is.'

'Yes, thank God; but it has no address!'

My heart was beating wildly. I broke open the seal, and found written, in place of the address, these words in Italian:—

'To the noblest man I have ever known in my life.'

Could these words be addressed to me? I opened the sheet; inside, on a blank sheet of paper, was written—

Henriette's stratagem.

'*Henriette!*' and not another word.

Io non mori, e non remasi vivo.[1] Henriette! Yes, the note was in her very own style; it had the laconic eloquence peculiar to her. I remembered the last letter I had received from her—'*Adieu*'—and nothing more!

Henriette, whom I had loved so dearly, and whom, it seemed to me now, I loved more than ever!

'Henriette,' said I to myself, 'you saw me, cruel one, and you would not allow me to see you! You feared perhaps that you had lost some of your ancient charm, the beauty that sixteen years ago held me a willing victim? I love you still with all the strength of first love. Why did you not give me the pleasure of hearing from your own lips that you are happy? It is the only question I would have put to you, cruel one. I would not even have asked you if you love me still; for I know I am unworthy to be loved by you, I who have cared for so many women since I parted from you, the sweetest of your sex. Adorable and generous Henriette, I shall fly to you to-morrow, as you say your house is always open to me.'

But on maturer reflection, I concluded that she had tried to show me plainly that she did not wish to see me—not then, at any rate. I determined that I would respect her wishes; but, at the same time, I resolved not to die without seeing her again.

[1] I did not die, and yet I was killed.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The surprise of Marcolina.

Poor Marcolina breathlessly watched the effect of her communication. I turned and embraced her with a strange fury.

'Dear friend,' she said at last, 'you frighten me! You were as pale and motionless as a dead man. It lasted a full quarter of an hour. What is the matter with you? I was aware the countess knew you, but I did not imagine her name would have such an effect on you.'

'How do you know that we were once friends?'

'The countess told me so. She said if I wished to be always happy, I must never leave you; but, alas! I know that you want to send me away. I guess that you and she were once passionate lovers. Was it long ago?'

'Sixteen or seventeen years.'

'She must have been very young, but she could not have been more beautiful than she is now.'

'Marcolina, in pity, hold your tongue!'

'And how long did it last?'

'For four months of unclouded happiness.'

'I shall not be happy so long as that.'

'You will be happy for longer, dearest, but with another man nearer your own age. I must go to England to try and get my daughter out of her mother's hands.'

'You have a daughter! The countess asked me if you were married, and I said no.'

'You were right; yet when you see my daughter, you will know who her father is.'

He arrives at Lyons with Marcolina, and visits Madame d'Urfé.

I took an apartment at Lyons; and as soon as we were settled I visited Madame d'Urfé, who was living at the Place Bellecour. As soon as she saw me she said, as she always did on such occasions, that she had known I should arrive on that day. Thérèse Trenti's son, the little *soi-disant* Comte d'Aranda, was with her. I sent for him and embraced him tenderly. We spent the day in consulting the oracle about her will, with the object of providing for her after her reincarnation.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The oracle prescribed that her reincarnation must take place in Paris; that she must leave everything to her son, who would not be illegitimate, since Paralis would take care to send her an English gentleman who would marry her. Finally, the oracle ordered her to leave Lyons in three days, and take d'Aranda with her. D'Aranda had blabbed all to Madame d'Urfé, but I made the best of his indiscretion, as I had done in the cases of Parsano and la Corticelli. I was anxious to hand the boy over to his mother, who was continually writing me impertinent letters about him, and I wanted to get the girl in exchange, who, according to her mother, was a miracle of beauty and talent.

Parsano threatens to be dangerous.

On leaving Madame d'Urfé I went to visit Bono the banker, who told me Parsano, my greatest enemy, was still at Lyons.

'I saw him yesterday,' said Bono; 'he was deadly pale, and so weak he could hardly stand. "I shall surely die," he said, "for that scoundrel Casanova has poisoned me, but I will be avenged, and here at Lyons, where I know he is coming." He said abominable things about you. He declares that the whole world shall hear that you are the biggest rogue unhung; that you are ruining Madame d'Urfé with your blasphemous lies; that you are a sorcerer, a magician, a forger, a thief, a spy, a coin sweater, a poisoner, and, in short, the most infamous of men. He intends formally to denounce you, and to appeal to justice to punish you, for the attempts you have made on his person, his honour, and his life. He insists that you have administered a slow poison to him, and declares that he can prove his allegations against you. I think it my duty to warn you, and beg you not to despise the warning; you know the force of calumny?'

'Where does the wretch live?'

'I don't know.'

'Well, Lyons is not so large but what I can find him, and I should be obliged if you would give me the address of a good lawyer.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Here is the name of one of the cleverest, but think twice before you go to law; it is rather a scandalous matter.'

Madame d'Urfé was related to M. de la Rochebaron, the king's procurator; and had I known where Parsano was living, I could have hushed it all up. Although Parsano was a liar and a calumniator, I was not quite easy. I went back to my hotel and drew up a memorandum on the subject. I demanded protection against a traitor, who was hidden at Lyons, and who was attacking my life and my honour. But early next morning Bono came to dissuade me.

The banker's advice.

'The police,' he said, 'will make perquisitions to find out where Parsano is; and as soon as he gets wind of this, he will attack you, and so far from hiding, he will come forth and demand to be protected against *you*. It seems to me you have no very important business at Lyons; and that you could easily hasten your departure.'

'Run away from a Parsano! I should despise myself. My dear sir, that is not my theory of honour. I would rather die than leave here one hour sooner than I intended.'

As ill luck would have it, the lawyer whom Bono had recommended was precisely the one my enemy had chosen. The banker gave me a second address, and told me to lose no time, as in a criminal affair the first in the field has the greatest chance of success. He advised me not to set the police after Parsano, for 'Now we have brought an accusation against him,' he said, 'he needs must come forward and defend himself, or his own barrister even will forsake him.' The very next day I received a message from Parsano's lawyer, begging me to grant him an interview. His client, he told me, declared I had poisoned him. 'He swears,' he said, 'that he will have you condemned to death, for he has all his witnesses ready. He showed me twenty-five louis which you gave him at Marseilles, and which have all been clipped; he has two certificates from Genoa, stating that a nobleman there, Signor Grimaldi, had a quantity of gold pieces melted by a goldsmith, so as to prevent the Government from convicting you of

Digitized by Microsoft®

the same crime. He even has a letter from your brother, the abbé, which testifies against you. He is frantic with spite and disease, and wants to see you leave this world before he does. I should advise you, if I dared, to give him some money and get rid of him. He says he is the father of a family, and that if M. Bono will give him a thousand louis he will withdraw his charges against you. What do you say?'

Negotiations with Parsano.

'What I say is inspired by righteous anger. I will never give one sou to an ungrateful villain whom I raised from misery, and who now brings an atrocious charge against me.'

My lawyer highly approved of my having refused to treat with the scoundrel, and the case was arranged to come on in the three days. On the second of the three, I met Bono at the café, and he told me he had heard again from Parsano. He renewed his offer to withdraw his complaint, and this time his demand was modified to one hundred louis.

'I should be mad,' I exclaimed, 'to give him money which would enable him to escape from the hands of justice. To-morrow he will be arrested; and, if I can, I will see him under the hands of the executioner. The calumnies he has preferred against me are too odious. I insist on his proving them or suffering for them.'

'It seems to me,' said Bono, 'that a full withdrawal on his part would be as good as a verdict in your favour, especially as the trial must injure you, and a hundred louis is nothing compared to the expenses of the case.'

Parsano is squared.

'Your advice is admirable, my dear sir, but this time I intend to act according to my own ideas.' I spoke so decisively that the discussion ended. I received a letter from Bono next day, telling me that Parsano had left Lyons, but had previously deposited with the banker a full retractation of his allegations. I went off at once to see the banker.

'Well, are you pleased?' he asked.

'I am so pleased I could almost find it in my heart to forgive him, but it is odd he did not insist on his hundred louis.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'My friend, I gave them to him, and was glad to do so, and prevent a scandal which would have done us all harm. I am also glad of an opportunity of showing my friendship for you. Let us speak no more of this.'

'Very good, dear friend,' said I, embracing him; 'we will speak no more of it. You must deduct the sum from my account and receive the assurance of my deepest gratitude.'

To the play with Marcolina.

Freed from the frightful anxiety which Parsano had caused me, I could now light-heartedly devote myself to my dear Marcolina. I did all I could to please her, for I felt the hour of separation was at hand. I was at the theatre with her one evening in company with Monsieur Bono and Madame Pernon, his mistress, when I saw Signor Querini, the Venetian ambassador to London, come into the box opposite ours. The procurator Morosini, Signor Memo, Count Stratico, both professors at the University of Padua, were with him. I knew all four gentlemen, and knew that they had returned from bearing the congratulations of their Government to George, the King of England. I went to pay them my respects.

Querini received me politely, and Memo somewhat restrainedly, for he remembered that his mother had had a share in the cabal which, eight years before, had led to my imprisonment. I told them of my movements, and of how the Holy Father had made me a knight of his order, and how I was bound for London by way of Paris. As I was leaving the box, Morosini asked me to go and see him. 'For I have a little commission for you in London,' he said.

'I shall be delighted to undertake it for your Excellency,' I replied.

When I returned to my box I found Marcolina pallid with emotion, and during the remainder of the piece she kept her eyes fixed on Querini. While we were waiting for our carriage at the door of the theatre, the ambassadors came up, and Querini said: 'You have a charming young lady with you, Signor Casanova.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Before I could answer, Marcolina seized his hand and kissed it.

'Why this honour to me, signorita?' he asked in astonishment.

'Because,' answered Marcolina in Venetian, 'I have the honour of knowing your Excellency.'

'And what are you doing with Signor Casanova?'

'He is my uncle.'

On returning to our hotel, Marcolina told me the reason of her extraordinary behaviour. She was afraid I should force her to return to Venice under the escort of her worthy uncle, who was butler to Querini, as she had told me.

'Don't cry,' I said; 'we have three or four days before us. Meantime, it was clever of you to kiss Querini's hand. All will go well, but don't cry. That simply kills me!'

The following day Morosini brought me a little sealed box, directed to my Lady Harrington, with a letter, and another letter containing these few words—

The first mention of 'Miss Charpillon.'

'The procurator Morosini is very sorry to have been obliged to leave without bidding farewell to Miss Charpillon.'

'But there is no address,' I objected. 'Where shall I find the lady?'

'I cannot say; if you do find her, give her the letter; if not, so much the worse; and now I must tell you that I am charged by Signor Querini to invite you and your charming companion to dinner.'

'Shall we speak Venetian?' asked Marcolina.

'Most decidedly.'

'*E viva!* for I know I shall never learn French.'

She was delighted; and when Morosini had left, I told her that if by chance any one should speak of her returning to Venice, she was to say that there was only one person who could persuade her to do so. If Signor Querini would take her back under his high protection, she would go, not otherwise. I warned her, too, to ignore her Uncle Matthew, who would be sure to wait at table.

Digitized by Microsoft®

We presented ourselves at the ambassador's house. Marcolina wore her new dress, and I my richest suit; it was a coat of ash-coloured close-pile velvet, embroidered with gold and silver spangles, my ruffles and shirt front were in *point de l'aiguille*, and worth at least a thousand francs. What with my diamonds, my watches and chains, my sword, in beautiful English steel, my snuff-box set with fine diamonds, my cross and my shoe buckles, also in diamonds, I was worth at least fifty thousand crowns as I stood. This childish ostentation had its object. I wanted M. de Bragadin to hear that I was of importance in my world—the tyrants who had driven me into exile to know that I could afford to laugh at them.

The diplomacy of Marcolina.

After dinner, Signor Querini, who was excessively pious, saw fit to give us a little homily on Love, which he said could be classed under five heads—love of one's neighbour, love of God, conjugal love, family love, and self-love. He was particularly eloquent on love of God, and I was much surprised to see Marcolina shedding abundant tears, which she wiped away furtively as though to hide them from the good old man, whose piety had been aggravated by the wine he had drunk. Indeed I had never appreciated Marcolina till that day. She told me when we got home that she had simulated emotion so as to completely captivate the old ambassador, and that had she followed her instincts she would have laughed like a mad woman. She was made for the stage—the stage or the throne; there is not much difference between them.

I kissed her and said, 'Dearest, I find out how sweet you are—just when I am going to lose you!'

'Keep me, then, dear Casanova, and I will always be as gay as I was to-day. By the way, did you see my uncle? I am sure he recognised me. You will see, to-morrow he will tell Querini that I am his niece, and consequently not yours.'

'Then you must admit to Querini that it is true, and that the tie which unites us is an infinitely more tender one than mere relationship. At the same time, you must make your uncle feel that he has no rights of control over you, and that

Digitized by Microsoft®

if you return it must be entirely of your own free will, and with Querini.'

It all came about as Marcolina had foreseen. I received a note from Signor Querini asking me to see him.

'Signor Casanova,' he said, 'I have something to say to you; but first of all, I want you to confide in me. Have you known the young person who is with you long, for no one here believes you to be her uncle? How did she come into your hands?'

'As that is a point which concerns her alone, you must allow me not to answer that question.'

'Has she told you her real name?'

'She told me her parents were poor, but honest. I was not curious enough to ask their name.'

'I can tell it you then; she is the niece of my butler. Her mother, who is his sister, wrote to him while I was in London that her daughter had left the paternal roof. Her arrogance the other day made me think he must be mistaken, but now I know otherwise. Tell me, is she your wife, or do you intend to marry her?'

'I love her passionately, but I cannot marry her.'

'Then, do you object to her returning to Venice with her own uncle?'

Explanations between Casanova and the Venetian ambassador.

'As her lover I would defend her against violence or coercion; but as she has inspired your excellency with such a lively interest, I bow to Fate. If she chooses to return with you, I shall not oppose her so doing.'

'Then let us consider the matter settled. I beg you to dine with us to-morrow; I will find an opportunity of presenting Marcolina to her real uncle.'

We went, Marcolina as sprightly as ever. A few moments before dinner was announced, the butler came and presented Signor Querini with his spectacles on a silver tray. Marcolina fixed an astonished gaze on him, and exclaimed—

'My uncle!'

'My dear niece!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

She flung herself into his arms and played her little scene admirably.

'You will tell me of Venice,' she said. 'I am so glad to see you, and you see I am happy. But where were you the other day?'

'Here.'

'And you did not recognise me?'

'Yes I did; but your other uncle, who is here now——'

'My dear cousin,' said I, laughing, 'let us shake hands and recognise each other. Marcolina, I congratulate you on having such a nice uncle.'

'O happy hour!' exclaimed Signor Querini.

'Exquisite! exquisite!' echoed the others.

Marcolina's theology.

The newly found uncle went off, and we sat down to table. Marcolina's face wore an expression of mingled regret and happiness—regret at leaving me, happiness at the idea of going home. Later on she told Querini roundly that much as she esteemed her Uncle Matthew, it was in his protection and his only that she would travel to Venice. He was afraid to compromise himself by agreeing too eagerly, and thus endangering his pose of excessive piety.

Every one felt awkward, and looked it, but Marcolina. It was not until dessert was put on the table by the trembling hands of the uncle that this extraordinary girl said, as if to herself, but loud enough for all to hear—

'We must all worship Divine Providence, though few of us can do so blindly, for I defy any one to judge beforehand of the results for good or evil of His interference!'

M. Querini asked her to explain herself.

'I was thinking, and my thoughts were inspired. As the result of my self-examination, I came to the conclusion that my present happiness is the direct consequence of error—the greatest possible error into which a young woman can fall! I find in that a fit cause of humiliation and submission to the decrees of Providence.'

'But, my dear child, you must repent.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'That is what puzzles me, for I cannot see any cause for repentance, since all has turned out for the best. I must ask some learned doctor.'

'Never mind that, my dear, I will take upon myself to show you the road of repentance as we travel to Venice. I will tell you what I will do,' went on Querini, hopelessly fascinated by Marcolina's witching ways. 'My housekeeper, Dame Veneranda, shall take charge of you. You shall sleep with her if you like. Come, let us go and interview her. Casanova, you come too!'

The Venetian ambassador takes charge of Marcolina.

Veneranda was a lady of more than canonical age, but of sensible appearance and good manners. She assured me she would take every care of the young lady.

'I must tell the butler to see about another carriage,' said Querini; 'the calêche only holds two.'

'Your excellence,' said I, 'Marcolina has her own carriage, in which Madame Veneranda will find plenty of room for herself and her trunks.'

I discussed my plan of making my fortune through Lord Egremont in England, and M. Morosini promised me a letter for him. Then Marcolina and I returned to our hotel to get her baggage, and I flung myself on my bed, weeping bitterly. She was more reasonable than I.

'Remember,' she said, 'I am not leaving you; it is you who are sending me away. You have but to say one word, and this comedy will have no *dénouement*.'

Marcolina departs unwillingly.

It was true; but the fatality which ever attended me, the dread perhaps of a lasting tie, or my libertine spirit, which turned ever, in spite of myself, towards new loves and new pleasures, prevented me from saying that word, and made me persist in my resolution. I cannot describe our last hours together. She kept asking me how I could bear to be thus my own executioner and hers; and I could give her no satisfactory answer, for I knew no more than she did, save that some occult power prompted me to this gloomy course. Next day they started. Although Marcolina had my carriage, Querini made a

Digitized by Microsoft®

wry face when he saw her vast number of boxes being piled on it. I went with them as far as Pont de Beauvoisin, where we stopped. Marcolina slept with Dame Veneranda, and I passed the whole night sitting on a chair, with my head on the pillow beside Marcolina's. After the long night of tears I rose, had my horse saddled, and after placing Marcolina in her carriage, embraced her once more, and rode off. I did not see her again for eleven years.

I rode for six hours without stopping; then, worn out with fatigue, I returned to my hotel. I flung myself dressed on my bed, thinking it would be impossible for me to close my eyes, but in ten minutes I was asleep, and slept for nineteen hours. When Clairmont came in answer to my bell, I ordered him to bring me meat and wine, which I greedily devoured; then falling back, I slept again heavily till the following afternoon, when I awoke, refreshed, and able to take some interest in life.

Three days later, having bought a good two-wheeled carriage mounted on springs, of the kind called an Amadis, I started for Paris in my dressing-gown and nightcap; my trunks I sent by diligence. It seemed to me that by travelling in this *déshabillé*, and a prey to utter loneliness, I was paying some kind of tribute to my dear Marcolina.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXVIII

HIS BROTHER THE ABBÉ

I WENT straight to the Hôtel de Montmorency, as I did not wish to stay at Madame d'Urfé's. But I went to dine with her as usual. She received me with open arms. She told D'Aranda to go and get a sealed letter which was on his writing-table, and which she had given him that very morning. I read—

'My spirit told me this morning at daybreak that Galtinarde was that moment leaving Fontainebleau, and that he would be here this very day to dine with me.'

Predictions sometimes come true by pure chance. The like has often happened to me; it never affects me in any way.

Madame d'Urfé was in very good health. She had ordered her servants to admit no one, so we passed the day *en tête-à-tête*, considering how to persuade D'Aranda to go to London, for Madame d'Urfé and I had no authority over him. My scheme was to induce him to ask to be taken as a favour.

Their youngest brother is an annoyance to Jacques and François.

I went to the Italian Comedy that evening, and in the ballet, among the figurantes, I saw la Corticelli. I found out from a friend where she lived, and then went to see my brother François. He and his wife said I had just come in time to help them to get rid of the abbé.

'Where is he?'

'Oh, you will see him soon enough, for it is nearly supper-time, and eating and drinking is the principal business of his life.'

In another moment he appeared. He spoke to me; but as I took no notice, he asked me what I had against him.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I have the letter that you wrote to Parsano, calling me a spy, a coin clipper, and a poisoner.'

He did not answer, but sat down to table. François said—

'When this fine gentleman came I received him with pleasure, gave him a room, and told him to make himself at home. The first thing he said was that you were a scoundrel; that you had taken from him a young girl whom he intended to marry. He said he only meant to stay with us till he got something to do. My wife spoke to M. de Sauci, who promised to introduce him to the archbishop; in the meantime our curé at Saint Sauveur offered him twelve sols for a daily Mass. This was a good beginning, but my gentleman flew in a rage, and said he wasn't made to say Mass for twelve sols, or to hang about an archbishop's ante-room. For the last four weeks he has lived on us, and has turned everything in the house upside down. Our waiting-maid left us yesterday, to our great regret, and the cook won't stay, because he is always hanging about the kitchen.'

'It is easy to get rid of him,' said I; 'send his rags to a furnished room to-morrow morning, and notify him through the police not to set foot in your house again. If he is really anxious to leave, I will pay his expenses to any place he chooses to name, provided it is far enough off.'

'Abbé, what do you say?'

'I say this is a repetition of the way in which M. Jacques hunted me out of Marseilles. This is his style. Violence! Tyranny!'

'Monster! Thank God that instead of beating you to death I offer you money. Remember you tried to hang me at Lyons.'

'Where is Marcolina?'

He sends his brother back to Rome willy-nilly.

'I have no accounts to render to you. Quick now. Which is it to be—Rome or Paris?'

'Rome.'

'Good; the voyage costs twenty louis for a single man, but I will give you twenty-five.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Where are they?'

'You will see. Give me pen and paper. Now I will write out letters of credit for Lyons, Turin, Genoa, Florence, and Rome. I will take your place in the diligence for Lyons to-morrow; there you will draw five louis, and the same sum will be paid you in the four other towns. Here in Paris I will not give you a penny. I am at the Hôtel de Montmorency; that is all you need know.'

He visits Corticelli.

Later that day, when crossing the Place des Victoires,[1] it occurred to me to visit la Corticelli. I said no word in entering, and she began to abuse me roundly.

'Had I never seen you, I might be a happy woman now. I owe my misery to you.'

'You would be just as miserable, but in another way, for your misfortunes are the result of your bad conduct. But stop whining, and tell me about it.'

She then told me the most abject and degrading story it has ever been my lot to hear. I could not feel quite indifferent, for I knew I was to a certain extent the cause of her woes. I was morally obliged to assist her.

'You are now,' said I, 'in squalid poverty, devoured by disease, and liable any moment to be seized by your creditors

[1] One of the most beautiful old '*places*' in Paris. It was begun by Mansard in 1685, by the order of the Duc de la Feuillade, who bought up the Hôtels de Senneterre and d'Emmery. A bronze statue of Louis XIV. was placed in the centre. At the angles of the pedestal were chained figures representing the nations he had triumphed over. This monument was pulled down in 1792 and the statue melted. The figures are still to be seen in the courtyard of Les Invalides. In 1795 a wooden pyramid was erected in place of the statue, on which were inscribed the names of the citizens killed on the 10th of August '92, and the place was dubbed 'Place des Victoires Nationales.' In 1800 Napoleon laid the first stone of a monument to the memory of Desaix and Kléber; in 1806 it was decided that Desaix's name alone should be mentioned; in 1815 it was not yet finished, and in 1822 the unfinished work was cleared away, and the hideous rampant equestrian statue of Louis XIV., by Bosnio, which still occupies the place, was put up.

The houses are now nearly all occupied as warehouses, and their fine façades much disfigured by commercial signs and notices. Bossuet lived in the Place des Victoires in 1696, and Cambon lived at No. 6 in 1793.

Digitized by Microsoft®

and turned out of doors. What do you think you had better do?'

'Throw myself into the Seine; for, my God! there is nothing else left for me to do; I have no money.'

'And if you had money, what would you do?'

'Get well, and then return to Bologna, where I would live as quietly as possible, for experience has taught me wisdom.'

His charity towards la Corticelli.

'Poor Corticelli! I pity you, and in spite of your vile behaviour I will not abandon you. Here are four louis for your immediate needs, and to-morrow I will come and tell you of some place where you can go to get well. Dry your tears, make up your mind to improve, and God have mercy on you.'

The poor creature flung herself on her knees, and covered my hands with kisses and tears. I took a *fiacre* on leaving her, and went to the Rue de Seine, where lived an old surgeon I knew. He listened to my story, then gave me a paper with an address at the far end of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine—

'Admit the person who presents this note and three hundred francs, and keep her for six weeks, then dismiss her cured, unless God disposes otherwise. The person has her reasons for wishing to remain unknown.'

La Corticelli went there next day, and I went to see her and gave her twelve louis, and offered to send her another twelve when she should write to me from Bologna. She promised she would do so, but the poor thing was unable to keep her word, for she succumbed to the treatment.

All my tools in the deception of Madame d'Urfé betrayed me except Marcolina; and all, except her, have perished miserably.

Short work with his brother the abbé.

I found my scoundrel brother waiting for me when I got back to the hotel.

'Well, Paris or Rome?' I asked.

'Rome,' he answered.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I sent Clairmont to the office of the *diligence* to take a place for Lyons, and I wrote out the five letters of credit.

'And now,' I said, 'go; the *diligence* leaves to-morrow. You can go and dine with Parsano if you like, as you seem to be his chosen accomplice. Clairmont, turn this man out, and never allow him to put his foot inside my door again.'

My readers may perhaps think I treated my brother too harshly, but I had always disliked him, and his connivance with Parsano and his general conduct as a man and as a priest, had made him so odious in my eyes that I could have seen him hanged with pleasure. Every one has his code of morality, as every one has his passions. My ruling passion has always been vengeance.

We had told little D'Aranda that his mother was at Abbeville and wanted to see him. It was only by some such deception that we could induce him to leave Paris. Even then he would not have gone had not Madame d'Urfé given him a horse and a new riding costume. Once at Abbeville, I knew he would not escape me, and I secretly forwarded his trunks to Calais.

He sees Madame d'Urfé for the last time.

I took leave of my dear Madame d'Urfé with unusual emotion. I had a presentiment I should never see her again!

When we got to Abbeville, D'Aranda naturally asked to see his mother.

'After dinner,' I said.

'But suppose she is not here?'

'We will push on and find her somewhere. Come, let us visit M. Varobes's beautiful factory.'

'Go by yourself; I am tired.'

When I returned to the inn—

'Sir,' said the landlord, 'your young friend has gone back to Paris. He started five minutes after you left; he said he had gone for some despatches you had forgotten.'

'If you don't get him back, I will begin proceedings against you. You had no business to give him a horse without my orders.'

'Be easy, sir. I will have him overtaken before he reaches

Digitized by Microsoft®

Amiens.' He called up a postillion and ordered him to ride after the fugitive.

'If you catch him, I will give you two louis *pourboire*,' I said.

'For that,' said the man, laughing, 'I would bring you the Grand Turk.'

True to his word, he appeared in the evening, accompanied by my young gentleman, more dead than alive. I refused to speak to him, and ordered him to be shut up in a room with a bed and something to eat. Next morning I asked if he preferred going to London with me, free, and of his own will, or tied hand and foot like a prisoner?

'I will go with you if you will let me ride, for in this costume I should look absurd in a travelling carriage.'

'If you will give me your word of honour not to escape, you can go down and order a horse for yourself, and now let us shake hands.'

He lightly mounted his horse, and rode ahead of me with Clairmont. He was surprised to find his baggage at Calais when he reached that port, two hours before I did.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XXXIX

ENGLAND

At Calais I stored my postchaise at the *Bras-d'Or*, and I hired a packet-boat, to be in readiness whenever I might require it. There was only one at liberty, and one for the general public, the places in which cost six francs a piece. I paid six guineas in advance for mine, and was careful to have a written receipt for the money, for I was aware that at Calais and beyond, a man is sure to be in the wrong if he cannot prove his claims in writing.

Clairmont had my luggage put on board, and the crew embarked before low tide. I changed my money, and the landlord gave me English guineas for French louis d'ors. The difference is four per cent., and I tried to make him take it; but he refused, saying that he reimbursed himself by taking the English guineas and giving louis for them.

The little D'Aranda, to whom I shall now give his own modest name of Trenti, was resigned to his fate. He had behaved quite well, but bragged about his riding. We were just sitting down to table when I heard English voices outside.

'It is the English ambassador's courier,' said the landlord, 'announcing the arrival of his master, the Duke of Bedford, and quarrelling with the master of the packet. He declares he wrote to him to keep the boat at his disposition, and that he had no right to let it to any one else. The master says he never received the letter, and no one can convince him to the contrary.'

Glad that I had bespoken the boat, and paid for it, I went quietly to bed.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Amicable altercation with the Duke of Bedford, at Calais.

In the morning the landlord came to my room, followed by the duke's valet, who told me his master had arrived at midnight; that he was in a hurry to get back to London; and that I should be doing him a great service if I would let him have the boat. I took a pen and wrote as follows:—

'My lord duke is welcome to dispose of the whole boat with the exception of a place for myself and two other persons and our humble luggage. I am very glad of this opportunity of obliging the English ambassador.'

The messenger returned to say that the duke was much obliged to me, but that he could not accept my offer unless I would allow him to pay the price of the passage.

'Tell him it is already paid for.'

'He will return you the six guineas.'

'Tell your master he can have the boat without paying for it, but not otherwise. I do not buy things to sell again.'

Half an hour after the duke appeared in person; he told me in a very dignified but amiable way that I was perhaps right from my point of view, but that he was right from his.

'There is one way of settling this,' he said, 'and if you will accept it I shall be none the less obliged to you—we will each pay half.'

'The desire which I have to be of service to you prevents me from refusing your grace; but it is I who am your debtor, you are conferring a great honour on me. We will leave whenever you choose; I am entirely at your command.'

When he had gone, after shaking hands with me, I found three guineas on my table, where he had deposited them without my seeing. An hour after I returned his visit, and then sent word to the master of the boat to take aboard the duke and his suite, and arrange with them on his own account.

We were two hours and a half crossing the Channel; it was rough, but we got in without any mishap.

A foreigner landing on English soil must cultivate resignation. The custom-house inspection is a trial. The officials are indiscreet and impertinent; but as the duke submitted,

Digitized by Microsoft®

I was forced to follow his example; besides, what would have been the use of resisting? The average Englishman, strong in the rights the law affords him, and careful not to do anything the law forbids him, is brusque, rough, and ill-conditioned, the officials particularly so, and not to be compared with the French, who know how to be polite in the exercise of their functions. Nothing in England is as it is anywhere else. The very ground is of another colour, and the water of the Thames tastes differently to that of any other river. Everything in Albion has a character of its own; the fish, the horned cattle, the men and the women are distinct types, to be found nowhere else. Their mode of life, especially with regard to cookery, is totally unlike that of other people.

Character in Albion.

The main characteristic of these proud islanders is their national pride, which puts them in their own estimation far ahead of all other races. It is only fair, however, to say that this fault is not confined to them; each country places itself in the first rank; the classification of the second rank alone presents any difficulty. What most struck me was the general air of cleanliness, the beauty of the country, its high state of cultivation, the solidity of the food, the excellence of the roads, the coaches and post-chaises, and the modest tariff of the latter. Above all, I admired the perfect ease with which one could pay for everything with a mere scrap of paper.[1] The swiftness of the horses, though they never go at anything but a trot, delighted me, and so did the architecture of towns like Dover and London, Canterbury and Rochester, populous cities that might be figured by immense lengths of tubing, for they are very long and very narrow.

We got to London in the evening and drove to Madam Cornelys's[2] house, for it was by this name that Thérèse, first

He puts up at the house of Madam Cornelys

[1] Cheques were unknown on the Continent at this time, and are comparatively little used now.

[2] This remarkable woman, who has been called the 'Circe of Soho Square,' and by Horace Walpole 'the Heidegger of the Age,' arrived in England in 1756, or the following year. In London she was always known as Teresa Cornelys. She was a German by birth, and for many years a public singer.

Digitized by Microsoft®

married to the actor Imer and then to the dancer Pompéati, was known. When I had known her in Holland she was called Trenti, but had since adopted the name of her Dutch lover, Cornelius Rigerboos, of whom I have spoken in these Memoirs, and whom she had ruined. She lived in Soho Square,[1] almost opposite the Venetian ambassador's. I carefully followed out the instructions she had given me in her last letter. I left her son in the carriage; and having sent in my name, I expected she would rush to meet me; but the hall porter told me to wait, and by and by a servant in livery came up and handed me a note, in which Madam Cornelys requested me to follow him to a certain house. Arrived at the said house, a stout woman, called, as I afterwards learned, Rancour, and two servants, welcomed us, or rather welcomed my young companion, for she embraced him, and congratulated him on his safe arrival, without taking the slightest notice of me.

His reception.

She was, as the reader will remember, the mistress of Senator Malipièro in Venice, and subsequently of many others, including Casanova. She married an Italian dancer named Pompéati. After the closing of the revels at Carlisle House (see subsequent notes), she remained in obscurity for many years. At one time she sold asses' milk at Knightsbridge, and tried to get up fashionable breakfasts there. She died in the Fleet Prison, 19th August 1797, aged seventy-four, and left one son and one daughter.

[1] Carlisle House, built about the year 1690, stood on the east side of Soho Square, at the corner of Sutton Street. There was another Carlisle House at the west of Soho Square, at the end of what is now called Carlisle Street, but which was then known as 'King's Square Court,' 'Denmark Street,' and 'Merry Andrew Street' successively. The house inhabited by Madam Cornelys was built for Charles Howard, Earl of Carlisle, and the garden extended the length of Sutton Street to what is now the Charing Cross Road. Madam Cornelys erected a large building in the garden, consisting of two great rooms, one above the other, to be used for balls, assemblies, and concerts. When this building was pulled down, a small copper plate was found, on which was the following inscription:—

'Not vain but grateful,
In honour of the society,
And my first protectress,
Honble. Mrs. Elizabeth Chudleigh,
Is laid the first stone
Of this edifice, June 19, 1761,
By me, TERESA CORNELYS.'

Carlisle House was pulled down in 1778.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Our trunks were taken upstairs, and Rancour showed the boy a fine suite of three rooms, saying—

'These rooms and these servants are for your private use; and as for me, I am your most humble servant.'

My baggage was deposited in a room opening out of his. From the very look of it I was able to judge of the inferior position I was meant to occupy. My rage was on the point of breaking out, but I controlled it, and—wonderful for me!—said never a word.

'Where is your room?' I asked Clairmont.

'Upstairs, and I have to share it with one of those great stupid boobies you saw.' The brave fellow, who knew me well, was much surprised at the calm with which I told him to carry up his things.

'Shall I undo your trunks?' he asked.

'No; wait till to-morrow.'

Keeping a good face on it, I went to the boy's room, who no doubt thought he was now my master. Worn out with fatigue as he was, he listened stupidly to the Rancour, who was describing his mother's magnificent position, her vast enterprises, her immense credit, the superb house she had built, her thirty-three servants, her two secretaries, her six horses, her country seat.

'How is my sister Sophie?' said the child.

'Is her name Sophie? She is never called anything but Miss Cornelys. She is a little beauty; she is a prodigy; she can play by sight on several instruments; she dances like Terpsichore; she speaks English, French, and Italian with equal fluency; she is a perfect marvel. She has a governess and a waiting-maid; it is a pity she is so small for eight years old.' She was ten, but I kept that for myself.

Young Master Cornelys, who was very tired, now asked when supper would be ready.

'At ten o'clock; Madam Cornelys is never free till then. She is engaged with her solicitor about her great lawsuit with Sir Frederick Fermor.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

As I saw I should get nothing out of Mistress Rancour unless I questioned her, and as I had no intention of so doing, I took my hat and stick and went forth to explore the city, taking care not to lose my bearings.

The Orange Coffee-house or Café des Italiens.[1]

It was about seven o'clock. I saw a lot of people in a coffee-house, and I went in. It was the most ill-famed coffee-house in London, and the meeting-place of the scum of the Italian population. I had been told of it at Lyons, and had made up my mind never to go there; but chance often makes us turn to the left when we want to go to the right. I ordered some lemonade, and was drinking it, when a stranger who was seated near me took a news-sheet from his pocket, printed in Italian. He began to make corrections in pencil on the margin, which led me to suppose he was an author. I watched him out of curiosity, and noticed that he scratched out the word *ancora*, and wrote it at the side, *anchora*. This barbarism irritated me. I told him that for four centuries it had been written without an *h*.

'I agree with you,' he answered, 'but I am quoting Boccaccio, and in quotations one must be exact.'

'I humbly beg your pardon; I see you are a man of letters.'

'A very modest one; my name is Martinelli.'

He meets an author.

'I know you by reputation; you are a cousin of Calsabigi's, who has spoken of you; I have read some of your satires.'

'May I ask to whom I have the honour of speaking?'

'My name is Seingalt. Have you finished your edition of the *Décameron*?'

'I am still working at it, and trying to get more subscribers.

'Will you allow me to be among the number?'

He put me down for four copies, at a guinea a copy, and was surprised to hear I had only been in London an hour.

[1] This may have been in Orange Street, near Leicester Square, or in Compton Street, where the *Café d'Italie* exists at the present day. There is an *Italian Restaurant* in the present Oxendon Street, in the neighbourhood of the old unidentifiable street called Hedge Lane, whose direction corresponded more or less with Whitcomb Street.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Let me see you home,' he said; 'you will lose your way else.'

When we were outside he told me I had been in the Orange Coffee-house, the most disreputable in all London.

'But you go.'

'I go because I know the company and am on my guard against it.'

'Do you know many people here?'

'Yes, but I only pay court to Lord Spencer. I work at literature, am all alone, earn enough for my wants. I live in furnished lodgings, I own twelve shirts and the clothes I stand up in, and I am perfectly contented.'

This man pleased me; he talked pure Tuscan, and there was something very honest about him. I asked him how to settle myself comfortably. When he knew how long I was going to stay and the style in which I wished to live, he advised me to take a furnished house.

'Where can I find a house of this kind?'

He takes a house in Pall Mall.

We went into a shop, where he borrowed the *Advertiser*, and noted down sundry addresses. We were nearest at the moment to one in Pall Mall.[1] An old woman opened the door and showed us the ground floor and three upper stories. Each story had two rooms to the front, and a lavatory behind (in London every floor has this accessory). Everything was scrupulously clean—linen, furniture, carpets, mirrors, porcelain, even the bells and the locks on the doors. One great cupboard was filled with linen, another with silver, and china and earthenware dinner-services. In the kitchen were rows of shining pots and pans. In a word, it was *comfortable*. The price was twenty guineas a week; and as it is useless to bargain in London, I told Martinelli I would take it there and then.

The old woman said that if I would keep her as housekeeper, I need not trouble about references, as I could pay her a week in advance. I told her I would do so if she would undertake to find me a servant who could speak French or Italian as well as English, and I paid her a month in

[1] Probably in Spring Gardens or Cockspur Street.

Digitized by Microsoft®

advance. She made the receipt out in the name of the Chevalier de Seingalt. I was never called anything else in London.

Thus in less than two hours I had found a perfectly equipped home in the city which people say is a chaos, especially for foreigners. But in London money buys everything. I was delighted to be in a position to leave a house where I had every right to expect a cordial welcome, and where I had been so badly received.

It was past ten o'clock when I returned to Soho Square, but Madam Cornelys had not yet made her appearance; her son was fast asleep on a sofa. After a little while three loud knocks announced her arrival; she had come in a sedan-chair, and I heard her loudly rustling up the stairs. She pretended to be glad to see me, but did not offer to embrace me. She ran to her son, took the sleepy child on her knee, and covered him with kisses, to which he responded coldly enough.

'He is tired,' said I, 'and for people who are tired we have been kept a long time waiting.'

I do not know what she would have replied to this, for supper was just then announced. She took my arm and led me to a room I had not yet seen. Though we were only three, the table was laid for four. I asked who was the other guest.

'It was for my daughter, but I have left her at home; for as soon as she heard you had come, she asked if you were well.'

'And you punished her for that?'

'Certainly; she ought to have inquired for her brother first, and then for you.'

'Poor Sophie! I pity her. Gratitude was stronger than the tie of blood.'

'It is not a question of sentiment, but one of training young people to think and act correctly.'

Madam Cornelys told her son that she was working for him, so that he should be rich some day, and that she had sent for him because he was now old enough to help her.

'How can I help you, dear mamma?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I give twelve suppers and twelve balls yearly to the nobility, and twelve to the city people, at two guineas a head. I often have five or six hundred persons.[1] The expense is enormous; and all alone as I am, I am terribly imposed upon,

[1] Royal personages, peers and peeresses, foreign ministers, and the aristocracy were her patrons. Concerts under the direction of Bach, Abel, and others, galas, masquerades, rural balls, harmonic meetings, subscription assemblies and the like followed each other in rapid succession. The house is spoken of by a contemporary as 'by far the most magnificent place of public entertainment in Europe.'

The following notes, taken from the *Advertiser* and *Lloyd's Evening Post*, are of interest:—

'12 March, 1771. Annual Subscription Assembly. Tickets 21*s*. The Doors will be opened at 7 o'clock and not before. Hackney chairs must come to the chair door in Soho Square, ranking from Greek Street. Carriages to the Coach door in Soho Square with the horses' heads towards Greek Street. The nobility and gentry's own chairs to the door in Sutton Street. These arrangements are earnestly requested to be observed, which will prevent any possibility of confusion, and render the access to the House extremely facile and agreeable.

'For the information of our readers who intend to be at the Masquerade at Soho Square to-morrow we are happy to lay before them the following particulars of the manner in which that elegant entertainment is to be conducted. The door will be opened at 11 o'clock precisely. The company are first to assemble in the Tea Rooms. As soon as these are sufficiently full, the doors leading to the great gallery will be opened and the Masks will enter through an elegant green walk, with flowers and shrubs planted on each side. In the gallery, which will be curiously illuminated, is to be placed a Band of Music for Country Dances. The Bridge room will be opened at the same time, and the circular space under the pavilion is to be appropriated for dancing Cotillons. The pavilion will be ceiled with looking glasses, which must produce a most charming reflection. The rest of that elegant apartment is laid out in a delightful garden perfumed with the odoriferous scent of the choicest flowers which the season can afford, and bordered with a thicket of the most curious shrubs, which will at once inspire the mind with the most rural ideas, and after the fatigues of the Dances, will afford a most desirable refreshment by the coolness of the shade. At 1 o'clock a Band of Music will announce the opening of the Supper Room by a March, and proceed at the head of the company up the great front stairs to the door of the Star room, at the entrance of which the most rural and delightful prospect will open upon the eye. In the middle of the Great Supper Room will appear an elegant walk bordered with two regular green Hedges, on each side of this beautiful walk is raised a curious platform where supper will be laid out on large round tables, each of which is encircled with trees, under whose embowering shade the Masks will sup, as if they were in *pleine campagne*, with the pleasure of seeing the rustic swains and their lasses mix in the gay dance on the turf

Digitized by Microsoft®

I can't be in every place at once. Now that you are here, you can keep the keys, write my letters, take the money, pay the bills, and go through the rooms to see that every one is well waited on; in fact, you can be the master of the house.'

'And do you think, dear mamma, that I am capable of doing all that?'

'Yes, for you will be taught. One of my secretaries will live with you, and show you how to set about your work. You will study English for at least a year; you will attend all the assemblies, so that you will make acquaintance with the most distinguished personages in London, and little by little you will become quite an Englishman.'

'I think I would rather remain French.'

beneath them. Those who may not find room at these tables, may pass by the great back stairs into the stage-room, which is laid out in a shrubbery with extraordinary taste; in this and the Bridge-room, tables will be also laid for Supper, and the Masks, as they return into the Gallery, will be agreeably surprised by the opening of the Chinese room which will be so decorated as to afford the most charming *coup d'œil.* Upon the whole, there is every reason to believe that this will prove one of the most pleasing Entertainments that has been given to the town for many years, and that the night will be spent with true Arcadian felicity in this *Paradis Terrestre.*'

(For most of this note we are indebted to Dean Vere's *St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Soho.*)

That these entertainments were not always of the most seemly description may be inferred from the fact that Madam Cornelys was twice indited for keeping a disorderly house, and appeared before Sir John Fielding. In 1772 she made strong efforts to regain her waning popularity, and gave a great masked ball, the character of which may be inferred from the fact that before dancing began a Jew went round with a label 'Marriage Treatise' on his back, distributing cards somewhat to the following effect:—

'The Marriage Broker accommodates ladies and gentlemen with everything in the matrimonial way, virtue and money excepted, and that at first sight of the parties. Madam Cornelys provides a variety of commodious apartments, where these affairs can be settled out of hand. She deals in the "ton" or the city style. If a difficult case, apply to our Attorney-General, who attends me here in person.'

In June 1775 she had the sole management of a fête at Ranelagh, for which she received seven hundred guineas. She was caricatured under the title 'Lady Fashion's Secretary's Office,' and represented as a 'dignified, middle-aged dame, with somewhat marked features.'

The entrance spoken of in Sutton Street is supposed to have been at the spot now occupied by Messrs. Cross and Blackwell's cooperage.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'That, my dear boy, is mere prejudice! You will soon get rid of that. Every one will call you *Mister* Cornelys.'

'Cornelys? Is that my name? It sounds rather odd.'

She looked at her son sharply, and then told him to go to bed.

When we were alone she said he seemed ill brought up, and small for his age.

'I am afraid his education will have to be begun all over again, and it is rather late in the day. What has he learned in the last six years?'

'He might have learned a great deal, for he was at the best school in Paris, but he only learned what he liked, and that was not much. He can ride, play the flute, fence, dance a minuet, reply politely, present himself gracefully, talk nonsense prettily, change his linen every day, and dress himself elegantly. He can hardly write, cannot spell, doesn't know the first four rules of arithmetic, and is very uncertain whether England forms part of Europe or not.'

'Six years well spent!'

'Yes, six years lost, and he will lose many more.'

'My daughter will make fun of him, but then *I* brought her up. He will be ashamed when he sees how advanced she is, for eight.'

'He will never see her at that age, for she is ten now?'

'I know best about that. She knows geography, history, languages, music, she reasons intelligently, and has a judgment far beyond her age. All the ladies are wild about her. Every day she goes to a drawing academy, for she shows a great disposition for art. She dines with me every Sunday; and if you will do me the pleasure of joining us on that day, you will see that I am not exaggerating.'

It was then Monday! Why did she not ask me for Tuesday?

'You have just come in time,' she went on, 'for the last gala I give this year to the nobility. In three or four weeks every one goes out of town. I cannot give you a ticket, for

Madam Cornelys explains.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I can only give them to people of title, but you can stay by my side, and as my friend you can see everything.'

'You do me too great an honour.'

Her lawsuit with Sir Frederick Fermor.

We chatted until two o'clock in the morning. She told me of her lawsuit with Sir Frederick Fermor. He claimed that the house which she had built, and which had cost ten thousand guineas, belonged to him, for he had given her the money. Ethically he was right; but according to the English law he was wrong, for it was she who had paid the architect, the workmen, and the carpenters. She had given and taken all receipts in her own name, though now she owned that it was he who had supplied the funds. 'But,' she said, 'there is nothing extraordinary in that; you have often given me a thousand guineas at a time, and such generosity is not surprising in a rich Englishman. We loved each other, and we lived together—it is simple enough!'

Madam Cornelys had won her lawsuit four times in two years, and each time Fermor opened the question again in virtue of some English legal quibble. It cost her immense sums; and at the moment of which I am writing a last application was about to be made, but the solution might be fifteen years in coming.

'This case is a disgrace to Fermor,' said the worthy dame.

'There I agree with you, but do you think it is a credit to you?'

'Yes, most certainly I do.'

During our three hours' conversation this woman did not inquire once after my health, if I was comfortably lodged, how long I intended to remain in London, or the state of my finances, but she took good care to tell me that she never had a halfpenny to spend. She raked in over eighty thousand pounds sterling a year, but her expenses were frightfully heavy, and she was continually in debt.

I did not volunteer any information about myself, and it was impossible for her to judge my condition from my appearance, as I was very simply dressed, and did not wear a single

Digitized by Microsoft®

diamond, or jewellery of any kind. I went to bed, piqued, but not angry.

Next morning I told Clairmont to put my things on a coach, and when all was ready I went to see young Cornelys, who was still in bed. I told him I was going to live in Pall Mall, and I left him my address.

'What! you are not going to stay with me?'

'No, for your mother has forgotten to welcome me and lodge me properly.'

'You are quite right. I should like to go back to Paris.'

'Don't be a fool; remember you are at home here, whereas in Paris you perhaps would not find a roof to cover you. Good-bye; I shall see you on Sunday.'

He calls on the Venetian ambassador.

I was soon installed in my new house, and I went to call on Signor Zuccato, the Venetian envoy, with Morosini's mysterious letter. He told me coldly he was glad to know me. I asked him to introduce me at Court, but he only replied with a smile, in which I fancied I detected contempt. I paid the insolent aristocrat back in his own coin. I bowed distantly and went away, never to set foot in his house again. I had no better luck with Lord Egremont, who was ill, and who died a day or two after I presented my letter of introduction from Morosini to him. I had another letter from Chauvelin for the Comte de Guerchy, the French ambassador. He received me most cordially, invited me to dine, and promised to present me at Court the following Sunday after divine service. It was at his table that I met the Chevalier d'Eon, secretary to the embassy, and of whom, a little later, all Europe was talking. The Chevalier d'Eon was a beautiful woman, who, before adopting the career of diplomacy, had been a barrister, and then a captain of dragoons. She served Louis Quinze as a valiant soldier, and a consummately skilful diplomatist. In spite of her manly intellect and airs, I had not been a quarter of an hour in her company before I knew her for a woman. Her shape was too rounded for that of a man, and her voice was too clear.

Digitized by Microsoft®

During these first few days I made the acquaintance of all the bankers with whom my money was deposited (I had in all more than three hundred thousand francs). I visited the theatres of Covent Garden and Drury Lane incognito. I did not enjoy myself much, as I did not know a word of English. I dined in all the taverns of good or evil repute, so as to familiarise myself with the manners of these 'great little' islanders. In the mornings I went to the Stock Exchange, where I made many acquaintances, one of whom found me a negro servant who could speak French, English, and Italian, and a good English man cook, who spoke French.

In the evening I frequented the most select bagnios where a man of quality can sup, bathe, and meet well-bred women of easy virtue. There are plenty of this sort in London. This entertainment only costs about six guineas, and with economy one can do it for four; but economy was never one of my failings.

He is presented by M. de Guerchy to the king.

On Sunday morning I dressed myself elegantly and richly, and went to Court about eleven o'clock, where I met M. de Guerchy, as arranged. He presented me to his Majesty George the Third, who spoke to me, but so low that I could not understand him, and could only reply by an inclination of the head. The queen also spoke to me, and I was delighted to see the silly envoy of my own dear republic standing near her. When Monsieur de Guerchy announced me as the Chevalier de Seingalt, I saw him start and look astonished, for in the letter of introduction to him I was only spoken of as Casanova. The queen asked what part of France I came from, and when I said I was a Venetian, she looked at him. Zuccato bowed, as much as to say he could not contradict this. Her Majesty asked me if I knew the ambassadors who had been over here to congratulate the king? I answered I knew some of them intimately.

'M. de Querini,' the queen was good enough to say, 'made me laugh. He said I was a little devil!'

'He meant angel, madam.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I wished she would ask me why Zuccato had not presented me, for I had an answer on the tip of my tongue that would have prevented my lord from sleeping for a week, but the talk was vague and purposeless, as it always is in courts.

After this ceremony I got into my sedan chair, and my two bipeds carried me to Soho Square to the house of Madam Cornelys, where I was to dine. A man in court dress would not dare to walk in the street in London; the mob would pelt him with mud, and his fellows would laugh at him. Arrived at Madam Cornelys's, I was shown upstairs with my negro Jarbe; and after crossing a dozen large rooms, I was introduced into a small saloon, where the mistress of the house was sitting with two English ladies and two gentlemen. She was polite and friendly; but after bidding me be seated in an armchair near her, she continued her conversation in English, without introducing me to her friends. When the butler announced dinner, she told him to send for the children. I had been longing for this moment; and as soon as Sophie appeared, I ran towards her; but, drilled by her mother, she stepped back, made me a low curtsy, and repeated a compliment learned by heart. I was discreet enough to hold my tongue, for I did not want to embarrass the child, but my heart was wrung. La Cornelys then presented her son, telling them all that I had brought him from France, where I had had charge of his education for six years. She said this in French, and I was glad to see that every one understood.

He dines with Madam Cornelys.

We sat down to table; I was between the two Englishwomen; the elder of them was lively, and I liked her, though she was no longer young. The mistress of the house never spoke to me, and Sophie rolled her beautiful eyes about, but never in my direction. We were as like as two peas. As I wished to make a good impression on the company, I began to give my impressions of England as wittily as I could, taking, however, good care not to wound the national pride. I succeeded, but I took care not to look once at Madam Cornelys.

Digitized by Microsoft®

My neighbour, after admiring the beauty of my ruffles, asked me the news of Court?

'Madam, I was there to-day for the first time.'

'Did you see the king?' asked little *Sir Joseph* Cornelys.

'My son,' said his mother, 'you should not ask such questions; they might be displeasing to Signor Casanova.'

'On the contrary, madam, I have been teaching him for the last six years to ask questions; it is the only way to learn.'

'Well, then,' said the boy, 'did you see the king?'

'Yes, my dear, I saw the king and the queen, and their majesties both did me the honour of speaking to me.'

'Who presented you?'

'The French ambassador.'

'This time,' said his mother, 'you must own the question is impertinent.'

'To a stranger it might be, but not to me.'

'Well, then,' she said impertinently, 'as you like questions, let me ask you why you were presented by the French ambassador instead of by the Venetian envoy?'

'Because the Venetian knows I have a bone to pick with his government.'

The little Sophie welcomes him.

My little Sophie, who was so like me that it was impossible not to see the resemblance, kept her eyes modestly fixed on her plate, and it was not until after dinner that I could induce her to look at me. She brought me her drawings to examine, and she played the harpsichord and guitar and sang Italian airs charmingly; she then danced a minuet with her brother, who acquitted himself very badly. She begged me to dance with her, which I did, and afterwards she came and sat on my knee, and seemed to get over her shyness, which I make no doubt was due to the instructions of her mother.

Coffee was served in French fashion, and then La Cornelys took me over the house and showed me a magnificent dining-hall she had just built, and in which she could give a supper to four hundred people seated comfortably at one horseshoe table. She told me, and I could easily believe her, that it was

Digitized by Microsoft®

the largest room of its kind in London. The last gala was to be given just before the House rose; it was fixed for four or five days hence. She had about twenty waiting-maids in her service, and a dozen footmen in livery, of whom she spoke bitterly.

'These scoundrels all rob me,' she said, 'but I can't do without them. I ought to have an intelligent active man to look after them and my interests, then I should make an immense fortune in a few years; the English don't care what they pay for their amusements.'

I said I hoped she would soon find the man and the money, and I left her, full of admiration for her courage and enterprise.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CHAPTER XL

ENGLISH CUSTOMS

The English Sunday.

I HAD a letter of introduction to Lady Harrington,[1] who was lodged within the precincts of the Court, and received every Sunday. Card play went on at her house on that day, for the park comes under the royal jurisdiction. It is forbidden everywhere else to gamble or make music on Sundays. Spies infest the streets of London, and listen outside private houses to the various sounds issuing from the parlours. If, from what they hear, they think that gambling or singing is going on, they wait till a door opens, and then slip in and arrest the bad Christians who dare to profane the Lord's day by an amusement which in all other countries is considered innocent enough. On the other hand, Englishmen are free to keep the

[1] Lady Caroline Fitzroy, daughter of the second Duke of Grafton, married William Stanhope, Earl of Harrington and Viscount Petersham. Walpole speaks of her sometimes as Lady Harrington, sometimes as Lady Caroline Petersham. His friend and correspondent Conway was wildly in love with her, but Walpole made him break off with her. In a letter to Mann he quotes the following epigram:—

'Who 's this?
Her face has beauty we must all confess,
But beauty on the verge of ugliness.
Her mouth 's a rabbit feeding on a rose,
With eyes ten times too good for such a nose.
Her blooming cheeks, what paints could ever draw 'em,
That paint for which no mortal ever saw 'em;
Air without shape, of royal race divine,
'Tis Emily!—oh fie! 'tis Caroline!'

At the coronation of George III. she appeared covered with all the diamonds she could hire or borrow. She died in 1784, and was buried at Kensington.

Digitized by Microsoft®

day holy in taverns and houses of ill-fame, both of which abound in this capital.

I was shown into a room full of people, thirty at least, among which it was easy to distinguish the hostess by the air of welcome she assumed when I was announced. She told me she had seen me at Court, and without knowing who I was, had felt a desire to become acquainted with me. She was then about forty years old, but was still beautiful; she was a leader of society, and renowned for her many gallantries. She introduced me to her husband and to her four daughters, all grown up, and all charming. She asked why I had come to London at the time of year when every one was leaving it for the country?

I told her that I always acted on impulse, and could give her no better answer; but I intended to remain a year in England. I ventured to hope that what was deferred was not necessarily lost.

Lady Harrington's reception.

My answer seemed to please her, for it was English in its independence; and she kindly told me I could count on her doing everything she could to make my sojourn agreeable. 'You must begin with seeing all the nobility at Madam Cornelys's, in Soho Square,' she said; 'there is a reception there on Thursday. I can give you a ticket for the ball and supper; here it is; it costs a mere two guineas.'

I gave her the money, and she wrote across the ticket, '*Paid. Harrington.*'

'Is this formality indispensable, my lady?'

'Yes, or you would be asked to pay at the door.'

I took care not to tell her I had just come from Soho Square; and while she was arranging a whist table, she asked me if I had introductions to any other ladies.

'One, of a rather singular nature, which I intend to present to-morrow; it is the portrait of the person herself.'

'Can I see it?'

'Certainly; here it is.' I showed her the miniature Lord Percy had given me.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Why, it is the Duchess of Northumberland. She is here this afternoon; over there, in pink with curling hair. Let us go and give it her.'

She led me across the room.

'Dear Duchess,' she said, 'here is a gentleman who has a letter for you.'

'Ah, yes; it is Monsieur de Seingalt. I am delighted to see you, chevalier; my son has written to me about you. I hope you will come and see me; I receive three times a week.'

'Then I will do myself the honour of handing the precious letter to you at your own house.'

Lady Harrington's piece of advice.

We played whist for small stakes, and I lost fifteen guineas. Lady Harrington drew me to one side and gave me a little lesson, which I think worthy of being repeated here.

'You lost,' she said, 'and you paid your losses in gold. I suppose you had no bank notes.'

'Pardon me, my lady; I have one of fifty and one of a hundred pounds.'

'You should have changed one, then, or paid some other day. It is considered a mark of bad breeding here to pay in *sounding* money. In a foreigner, of course, it is excusable, but don't let it happen again. You saw the lady smile when you gave her your guineas.'

'Yes; who is she?'

'Lady Coventry,[1] the sister of the Duchess of Hamilton.'

'Ought I to offer her my excuses?'

[1] One of the beautiful Miss Gunnings, married to Lord Coventry. Walpole says of her that her genius was not equal to her beauty. On several occasions she was mobbed. Once in Hyde Park the crowd became so pressing, that she had to be guarded by an officer and twelve sergeants in front and twelve behind, her husband on one side of her and Lord Pembroke on the other. A shoemaker at Worcester made two guineas and a half by showing a shoe he was making for her at a penny a head. Lord Coventry would not allow her to paint or powder. Once at a dinner he suspected her of having rouged, and chased her round the table till he caught her and scrubbed her cheeks with a napkin.

The Duke of Cumberland was an admirer of hers, and she was supposed to

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No; the offence is not of such a serious nature as that. She may have been surprised, but not offended, for she is the gainer by fifteen shillings.'

This little bit of provincialism on my part was vexatious, for Lady Coventry was a piquante brunette. However, I soon forgot my vexation.

I dined in my own house next day, and was well pleased with my English cook, who knew how to serve French *plats* as well as the usual English ones, and sent me up 'poulardes,' 'fricandeaux,' 'ragoûts,' and, above all, the good French soup, which of itself is enough to do a nation honour, had it no other claim.

He is lonely.

But I was ill-content. I was alone, and nature had not made me for a hermit. I had neither mistress nor friend. In London one can invite a chance acquaintance to dine at a tavern, where each pays his share, but not to one's own house. I remember a younger son of the Duke of Beaufort's asking me one day to have some oysters with him. He ordered the oysters and a bottle of champagne; but when we had a second one, he made me pay half its price. This is the style across the Channel!

Everybody laughed at me when I said I ate at home because they did not give me any soup at the taverns.

'But are you ill?' they said; 'broth is only for invalids!' The Englishman is carnivorous; he eats hardly any bread, and thinks himself economical because he orders neither soup nor dessert. So, to my mind, an English dinner has no beginning and no end.

have had a passion for Lord Bolingbroke. Walpole alludes to these two as 'Billy and Bully.'

When asked by King George some question about masquerades, she replied that there was 'only one sight she wished to see, and that was a coronation!' She died at the age of twenty-seven, Walpole says from the quantity of white lead she put on her face, which checked perspiration. She was very proud of her looks, and could not bear to be seen in her last illness. Towards the end she would have no light in her room, and only took things handed through the closed curtains of her bed.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Soup is considered a great expense, because even the servants will not eat the meat it is made from; they call it fit to be thrown to the dogs. I must admit that the salt beef which takes the place of the French *bouilli*[1] is excellent. I cannot say as much for the beer, which I could not use myself; it is bitter and undrinkable. As *vin ordinaire*, the English drink a Portuguese variety, a kind of sweet piquette that gave me a stomachache. My wine merchant supplied me with excellent French wines, very pure, but very dear.

I went with Martinelli to the British Museum, where I met Dr. Mati,[2] and in the evening to Drury Lane Theatre, where I was given a sample of the somewhat boisterous manners of this insular population. I forget the name of the piece announced for that evening, but for some reason it was impossible to give it. The celebrated actor, Garrick,[3] who twenty years later was buried at Westminster, came forward to explain matters to the public, but he could not calm them. They pelted him with apples and dirt. There was a cry of 'Clear the theatre.' The king, the queen, and the respectable portion of the audience made off in a hurry; in less than an hour

A riot at Drury Lane.

[1] Apropos of Casanova's remark about servants refusing to eat *bouilli*, it is amusing to note that while English servants have a contempt for soup, they will eat mutton broth, whereas French servants will eat soup of all kinds except that made from mutton, which they declare only fit to throw away.

[2] Dr. Maty was head of the British Museum at this time.

[3] This account of the riot at Drury Lane is entirely erroneous. What really happened was this. On the 25th of June 1763 Garrick produced the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. A certain Fitzpatrick put himself at the head of a set of young men known as 'the Town,' and demanded in their name admission at half-price after the third act. A riot followed and was renewed the next day, the audience shouting, 'No prologue till Mr. Garrick comes in, off! off!' Garrick appeared and bowed, but was not allowed to speak. The benches were torn up, sconces broken, and actors pelted. Moody (not Garrick) was ordered to go down on his knees and apologise, his crime being that he had forcibly prevented a man from setting fire to the house. He refused, and was supported by Garrick, who, however, was compelled to promise that Moody should not appear so long as he was under the displeasure of the audience. Garrick had to agree to the proposition of half-price admission, an exception being made for new pantomimes.

Digitized by Microsoft®

everything inside the building was wrecked, only the four walls were left standing. The sovereign people destroyed everything it could lay hands on, just to show its sovereign power; then, satisfied with its work, went off to swill beer and gin.

About a fortnight later, when the theatre was reopened, Garrick appeared before the curtain to beg the indulgence of the spectators. Before he could utter a word, a voice from the pit cried out, 'On your knees!' A thousand voices took up the cry, 'On your knees,' and the Roscius of England was obliged to ask pardon, in this humiliating position, of the scum of the London slums. Thunders of applause told him the pardon was granted, and there was an end of the matter. The English people are like this, and, above all, the people of London; they scoff and hoot at king, queen, and princes when the fancy takes them; and for this very reason royal personages are careful not to show themselves, except on great occasions and surrounded by hundreds of constables.

I was walking in St. James's Park one day with Lord Augustus Hervey when we met a gentleman, who stopped us and remained talking to Hervey for some minutes. I asked him who it was.

'That is the brother of Lord Ferrers,'[1] he said, 'who had his head cut off about a couple of months ago for killing one of his servants.'

'And you speak to him?'

[1] Laurence Shirley, fourth Earl Ferrers (1720-1760), murdered John Johnson, his steward. In 1758 Lady Ferrers had obtained a separation on account of cruelty, and the Ferrers' estates were vested in trustees, Johnson being appointed receiver of the rents. Ferrers failed in an attempt to evict Johnson from a farm to which the trustees had appointed him, and in 1760 deliberately shot the steward, having previously locked the door of the room in which they were. Ferrers was tried by his peers in February, and unanimously condemned to death. He was hanged at Tyburn, and is said to have been the first sufferer executed by the drop instead of the old cart or ladder. He demanded to be hanged with a silken rope, and provided one for the purpose, but the hempen one was used. The silken rope is said to have passed into the hands of a member of the Humane Society who made a collection of such things.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Why not?'

'Isn't he disgraced by the shameful death of his relation?'

Sir Augustus Hervey on the crime of Lord Ferrers.

'Disgraced! What an idea! Lord Ferrers himself was not *disgraced*. He violated the law, and he has paid for it with his life, so he owes society nothing. He was an honourable man who played a high game and lost. I do not know if, according to our constitution, there be any punishment which is disgraceful. I am free to break the law if I am disposed to suffer the penalty. It sounds absurd, I own, but it is a thing we are very particular about, for we are free to choose. We do consider it disgraceful if the criminal, to escape his chastisement, does anything cowardly or mean, or unworthy of a gentleman.'

'As, for instance?'

'Beg the king to forgive him, or ask pardon of the people?'

'Or run away?'

'No; to run away takes a good deal of courage, for it is a further transgression of the law. A man must have physical and moral courage to conceive the plan of flight. Your escape from the tyranny of your magistrates does you honour; your escape from 'The Leads' was an act of virtue.'

A disquisition on highway robbery.

'What is your opinion of highway robbers?'

'I detest them, for they are dangerous to society; but I pity them when I think that they must always have the fear of the gallows present to their minds. Supposing,' he continued, 'you took a coach to visit a friend some three or four miles out of London, and suddenly a man jumped on the step of the carriage, and putting a pistol to your breast demanded your money or your life, what would you do?'

'If I had a pistol handy, I would blow out his brains; if not, I would hand him my purse, and tell him he was an infamous assassin.'

'You would be wrong in both cases. If you killed him, you would be hanged, for no one has the right to take the life of an Englishman. If you called him an infamous assassin, he would tell you you were a liar, for he had given

Digitized by Microsoft®

you a chance of defending yourself by attacking you in front. But, as you handed him your purse, you might gently remonstrate with him on his villainous calling, and he would probably agree with you, and tell you that he meant to change it as soon as possible. He would then thank you, and advise you in future not to travel outside of London without a mounted manservant. We English are aware of the existence of these vermin; and when we travel we take two purses with us—a little one for the robbers, and another for ourselves.'

Lord Augustus then spoke of an unfortunate man who, after embezzling seventy thousand pounds on the Stock Exchange, had taken refuge in France, where he thought himself safe; but the king had demanded his extradition, and Louis Quinze had accorded it, in order to curry favour with England, and the poor wretch was hanged.

'Without doubt,' said I, 'England has recovered the seventy thousand pounds?'

'Not a shilling, as no money was found on his person. He had probably handed the treasure over to his wife, who is living at her ease, and will, perhaps, marry again, for she is young and pretty.'

'And she has not been interfered with?'

'No; what good would it do? It is not likely she will admit that her husband has given her the money. The law directs that thieves shall be hanged, but it says nothing about the proceeds of their theft. If we began to make distinctions between those who return what they have stolen and those who do not, we should have to make two laws and two penalties, besides going into the mode of restitution. It seems to us Englishmen that one punishment suffices for one crime—the gallows is enough. The thief becomes the owner of what he has taken, by violence it is true, but that does not prevent him from disposing of it as he likes. This being so, it behoves us to carefully keep what we have got; if we let ourselves be robbed, so much the worse for us. I took Havana from Spain—it was robbery under arms—and it will be given

Sir Augustus on Havana.

Digitized by Microsoft®

back, for I could not put Cuba in my pocket as I put forty million piastres for the benefit of my Government, and which have never been spoken of again.'

He was a philosopher, and a faithful British subject!

Then we went on to the Duchess of Northumberland's, where I met the Lady Rochefort, whose husband had just been appointed ambassador to Spain. This lady was one of the three celebrated women, the chronicle of whose gallantries yielded fresh matter daily to the gossips of the great metropolis.

The night before the assembly in Soho Square, I dined with Martinelli, and he spoke of Madam Cornelys, who, he said, was so heavily in debt that she only dared go out on a Sunday—the one day in the week when creditors have no right to arrest their debtors.

'Her needless extravagance,' he said, 'keeps her in continual distress, and sooner or later she will find herself at bay. She owes four times more than she is worth, including her house, the possession of which is doubtful, as there is a law-suit about it.'

I was sorry to hear this for her children's sake; but as far as she was concerned, I thought she had only her deserts.

The assembly at Madam Cornelys.

I went in my finest clothes to the assembly, and the secretary, who sat at the entrance, took my ticket and wrote down my name. As soon as Madam Cornelys caught sight of me, she came forward to welcome me, saying how delighted she was to see that I had come in with a ticket.

'You might have known I should not come on any other terms,' I said; 'and also, that having the *entrée* to the Court, it was only necessary for me to pay my two guineas. I only regret, for the sake of our old friendship, that I did not pay them to you personally, for you must have known that I never should have accepted the inferior position you offered me.'

This speech embarrassed her, but Lady Harrington, who was one of her principal patronesses, came to her assistance.

'My dear Cornelys,' she said, 'I have a great many guineas

Digitized by Microsoft®

to hand over to you, among them two from M. de Seingalt, who, I fancy, is an old acquaintance of yours. I did not dare to ask him about it, though,' she added, glancing mischievously at me.

'Why not, my lady? I have had the honour of knowing Madam Cornelys for many years.'

'I can quite believe it,' she said, laughing, 'and I congratulate both of you. I suppose, chevalier, that you also know the amiable Miss Sophie?'

'Naturally, who knows the mother must know the daughter.'

'Yes, yes, I understand.'

Sophie was standing by, and Lady Harrington, after embracing her affectionately, said: 'If you love yourself, you must love her, for she is your very image.'

'One of the little tricks nature plays on us,' I said.

'Certainly, but you must own she has managed it very well this time.'

So saying, she took my arm, and holding Sophie by the hand, she led us through the crowd, and I had to endure a thousand questions from people I had never seen.

'Why, here is the husband of Madam Cornelys.'

'Here comes Mr. Cornelys!'

'This must be Mr. Cornelys!'

'No, no, no,' laughed Lady Harrington continually.

It began to annoy me, for the cause of this persecution was the likeness between the child and myself. I asked my lady to let Sophie go back to her mother, but she was too much amused to listen to me.

'Stay by me,' she insisted, 'and I will tell you who everybody is.'

We sat down, and by and by up came La Cornelys to pay her court. Every one turned to her and repeated the questions which had annoyed me so much.

She took her stand very boldly, declaring that I was her oldest and her best friend, and that it was not without reason that her daughter resembled me. Then, when the laughter had

Digitized by Microsoft®

somewhat died away, and doubtless to change the subject, she said that Sophy had been learning the minuet and danced it to perfection.

'Come, then,' said Lady Harrington, 'send for a violin, and let us admire the pretty little virtuosa.'

Sophie and her father dance a minuet together.

We were in a private sitting-room, and the ball had not yet begun, so, as soon as the violin apoeared, I took the child by the hand, and we danced the minuet, to the admiration of the beholders.

The ball lasted all night; people went in troops to eat and drink at all hours; there was a most princely waste and profusion. I made the acquaintance of all the nobility and all the royal family, which was there in full force, with the exception of the king and queen and the Prince of Wales. La Cornelys must have taken more than twelve hundred guineas, but the outlay was enormous; there was no saving, and not even the most ordinary precautions taken against theft. She insisted on presenting her son to every one, but the poor boy could only make the lowest bows, which looks ridiculous in England. I felt really sorry for him. I was so tired when I got home that I spent the whole day in bed.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLI

THE LODGER

LORD PEMBROKE[1] had advised me to dine at the Star Tavern, if I wanted to see the prettiest women in London; so relying on his recommendation I went there. The landlord came and talked to me in French, and I was much impressed by his gravity and circumspection, and said I thought Lord Pembroke had misled me when he had told me that a pleasant *convive* was included in the *menu*.

English customs.

[1] Henry Herbert, tenth Earl of Pembroke, and seventh of Montgomery (1734-1794), eldest son of Henry, ninth earl, by Mary, eldest daughter of Richard, Viscount Fitzwilliam, in the peerage of Ireland. Was appointed cornet in his father's regiment of dragoon guards, 1752. On the formation of Elliott's Light Horse (now 15th Hussars) Herbert was appointed lieutenant-colonel. He took the regiment out to Germany in 1760, but appears to have had no share in the brilliant achievements of the regiment. He commanded the cavalry brigade under Lord Granby in 1760-1761. Returning to England he resumed his court duties as Lord of the Bedchamber to George II., and in 1762 published his *Method of Breaking Horses*, on which is based the system since generally adopted in the British cavalry. In 1762 he caused a great scandal by throwing up his place at court and eloping, in a packet-boat, with the daughter of Charles Ormsby Hunter, a Lord of the Admiralty (v. *Walpole's Letters*). He afterwards returned to his wife, and Miss Hunter, who had a child by him, it is said, married Sir Alured Clarke. Lord Pembroke was restored to favour at court, and in January 1779 he entertained George the Third and Queen Charlotte with great splendour at Wilton House. He was eventually made Governor of Portsmouth, and died in 1794. 'I almost wish I could stop here, and not relate the cruel story I am going to tell you. Lord Pembroke, Lord of the Bedchamber, Major-General, owner of Wilton House, husband of one of the most beautiful creatures in England, father of one son, himself only twenty-eight, is gone off with Miss Hunter, a handsome girl with a fine person, but silly, and in no degree lovely as his own wife.'—*Walpole to Sir Horace Mann.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Not at all, sir,' said he; 'if you want somebody to dine with you you have only to say so.'

He called to the waiter, and told him to go and fetch a girl, exactly as though he was telling him to fetch a bottle of champagne.

The man went off, and returned in a few minutes with a young person whose appearance did not please me.

'Give her a shilling, then, and send her about her business. We don't stand on ceremony here in London.'

I gave her a shilling. The next was worse, and I dismissed her too, and ten others who came after her. The landlord was much amused at my fastidiousness.

'Don't bring any more,' I cried at last; 'I will dine by myself,' which I did; and afterwards went for a walk in Saint James's Park, and thence alone in a carriage to Ranelagh. It was the first time I had been to that place of amusement. I had tea in the rotunda, and danced several minuets, but made no acquaintances, though I saw many pretty women.

A meeting at Ranelagh.

As I had not paid my coach, I expected to find it waiting for me, but it had gone. I was looking about in some embarrassment, when a very handsome woman, who was standing in the doorway, spoke to me in French, and said, that if I did not live too far from Whitehall she would set me down at my door. While I was thanking her, her coach came up; a footman opened the door, she got in and invited me to take a place by her side. As soon as we were alone, I told her my name, and told her how I regretted not having seen her at the assembly in Soho Square.

'I was not in London,' she said; 'I only returned from Bath to-day.'

I expressed my pleasure at having met her, and kissed her hand passionately. As she did not withdraw it, I kissed her cheek, and found no resistance, only gentleness and yielding smiles. I grew still bolder, and still she was not offended. Flattering myself that I was not displeasing to her, I begged her to tell me when I might hope to see her

Digitized by Microsoft®

again, that I might pay my homage to her while I was in London. She would only say, 'We shall meet again; be discreet.' I vowed discretion, and kissed her hand once more; the carriage stopped at my own door, and I got out; after kissing her hand again. I did not meet her for some time; but going one day to call on Lady Betty Germaine, a clever, famous old woman, I saw the unknown fair one of Ranelagh seated in the drawing-room reading the paper. As I had never even met Lady Betty, but came with an introduction from Lady Harrington, I thought I would ask my fair friend to introduce me. She looked at me calmly, and said, in the politest way conceivable, that she was very sorry, but that she could not introduce a person whom she herself had not the honour of knowing.

'But I have told you my name, madame; do you not remember me?'

'I remember you perfectly, but a mere passing madness does not entitle you to claim acquaintance with me.'

A snub at Lady Betty Germaine's.

My arms fell to my sides. She did not say another word, but went on quietly reading her gazette till Lady Betty appeared, when she joined in our conversation, and talked to me for two hours on all manner of subjects.

She was a lady of high rank, well known and highly esteemed in London society.

I asked Martinelli one day who the pretty person was who continually kissed her hand to me from a window opposite my house, and I was greatly surprised to hear it was the dancer, Madame Binetti, who rendered me such signal service when I escaped from Stuttgart. I had not known she was in London. She had an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre, and was not living with her husband, though he appeared on the stage with her nightly. She told me that one reason for this separation was that he was a gambler, but another and more important reason was that no woman living with her husband could hope to attract a rich admirer, because, by virtue of the English law, a husband could arrest and imprison his wife's

La Binetti, who saved his life at Stuttgart.

Digitized by Microsoft®

lover if he found him with her, and that the lover thus arrested would be condemned to pay the half of his fortune to her husband. I left the poor woman, giving her my address, and asking her to dine with me any night she liked, if only she gave me notice beforehand.

Lord Pembroke came to see me one day, and after visiting my house and my kitchen, where the *chef* was preparing my dinner, paid me the compliment of saying, that there was no peer of the realm, except those who lived all the year round in London, who had such a well-organised establishment. He made a rough calculation, and concluded that I must spend at least three hundred pounds a month.

Gossip with Lord Pembroke.

'I am a bachelor,' he said, 'and I spend four times as much as you do, for I never take a meal at home. I am surprised at you being able to eat alone as you do.'

'I don't speak English, and I like soup and good wine. That is enough to make me flee from your taverns.'

'I can understand your doing so, given your French tastes.'

'You must own French taste is not bad.'

'I agree with you, and, good Briton though I am, I get on very nicely in Paris.'

He roared with laughter when I told him about the Star Tavern.

'I ought to have given you the names of my friends. Promise to be as generous as I am, and I will write them down.'

He wrote down several names, putting four and six guineas after them; one only he marked at twelve.

'She is twice as beautiful as the others, I suppose,' I said.

'No, but in entertaining her, you make a fool of a duke, and 'tis an honour which must be paid for.'

Pembroke was young, handsome, rich and witty. We were going out together one evening, when he called to his valet to shave him first.

'But,' I said, 'you have not a sign of hair on your face.'

Lord Pembroke's ablutions.

'You will never see such a sign, my friend, I am shaved three times a day. When I change my shirt I wash my

Digitized by Microsoft®

hands; when I wash my hands I wash my face, and a man's face can only be washed with a razor.'

'At what hour do you make these three ablutions?'

'When I get up, when I dress for dinner, or for the opera, and when I go to bed.'

I asked Pembroke to dine with me that day, and take 'pot luck,' though I privately sent word to my cook to treat us well. We had not been home half an hour when La Binetti appeared. On seeing Pembroke she made an exclamation, and I learned that he had been making love to her for six months, writing the most passionate letters, without getting any reply.

'I would never listen to him,' she said, 'because he is the greatest libertine in all England, and it is a pity, for he is the pleasantest creature!'

This explanation preceded an exchange of kisses, and I saw how it would end.

We had an excellent French dinner, and Pembroke swore he had not fared so well for over a year. When, at six o'clock, my guests left me, I dressed and went to Vauxhall, where I met Malingan, a French officer I had known at Aix-la-Chapelle, and the Chevalier Goudar, a well-known person who talked gallantry and play to me. Malingan presented me to Frederick, son of Theodore, the pretended King of Corsica, who fourteen years previously had died miserably in London, a month after his release from gaol, where his inhuman creditors had kept him for seven years. I could have wished I had stayed away from Vauxhall that day! The entrance fee to Vauxhall was just half what it was to Ranelagh, but in spite of that it was quite as amusing: the pleasures were most varied, excellent food, music, dark and solitary walks, or alleys lighted with coloured lanterns, not to speak of all the beauties of London, from the highest to the lowest class, promenading up and down. In spite of all this I was bored, for I was alone, and had no one to share my home and my table, and this though I had been six weeks in London! Such a thing had

First meeting with Goudar.

Digitized by Microsoft®

never befallen me before. How was I to find in that great city a woman to my mind, and who would resemble, in character at least, some one of those whom I had so tenderly loved? As I was turning all this over in my mind, an extraordinary idea occurred to me.

I called my old housekeeper, and told her I wanted to let the second or third story of my house, for the sake of having a companion, and that, though she was my servant, I would give her half a guinea a week for the extra trouble. She was to put up the following notice in the window:—

He advertises for a companion.

'Second or third story to be let furnished, cheap, to a young lady, alone, without encumbrances, speaking English and French, and receiving no visitors.'

The old woman, who knew a thing or two, and had not been a saint in her youth, was like to choke with laughter.

'What are you laughing at, my good woman? Do you think no one will take the rooms?'

'The other way round. I shall have a crowd here from morning to night, but Fanny can attend to them. Just tell me how much I am to ask?'

'I will settle that with the young woman herself. There will not be so very many, as I say, "*speaking English and French.*" Furthermore, my lodger must be young and respectable, as I will have no visitors, not even her father and mother.'

'But there will be always a crowd round the door to read the notice.'

'That does not matter; a little singularity does no harm.'

As the old housekeeper had foreseen, as soon as the notice was up, every one stopped to read and comment on it. The second day, my negro servant, Jarbe, told me my notice had been reproduced in the *St. James's Chronicle*[1] with satirical comments. I sent for the paper, and Fanny translated it to me as follows:—

'The owner of the second and third floors probably

[1] Careful search has failed to discover any allusion to Casanova's placard in the journal mentioned.

Digitized by Microsoft®

occupies the first himself. He must be a man of pleasure and taste, for he desires a young lodger, alone and without encumbrances. As she is to receive no visitors, it is to be supposed he means to keep her company. It is to be feared, however, that the landlord gets the worst of the bargain, as the young lady may only take the rooms to sleep in, or to go to from time to time; it is even possible that she may refuse to receive her landlord.'

English news-sheets are the most entertaining things in the world. Everything that goes on is freely discussed. The journalists here have a knack of making the simplest things interesting. Happy the people in whose country one can say everything and write everything!

Lord Pembroke was the first to compliment me on my idea. Martinelli was not so enthusiastic about it; he was afraid it might turn out badly. There were a great many very clever girls in London, he said, who would try to get a hold over me.

I will not describe the hundred and one young women who presented themselves during the first ten days, to all of whom I refused to let, on some pretext or other, though many of them were not lacking in grace and beauty.

First appearance of Miss Pauline.

On the eleventh day, as I was sitting down to dinner, a young woman, of from twenty to twenty-four years old, presented herself. She was above the average height, dressed without pretension, but tastefully and decently. Her face was proud, gentle, and serious; her features regular; her complexion pale; and her beautiful hair jet black.

She made me a respectful courtesy, and as I rose to return her salutation, begged me to be seated and to continue my dinner in a manner and tone which showed she was accustomed to good society. I offered her a chair and pressed her to partake of some preserves which were on the table, but she refused them in a way which was absolutely charming. She spoke, at first, in good French, which she afterwards changed to perfect Italian, without the slightest accent. She would like to rent the room on the third story, she said, and hoped I would

Digitized by Microsoft®

accept her as a lodger, as she was ready to fulfil all my conditions.

'You are at liberty to use only one room, if it suits you, mademoiselle,' I said, 'but the whole floor is at your disposition.'

'The whole floor would be too expensive for me,' she answered, 'for though in your advertisement you say the rent is cheap, I can only afford two shillings a week for my lodging.'

'That is precisely what I ask for the apartments. So you see we shall not fall out on that point. My maid will wait on you, and buy your provisions for you; she will also wash your linen for you and run your errands.'

Pauline bargains.

'In that case, I can dismiss my servant,' she said, 'and I shall be glad to do so, for she robs me—not seriously, it is true, but more than befits my purse. I will tell yours what I can spend on my food, and I will give her sixpence a week for her trouble.'

'She will be very pleased, but you had better make an arrangement with my cook's wife, who is a very respectable woman, and who could give you your dinner and supper for less than you could have it sent in for.'

'I hardly think so, for I am ashamed to tell you how little I have to spend.'

'If you only wish to spend a penny a day, I will tell her to give you a pennyworth; at the same time I advise you to take what she sends up from the kitchen, and not be uneasy about the cost of it, for she has orders always to provide for four persons, though I am generally alone. Whatever you give her will be pure profit to her. I will simply tell her to look after you, and I hope you will not be offended at my doing so.'

'You are very generous, sir, and the whole arrangement is very extraordinary.'

'If you will wait a moment you will see how easily everything can be settled.'

I rang for the maid and the cook's wife.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What would you charge this young lady for her dinner and supper every day? She wishes to live very simply.'

'I would charge her very little, sir, for there is always a great deal left over.'

'I can only afford to spend threepence a day.'

'Very well, miss, I will manage to satisfy you for threepence a day.'

I ordered the placard to be taken down and the room to be arranged as comfortably as possible.

When the servants had withdrawn, the young lady told me she never went out, except on Sunday, when she attended Mass at the Bavarian minister's chapel, and once a month to draw her allowance of three guineas. She begged me never to introduce any one to her, and to tell my servants if any one inquired for her to say they knew no such person. I promised everything, and she left me, saying she would return with her trunk.

Miss Pauline's habits.

The old housekeeper told me she had paid a week in advance, and had gone away in a sedan chair, as she had come. The good old woman thought it necessary to sound a note of warning.

'Nonsense,' said I. 'If I fall in love with her, so much the better. What name did she give you?'

'Miss Pauline. I noticed that she was quite pale when she came, but she has gone away as red as a turkeycock.'

I was filled with joyful anticipations. I wanted some one to care for, some one whose moral qualities should equal her beauty. As for her not caring for me, I must confess, the thought did not disturb me. What woman can resist a man bent on her conquest?

When I came home from the play, the maid told me Miss Pauline had chosen a small dressing-room at the back of the house only fit for a servant; that she had supped moderately, drinking only water, and had begged the cook to send her in future only one dish besides soup.

'What does she take in the morning?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'A little bread.'

'Tell her it is the custom of the house to serve breakfast in each room—coffee, tea, chocolate or broth—and that if she refuses, I shall be greatly hurt. Here is a crown for you; I will give you as much every week if you wait on her well.'

Before going to bed, I wrote her a note, begging her to choose a better room, which she did. She also accepted my offer of coffee. Wishing to persuade her to take her meals with me, I dressed myself carefully, and was on the point of paying her a visit, when young Cornelys was announced. I laughed when he came in, and thanked him for coming to see me for the first time in six weeks.

'Mamma would not let me,' he said, 'though I have tried to slip away twenty times. Read this letter, it will surprise you.'

I opened the letter, which was in his mother's hand.

Madam Cornelys notifies him that she is in the sponging-house.

'Yesterday, a bailiff took the opportunity of my door being open for a moment to force his way in and arrest me. I was obliged to follow him, and am now in a sponging-house. If I do not find bail in the course of the day I shall be taken to King's Bench prison. The bail demanded is two hundred pounds. It is on a note of hand I was not able to meet. My benevolent friend, I wish you would get me out of this place; if not, a crowd of creditors will swoop down on me to-morrow, and I shall be undone. In helping me, you will help my innocent children. As a foreigner, you cannot go bail for me, but you could easily find some householder who would. Come and see me, and I will explain to you, that if I had not signed the note of hand I could not have given the last ball, for all my plate and china were in pawn.'

Exasperated at the woman's impudence in daring to write to me thus, after her neglect of me, I replied that I was sorry for her, but that I had no time to go and see her, and that I should be ashamed to ask any one to go bail for her. The boy went off very sadly; and I sent Clairmont up to Pauline to ask if she would receive me. She answered in the

Digitized by Microsoft®

affirmative. I noticed several books on her table, and on the chest of drawers a lot of odds and ends which betokened anything but poverty.

He visits his fair lodger.

'I am much obliged to you, sir,' she said, 'for all your kindness.'

'Don't speak of that, madam, I beg you. It is I who hope to be your debtor.'

'What can I do to show my gratitude?'

'Honour me with your company whenever I am alone, for when I am by myself I eat like an ogre, and my health suffers in consequence. If you do not feel inclined to accord me this favour, forgive me for having asked it, and believe me it will in no wise alter your situation in my house.'

'I will do myself the honour of eating with you, sir, whenever you are alone, but I fear I shall be but poor company.'

I left her, with a low bow, not having even sat down, or asked her how she passed the night. I noticed that when I went in she was pale, and when I left her her cheeks were scarlet. I was already in love with her, and determined to do all in my power to make her reciprocate my feeling. I suspected her of being Italian, but I intended to be very cautious and not ask her any questions.

I went for a walk in the park, and when I returned I found Pauline had come down from her room unasked, and was waiting for me; this pleased me much. In reply to a question about her health, she said—

'I have never been ill in my life except at sea. I must own that that element is obnoxious to me.'

'You have travelled by sea?'

'It would be difficult to come to England otherwise.'

'I thought you were English.'

'I am not surprised. I have spoken the language since my earliest youth.'

On the table near the sofa where we sat was a chessboard; as Pauline was fingering the pieces I asked her if she knew the game.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Yes, I play well, so I am told.'

'I play very badly, but let us have a game.'

We began, and in four moves I was checkmated; in the second game I was beaten again, but in the third I was victor.

Dinner was announced, and just as we were sitting down, Clairmont told me that Sophie Cornelys and Mrs. Rancour wanted to see me.

'Say that I am at dinner, and shall not leave the table for three hours,' but before Clairmont could take the message little Sophie ran in and flung herself on her knees before me, crying and sobbing bitterly.

I lifted her up and put her on my knee, telling her I knew what her errand was, and that for her sake I would do what she had come to ask me. The child at once passed from tears to smiles, kissing and embracing me and calling me her dear father in a way which made me weep in my turn. She then ran to kiss Pauline, who was crying too. I bid her sit down and dine with us, which she agreed to do, if I would order some dinner for Rancour.

Sophie obtains what her mother could not obtain.

'She doesn't deserve any,' I said; 'she ought to be punished for the way she has behaved to me ever since my arrival in England; however, to please you, she shall be served.'

The child entertained us throughout dinner in the most extraordinary way; she talked like a young person of twenty, speaking severely, though respectfully, of her mother's conduct.

'At La Haye,' she said, 'mamma always said you were my father, now she tells me I am the daughter of M. de Montpernis.'

'She is wrong, my dear Sophie; you are no bastard, but the child of your mother's husband, Pompéati, the dancer, who died at Vienna when you were a baby.'

'If you are not my father, how is it I am exactly like you?'

She then asked if Pauline was my wife, and on my answering yes, she addressed her as her dear mamma, which made us both laugh heartily.

At dessert I took from my pocket-book four fifty-pound

Digitized by Microsoft®

notes, and gave them to Sophie, telling her she could do what she liked with them, but that they were a present to her, not to her mother.

'Write to her and say you give them to me, for I dare not tell her so myself.'

'I cannot do that, my child. It would be insulting her when she is in trouble, but tell her that whenever she will send you to dine or sup with me she will please me greatly.'

After she left us, Pauline told me she had not laughed so heartily for a long time. I explained to her who the child was, and the reasons I had for despising the mother.

'I wonder what she will say when Sophie tells her you were at table with your wife.'

'She will not believe it, for she knows that marriage is a sacrament I abhor, because it is the tomb of love.'

Marriage the tomb of love.

'Not always,' said Pauline with a sigh; and then changing the conversation she asked how long I intended to stay in London. I told her nine or ten months, and then put the same question to her.

'I do not know. My return to my country depends upon a certain letter.'

'Dare I ask the name of your country?'

'I foresee that I shall end by confiding in you absolutely, but for the present I beg of you not to ask me anything.'

Soon after this she retired to her own apartment, leaving me more than ever convinced that she was used to the best society.

Pembroke came to breakfast the next morning.

'I should like to make your lodger's acquaintance,' he said. 'I see the notice-board has disappeared.'

'I am sorry that I cannot gratify your curiosity,' I answered. 'My lodger is a hermit, and only suffers me because she must.'

He laughed, and asked me if I dined at home that day.

'Not to-day.'

'I understand; well, good-bye and good luck.'

There were three or four more skits on my advertisement in

Digitized by Microsoft®

the *Advertizer*, mostly of an indecent nature, for it must be admitted that the right to say anything and everything in London is much abused. On Sunday I went to Mass at the Bavarian minister's with Martinelli. The chapel was crowded, and he pointed out to me many lords and ladies and other great personages who were Catholics, and did not conceal the fact. I looked for Miss Pauline, but did not see her. On returning to my house, I found a note from La Cornelys, in which she told me she was free to go out on Sundays, and asked me if I would ask her to dinner. She came, bringing Sophie with her, and talked a great deal of her gratitude, and of various chimerical plans for making a fortune in the shortest possible time.

Sophie was the life and soul of the dinner. Her mother left her with us, and in the evening she and Pauline sang duets in English, French, and Italian. My state of mind about the tall girl, Pauline, was calculated to bring about an immediate explosion and declaration, yet I had not so much as kissed her hand.

He tells his love to Miss Pauline.

'Are you married, dear Pauline?' I asked her one evening.

'Yes.'

'Do you know what maternal love is?'

'No, though I can easily imagine it.'

'Are you separated from your husband?'

'Yes; he is far away, but do not let us speak of it.'

'Tell me this: when I lose you, will it be to rejoin him?'

'Yes, and I promise you that I will not leave you till I leave England; when I go away from this happy island it will be to be happy with the man of my choice.'

'And I shall remain behind, poor miserable me! for I love you, Pauline, though I dare not show my love for fear of displeasing you.'

'Be generous, be calm, I am not free to listen to you—and perhaps I should not have the strength to resist you, and I beg you to spare me. Besides, remember we may be obliged to part to-morrow, and our separation would be all the more painful.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I must give way before your irresistible dialectics, beautiful Pauline. Will you let me see with what books you feed your sublime mind?'

MissPauline's library.

'Certainly, but you will be disappointed.'

She showed me Milton in English; Ariosto in Italian; the *Caractères* of La Bruyère in French; the rest of her library was in Portuguese.

'These give me a high idea of your taste,' I said; 'but will you tell me why this preference for Camoëns and his compatriots?'

'For a very sufficient reason. I am Portuguese.'

'You are Portuguese! I thought you were Italian! At your age, then, you speak five languages, for you must know Spanish?'

'Yes, though it is not absolutely indispensable for a Portuguese to speak Spanish.'

'Tell me who you are; tell me everything. I deserve, and will continue to deserve your confidence.'

'I believe you, and I will tell you all without fear or without restraint. As you love me, you could not wish to injure me.'

'What are all these manuscripts?'

'My history, which I have written down. Come, I will read it to you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLII

THE STORY OF THE FAIR PORTUGUESE[1]

I AM the only daughter of the unfortunate Count de X——mo, whom Carvalho Œyras, the Marquis de Pombal,[2] imprisoned for attempting the life of the king, and who died in prison. The attempted assassination was attributed to the Jesuits. I do not know if my father was guilty of participation in it, or if he was the innocent victim of private revenge, but I know that the tyrannical minister never dared

[1] The identification of the fair Portuguese presents certain difficulties, owing to Casanova's unusual discretion in altering names. No such name as X——mo figures among those of the conspirators against the life of Joseph I. King of Portugal, put to death, some of them, by the ferocious Œyras, while others lost their lands and possessions. These were the Duke of Aveiro, the Count of Atonguia, the Marquis and Marchioness of Tavora, and various members of that noble family. Pauline expressly says that her father was only imprisoned, not executed, nor was his wealth confiscated, or else we should be inclined to connect her with the Duchess of Aveiro, whose two daughters were shut up in a convent, with strict orders that they were both to take the veil, an order which was not enforced. But supposing Pauline's father to have been one of the race of Tavora implicated in the treason of the more prominent members of the family, there was a certain Dona Joanna of Tavora, born in 1747, so her age at the time of Casanova's London visit would have been sixteen, not eighteen, the age admitted to by Pauline. There was also a niece of the attainted marquis, daughter of Nuno Gaspar de Tavora, who was certainly not executed, but neither did he 'die in prison,' as Pauline says her father did, but received his freedom in 1777 through Queen Maria I. This lady married Pombal's second son, Count Redinha. This latter hypothesis would explain her omission to correspond with her English lover. 'Considerable shock,' says a courteous informant of Pauline's own nationality, 'was given by Casanova's attractive novel about the Portuguese lady.' This must have been when the fair heroine of it was grey-haired and old.

[2] Sebastian Joseph de Carvalho et Mélo, Count d'Œyras, secretary of state, prime minister to Joseph I., King of Portugal.

Digitized by Microsoft®

bring him to trial, nor confiscate his wealth, of which I am now the possessor, though I cannot enjoy it except in my own country. My mother had been educated in a convent, of which her sister was the abbess, and where I had lessons from all sorts of masters; amongst others a learned Italian, who taught me all I know.

I was eighteen when my grandfather took me away from the convent. I should have preferred to remain there until my marriage, for I loved my aunt, the abbess.

My grandfather placed me with his sister-in-law, the Marquise de X——mo, who gave up half her house to me. I had a governess, companion, waiting-maids, pages, and servants, who were supposed to be in my service, but were really under the command of the governess, who was of noble family, though happily, for me, an honest and good woman.

The negotiations for Pauline's marriage.

A year later my grandfather told me the Comte de Fl—— had asked me in marriage for his son, who had just returned from Madrid, and that such a marriage would be pleasing to the whole nobility, and would be approved by the king and the royal family.

'But, dear grandpapa, am I sure to please the count?'

'No doubt about it, my child; besides, that is a point you need not take into consideration.'

'But, grandpapa, I must take that point into consideration. We must meet each other.'

'You will meet before the marriage, but that will not affect the conclusion.'

'I sincerely hope so, but we will not be too sure; we will see.'

I told my governess privately, that I was determined not to give my hand where I could not give my heart; or to a man whose character I had not studied. She did not answer, and when I insisted on her giving her opinion, she said that she could not pronounce on such a delicate point; this showed me very plainly she approved of my resolution.

Next day I went to see my aunt, the abbess, who listened

Digitized by Microsoft®

to me kindly; she hoped, she said, that I should like the count, but in any case, the marriage was a settled thing; the Princess of Brazil had suggested it, for the count was a favourite of hers.

In a few days the count was introduced to me in the presence of a large gathering. There was no question of our marriage, but he talked a great deal about the foreign countries he had visited. I spoke little, but listened attentively. As I had but small experience, I could not judge him by comparison, but I felt I could never belong to him. He was a giggling, sneering, presumptuous fribble, stupid, ill-mannered, and devout to fanaticism. He was ugly, ill-made, conceited, and not ashamed to talk of his gallantries in public. I was anything but civil to him, and I hoped that he found me disagreeable. I heard nothing of him for eight days, and I began to breathe freely; then my great-aunt invited me to a dinner-party, where I met the fool and his father, and my grandfather presented the former to me as my future husband, bidding me fix a day for the signing of the contract. I would rather have signed my death sentence! I replied coldly that as soon as I had fixed on a day I would let them know, but that it would not be for some time. The dinner was constrained. I answered only in monosyllables when directly addressed; after coffee I left the room, bowing only to my aunt and grandfather.

Some days went by without my hearing any more of the matter, and then my governess told me Father Freire wanted to see me. He was the confessor of the Princess of Brazil. He was shown in, and after a few desultory remarks said that the princess had charged him to congratulate me on my approaching marriage with the Comte Fl———.

Without betraying the slightest surprise, I said I was grateful for her royal highness's attention, but that nothing was settled as yet, as I had no intention of marrying. The priest, sly as any courtier, answered with a smile, that was half benign half sardonic, that I was of an age when I

Digitized by Microsoft®

had no need to trouble about serious matters, but could leave such things to those who loved me.

I went to see the abbess again. She told me that she had seen the count, and had found him impossible, so that she greatly feared that they would force me into this repugnant union. Her words made such an impression on me, that I then and there conceived the most extraordinary plan. As soon as I got home, I shut myself up in my room, and without consulting any one, or listening to anything but the promptings of my own despair, I wrote to the persecutor of my unfortunate father, the pitiless Œyras. I told him the whole story, and begged him to intercede with the king for me. This much he owed me, I said, as it was he who had made me an orphan ; he was responsible for me before God ! I implored him to shelter me from the displeasure of the Princess of Brazil, and to obtain for me permission to dispose of my hand as I chose.

Pauline appeals to Œyras.

I did not suppose that Œyras had a tender heart, but I imagined he had at least a man's heart, and that I might touch it by my firm language, and by the strangeness of my appeal. He might, I thought, try to be just to me, as a proof that he had been just to my father. I was not mistaken.

Two days later a messenger from Œyras came to me privately. This messenger told me the minister had sent him confidentially, and that I was to reply, as regarded the marriage, that I could decide nothing, until I knew for certain that her royal highness, the Princess of Brazil, approved of it. The minister apologised for not writing ; he had strong reasons for not doing so, he said, but I could count upon him. The bearer then withdrew without waiting for my answer. I must own that the appearance of the young man struck me. I cannot describe the impression he made on me, but it influenced my conduct then, and my whole after life.

The minister must have been certain that the princess

Digitized by Microsoft®

would cease to meddle in the affairs of my marriage, and with an easy mind I allowed myself to dwell on the thoughts which were now uppermost in my imagination. I saw the young man at church, at the theatre, in the public gardens, in the houses where I visited; and whenever I entered my carriage, or left it, he was there to offer me his hand. I became so accustomed to seeing him, and thinking of him, that if by any chance I did not encounter him, I was uneasy, and life seemed a blank.

Œyras's messenger appeals to her imagination.

I often met Comte de Fl—— and his father at my great-aunt's house, but there was no more talk of an alliance between us.

He introduces himself into her apartment in disguise.

One morning I heard a strange voice in my waiting-maid's room, and on going in I saw a quantity of lace spread out on the table; a young girl was standing near it, who made me a deep courtesy. I looked over, and did not care for any of her wares, and she said she would bring me something better next day. I looked at her as she spoke, and was struck by the extraordinary resemblance between her and the youth who was constantly in my thoughts. I could not, however, believe that they were the same. Such boldness seemed improbable; moreover, the girl appeared to me taller. After she had withdrawn, I asked my maid if she knew her; she told me she had never seen her before.

The next morning, at the same hour, she returned with a basket full of laces and blonds. I had her brought into my room, and when I forced her to speak to me, and to look at me, I was no longer in any doubt. I was so much troubled that I could not ask one of the questions I had prepared; besides, my maid was present, and I was afraid of compromising myself. When I had chosen several things, I sent the maid for my purse. As soon as she had left the room the pretended lace-seller fell at my feet, saying passionately—

'My fate is in your hands, madame; you have recognised me.'

'Yes, I have recognised you, and I can only think you are mad.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Yes, I am mad, but it is with love. I adore you.'

'Rise, I entreat you, my maid will be back in a moment.'

'She is in my pay.'

'What! you have dared ——?'

He rose, and the maid coming in at that moment coyly counted him out his money. He collected his scattered pieces of lace, made me a low bow, and went away.

I ought to have dismissed the maid on the spot. I had not the courage; and I persuaded myself that the best thing I could do was to know nothing.

'Fifteen days went by, and during the whole of this time I never once saw the young man. I became dreamy and melancholy, though I blushed to own the cause of my sadness even to myself. I was longing to know his name, but I could only ask it of my maid, and I detested her, and reddened whenever she came into my presence.

This state of things could not last for ever, and one day as I was putting on a blond fichu I had bought from the unknown, I said as nonchalantly as I could—

'What has become of the girl who sold me this?'

My maid was as sly as I was naïve. She answered that she probably had not dared to return for fear I should see through the disguise.

'I did see through the disguise,' I replied; 'but I am surprised to learn that you were aware that it concealed a young man.'

'I did not think it would displease you, madame; I know him personally.'

'Who is he?'

'The Comte d'Al——. You must have recognised him, for you received him in this room about four months ago.'

'May I ask why you lied to me when I asked you if you knew the lace-merchant?'

'I lied, madame, so as not to embarrass you; I thought you would be angry if you knew I was in the secret.'

This explanation, instead of revealing to me the real

Digitized by Microsoft®

culpability of my servant, appeared to me quite satisfactory; besides, I was glad to learn the name and position of my admirer. I knew there was a young Comte d'Al——, of very good birth, but absolutely without fortune. He was, however, a protégé of the minister, and might obtain a place some day. The idea that Heaven might have destined me to supply his needs was very sweet to me, and I spent my time building castles in the air. My family would never permit me to marry him, even if he desired it, which seemed doubtful.

I was in this state when my maid took upon herself to write to him and tell him he could return in his woman's dress.

She came into my room, laughing, one morning.

'Madame,' she said, 'the lace-seller is here; shall I bring her in?'

'You are mad,' said I.

'Shall I send her away?'

'No; I will speak to her myself.'

We had a long conversation, the maid coming and going while we talked. I owned to him frankly that I loved him, but that it was hopeless. He told me the minister was about to send him to England on a mission, but that he should die of despair if he did not carry with him the hope of possessing me one day, for he loved me too much to think of living without me. He begged me to let him continue his visits; and on his promising to be very prudent, I consented.

He was twenty-two years old, rather shorter than I, of a slim, graceful figure, a sweet voice, and little or no beard, so that it was easy for him to pass as a woman. During three months he came to see me three or four times a week, generally in the presence of the maid; but even had he been entirely unrestrained, I am sure he would never have shown me the smallest disrespect, and I believe that this restraint fanned the flame of our passion.

The moment of separation came unexpectedly, and when we were totally unprepared for it. My lover came to me one

Digitized by Microsoft®

morning in tears; the minister had given him a letter addressed to Monsieur de Saa in London; and a frigate which was lying at Ferrol was to take him to England immediately. He was choking with grief, and incapable of putting his ideas together. Thinking only of his grief and my love, I concocted a plan as bold as it was hazardous. I would leave with him disguised as his servant. Upon reflection, however, we concluded that if the weather was rough, I might be tried beyond my strength, and that it would be better for me to go as the master, he as the man; but as I hated the idea of my lover passing as a servant, he finally determined that he should wear woman's clothes and travel as my wife.

She flies with the Comte d'Al——.

'As soon as we get to England,' I said, 'we shall be married, the ceremony will efface the shame of our flight; you will be accused of having run away with me, but a man cannot run away with a girl without her consent, and the Comte d'Œyras will not persecute me for having made his favourite's fortune. In the meantime we can live on the produce of my diamonds; I will take my jewel-case with me.'

After waiting three days we heard that the frigate had left Ferrol, and was waiting at the mouth of the Tagus.

I shut myself up in my room, pretending to be ill, and after having packed a small bag with a few indispensable things and the precious jewel-case, I donned my male attire and left the house by the servants' staircase. No one recognised me, not even the porter, as I crossed the threshold of my palace. The count was waiting for me a hundred yards off. We went first to his rooms, where he quickly transformed himself, and then aboard the ship. It was eleven o'clock when we sailed, and the captain did not appear until midnight. He came up to me with his officers, saying he had orders to treat me with the greatest attention. I introduced my wife, whom he saluted respectfully. He did not seem to think it strange that the minister had not mentioned the fact of the count being a married man.

We had a very commodious cabin, and passed the rest of the

Digitized by Microsoft®

night in congratulating ourselves on having escaped so happily. At daybreak we were out of sight of Lisbon, and, tired out, I flung myself on a bench, while the count climbed into a large hammock. We were awakened from our sleep by the uneasiness which precedes sea-sickness, and for three days and nights we had not a moment of repose. On the fourth we could just stand up, were slightly better, and began to feel the first pangs of hunger.

My lover, who suffered more than I did, was glad of the pretext for not quitting his cabin, and the captain did not come near us once. I spent much of my time on the bridge looking through a telescope. On the seventh day out I had a presentiment of misfortune, when a sailor pointed out a corvette which he said must have left Lisbon a day or two after us, but which being a fine vessel would arrive before we did.

They anchor at Plymouth.

On the fourteenth day we cast anchor in the port of Plymouth, and an officer whom the captain sent ashore to obtain permission to disembark his passengers returned bearing letters, which he read with great attention. He then called me to one side.

'This letter,' he said, 'is from Count Œyras, and he warns me as I value my head not to let a young Portuguese lady leave the ship; I am to take her back to Lisbon. Now there is no woman on board but your wife; prove to me that she is really your wife, and I will allow her to land, otherwise I cannot disobey the minister's orders.'

'She is my wife,' said I with assurance, 'but I have no papers with me to prove it.'

'I am very sorry, then, but she must return to Lisbon with me. But you may be sure she will be treated with all possible respect, according to the minister's orders.'

'But, captain, a wife is inseparable from her husband.'

'Granted, but I must obey my orders. You can return to Lisbon on the corvette; you will be there before we shall.'

'Why can I not return on the frigate?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Because I have imperative orders to land you here. And now I think of it, how was it the minister did not mention your wife when he told me to carry you to England? If madame is not the person he is looking for, she will be sent to join you in London.'

'Will you allow me to speak to her?'

'Yes, but in my presence.'

I went down into the cabin, and calling the count *my dear wife*, I told him what had happened. I was afraid he would betray himself, but he had strength of mind to keep it up, and to answer that there was nothing for us but to submit, and that we should meet again in a couple of months. As I could not speak freely in the presence of the captain, I contented myself with telling him that I would write to the abbess from London, and that she was the first person he must go and see. He had my jewel-case in his pocket, but I did not dare to ask for it, as the magnificent diamonds would have made the captain think he was some rich girl I had betrayed.

Pauline puts up at an inn in the Strand.

We could not fight against our destiny. We embraced each other, weeping, and the captain himself shed tears when he heard me say: 'I commend your honour and mine to the kind captain, and let us trust in one another's constancy.'

His trunk was put in a boat. I did not dare take my bag, and I was landed with nothing but a man's wardrobe, the contents of which were displayed at the custom-house. I had some books, papers, letters, linen, some clothes, a sword, and two pairs of pistols. I went to an inn, where the host told me that if I wished to go to London, I could join a party that was going, and it would only cost me the price of a horse. He introduced me to these people, a Protestant minister and two ladies, and we supped together. I pleased them, and they pleased me, so we travelled together. I went to an inn in the Strand, but the next day looked out for cheaper lodgings. I only possessed fifty gold pieces and a ring worth about the same sum.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I took a room in a decent house, on the third story. The landlady was an honest, kind-looking woman, and I decided to trust her. I begged her to buy me the clothes proper to my sex, for I did not dare show myself dressed as a man. In two days I was attired as a poor girl who does not wish to dazzle or attract attention. I spoke English well, and knew that if I lived quietly I had nothing to fear.

I paid ten shillings a week rent; but I soon saw that though my hostess was a good woman, the house was not suitable for me. I received no visitors, but I could not prevent curious people from intruding on me at all times. We were close to the Stock Exchange, and a crowd of young men were always coming and going. Several of them took their meals in the house, and were persistent in their efforts to 'liven me up a bit,' as they expressed it.

The fair Portuguese in London.

I was determined not to spend more than one guinea a week, so I decided to sell my ring. An old man who lived next door offered me a hundred and fifty guineas for it. I did not know it was so valuable, and I let him have it, on condition he paid me four guineas a month, and would let me buy it back if I chose. I wanted to keep a certain sum about me, so as to be able to go to Lisbon by land as soon as I should receive permission to return. I had suffered too much on the sea to think of taking that route again.

I told my landlady that I must leave her, and she helped me to find a cheaper room. But I was obliged to engage a servant, as I could not take my meals outside, and this was a great annoyance to me, for I found nothing but worthless creatures who robbed me. Their thefts were not large, it is true, but when one can only spend a shilling a day every little counts. I was living on bread and water, and growing thinner daily, when chance brought your strange placard under my eye. My curiosity was aroused, and I could not resist the desire I had to see you and speak to you. I saw in the *Advertizer* a satire on your notice, which said you were an Italian, and not afraid of adventures. I, on my side, was not

Digitized by Microsoft®

afraid of any violence. I thought I could defend myself, but I feel now how presumptuous I was and what danger I ran. As I had been educated by an Italian, a man of great intelligence and probity, I have always had a predilection for your nation.

When the beautiful Portuguese had finished her story, 'Madame,' said I, 'you have interested me greatly; there is matter here for a romance.'

'So I think,' she said, 'and the romance is true.'

'And I shall not hate your nation any more. To tell the truth, I did so because you treated your Camoëns so badly.'

'Well, didn't the Greeks let Homer die!'

'One wrong doesn't excuse another.'

'True, but what can you know of Camoëns? You don't know Portuguese?'

'I have read a Latin translation.'

'I will learn Latin.'

'Let me teach you. Then I will vow to live and die in Portugal, if you will promise to give me your heart?'

'If only I had two hearts!' said she naïvely, and I pressed her to go on with her story.

Pauline wishes she had two hearts.

The third day after my arrival in this immense city, I wrote to my aunt, the abbess, a long letter, telling her what had happened to me. I implored her to protect him whom I consider my husband, and to support me in my resolution not to return to Lisbon until all opposition to our marriage is withdrawn. I asked her to let me know how things went on, and to write to me, under cover to my landlady. I sent my letter by Paris and Madrid—it is the most direct route by land—and I received an answer three months later. She told me the frigate had returned, and the captain had written to the minister, saying the lady was on board, and asking what was to be done with her. The minister replied that she was to be taken to the convent with a letter which

Digitized by Microsoft®

he enclosed. In this letter he told my aunt he was sending her his niece, and that he hoped she would keep the young lady under lock and key. Fortunately, my aunt had received my letter first. She had my lover securely shut up, and then wrote to Œyras that the supposed niece was in reality a man in disguise, and that, therefore, she could not prolong his sojourn in her convent, and she begged his excellency to relieve her of the unwelcome visitor as soon as possible. When she had despatched this epistle, she paid a visit to Comte Al——, who flung himself at her feet and besought her to take us both under her protection. He gave her my jewels, which she was glad to receive.

As soon as the minister read her letter, he hastened to answer it in person, and she easily convinced him of the importance of keeping the whole affair a secret, for the sanctity of her convent had been violated, and, were it known, her honour would be compromised. She told him of my letter, and how she had my jewels in her possession.

He laughingly asked her to forgive him for having sent her such a good-looking young fellow to keep her company. He agreed with her that the greatest secrecy was necessary, and he took the count away with him in his carriage. Since then, to the moment of writing, the good abbess said, she had heard no more of my lover. All Lisbon was talking about us, but they had got hold of the wrong end of the story. The gossips had it that my lover was in London, and the minister was keeping me in concealment, possibly because I had inspired him with tender sentiments. No doubt Œyras has kept himself well informed concerning me, for he knows the name I go under and my address, and has set spies to keep a watch on my movements. On the advice of my aunt, I wrote to him, telling him I was quite ready to return to Lisbon if he would assure me that directly I arrived there I should be publicly united to Al——, otherwise I would remain in London all my life, for there, at least, the laws assure me complete liberty. I am now awaiting his answer,

Digitized by Microsoft®

which, I believe, will be favourable. No one can deprive me of my fortune, which is absolutely at my own disposal, and Œyras, I think, will be glad to be of service to me, if only to compensate in some degree for his share in my father's death.

Pauline told me the real names of the actors in this drama; but as she is still living, and as her memory is very dear to me, I will not run the risk of offending her by mentioning them here. It suffices to say that her story was absolutely true, and well known to the inhabitants of Lisbon. The personages alluded to are well-known and prominent people.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLIII

THE RECALL OF MISS PAULINE

Our friendship grew more perfect each day, but, alas! friendship was not enough for me. I could neither eat nor sleep; my health was suffering. Pauline, on the contrary, grew robust and beautiful in proportion as I languished and became thin.

'You think,' she said to me one morning, 'that you are dying for love of me, but it is not sentiment which is making you thin and sleepless; it is the sedentary life you are leading. If you wish to please me, go for a long ride.'

'I can refuse you nothing, lovely Pauline; but when I come back——?'

'You will find me grateful, you will have a good appetite, and you will sleep well.'

My horse, quick!—my riding boots!—a parting kiss on her beautiful hand, and I am on the road to Kingston! I put my horse at a gallop, when all of a sudden he stumbled, fell, and flung me on the pavement in front of the Duke of Kingston's door.[1] Miss Chudleigh happened to be

[1] Kingston House is at Knightsbridge, and was not built before 1769. The accuracy of the incident therefore may be doubted. The famous maid-of-honour whom Casanova drags into his narrative with such mendacious readiness was Elizabeth, daughter of Colonel Thomas Chudleigh, born in 1720. After an intrigue with the Duke of Hamilton, she secretly married Lord Augustus Hervey, in a fit of pique, but she always refused to live with him. The Duke of Kingston fell in love with her, and they lived together for about twenty years, taking every precaution to conceal their intimacy. Her maxim was to be 'short, clear, and surprising.' Mrs. Montagu, in a letter to her sister in 1751, says: 'Miss Chudleigh at a masked ball, as Iphigenia, was so naked that the High

Digitized by Microsoft®

looking out of the window. She saw me with my legs in the air, and screamed. I turned my head at her cry; she recognised me, and sent one of her men to my assistance. He raised me to my feet, but I could not move. I was carried into a room on the ground floor, and one of the foot-

He is succoured by Miss Chudleigh.

Priest could easily inspect the entrails of his victim.' George II. was in love with her, and gave her presents. She said, 'There was some good in belonging to a king who tired of an old mistress as soon as he got a new one.' Charles Townsend, on hearing that she cried at the news of the king's death, exclaimed, 'What! oysters!' (Walpole).

After twenty years Hervey tried to get a divorce, but she had forced herself into the house of the parson who had married them, and who was dying, and so bullied him that he gave up the certificate. She then swore in the House of Commons that she had never married Hervey. She married the Duke of Kingston in 1769, when she was nearly fifty years old. On that occasion she wore, Walpole says, 'as a proof of purity and poverty, a wedding gown of white satin, Brussels lace, and pearls.' He alludes to her as 'Œlia Laelia Crispis,' quoted presumably from the Latin verse, which is translated—

> 'Neither man, nor woman, nor Androgyne;
> Neither girl, nor boy, nor eld;
> Neither harlot nor virgin,
> But all (of these).'

In a description of her house, he says: 'Every favour she bestowed is registered with a bit of Dresden china.'

In a letter to Conway, he says: 'Miss Chudleigh gave a grand entertainment on the queen's birthday. A scaffold was erected in Hyde Park for fireworks, to see which with advantage the guests were kept for two hours in a dark room. If that gave rise to more birthdays, who could help it?'

She made the duke's life utterly unbearable. Whitehead's description ot her habits when travelling is not quotable. He says: 'At dinner, in company with a dozen or more, I have often known the duchess rise from table, go into an adjoining room, when, after, in the hearing of all, being violently sick, she would return, and say, "I beg your pardon, a fit of gout in the stomach; I am now much better." She would then drink, until attended to her room by the duke. She would rise from her chair in hot weather, and fan herself with her petticoats over her head, to the great discomfort of all present.'

In 1776 she was tried for bigamy, proved guilty, but acquitted without any punishment, although the attorney-general threatened to brand her with a hot iron in the hand.

The duke died of consumption at Bath in 1788. She travelled a great deal in the later years of her life, and visited most of the foreign courts, and in Poland she inspired a passion in the breast of Prince Radziwill. She died in France (where she vied with the salon holders), in the château of Saint Assisi, in the same year as the duke.

Digitized by Microsoft®

men, who was also a surgeon, declared I had dislocated my collar-bone.

'You must take a complete rest for a week,' he said.

The young miss assured me that, if I would remain in her house, I should be most carefully nursed. I thanked her warmly, but on the pretext that I should be in the way, I asked to be taken home. She immediately gave the order, with charming grace, and I was driven back in a comfortable carriage. The two servants who accompanied me refused to accept anything for their trouble; and in this little trait I recognised the delicate hospitality for which the English are so justly celebrated, though I must qualify my praise by remarking on their egoism, which is an equally national characteristic. As soon as I got home, I went to bed and sent for a doctor, who laughed at the mention of dislocation.

'It is a mere sprain,' he said. 'I wish you had broken a bone, that I might have a chance of showing my skill.'

'I am glad,' said I, 'not to put you to the test. I shall think just as highly of you if you cure me quickly.'

I had not yet seen Pauline, and this rather astonished me. I was told she had gone out in a chair, and I could not control a slight feeling of jealousy, though I had no real suspicion of her. After waiting two hours she returned, and entered my room in a state of great emotion, for the old housekeeper had told her I had broken my leg.

'It is I,' she cried, running to my bedside, 'who am the cause of this disaster!' and, pale as death, she fell, almost fainting, at my side.

'Divine creature,' I exclaimed, pressing her in my arms, 'it is only a sprain.'

'God be praised! but that stupid old woman, how she terrified me! Feel my heart, how it beats!'

'I feel it, I feel it with delight. O happy accident!'

Pressing my lips to hers, I felt that my kisses were returned, and I blessed the accident which had forced her to declare herself.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Then Pauline began to laugh.

'What are you laughing at, my angel?'

'At love's little ruses, which always triumph.'

'Where have you been?'

'To my old pawnbroker, to get my ring, which I want to give to you so that you may always have a souvenir of me.'

'O Pauline! I care more for love than diamonds.'

'You will have both; from now to the time of my departure, which will come all too soon, we will live like a loving couple, and we will have supper served here, on your bed, which you must not leave. I am tired of living beside you, loving you as I do, and watching you suffer. I determined to be yours this morning; I went out to get the ring, and I do not mean to leave you again till the fatal letter arrives.'

'May the courier be robbed on the road!'

'No such luck for us, dear friend!'

She fetched Ariosto, and read me the adventure of Ricciardetto with Fiord'espina, Princess of Spain. It suited our case admirably, I confess.

I gazed on my Pauline, the most beautiful woman in Portugal, last scion of an old and noble house, who had given herself to me for love, and who could only be mine for a very short time. A great sadness took possession of my soul.

'Tell me,' she said, after a while, 'if shame disappears after knowledge, how is it that our first parents were not abashed until they had eaten of the tree?'

'I cannot say, my beloved. Why did you not ask your learned Italian tutor?'

'I did ask him, and he said it was not because they had enjoyed the fruit, but because they had disobeyed, and that by covering themselves they thought they could disown the fault they had committed. Whatever one may say, I think Adam was far more to blame than Eve.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'And why?'

'Because Adam had received the prohibition direct from God, while Eve only learned it through Adam.'

'I think they both of them received it from God.'

'You have not read Genesis then, or you have read it carelessly, for it distinctly says that God made Eve after He had forbidden Adam to eat of the tree; but the interpreters of the Scriptures are generally enemies of our sex; my preceptor, however, was an honest man.'

'Was he a Jesuit?'

'Yes, but a short-frocked one.'

'What is that?'

'I will tell you another time.'

'Very well, my dear, and you shall show me how a Jesuit and an honest man can walk hand in hand.'

Pauline was deeply religious, but a bit of a freethinker. I have known many women of this turn of mind. To thoroughly appreciate their virtues and the elevation of their minds one must begin by making sinners of them.[1]

I resolved not to leave my house as long as Pauline remained in London, and she was only absent on Sundays for Mass. I forbade my door to every one, even the doctor, and sent word to Miss Chudleigh that I was well; she had been inquiring after my health twice daily.

I wrote to Martinelli to procure me the best miniature painter in London; and he sent me a Jew, who succeeded in producing two admirable likenesses. I had mine mounted as a ring, and it was the only present Pauline would accept from me.

We had three weeks of happiness. Every day I discovered fresh qualities and beauties in my beloved. She was beginning to flatter herself that the letter which would recall her to Lisbon would never come; we made plans for the future, and Comte Al—— existed only in her memory.

[1] Cf.— 'Would she could make of me a saint
Or I of her a sinner!'—CONGREVE.

Digitized by Microsoft®

She said to me sometimes that she could not understand the mere power of a handsome face over a woman's affections.

'I realise,' she said, 'that a union based on such a trifling circumstance has a very poor chance of happiness.'

But the first of August was a fatal date for her and for me. She received the letter from Lisbon, which left her no pretext for postponing her departure, and I received one from Paris announcing the death of Madame d'Urfé. Madame du Rumain wrote and told me, that on the testimony of a waiting-maid the doctors had declared that the marquise had killed herself by an overdose of a certain liquid she called *the panacea.*

Death of Madame d'Urfé.

She left a will[1] which might have been written in 'Les Petites Maisons.'[2] She left everything to the child, son or daughter, which was to be born of her, appointing me guardian to the new-born child, which vexed me greatly, for I knew all Paris would joke and laugh over this for at least a week. Her daughter, Madame du Chatelet,[3] had taken possession of all her property, including her private purse, which contained, oddly enough, four hundred thousand francs. Her death was a great blow to me, but I had another and a greater grief to distract me, in the correspondence of Pauline. One letter was from her aunt, the other from the minister Œyras. The latter conjured her to return to Lisbon as quickly as possible, by sea or by land; he assured her that on her arrival she would be put in possession of all her fortune,

Recall of Pauline, 12th August 1763.

[1] The heirs of Madame d'Urfé under her will instituted proceedings against '*un misérable Chevalier Casanova*,' including him with Cagliostro, who had also had to do with the marquise. Their efforts resulted in Casanova's flight from the kingdom, a circumstance of which he of course gives a more colourable explanation.

[2] The Bedlam of Paris.

[3] Adelaide Marie Thérèse, born 1727, and who married the Marquis du Chastellet, and lived in constant warfare with her mother. Their son was called Marquis du Chastellet de la Rochefoucauld-Lascaris-d'Urfé. He fought in America under Lafayette, and was a prisoner in the Luxembourg under the Terror, escaping the scaffold by a dose of poison. The estates of the family were of course confiscated.

Digitized by Microsoft®

and that she might publicly marry the Comte Al——. He sent her a note for twenty million reis. As I was not aware of the small value of this money, I was in ecstasies; but Pauline laughingly told me that the twenty millions were only worth two thousand pounds sterling, which sum would insure her travelling like a duchess. Œyras said that if she decided to go by sea, she had but to tell Monsieur de Saa, the Portuguese ambassador, and a frigate which was stationed at one of the English ports would be placed at her disposal. She would not hear of the frigate, or of de Saa, and was very indignant at Œyras having sent her the note, for, she said, it meant he supposed her to be in need of money.

Pauline was rich, and generous, judging from the ring she forced on me when she was, so to speak, in poverty. She certainly did not rely on my providing for her, though she knew I would never abandon her. I am sure she thought I was wealthy, and I never undeceived her.

We passed our last days together, drowned in grief. We looked at each other without daring to speak; we sat down to table, without being able to eat; we went to bed, without being able to sleep.

I accompanied her to Calais. We left London on the 10th of August, only stopping at Dover for an hour or so. On the 12th of August she left me, taking with her my faithful Clairmont, whose escort I had induced her to accept as far as Madrid.

'One thing I will ask of you,' she said, 'and that is, never to come to Lisbon, unless I should ask you to do so. I need not give you my reasons. You will understand that you must not trouble my peace. I could not be wicked without becoming unhappy, and loving me as you do, would you be the instrument of my undoing? Believe me, I shall try to persuade myself that I have lived with you as your wife, that I am a widow, and that I am going to Lisbon to be married a second time.'

My separation from Pauline resembled, in many ways, that

Digitized by Microsoft®

which had afflicted me so deeply, fifteen years before, when I parted from Henriette at Geneva. The characters of these two incomparable women were alike in many details; difference of education alone had rendered one more gay, more talented, and less prejudiced than the other. Pauline had the noble pride of her nation. She was more serious, and more religious; she was also more passionate than Henriette. I was happy with them both, because during the time these two liaisons lasted I was rich, otherwise I should not have known either. I have forgotten them, because one forgets all things, but when I recall their memories I find that Henriette made the more profound impression on me, doubtless because I was but twenty-two when I was with her, whereas in London I was thirty-seven. The longer I live the more I feel how great an influence age has on our impressions.

Comparison of Pauline and Henriette.

I left Calais on the day Pauline commenced her journey. I had a bad crossing, and as soon as I got home, I shut myself up, a victim to true British *spleen*. Jarbe, my good negro servant, put me to bed.

When he brought me my chocolate next morning, he said naïvely: 'The housekeeper wants to know, sir, if she is to hang out the notice-board again?'

'The wretch! does she wish me to strangle her?'

'No, sir; but she is very devoted to you, and seeing you so sad, she thought——'

'Get away with you, and tell her never to dare think of such a thing again, or you either.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLIV

THE STORY OF MISS CHARPILLON

THE night was one long, continuous nightmare. I rose in a sombre mood, ready to kill the first man who contradicted me, or to stake my life on the ace of spades. I felt as if the roof of my beautiful house pressed heavily and directly on me. I went out gloomily—in my travelling clothes—and entered a coffee-house, to read the newspapers. There were about twenty people in the room. Suddenly my attention was attracted by a man speaking French to his companion.

'Tommy has killed himself, and by my faith I think he was right; his affairs were in such a state, he would have been a beggar had he lived.'

'You are quite wrong,' said the other sententiously. 'As he owed me money, I was there yesterday when they took the inventory, and it was quite plain that he behaved like a stupid schoolboy. He could have lived at least six months longer very comfortably.'

This calculation would have made me laugh under other circumstances, as it was it distracted me a little. I went down to the city to draw some money, and strolling out with my banker's clerk, a certain Mr. Bosanquet, an interesting-looking man passed us.

'Who is this?' I said.

'A man worth a hundred thousand pounds.'

'And who is that?'

'A man who is not worth ten thousand.'

'I did not ask their money value, but their names.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I do not know their names.'

'Then how can you tell what they are worth?'

'Oh, the name goes for nothing here. The thing is to know what a man has at his disposal. Deposit a thousand pounds in my bank, and call yourself Attila or Socrates, it doesn't matter to me; you would sign your cheques Attila or Socrates, and would be paid as such. You can't understand that! You are neither an Englishman nor a merchant.'

I went to an important shopman and asked him to change me a twenty-guinea note. 'Come back in an hour,' he said, 'I haven't got change by me. Take your note.'

'Keep it till I come back. I don't doubt you.'

'Nonsense. If you leave the note here I shall not give it you back, if only to teach you wisdom.'

'I am sure you could not do a dishonest thing.'

'No more I could, but really if I were to put the note in my pocket I might forget that I had not given the equivalent, and there would be a discussion in which you would be worsted.'

'I understand; especially in a town where every one has his head full of business.'

Thence to the Park, where I met Martinelli. He congratulated me on my reappearance in the world, and on the beautiful creature whose possessor and slave I was.

'Lord Pembroke saw her,' he said, 'and thought her charming.'

'When did he see her?'

'In a coach and four, with you, on the Rochester road at full trot, two or three days ago.'

'Good. I may as well tell you that I was taking her to Calais, and I shall never see her again.'

We passed through the Green Park, where we saw Lord Pembroke on horseback. Martinelli then let me out by a door I did not know. There was a crowd in Pall Mall, and Martinelli went to see what it was all about, and came back and told me it was a man who would be dead in a quarter of

A boxing match and a wager.

Digitized by Microsoft®

an hour from a blow he had received on the temple in a boxing match.

'There is a surgeon there,' he said, 'who declares he can save him if he is allowed to bleed him.'

'Who would prevent him?'

'That is the odd part of the business. There are two men there, one has wagered twenty guineas that he will live, the other has laid the same sum he will die, and the latter won't let the surgeon bleed him lest he lose his twenty guineas.'

'What an unfortunate man, and what hard-hearted wretches!'

'Well, you see the English are very particular about their bets, and they bet on everything. There is a society which is called the Betting Club. I can introduce you to it if you like.'

'Certainly, if the members are intelligent men, and men of standing. What do they do there?'

'Talk and discuss. When any one denies a statement, if the man who has advanced it is ready to back his opinion, the other must take up the wager, or pay a fine, which goes into a common fund that is divided at the end of every month.'

'My dear fellow, pray introduce me to this charming club, where I shall speedily grow rich, for I shall be careful not to make a remark unless I am sure of my facts. But to return to the dying man, what will be done to the man who has killed him?'

'They will examine his hand, and if it is like yours and mine, they will simply mark him. If his hand is already marked it will be a proof that he has killed a man before. When he is marked they say to him, "Be careful not to kill another, for if you do you will be hanged."'

'But suppose he is attacked?'

'He must show his hand. If his antagonist does not then withdraw, and if he kills him, he is absolved from blame.'

'But I am astonished that you allow boxing if it is so dangerous.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'It is only allowed in the case of a wager, and the combatants must throw down two or three pieces of money as evidence, otherwise if there is a death the survivor is hanged.'

What of law? What of morals? In this way I studied, and learned to understand the proud English nation—at once so great and so petty.

I went that evening to see Madam Cornelys, who had told me that my little girl was ill. She said that she had been thrice refused admittance to my house. I told her that I had closed my doors to everybody, so as to give full scope to my love and happiness. She accepted this excuse, but the state of little Sophie did alarm me. She was in bed with a high fever. She had grown terribly thin, and looked as if she was pining away from grief. Her mother was in despair, for in spite of all, she loved her passionately, and I thought she would have torn my eyes out when I told her that if the child were to die she would have no one to reproach but herself. I took her aside before leaving, and said Sophie's illness was caused by the excessive severity of her training. 'You love her,' I said, 'but you are very hard on her. Send her to school for a couple of years with other girls of good family.'

A school for Miss Cornelys.

'But, my dear friend, a good school costs a hundred guineas a year!'

'If you consult me as to the choice of a school, I will pay a year in advance.'

At this offer Madam Cornelys embraced me. Poor woman! she was a beggar in spite of her apparent wealth.

I was engaged to dine with Pembroke next day, and at two o'clock Jarbe came to ask me if I had forgotten the engagement.

'No,' said I; 'but it is too early.'

'We have a twenty-mile journey before us, sir.'

'Twenty miles!'

'Yes, sir, we have to go to Saint Albans.'

'But Lord Pembroke did not tell me that. How do you know?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'He left his address, sir, as he was going away.'

Just like an Englishman! I took the stage-coach, and in three hours was at my destination. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the English roads, through smiling fields, that bear every crop but the vine.

Lord Pembroke's house[1] was not large, but it was commodious. He showed me his gardens, his baths, his superb glass-houses, and a cock chained up in a kennel.

Lord Pembroke on cockfighting.

'Why is that bird chained up, my lord!'

'Because he is very fierce. If he was let loose, he would be off at once, and would kill all the cocks in the neighbourhood.'

'And he is condemned to celibacy?'

'Yes, so that he may be valiant in battle. Look, here is a list of his victories.'

He showed me a paper relating all the combats in which his bird had come off victor, after having slain his adversary; they numbered more than thirty. He showed me the steel spurs with which he was armed before entering the fray. The cock ruffled his plumage and began to crow loudly when he caught sight of them. I could not help laughing at the martial spirit of the little animal; he seemed possessed by the demon of combat. He kept raising his claws, one after the other, as though begging to have his armour girded on.

After the spurs, Pembroke showed me the helmet, which was also in shining steel.

'But,' said I, 'he is sure to win with such advantages.'

'No, for he would refuse to fight an enemy who was not equipped in the same manner.'

'It passes all belief.'

He then read me this singular biped's genealogy. He had thirty-two quarterings to his shield, more than many a *grand*

[1] The manor of Ricksmansworth, Saint Albans, belonged at one time to the Pembroke family, but was sold by Philip, fourth earl, in 1632, to one Thomas Fatherby; so unless Casanova's friend rented or owned another house in the same neighbourhood, we must consider this one of the inaccuracies he so often commits where English names and places are concerned.

Digitized by Microsoft®

seigneur can boast, on the paternal side that is; if he had been equally well descended on the maternal side, Pembroke would have decorated him with the Order of the Golden Fleece.

'That cock,' said he, 'cost me a hundred guineas; I would not sell him for a thousand.'

While we were still discussing the bird, a carriage drew up, containing a lady and two gentlemen. One of the latter was the scoundrel Castel-Bajac,[1] and the other a lean personage, who was presented as the Count de Schwerin, nephew of the illustrious field-marshal of that name, who died on the field of honour. General Beckw——, an Englishman, who had been in the service of the King of Prussia, and commanded the field-marshal's regiment, was one of Pembroke's guests, and told Schwerin that his uncle died in his presence. Whereupon this modest nephew drew from his pocket the ribbon of the Black Eagle, all stained with blood, and said: 'My uncle wore this on the day of his death, and his Majesty allows me to preserve it as a souvenir.'

'Such things are out of place in a man's pocket,' remarked one of the guests. Schwerin looked as though he had not heard or understood this remark. This little incident was enough for me.

Castel-Bajac, by the way, had evinced the most lively satisfaction at meeting me again. He might, had he chosen, have pretended not to know me as Seingalt! The lady was blonde, and ugly when she smiled; a hopeless defect in a woman. After dinner we had a game of faro; as Pembroke never gambled, the general took the bank. In the course of the game Castel-Bajac asked me if he might take ten of my counters.

'You would bring me ill luck,' said I coldly, pushing away his hand. He went out into the garden to digest the insult as best he could, and his *soi-disant* wife said her husband

[1] It was Castel-Bajac who conspired with the Paris wise-woman to blackmail Casanova in the affair of Mlle. X. V. C.

Digitized by Microsoft®

had forgotten his pocket-book. An hour afterwards I made my bow, after inviting Pembroke and the company to dine with me the following day.

We sat down at two o'clock, and rose from table at four, having emptied forty bottles of different wines, though none of us were drunk. After coffee, the general carried us away to sup at his house, where Madame Castel-Bajac persuaded me to take the bank. I put a thousand guineas on the table, but as there were no counters I declared I would only play gold against gold. The two counts had paid the general their losses of the night before with two bank-notes, which he now handed over to me, and in the course of the evening I changed two more for them. These four notes I laid to one side. The next morning I took them to the bank. The clerk to whom I presented them returned them, saying: 'These notes are forgeries, sir.'

Play at Lord Pembroke's: false notes.

I went at once to Pembroke to get the scoundrel's address. He was still in bed, but he sent a manservant with me. The swindlers affected great surprise at seeing me; I told them their notes were worthless, and that they must take them back, and give me their value in gold; forty gold pieces.

'I have no change,' said Castel-Bajac, 'and I am very much surprised at this. I will return them to the person from whom I got them, always providing they are the same bank-notes you received from us yesterday.'

The blood rushed to my head; with a withering remark I left them, and told the servant to take me to the nearest magistrate. This worthy, after making me swear to my deposition, gave me a writ authorising their arrest. This writ I confided to an alderman, who undertook to execute it; and then, much annoyed at the whole disgraceful business, I went home.

Martinelli was waiting for me, and I told him the story. Said the philosopher: 'The best thing you can do is to put the notes in the fire!' The advice was sound, but I did not follow it. He told me he had fixed a day with Lord

Digitized by Microsoft®

Spencer to introduce me to the Betters' Club, but I answered that I no longer cared about it. I ought to have treated Martinelli with more respect. He was distinguished for his learning, his manners, and his morals, but who can sound the depths of human weakness? I wreaked my annoyance on him about the Castel-Bajacs.

In the evening I went to the general's house, where I found the Countess of Castel-Bajac sitting on Lord Pembroke's knee: the two men did not appear. The supper was good; and we were a lively party. We played till daybreak, and I lost two or three hundred guineas.

Flight of Castel-Bajac.

Next day an individual visited me, who announced himself as head of the police. He assured me that if I would pay his travelling expenses he would engage to arrest Castel-Bajac at Dover. That worthy had left London, it seemed, and was already on his way to France. His accomplice, my informant said, had not yet started. I gave him a guinea, and said if he captured this latter it would satisfy me.

As it was a Sunday, Madam Cornelys could go out without fear of being arrested, and her daughter dined with me. Sophie was better; the prospect of leaving her mother had worked wonders. Madam Cornelys had chosen a school at Harwich,[1] and we went there after dinner. The directress was a Catholic lady about sixty years of age, witty, and well-mannered. There were about fifteen pupils in all, and as Sophie was warmly recommended by Lady Harrington, her reception among them was very flattering. Five or six of the girls were angels of beauty, two or three most repulsively ugly: these extremes are met with more frequently in England than elsewhere. My daughter was smaller than any of them, but pretty and clever enough to stand comparison with the best.

On returning to London I learned that Count Schwerin was in prison, and desired to speak with me. Jarbe told me the poor devil was in the most pitiable state. As he was

[1] Probably a slip for Hackney, which teemed with young ladies' seminaries at this period.

Digitized by Microsoft®

accused of forging bank-notes, there was a chance of his being taken to Newgate, and eventually hanged. I found him in tears and despair; he swore Castel-Bajac had given him the notes, and that he had received them from a third person, whose name he would give me if I would have him set free. I replied that I should keep him in prison until he had refunded the money, but would give him twopence a day lest he died of hunger. He pulled his uncle's blood-stained ribbon from his pocket and offered it to me. I was delighted at this excuse for letting him off, and solemnly accepted the rag with the Black Eagle hanging to the end of it, and promised to return it when he paid the forty guineas. I then burned the notes in the presence of the alderman, paid his prison expenses, and had him dismissed.

Two days later the countess knocked at my door. She was alone and without resources, she said, and complained bitterly of Pembroke, who had abandoned her after receiving the most unequivocal marks of her affection. To get rid of her, I was obliged to pay her way back to Calais. She declared she would never see the Gascon Castel-Bajac again, and that he was not her husband at all!

The Flemish officer whom I had assisted at Aix-la-Chapelle had paid me several visits, and had even dined with me two or three times, but I had never been to his house. I decided one day to return his courtesy, and was in conversation with him and his wife when an old woman and a young girl came into the room. The officer presented me as the Chevelier de Seingalt, whereat the girl looked astonished, and said she had once known a Signor Casanova, who was strikingly like me. I told her that that also was my name, but that I did not remember her.

He meets Miss Charpillon, September 1763.

'In those days I was called Anspergher,' she said; 'but now I am called Charpillon. You only saw me once, when I was a little girl of thirteen. You were in the Palais Royal in Paris, with a charming lady, and you made me a present of a pair of strass buckles—I have them on my shoes at this

Digitized by Microsoft®

moment,—and then, encouraged by my aunt, who was with me, you did me the honour of embracing me.'

'I remember, mademoiselle, I remember you distinctly now, and I have a letter for you, but I do not recognise your aunt.'

'This is another aunt. If you will come and take tea with us, you will meet the one you saw in Paris. But give me the letter.'

I took it out and gave it her.

'What,' she said, 'from my dear ambassador, my dear Morosini. Why didn't you give it me three months ago?'

'I am to blame, mademoiselle, but there is no address. I am glad to have met you.'

'We live in Denmark Street,[1] Soho. Will you come to-morrow?'

'Unfortunately I am engaged. Lord Pembroke dines with me.'

'Will you be alone?'

'I think so.'

'Then we will come and see you.'

I gave her my address. On hearing it she smiled.

'Why, you are the Italian gentleman whose notice of lodgings to let made all the town laugh! I am told the joke cost you dear!'

'On the contrary, I owe to it some of my happiest memories.'

'I wanted to offer myself as a lodger, but my mother would not let me.'

'What need had you to look for a cheap lodging?'

'None whatever; but I wanted to amuse myself and punish the audacious writer of the notice.'

'How would you have punished me?'

'By making you love me, so that you suffered the most frightful tortures afterwards. Oh, how I should have laughed!'

[1] Probably the street now named Carlisle Street.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You think you can make any one you choose fall in love with you, and then propose to play the tyrant? The scheme is monstrous, and it is a pity you do not let men see more plainly the kind of woman you are. I, at least, will be on my guard against you.'

'You must make a resolution not to see me again, then, or else all your labour will be lost.'

I considered this little dialogue to be merely a passing pleasantry, for Miss Charpillon was laughing all the time; but I could not help admiring her beauty and a vivacity which was calculated to help her to carry out any plan she might choose to form. The day that I met this woman was an accursed day for me.

It was towards the end of September that I made her acquaintance, and on that day the period of my physical and moral death set in. If the perpendicular line of ascent equals the line of descent, as mine must do to-day, the first day of November 1797, I can count on about four years more of life which will pass rapidly, according to the axiom, '*Motus in fine velocior.*'

Miss Charpillon, who was notorious all over London, and who I believe to be still living, was one of those beauties in whom it is impossible to find the slightest physical defect. Her hair, of a lovely light chestnut colour, was surprisingly long and thick; her blue eyes languished and sparkled alternately. She was tall and slim, with a dazzlingly white skin; her bosom was small but perfectly formed; her white dimpled hands were rather longer than ordinary; her feet were tiny, and her walk graceful. Her gentle face bore an expression of candour and openness, and bespoke the most exquisite delicacy of feeling. In this respect, alas! nature was pleased to lie.

I left Malingan's house, not as an eager sensualist who has just made the acquaintance of a rare beauty and rejoices at the thought that she will one day assuredly be his, but as one absolutely overcome and stupefied! The image of my dear Pauline could not withstand the impression Miss Charpillon,

Digitized by Microsoft®

whom I despised, had made on me. I tried to persuade myself that disillusionment would soon set in. 'I shall cease to find her marvellous,' I thought, 'as soon as I have gained her, and that will not be long!' I could not suppose her difficult of conquest. She had invited herself to dinner with me. I knew she had been the mistress of Morosini, and as he was neither young nor handsome, she must have yielded to him from cupidity. Without flattering myself that I should make her love me, I was determined not to spare gold, if gold could win her.

Lord Pembroke warns him about Miss Charpillon.

When Pembroke learned who were to be his fellow-guests, he exclaimed: 'The hussy inspired me with a violent desire once. I met her and her aunt one evening at Vauxhall, and offered her twenty guineas if she would walk down one of the alleys with me. She accepted, on condition I paid her in advance, which I was weak enough to do. As soon as we were in the alley she ran away from me, and I was not able to catch her again the whole of that evening.'

'You ought to have boxed her ears in public.'

'I should only have got into trouble and been laughed at for my pains. I preferred to despise her and the money she had got out of me. Are you in love with her?'

'No; but I am curious, as you were.'

'Be careful, she will play you a trick.'

When she appeared, she went up to Pembroke and made him pretty speeches without paying the slightest attention to me. She talked and laughed over the adventure at Vauxhall, and twitted him with cowardice.

'Another time,' she said, 'I shall not escape you.'

'Very probably, my dear, for next time I shall not pay you beforehand.'

'Oh, fie for shame! Pay is an ugly word, which does you no credit.'

'Perhaps you think it does you honour.'

'Such a detail as that should never be mentioned.'

She was piqued at the indolent fashion in which he spoke

Digitized by Microsoft®

to her, and left us soon after dinner, having made me promise to dine with her.

He goes to the house of Miss Charpillon.

On the appointed day, led by my evil star, I went to Miss Charpillon's house. She presented me to her mother, who, old, withered, and changed as she was by illness, I remembered perfectly. She awakened strange memories. In the year 1759 an individual named Bolomé, from Geneva, had persuaded me to sell her six thousand francs' worth of jewellery. She had given me two notes of hand, signed by herself and her two sisters, and drawn on this same Bolomé, who became bankrupt before the notes were due, and she and her sisters disappeared. My surprise at meeting the three sisters was equalled by their own, for Miss Charpillon had not told them that Seingalt was the Casanova they had defrauded.

'I have the pleasure of recognising you, madame.'

'And I you too, sir. That scoundrel of a Bolomé——'

'Do not let us speak of him, at any rate not to-day. I see that you are ill.'

'I have been at death's door, but am better now. My daughter did not announce you by your name.'

'Pardon me, my name is Seingalt as well as Casanova.'

At this moment the grandmother and the two aunts came in, followed by the Chevalier Goudar,[1] whom I had known in Paris, and two other men named Rostaing and Caumont. They were the three friends of the family, and their business was to inveigle dupes and take their part in plundering them.

[1] Angelo Goudar, born in 1720, at Montpellier, son of the Inspector-General of Commerce. He was probably in England in the capacity of spy, and was mixed up in de Guerchy's plots against the Chevalier d'Eon. He published several books. The best known among them is *The Chinese Spy*, a collection of letters supposed to be translated by him from the Chinese. His wife, Sarah, of whom mention will be made further on, occasionally wrote and spoke of herself as being Chinese, perhaps as a joke, perhaps to encourage the idea that her husband's book was really written by a Celestial. The book, which is in six volumes, was published at Cologne in 1769; and is called as a second title *L'envoyé secret de la Cour de Pékin, pour examiner l'État présent de l'Europe.* Goudar died in 1791.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Such was the infamous company in which I found myself. I secretly swore I would never set foot in the house again; but Miss Charpillon, apologising for the indifferent dinner at her house, cleverly forced me to invite them all to a supper on a date she herself fixed. After coffee, we played four rubbers of whist. I lost; and at midnight went home, vexed and displeased with myself, but more bewitched than ever.

I passed two days without seeing her, the third was the day on which the supper was to take place. At nine o'clock in the morning she appeared with her aunt.

'I have come,' she said in the most engaging way, 'to have breakfast with you, and to speak to you on a matter of business.'

'Now, or after breakfast?'

'Afterwards, for we must be alone.'

When the meal was over, the aunt went into another room, and Miss Charpillon explained to me that her family was in a most unfortunate position, but that if her aunt had a hundred guineas she could make a small fortune.

'And how?'

'She would compose and sell the elixir of life, of which she alone has the secret.'

She then dilated at some length on the properties of this marvellous elixir, of its probable sale in a city like London, and of the profits in which I should naturally share. Her mother and her aunts proposed to give me a written promise to pay back the hundred guineas in six years.

'I will give you a definite reply after supper.'

Then assuming the caressing airs of a man in love, I vainly attempted to win some marks of her favour. I caught hold of her, but, supple and lithe as a snake, she slipped through my fingers, and ran laughing to join her aunt. I followed her, laughing forcedly, and she gave me her hand, saying, 'Farewell, till to-night.'

I was not displeased at this incident, for I thought she

Digitized by Microsoft®

must be in need of money, to ask me for it on so short an acquaintance. It rested with me to see that the bargain was not a one-sided one.

When the company arrived in the evening, she suggested that I should make a little bank against them to wile away the time till supper, but I declined.

'We will have a game of whist, then,' she said.

'You do not appear in a hurry for the answer I was to give you,' I remarked.

'You have made up your mind to say yes, I hope?'

'Yes. Come with me.'

Her manœuvres.

She followed me into another room, when, after having seated myself beside her, I said the money was at her disposal. I tried once more to kiss her, but she said, 'You will obtain nothing from me by money or violence. You may hope everything from my friendship, but only when I have found you as gentle as a lamb.'

I went back into the drawing-room in the most devilish humour; as for her, she was sparkling with gaiety, but she annoyed me. After supper she drew me aside, and asked if I would give her aunt the money.

'As we shall have to write about it,' I answered, 'we will put it off to another day.'

'Will you fix a day?'

Drawing a purse full of gold from my pocket, I showed it her. 'Whenever you like,' I said.

When my odious guests left me, I recovered my sanity to a certain extent. The little intriguer had laid a spell on me, just to get my money from me, without any return. I resolved there and then to break with her, and to distract my thoughts I would go and see Sophie.

I took an immense box of sweetmeats and preserves with me, and spent a delicious day with my child and her young companions. I returned again and again to Harwich, and in three weeks flattered myself I had forgotten Miss Charpillon, or rather had replaced her with a more innocent love

Digitized by Microsoft®

(though I must own that one of Sophie's companions inspired me with an affection not altogether fraternal).

I was in this blessed condition, when one morning in walked Charpillon's favourite aunt. They were all surprised and mortified, she said, at not having seen me since the supper-party; besides her niece had told her I had promised to advance her the money she needed to make her elixir of life.

'I would have given you the hundred guineas if your niece had treated me properly, but she chose to give herself the airs of a vestal virgin, which you are well aware spells nonsense.'

'The dear child is young and foolish; she is only to be won by affection; she has told me all. She loves you, but fears that your feeling for her is only a caprice. She is in bed now with a feverish cold; come and see her. I am sure you will not leave her again in anger.'

These specious words, instead of filling me with contempt, aroused all the latent passion in me.

'Go on ahead, I will follow,' I said.

In less than a quarter of an hour I was knocking at Miss Charpillon's door.

The aunt opened it softly.

'Come back in an hour,' she said; 'she has been ordered a bath, and has just got into it.'

Miss Charpillon is obdurate.

'This is only another infamous piece of deception; you are a liar, and she is a brazen cheat.'

'You are severe and unjust; but if you promise to be reasonable I will take you up to her on the third floor. She can say what she likes about it, at any rate you will see I have not deceived you.'

I followed her upstairs; she pushed me into a room, and closed the door on me. Miss Charpillon was in a large bath; her back was turned to me. Said the miserable coquette, pretending not to know who it was: 'Aunt, will you give me some towels, please.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

But as soon as she saw me she crouched down, and pretended to be very angry.

'Go away! go away!'

'Spare yourself the trouble of crying out, my dear, you cannot impose upon me; and do not fear, I shall do you no harm, that would be playing into your hands.'

'My aunt shall pay me for this.'

'As you like, but I am her friend henceforth. I won't touch you. Stay as you are.'

'Monster!'

At this moment the aunt came in, and I left the room without saying another word. She followed me downstairs, and asked me if I was satisfied.

'Yes,' said I, 'for I now know you both thoroughly. Here is your money.'

I tossed a hundred-guinea note into her lap, fool that I was, saying she could make her balm of life, and that as for her promise to repay, I would not give one damn for it.

Six or seven days after, I met her at Vauxhall, with her aunt and Goudar, and she inveigled me into giving them supper. She asked me to take her home, but I refused, paid the bill, and left her. But she was not one to relinquish her prey so easily. She sent Goudar to me. The wretch began by congratulating me on my wisdom in staying away from the Ansperghers' house.

'You don't know that girl,' he said; 'you would have fallen deeper and deeper in love, and she would have beggared you before she was done with you.'

'You must think me a fool; if she had been amiable I should have been grateful, but not extravagant, in my marks of appreciation. I am not the man to be beggared by a creature like that.'

Goudar warns him of the plot of Miss Charpillon to ruin him.

'I am glad to hear it. Then you have made up your mind not to see her again? She has cost you a hundred guineas, and you have not had so much as a single kiss for it! She boasts now that she has taken you in. I will

Digitized by Microsoft®

tell you now why I frequent this house. It is not, as you think, because I take part in their schemes. It was I who introduced her to Morosini, the Venetian minister. He took a house for her, and gave her fifty guineas a month. I made some little conditions for myself. Morosini remained one year in England. After him Miss Charpillon lived with Lord Baltimore, Lord Grosvenor, the Portuguese minister, de Saa, and others, but has not fulfilled any of her engagements with me. I shall never leave until she does; and I warn you again that they are plotting to get hold of you, and they will succeed unless you are very careful.'

'Tell the mother there is another hundred guineas at her disposal, if her daughter will be civil to me.'

I kept the scamp to dinner, for he was likely to be of use to me in the kind of life I was leading. He was a devil for tricks, and not without a certain cleverness. He wrote several books which were not so bad; he was then at work on his *Chinese Spy*.

The next day, when she was certainly far from my thoughts, in came Miss Charpillon, accompanied by a plain young woman, whom she presented as Miss Lorenzi, and who soon withdrew discreetly.

'Is it true,' began Miss Charpillon, 'is it true you told Goudar to offer my mother a hundred guineas for me?'

'Is it not enough?'

'Have you any right to insult me?'

'I am sorry you think so; it is not my fault. Goudar is one of your most intimate friends, and it is probably not the first proposition of that nature he has made you.'

'I pass by your remark in silence, but would remind you that I have told you that you will never win me by violence or bribery, but only by making me care for you. I have not broken my word to you, it is you who have broken yours to me. Only a scoundrel like Goudar would have delivered a message like yours.'

'Goudar a scoundrel! he is your best friend. You know

Digitized by Microsoft®

he loves you: he got you the ambassador in the hope of getting you eventually. You are in his debt; pay him, and then abuse him. Do not cry. I know the source of your tears; it is not one that does you credit, it is impure.'

'You do not know it. Learn, then, hard-hearted man, that I love you, and that you treat me very cruelly.'

'You show your love in a strange way.'

'And you? You treat me as the lowest of the low, as a slavish animal, as the thing of my mother. If you had cared for me, you would have come to me yourself; you would have written, you would never have made use of a cowardly messenger, I should have answered you, and you would not have been wronged.'

'And suppose I had done so, how would you have answered me?'

'I would never have mentioned money, and only on condition that you made courteous love to me for a whole fortnight, coming to see me every day. We would have amused ourselves innocently; we would have gone to the play; you would have made me madly in love with you. I am surprised that a man like you should be content with a woman who gives herself for interest only. Miserable creature that I am! I was made for pure and honest love, and for one moment I thought you were the man who was to inspire me with a veritable affection. On the contrary you have made me unhappy. You are the first man who has ever seen me weep; you have made my home unbearable to me, for my mother shall never have the money she counts on; no, not if you would give it me for a single kiss.'

'I am sorry I have hurt you; I did not mean to, but what is done can't be undone.'

'Yes, it can. You can come to our house, but keep your despicable money. Conquer my love as an honest, straightforward lover, not as a brute, for you must believe it now, I love you.'

She was a born actress! I was in her toils again, and I

Digitized by Microsoft®

promised I would do as she wished, but only for a fortnight, as she herself proposed. As she rose to go, I asked her to give me a kiss as a token of our reconciliation, but she replied with a smile that we must not begin by breaking our own rules. She left me more lovesick than ever, and deeply ashamed of my treatment of her.

I began my visits that very evening. I gathered from the warmth of my welcome that I had won the game. I passed fifteen days without even kissing her hand. Each time I went I took her a valuable present, which she received with every expression of gratitude; besides this I escorted her constantly to the play, and made excursions with her in the environs of London. That fortnight cost me four hundred guineas.

When my term of probation was ended, I asked her, in her mother's presence, if I might stay and sup with them, or would they come to me? I did not mention that the supper at my house would be a good deal better. But no. Her mother asked me in a low voice if I would leave with the rest of the company, and return later, bringing the money.

'For shame,' cried the daughter, as the mother withdrew.

Now was the moment when my long and faithful service was at last to be rewarded. I approached her, but she gently eluded me, and put out the light. I found her huddled up, her knees touching her chin, her body wrapped in a long gown tightly wound round her, her arms crossed and her head held down. I begged, I scolded, I cursed, nothing would make her change her position or open her lips. At first I thought it was a joke, but I soon saw it was deadly earnest. I had once more been duped and humiliated by the wretched woman.

He ill-treats Miss Charpillon.

My love turned to rage. I shook her like a bundle of rags; I rolled her over and over; she said never a word. My hands became like the claws of a wild beast; I ill-used her, I struck her, I even tried to strangle her. I spoke to her in every tone, used gentleness, anger, argument, remonstrance, threats, despair, prayers, tears, insults, for three long hours.

Digitized by Microsoft®

She remained impervious to them all. At last, I made up my mind to leave her. My head burning, my body worn out, my mind conscious of its degradation, I left the accursed house. I gained my house, shivering with cold and fever; I could touch nothing, and for several days was confined to my bed, aching in every limb and racked with pain.

He is ill.

I gave orders to my servants to admit no one, and to place all my letters on my desk. When at last I was sufficiently recovered to attend to them, imagine my joy at finding one from Pauline, written from Madrid. My faithful Clairmont, she said, had saved her life as they were fording a river, and as she could never hope to find another servant so devoted, she had decided to keep him with her till she reached Lisbon, and send him back by sea from thence. I was glad at this for her sake, but it was fatal to him, poor fellow. The ship in which he embarked was wrecked; I supposed that he had perished in the waves, for I never saw him again.

There was a letter from Miss Charpillon, and two from her infamous mother, who said in one her daughter was ill in bed and covered with bruises, the result of my ill-treatment, and that she was going to institute proceedings against me at once. In her second letter she said she heard I was ill too, and regretted it the more as her daughter admitted that I might have some reasons for complaint. Miss Charpillon's letter was a model of hypocrisy. She owned that she had behaved badly, and wondered I had not killed her. She would have made no opposition to that, for death was the only alternative in the dilemma in which I had placed her. She supposed I would never go to her house again, but would I receive her once, just once more, as she had something important to communicate to me which she would not write.

I had just finished reading these epistles, when Goudar was shown in.

'Miss Charpillon is not ill,' he said, 'but she is covered

Digitized by Microsoft®

from head to foot with bruises. Her mother it was who made the girl promise to withstand you, and you may be sure of one thing, until her mother gives her leave, you will never get her; and the mother declares that when once she is yours you will abandon her.'

'Perhaps, but I should have loaded her with presents first; now she will get nothing.'

'Well, you are wise, I think, but I should like to show you something which will astonish you. I will be back in a few minutes.'

He returned in half an hour accompanied by a porter, bearing an armchair, which, as soon as we were alone, he asked if I would like to buy.

The prison chair.

'What should I want it for? It is not an attractive piece of furniture.'

'Nevertheless, it is worth a hundred guineas.'

'I wouldn't give three for it.'

'This chair has five springs,' said he, taking off the holland cover, 'which all work at once. As soon as any one sits down in it, two seize the arms, two the legs, and the fifth raises the seat, so that the person is thrown back.' He illustrated his description by seating himself on the diabolical machine; behold, there he was spread out and powerless, before my eyes. I could not help laughing.

'I will not buy it,' I said, 'but you can leave it here till to-morrow.'

'Not one hour, unless you buy it; the owner is waiting round the corner.'

'You can take it back to him, then, I would not use the repulsive thing.'

He had to explain what I must do to set him at liberty, for the springs were strong and tightly clasped; and I was glad to see the last of him and his machine, which, had I consented to avail myself of it, might have led me to the gallows.

He dined with me, and amused me with telling me Miss

Digitized by Microsoft®

Charpillon's family history. The grandmother came from Berne. She had no right to call herself Anspergher, as she was merely the mistress of a man of that name, by whom she had four daughters. The youngest, the mother of Miss Charpillon, was very pretty and very vicious; the government exiled her with her mother and sisters. They lived some time in Franche Comté, on the proceeds of the 'Balm of Life.' It was here that Charpillon was born; her mother attributed her paternity to the Count of Boulainvilliers. As the girl was very beautiful, they took her to Paris; but instead of making a fortune there, they only contracted debts, and after four years established themselves in London. Goudar told me many of the extraordinary expedients they were put to to live.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLV

THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE

The acquaintance of Goudar was useful to me, and I may be excused for encouraging the man, though I was well aware of his real character, for I had few friends in London, and nothing to do. He introduced me to all the celebrated ladies of the town, among others the famous Kitty Fisher.[1] In a

[1] She was of German origin; her beauty not alone prettiness, but superlatively attractive. Lieutenant-General Anthony Martin, called the 'Military Cupid,' introduced her into public life. He broke his connection with her because of his restricted circumstances, but she always retained her partiality for him, and would quit the most elevated of her admirers for his sake. She played in the *Belle's Stratagem* as Kitty Willis. Saville, when instructing her in her part, said, 'Remember, Kitty, the woman you are to personate is a woman of virtue.' She replied, 'I'm afraid I shall find that a difficult character.' One gentleman, in *Satirical Tracts*, asks in disgust, 'Who the devil would be modest, when they may live in state by prostitution? Why 'tis enough to debauch half the women in London!'

In a satire called 'Kitty's Stream,' one verse runs—

'All that we can know of her
Is this, she was a milliner.
Her parentage, so low and mean,
Is hardly to be traced, I ween.
Say has she wit, or has she sense?
No, nothing but impertinence.

Think then, ye fair, so neat and pretty,
Whether you would not all be Kitty.
What would you give to have a tribe
Of dukes and lords, from each a bribe,
To see 'em bow and cringe before ye,
Sigh, favour, flatter, and adore ye,
As now this envied Kitty reigns,
While powdered courtiers wear her chains?'

Several portraits of her by Sir Joshua Reynolds are in existence. She inserted a protest against the satires written about her in the *Public Advertizer*, 30th March 1759. She married John Norris of Hemiton Manor, and devoted herself to repairing his fortunes. She died at Bath.

Digitized by Microsoft®

certain tavern where he took me to drink beer, he showed me a beautiful barmaid, a miracle of loveliness. She was Irish, and a Catholic ; her name was Sarah. I would have liked to have got hold of her, but Goudar had his eye on her, and as a matter of fact carried her off the following year, and married her. She was that celebrated Sarah Goudar who had such a brilliant career in Naples, Florence, and Venice, where we shall meet her again in four or five years' time. Goudar's plan was to substitute her for the du Barry, the mistress of Louis Quinze, but a *lettre de cachet* obliged him to leave France hurriedly, and seek fortune elsewhere. O happy days! when the *lettre de cachet* had such power! ye are gone for ever!

Miss Charpillon waited a fortnight for an answer to her letter, and then came to seek it herself in a sedan-chair. I was sitting quietly taking my chocolate, and I did not get up or offer her any. She asked me for some, and modestly held up her face to be kissed, but I turned my head away.

'Perhaps you don't care to see the marks of the blows you gave me,' she said.

'You lie! I never struck you!'

'Perhaps not, but your tiger's claws have left bruises all over my body.' Saying this she unfastened her bodice, and showed me livid spots on her neck and shoulders.

Coward that I was! why did I not turn away my eyes? I pretended not to take any notice, but I must have looked very ridiculous; this little girl was more than a match for me, though I had fed myself on the wisdom of the ancients. She knew well enough that I was taking in the poison of her glances at every pore.

A bargain with Charpillon.

She talked for two hours and persuaded me that her mother was to blame for what had happened; that if she could be with me as she was with Morosini, clear of her family—I must make her mother an allowance, for she was not of age—all would be well. I said I would ask her mother all the same, and she seemed surprised. She dined with me,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and I believe that that day she would have refused me nothing. I did not ask. Why? Because I felt that, to a certain extent, she was in the position of a criminal before her judge, and perhaps also because I chose to behave like a fool, as I have done many times in my life. She was cross when she left me, and no doubt determined to revenge herself for what she supposed my contemptuous attitude.

I had an interview with the mother next day.

'I will take a house,' I said. 'Your daughter will live there, and I will give her fifty guineas a month to do what she likes with.'

'What you give her has nothing to do with me,' said the hag, 'but before she leaves my hands she must hand me over the hundred guineas you promised.'

I took a pretty cottage at Chelsea, and paid ten guineas for one month in advance. The girl's belongings were sent down there, and feeling that I had now nothing to fear, I handed the hundred guineas over to her avaricious parent. Miss Charpillon seemed delighted with the cottage. We took a little walk and then supped merrily. The scene of Denmark Street was enacted all over again, but this time she dared to answer me disdainfully, and to laugh insolently when I reproached her. Beside myself with rage, I dealt her a sound box on the ear, which I followed up by a vigorous kick, which sent her sprawling on the floor. She screamed murder and thieves, and made such an infernal noise that the landlord came up. Her nose was bleeding violently, and though I could not understand, as she spoke in English, I inferred from her gestures that she was giving her version of the story.

Fortunately the man spoke Italian. He told me she wished to leave the house then and there, and advised me not to oppose her, as she might get me into trouble, and he would be obliged to bear witness against me.

'Get her out of my sight,' I said, 'as quickly as you can, and let me never see her again.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

She stanched the blood, made herself neat, and went off in a sedan-chair, leaving me mute and motionless.

The reader perhaps imagines that my infatuation was now at an end. No such thing. On receiving, through Goudar, a message from the mother, to the effect that she hoped I should still continue to be a friend of the family, I was weak and foolish enough to pay her a visit. During the hour which I passed with them, Charpillon never opened her lips. She kept her head bent over her embroidery, on which from time to time a tear dropped silently. Every now and then she turned her cheek officiously in my direction, so that I might see her swollen cheek. I continued to see her every day. She was always silent, but during these mad visits the venom of desire penetrated my whole being so completely that had she so wished it, she could have despoiled me of everything I possessed. I would have beggared myself for one little kiss.

I bought a superb painted panel for her mantelpiece, and a magnificent breakfast service, in Sèvres porcelain, which I sent her, with a love-letter. I must have appeared to her the most extravagant and the most dastardly of men. She accepted all, and wrote me a note, saying she would receive me *en tête-à-tête*, and would prove her love and gratitude.

After supper, I drew from my pocket-book the two bills of exchange which I had been given years before by her mother, and which, the reader will remember, had been returned to me dishonoured. I told her the history of them, and I gave her them as a proof that I had no desire to be revenged on her mother or her aunts; if she would be kind to me, I would sign them in her favour, so that she could draw the sums mentioned on them, but until then she must promise not to let them leave her hands. She was warm in her praises of my generosity and magnanimity, and having given me her word not to dispose of them, she locked them up in her desk. I thought that I had now given her the last and most convincing mark of my affection,

Digitized by Microsoft®

I took her in my arms, when, behold, she began to weep bitterly!

Commanding myself as well as I could, I asked her if she thought she would ever feel differently. She sighed, and after a moment's silence, answered *No*. This cold reply staggered me. I remained for a quarter of an hour without speaking, or moving; then I rose, took my cloak and my sword, and prepared to depart.

Tantalus Charpillon.

'What!' she said, 'you will not stay with me?'

'No.'

'Shall we meet to-morrow?'

'I hope so. Adieu.'

I left this hell and went home to bed. At eight o'clock the following morning she was at my house. I told Jarbe I would not receive her, but she pushed past him.

'I hope,' said I, 'that you have brought me the two bills I confided to you last night.'

'I have not them with me, but why do you wish me to return them?'

At these words my rage got the better of me and, breaking all bounds, spent itself in a flood of invective. My nature had need of some such explosion. I was overwrought; tears came to my relief; I cried like a woman.

The infamous creature waited until she saw me weak and exhausted with sobbing, unable to utter a word, then gently and sweetly told me she had sworn to her mother to preserve always the strictest austerity of conduct in her house, and that was why she had come to me here. She was mine, and if I would keep her, she would never leave me.

The transition from love to anger is rapid; the opposite process is long and difficult. Mere rage may be appeased by tears, caresses, and submission; but when a man feels that he has been deceived and cruelly trifled with, he is temporarily incapable of the softer emotions. With me the mere paroxysm of anger has ever been of brief duration, but when I am

Digitized by Microsoft®

indignant as well, pride makes me inflexible, until time brings forgetfulness.

Charpillon knew that I should not, that I could not, take her at her word. Instinct in such a case teaches a woman what science and experience cannot teach a man.

Towards evening the young monster left me, affecting a sad, mortified, and downcast air, saying: 'I hope you will come to me when you come to yourself.'

The end of the first act.

I must admit here, in all humility, the metamorphosis which love wrought in me here in London at the age of thirty-eight. I consider this as the end of the first act of my life. The curtain fell on the second act when I left Venice, in 1785, twenty years later. The third and last act will probably be played out here, where I am amusing myself with writing these Memoirs. My comedy will then be finished. If it is hissed, I shall not hear, a satisfaction not accorded to all authors; but the reader has not yet come to the last scene of the first act, which is, in my opinion, exceedingly interesting.

In Green Park I met Goudar, who told me he had seen Miss Charpillon, but that she had refused to allow the conversation to be turned in my direction. We dined together, and then went to the house of the well-known Mrs. Walls, where we saw Kitty Fisher, waiting for the Duke of —— to take her to a ball. This Phryne was magnificently dressed, and it is no exaggeration to say she was at that moment wearing twenty thousand pounds' worth of diamonds. Goudar said if I liked to profit by the opportunity, it would not cost me more than ten guineas. I was not tempted, for though she was very charming, she only spoke English, and I liked to gratify all my senses at once. Mrs.

Kitty Fisher and the sandwich.

Walls told us that one day this Kitty swallowed a thousand-pound bank-note on a slice of bread-and-butter. The note had just been given her by Atkins,[1] brother of the beautiful

[1] Penelope Atkins, daughter of Sir Henry Atkins, married, 14th January 1745, to Pitt, was a celebrated beauty.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Mrs. Pitt. I do not know whether the bank expressed its gratitude for this present.

I passed an hour with a pretty Irish girl, Nelly, who spoke a little French, and who, wound up by champagne, said and did a thousand amusing things; but the image of Miss Charpillon pursued me and made everything seem insipid. Reason told me I must put the creature out of my head, but something, which I wrongly supposed to be a sense of honour, determined me not to give up till at least I had forced her to return the notes of hand.

As luck would have it, Malingan invited me to dinner. He told me the names of the other guests, and I accepted. There were two young women from Liége there, and one or two others, in all an agreeable company. I was enjoying their society, when in came my evil genius, Miss Charpillon. 'I should not have come had I known you had visitors,' she said gaily to Malingan; 'but if I am in the way you must tell me.'

Every one declared her heartily welcome, but I remained dumb and ill at ease. She was placed on my right, and I had already begun my soup, or I should have left.

The ladies from Liége, with their cavaliers, were leaving for Ostend in a few days. One of them remarked how sorry she was not to have seen Richmond; whereupon I asked her to allow me the honour of taking her there next day, including her husband and the rest of the company in my invitation, with the exception of Miss Charpillon, whom I pretended not to see.

'I will order two carriages with four places each, to be ready at eight o'clock,' I said, 'and as it happens, there are just eight of us.'

'There are nine of us,' cried Miss Charpillon, looking at me in the most brazen manner, 'for I hope you won't send me away if I come?'

'Certainly not; it would be most impolite. I will precede you on horseback.'

'Not at all; I will take Miss Emily on my knee.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Emily was Malingan's daughter, and as everybody thought the arrangement delightful, I had not the courage to resist. As I was leaving the house the impudent girl stopped me in the hall, and declared I had grossly insulted her, and that if I did not make her amends she would be revenged in a manner which I should feel deeply.

'Give me back my notes.'

'You shall have them to-morrow, but you must first make me forget your insults.'

We set out at eight o'clock; the weather was superb, although it was in the autumn. I ordered a good dinner, and in the meantime we strolled about the palace and the gardens. At dinner Miss Charpillon sat next to me, and from her behaviour the others must have imagined we were on terms of perfect intimacy. After dinner we returned to the gardens, when she took my arm, and succeeded in drawing me into the Maze. She pulled me down on the grass beside her, lavishing ardent expressions of love on me, and the most passionate caresses. Her bright eyes, her crimson cheeks, her panting breaths, moved me deeply. I was softened; I begged pardon for my haste and brutality, putting it down to excess of love; but she checked me suddenly.

'Enough, my friend, for the present. I swear I will come to you to-night.'

I was past reason; I was no longer master of myself. I held her down with my left arm, and drawing a little knife from my pocket, I opened it with my teeth, and pressing the point to her throat, I swore I would kill her.

'Do as you like,' she said calmly, 'only don't kill me. But I vow I will not go from here; you will have to drag or carry me by force to the carriage, and I will let every one know why.'

The threat was unnecessary. I had recovered my senses. I took my hat and cane, and hastened away from a place where unruly passion had drawn me to within an ace of ruin. Would any one believe it? the shameless woman came up

Digitized by Microsoft®

and slipped her arm through mine, in the most natural and innocent way in the world.

A girl of seventeen could not possibly have been versed in this style of trickery, unless she had tried and proved her strength in a hundred combats. They all wanted to know if I had fainted from the heat; but no one noticed any change in her.

We went back to town. I said I had a violent headache, took off my hat to the company, and went home. I wrote to the mother of Miss Charpillon advising her to send me the notes at once, or I would institute proceedings against her. This was her reply:—

Miss Charpillon's treason.

'I am surprised, sir, that you should venture to ask me for the two notes you confided to my daughter. She tells me she will return them to you in person when you have become calmer, and have learned to be respectful.'

The sight of this impertinent letter made my blood boil. I forgot all my good resolutions, and putting my pistols in my pocket, I started off, determined to revenge myself, and to oblige the wretched woman to return the notes, even if I had to take a stick to her.

My pistols, I need hardly say, were to protect myself against the scoundrels who were always hanging about her house. Just as I approached the door, I saw it open to admit a certain hairdresser, a good-looking young man, who put her head in curl-papers every Saturday.

I was not anxious that a stranger should witness the scene I was meditating, and I walked on to the corner of the street, where I waited. In about half an hour Rostaing and Caumont, the two bullies, *habitués* of the old woman, came out. Eleven o'clock struck, and still the handsome barber had not left. A little before midnight a servant came out with a lanthorn, evidently to look for something which had fallen from one of the windows. I stepped past her noiselessly and opened the parlour door, and sadly startled Miss Charpillon and the hairdresser!

Digitized by Microsoft®

When she saw me, the wench jumped up with a wild screech. I belaboured her minion with my cane, and at the sound of their cries, the mother, the aunts, and the servants rushed in, and the fellow profited by the confusion to make good his escape. Miss Charpillon had clambered over the sofa back, and there she remained during the scuffle, crouching against the wall, hardly daring to breathe, or protest against the shower of blows which fell on her lover. The three old women fell on me like furies, but they only added fuel to the flames. In my rage I smashed the painted panel and the china I had given the strumpet, the furniture of the room, and in my madness I turned on them, and should have broken their heads had they not ceased their yelling.

At last I flung myself on the sofa, exhausted, and ordered the mother to bring me my notes of hand, but at this moment the night watchman appeared.

The night watch in London consists of one man, who promenades a given quarter, with a lanthorn in one hand and a long staff in the other. On this man alone depends the peace and tranquillity of a section of the immense city. No one thinks of treating him disrespectfully. I put two or three crowns in his hands, saying, 'Go away,' and shut the door in his face.

When I again demanded the notes, the mother answered, 'My daughter has them.'

'Call her.'

The two servants then said that while I was breaking the china she had run out at the street door, and they did not know where she had gone. At these words the old women began to cry and shed tears.

'At midnight! alone in the streets of London! my poor daughter! my poor niece! and in the state of undress in which she is! She is lost. Cursed be the day when you set foot in England, to make us all miserable.'

My rage was now somewhat abated, and I could not help

Digitized by Microsoft®

shuddering at the idea of the poor frightened girl rushing wildly through the streets of the vast city.

'Go!' said I to the servants, 'and look for her; when you tell me she is in safety, I will give you each a guinea.'

When the three Gorgons saw I was anxious about Miss Charpillon, their complaints and reproaches began again. As I held my tongue, they thought it as good as an admission that I was to blame. By and by the servants returned; they had been to all the neighbours, they said, but could not find her. I was simple enough to express regret; I implored the women to search for her diligently, and to let me know as soon as they had news of her, that I might fling myself at her feet, and never see her more. I promised I would replace everything I had injured, and would abandon the notes of hand to them, and even give them a receipt for the amount.

Having acted in this weak and disgraceful manner, having asked forgiveness from abominable procuresses, who were laughing at me in their sleeves, I left, promising two guineas to the servant who should first announce to me the return of her young mistress.

The watchman was waiting for me at the door; he accompanied me home. It was two o'clock in the morning when I flung myself trembling and weeping on my bed.

Six hours later, one of the servants knocked at my door. Miss Charpillon, she said, had returned in a sedan-chair; she had passed the night in a shop which she had found open, the keeper of which knew her slightly. She was in bed, in a high fever; it was feared that a serious illness would result from fright and exposure. I waited three hours longer, and then timidly presented myself at her house. One of the aunts opened the door. Miss Charpillon was delirious, she said, and called out incessantly: '"Here is Seingalt, here is my murderer; he is going to kill me! Save me, save me!" In God's name, sir, go away.'

I passed the whole day without eating, the night without

Digitized by Microsoft®

sleeping, talking away to my own nightcap like a madman. The next morning I was told she was still delirious, and the doctor had declared that unless there was a change for the better, she could not live twenty-four hours.

'Miserable barber!' I cried.

'Can't you overlook the follies of youth? You should have pretended not to have seen,' said her aunt.

'By all the gods! You old witch, do you think that possible? However, let her want for nothing; here is a ten-pound note.'

I walked away like a lunatic, not knowing whither I went. On the third day, as I was pacing up and down beneath her windows, at seven o'clock in the morning, the mother spoke to me, and said her daughter was dying. At the same moment a tall, thin, pale old man came out of the house; he told her, in German, that she must resign herself to the will of God. I asked if he were the doctor.

'There is no more need of a doctor,' she answered; 'he is a minister of the Gospel, and there is another one with her now; in an hour, perhaps, my poor daughter will be no more.'

I felt a hand of ice laid on my heart, but I said, 'I may be, possibly, the actual cause of her death; but it is you, wretched old woman, who have killed her.'

I returned home slowly; my legs seemed incapable of supporting my body; my mind was made up, I would seek death by the surest means.

I ordered my servants to admit no one. I locked myself in my room. I put my watches, rings, snuff-boxes, diamonds, and other valuables into my secretary, and addressed them to the Venetian consul, to whom I wrote a letter, saying that after my death everything was to go to M. de Bragadin. I took a few guineas and some silver in my purse, my pistols in my pocket, and went out with the firm intention of drowning myself in the Thames, where it flows past the Tower of London.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLVI

THE TALKING PARROT

Love or anger had ceased to have dominion over me. I was in the full possession of my reason, and bent on suicide. I went into a shop and bought as many leaden bullets as my pockets would hold, to weigh me down in the water. I walked along slowly, because of the enormous weight, pondering my project as I went. The more I thought of it, the more inevitable did it seem to me. I could not live and be tortured every day by the reproachful image of Miss Charpillon; and I felt a secret pride in thinking that I was courageous enough to punish myself for my crime.

An Englishman called Edgar.

Half way across Westminster Bridge, I met an Englishman named Edgar, a rich, handsome, and amiable young fellow, who enjoyed life to the utmost. I tried to avoid him, but he came up to me, and took me by the arm.

'Where are you going? Come along with me, you will see some fun.'

'I can't, my dear fellow; let me go.'

'What is the matter? Why do you look so solemn?'

'Nothing is the matter.'

'Nothing! You ought to see yourself in the glass; you are on the way, I am sure, to do something foolish.'

'You are mistaken; good-bye. I'll go with you some other day.'

'My dear Seingalt, you've got the blue devils, and they don't suit you at all. If you don't come with me, I shall

Digitized by Microsoft®

go with you. I won't leave you the whole of this blessed afternoon.'

At this moment his eye fell on my breeches pocket; he calmly put his hand in, and drew out one of my pistols, searched the other pocket and found the second.

'Going to fight a duel, I suppose? All right; I've no objection, but I shan't leave you.'

I tried to smile, and answered him that I was only walking about town to amuse myself.

'Well, I hope my society will be as agreeable to you as yours is to me,' he replied, 'for I mean to walk with you. After our promenade we will dine at the "Canon." I will tell a girl who was going to dine with me to bring a French friend of hers, and we shall be a *partie carrée*.'

'My dear Edgar, do let me off, I am not feeling gay; I want to be alone and get rid of my spleen.'

Edgar shadows him.

'You can be alone to-morrow. In three hours your spleen will have disappeared; if not, I will help you to get rid of it. Where were you thinking of dining across the water?'

'Nowhere. I am not hungry. I have been fasting for three days; I can only drink.'

'There is something queer in all this, but I begin to see daylight. Some trouble has stirred up your bile; you may go mad, or die as one of my brothers did. I must see to it.'

He would not be denied, and I went with him, saying to myself, 'One day more or less, what does it matter?'

I am as certain that all those who have killed themselves on account of some great sorrow have done so because they foresaw the approaching loss of reason, as I am sure that those who have gone mad could only have avoided this calamity by death. When I made up my mind to kill myself, my folly was at its height; a day longer, and I should have been a raving maniac. And from this it is to be deduced that man should never kill himself, because from

Digitized by Microsoft®

one day to another the cause of his grief may be removed, as mine was. I had lost all hope; I was about to die, and I only owed my life to chance.

Edgar persuaded me to turn back with him, but after half an hour I was obliged to ask him to take me somewhere to rest. I was so dead beat I could hardly drag my feet along; and the lead in my pockets weighed me down. Edgar took me to a tavern, and only left me when I had given him my word I would await his return. As soon as I was alone I hid the bullets in a cupboard. Edgar returned, accompanied by two girls, one French, and both endowed by nature with charm. They thought me a surly fellow, till I begged Edgar to tell them that had I not been half dead, I should have found them delightful. A man who has spent three times twenty-four hours without eating or sleeping is not highly impressionable; but as soon as they learned my name, their opinion changed. They evidently knew me by reputation, and were most respectful. They all hoped that Bacchus and Comus would plead for Cupid, but, I knew their hopes were vain.

He dines with Edgar.

We dined *à l'anglaise*, that is to say, without soup; and I could only swallow a dozen oysters, with some good Grave wine. As I had not sufficient money to pay my share, I was obliged to borrow from Edgar, and this forced me to postpone my suicide; and partly from weariness, partly from indifference, I allowed him to drag me to Ranelagh.

We walked about the Rotunda, our hats pulled over our eyes, our arms crossed behind each others' backs, as was the fashion in those days. A minuet was going on, and I stopped to watch a woman who was dancing very well. I could not see her face, but her dress and hat seemed strangely familiar, absolutely like what I had bought for Miss Charpillon some days before. But Miss Charpillon was dead, or dying?

The dancer turned to cross the floor, raised her head. It was she!

Edgar told me afterwards he thought I was going to fall down in an epileptic fit. With a tremendous effort I steadied

Digitized by Microsoft®

myself; my eyes must have deceived me; the dance was over, as she was making her curtsy to her partner. I stepped forward, as though to invite her to promenade with me. She looked at me and fled. I sat down, trembling in every limb. A cold sweat broke out over my face and body. I prayed Edgar to leave me to myself for a little while; my heart was beating so that I could not stand.

The crisis was over; it had not killed me, it had given me new life. When Edgar came back, he found me watching the crowd with apparent interest.

'My dear fellow, you are laughing; have the blue devils departed?'

'They have, and I am starving, but before we go to supper I want to ask you something. I owe you my life, *my life*, do you understand, and to make my gratitude to you complete, will you spend to-night and to-morrow with me?'

He agreed and came home with me. They served us a good supper, which I eat, or rather devoured; after which I slept till noon next day. Over our chocolate I told Edgar the whole story, the *dénouement* of which would have been so fatal but for my meeting with him on Westminster Bridge. He assured me I could have the mother arrested, as she had acknowledged her debt in her letter to me, and I resolved to take his advice. Before we parted we swore eternal friendship, and on my part it was the least I could offer. Yet for his kindness he paid dear!

Next day I went to the attorney whom I had already employed in my affairs with Count Schwerin. He told me I was in the right, and could arrest the mother and the aunts. Without losing time I applied to a magistrate for a warrant, and then to a bailiff; but this latter was unacquainted with the females. He could go into their house, and serve the warrant on them, but he must be certain first of their identity. Not knowing who to charge with this delicate mission, I decided to conduct him myself.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I met him at eight o'clock in Denmark Street. I followed him into the parlour where the three hags were sitting. After pointing them out, I left the room hastily, for Charpillon, dressed in black, was standing by the fire-place, and she cast a glance at me which made me shiver. I thought I was cured, and I was cured, but the wound had been deep and was hardly scarred over. I do not know what would have happened had this Circe had the presence of mind to fling herself in my arms, and ask for mercy for her mother and her aunts. I heard afterwards from Goudar that the women had resisted, and that their bullies had come to their assistance, and even drawn their swords, but the bailiff and his men disarmed them. He added that he meant to go and see them in prison, and that if I would consent to compromise, he would gladly act as mediator. My answer was that they must pay me my six thousand francs, and that they might think themselves lucky that I did not claim interest and damages.

For a fortnight I heard nothing of this matter, except that Miss Charpillon paid their expenses in prison, where they had two rooms, and that she declared she would never ask me to set them at liberty, though she knew she had but to do so, and I should consent.

All this time I had not seen Edgar, when one morning he appeared in my room, smiling.

'Where have you been all this time?' I asked.

'Love has kept me in his most impenetrable prison. I have brought you some money from Madame Anspergher. Give me a receipt for it, for I have promised this very morning to restore her and her sisters to poor Miss Charpillon, who has cried for fifteen days without stopping.'

'I can understand her tears, and I admire her cleverness in chosing you for her protector.'

'She knew nothing, until I told her, except that we were together at Ranelagh, where you saw her with Lord Grosvenor.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'She asked you no doubt to intercede for her?'

'On the contrary, she says you are a monster of ingratitude, for she loved you, and proved her affection for you, but now she detests you.'

'God be praised! But I am sorry she has chosen you as her emissary; you will suffer for it.'

'May be I shall, but at any rate it will be very pleasant. I am in love with her.'

Edgar counted out the money; I gave him the receipt, and he went off well pleased. Was I not justified in believing that all was now at an end between Miss Charpillon and me? I flattered myself!

Just at this time the hereditary Prince of Brunswick, who is now the reigning duke, married the king's sister. The common councillors having bestowed on him the freedom of the city, he was admitted into the guild of goldsmiths, and was given his diploma, by the lord mayor and aldermen, in a magnificent golden box. The prince, who was the first gentleman of Europe, did not disdain to add this new title to his fourteen centuries of nobility.

Lady Harrington organised a grand ball at Madam Cornelys. A thousand persons were admitted at three guineas a head. The bride and bridegroom, and all the royal family, except the king and queen, were there. I was among the number, but had to stand up with six hundred others, for there was only room at table for four hundred.

Lady Grafton's *coiffure.*

I saw Lady Grafton seated by the Duke of Cumberland. She wore her own hair, without powder, cut straight across her forehead. The other ladies were scandalised, crying out that the coiffure was hideous; in less than six months, *la coiffure à la Grafton*, became general, crossed the Channel, and spread throughout Europe, where, unfairly enough, its name was changed. The mode still exists; it is the only one which has lasted thirty years in spite of its having been hissed at its birth.

Three thousand guineas were spent on this ball. There was

Digitized by Microsoft®

every kind of amusement going, but as I did not dance, and was not in love with any of the ladies, I left at one o'clock in the morning. It was a Sunday, a day on which none but criminals need fear the law in England. But this is what happened to me.

I was smartly dressed, and was driving home in my carriage, with my negro Jarbe, and another servant behind, when as I turned into my street I heard a voice call out: 'Good night, Seingalt.' Putting my head out of the window to answer, I saw I was surrounded by armed men, one of whom said: 'By order of the king.'

Miss Charpillon's revenge.

On my demanding what they wanted, they replied: 'To take you to Newgate prison; Sunday doesn't protect criminals.'

'And what is my offence?'

'You will know when you get there.'

'My master' said Jarbe, 'has a right to know now.'

'The judge is asleep.'

Jarbe insisted, however, and the passers-by, learning what was the matter, declared he was right. The chief of the band then proposed to take me to his house in the city, which I agreed to. We went into a big room, where there were benches and tables. My servants stayed with me, and the six policemen, who told me I ought to stand them something to eat and drink. I told Jarbe to see that they were satisfied. As I had committed no crime, I was quite easy in my mind, besides I knew that in London one could always get justice, and get it quickly. I thought on the strange transition, which had brought me, dressed like a prince, from a brilliant assembly, to an infamous den like this. In the morning the master of the house came in, and was furious that I had been left in the common room all night; had I been given a bedroom, he would have been the richer by a guinea. Finally, they told me it was time for me to present myself in court. A chair was sent for, for I did not dare to walk out in my gorgeous costume.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

There were about sixty people in the hall, who stared in astonishment at the barbarian who dared to appear before his judge in such luxuriant attire. At the end of the room I saw a man on a raised seat; it was the judge, and the judge was blind! A wide bandage was tied round his head and over his eyes. Some one who was standing near me guessed I was a foreigner, and said in French: 'Don't be alarmed, Mr. Fielding is an honest and upright judge.'

I thanked the benevolent unknown, and I was charmed to see before me an amiable and intellectual man, known to me as the author of many works of which England is proud.

When my turn came, his secretary told him my name, and Mr. Fielding said in very good Italian: 'Signor Casanova, have the goodness to come nearer; I wish to speak to you.'

Delighted that he should address me in my own language, I went up to the bar, and said '*Eccomi, signor.*'

He went on, in Italian: 'Monsieur Casanova, Venetian, you are condemned to perpetual imprisonment, in one of the prisons of his Majesty the King of Great Britain.'

'May I not know for what crime I am condemned?'

'Your curiosity is right and natural; in our country justice condemns no one without letting him know the reason of his condemnation. You have been accused, and the accusation has been supported by two witnesses, of having tried to disfigure a young and pretty girl. This young lady asks to be protected against further outrage, and justice can find no better means of protecting her than by keeping you in prison, *in vitam æternam.* So get ready to go there.'

'Sir, the accusation is absolutely calumnious, I swear it. If the girl reflects on her own behaviour, she may with reason fear that I might be tempted to ill-treat her, but I can swear to you that I have not done so as yet, nor do I intend to do so.'

'She has two witnesses.'

'They are false. May I ask the name of my accuser?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Miss Charpillon.'

'I know her. I have given her nothing but marks of affection.'

'It is not true, then, that you wished to disfigure her?'

'No, most certainly not!'

'In that case, I congratulate you; you can go home to dinner, provided you can find two people willing to go bail for you. They must be two householders, and must answer for you that you will never attempt to commit such a crime.'

'Who will venture to be surety for that?'

'Two Englishmen whose good opinion and esteem you have gained, and who are prepared to swear you are not a scoundrel. If they appear before I go to dinner, I will set you at liberty at once.'

He is taken to Newgate.

I was taken back to the place where I had passed the night. I wrote to all the householders, who were likely to help me, explaining why I was obliged to ask their help, and despatched these letters by my servants. I told them to make haste; they were to come back before noon. But London is so big! They did not come back, and the magistrate went to his dinner. I hoped he would return in the afternoon.

By and by, the head policeman, accompanied by an interpreter, came to tell me he had orders to take me to Newgate, the prison where the most miserable and abject criminals are confined. I told him I was waiting for bail, and that he could take me to Newgate [1] in the evening if it did not come; but he turned a deaf ear to my remonstrances. The interpreter told me in a low voice that this man was certainly paid by my adversaries to cause me as much trouble as possible, but that I could easily bribe him.

[1] Either Casanova was mistaken in the name of the judge who tried him, or in that of the prison where he was tried. Sir John Fielding was assistant magistrate to his brother Henry, who sat for Westminster and Middlesex till 1754, when Henry Fielding died and his office devolved on his brother. The Middlesex Sessions in his day were held at Clerkenwell.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'How much must I give him?'

The two men whispered together for a minute, then the interpreter told me that for ten guineas the other would allow me to remain where I was.

'Thank you; tell him I am curious to see the inside of Newgate.'

A coach was fetched, and I was driven off.

Newgate.

On my arrival at this place of desolation, a veritable hell, worthy of the imagination of Dante, a crowd of poor wretches, some of whom were to be hanged within a week, pressed round me and saluted me mockingly. Seeing that I did not answer, they became insulting. The gaoler appeased them by saying I was a foreigner, and did not understand a word of English. He took me into a room by myself, and told me what it would cost me, and what the prison rules were, as if he were sure I should remain there a long time. But half an hour after, the individual who had tried to make me pay a ransom of ten guineas came to say that bail had been found, that my sponsors were waiting at the court, and my carriage was at the gate.

I thanked God from the bottom of my heart. I was again in the presence of the man with the bandaged eyes. I saw Mr. Pegu, my tailor, and Maisonneuve, my wine merchant, who both said they were glad to render me this service. A little way off, I saw Charpillon with the infamous Rostaing, and Goudar. I contented myself with casting a withering glance at them. When my sponsors had signed the caution, the judge said in a most affable tone: 'Signor de Casanova, will you sign this too, and then you will be absolutely at liberty.'

I asked what the amount of the bail was, and was told it was forty guineas, twenty guineas each. As I was signing it, I said to Goudar, that if the magistrate had been able to see, he might have valued Miss Charpillon's beauty at ten thousand guineas.

I then asked the names of the two witnesses, and was told

Digitized by Microsoft®

they were Rostaing and Bottarelli. I looked at Rostaing, who was as pale as death; but without looking at Miss Charpillon, I said in a loud voice, 'The witnesses are worthy of the accusation.'

Before leaving I bowed to the judge respectfully, though he could not see me, and asked the clerk of the court if I owed anything for costs. His negative reply gave rise to a dispute between him and Miss Charpillon's attorney, who was mortified at not being able to make me pay the expenses of my capture.

The charge is dismissed.

As I was going out, I met five or six well-known Englishmen, who had come to go bail for me, and who were quite disappointed at not having been there in time. They begged me to be indulgent to the English laws, which were often inconvenient for foreigners.

So, after one of the most tiresome days of my life, I got home at last, to laugh at my adventure, and put off my fine clothes and go to bed.

About this time, Monsieur de Saa, the Portuguese minister, brought me a letter from Pauline. She told me of my poor Clairmont's misfortune, and announced that she was married to Count Al———. Monsieur de Saa assured me that he had known who Pauline was from the moment of her arrival in London. All diplomatists, I observe, have the foible of omniscience, and very ridiculous it makes them.

Miss Charpillon had treated him nearly as ill as she had treated me. We might have told each other consoling details, but her name was never mentioned between us.

A purchase in the Parrot Market.

I was walking one morning in a part of London known as the 'Parrot Market,' where I noticed a young and particularly handsome bird. I bought it, cage and all, for ten guineas. I had it placed near my bed, and as I wanted it to say something striking, I repeated to it a hundred times a day, 'Miss Charpillon is more infamous than her mother!'

I had no other object but my own amusement, and in fifteen days the little beast repeated this sentence with the

Digitized by Microsoft®

most ridiculous precision, adding a screech of laughter on its own account. Goudar, delighted, said that if I sent it down to the exchange, I could surely sell it for a hundred guineas. It struck me that this would be a noble revenge on the wretch who had so shamefully misused me. I confided the bird to Jarbe; he was a nigger, and it was natural he should deal in such wares. For the first two or three days my parrot's cry was not taken any notice of, as it spoke in French, but once it had attracted the attention of some one understanding both language and allusion, the indiscreet fowl drew a large audience, and men began to bid for it. Fifty guineas seemed a high price, and my nigger wanted me to sell it for less, but I would not.

I nearly died with laughter when Goudar told me of the effect produced by the parrot in the Charpillon family. They had recognised Jarbe; they knew who the bird belonged to, and who had been its teacher. Charpillon, it seemed, thought my revenge a very neat one, but the old women were furious. They had already consulted lawyers, who told them that the law of libel could not be applied to a parrot, but I could be made to pay dearly for the joke, if it could be proved that the bird was my pupil. Goudar said I had better not boast of my achievement, as two witnesses would be enough to ruin me. The ease with which false witnesses can be picked up in London is a sad and degrading fact. I have myself seen a board hung outside a window, with the word 'Witness' on it, in capital letters, meaning that there was a man, who in return for a small sum of money, was willing to swear to anything.

An article appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle*, saying that the ladies who had the right to consider themselves insulted by the talkative parrot at the Exchange must be either very poor or very friendless, as no one had come forward to buy the impertinent creature. It added, 'Whoever trained the parrot, did so, no doubt, with a view to revenge; it is in excellent taste, and he deserves to be an Englishman.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I asked Edgar why he did not buy the little scandal-monger, and he said it was because the bird was the delight of all who were acquainted with the lady. From which I inferred that he had come off no better than I with her. At last Lord Grosvenor bought the bird for fifty guineas to please Miss Charpillon.

I never spoke to the girl again. I saw her several times afterwards, but always with complete indifference.

The Marylebone Gardens.

I was now living quietly and regularly, and should, no doubt, have become accustomed to the life, had not circumstances arisen to change my destiny. I often visited Sophie at her school, and spent many hours at the British Museum with Dr. Maty. I met at his house an Anglican minister, who, when I asked him how many sects there were in England, replied: 'Sir; no one can say for certain, for every week some die out, and fresh ones arise. It is enough if a man, whether he be of good faith or merely desirous of making a name and a fortune, instate himself in a good position where he can preach. He is immediately surrounded by a crowd. He explains some passage in the Bible, in his own fashion, and if he pleases the people they invite him to preach again the following Sunday, generally at some tavern. He declaims his doctrines with energy, gets talked about, his adherents augment in proportion to his popularity; they take to themselves a name, and a sect is formed which the government ignores until it begins to have political influence.'

I went one night, by chance, to the theatre at Marylebone,[1] the admission to which only cost one shilling. The

[1] Marylebone Gardens, an open-air entertainment much in vogue in Casanova's time. The Gardens were opposite Marylebone Church, where Hogarth placed his rake before the altar with the old maid. It was taken down in 1741. The gardens occupied the space between Beaumont and Devonshire Streets. The fee for admission was sixpence, not a shilling. Miss Trusler, the daughter of the proprietor, made twelvepenny tarts and almond cheese-cakes. She cannot have been good looking, or we should have heard of her from our Venetian. There was a ball-room and a theatre, something after the open-air style of 'Les Ambassadeurs' in Paris now. Casanova would feel at home in the London of the eighteenth century, as in the Paris of to-day.

Digitized by Microsoft®

spectators sat at little tables, and every one was obliged to order something, if it was only a pot of ale. I sat down by a young person, whose pretty face was not altogether strange to me. She let fall one of her gloves, and as I hastened to pick it up, she thanked me, in very good French.

'You are not English, madame,' said I, in a respectful voice.

'No, sir; I am Swiss, and an old acquaintance of yours.'

I looked at her more closely, and recognised Sara—my dear little friend Sara, whom I had known at Berne. Her mother, Madame M. F., and her elder sister were with her, while a little distance off sat Monsieur M. F., who was acting in London as chargé d'affaires for his canton. I had already called on the good gentleman, but had not been received. I attributed his coldness to his having got wind of certain little familiarities that had passed between me and his daughter three years previously. I spoke to the lady, and bowed to her husband, who returned my salutation coldly. When I asked her how I had offended him, she said Parsano had told him all sorts of horrors about me.

As I could not enter into explanations with him at that moment, I talked to the daughter, who had become a perfect beauty.

'Charming Sara,' I said, 'you have dazzled me so, that I must ask you a question. Do you remember our talks at Berne?'

'Yes.'

'Are you angry with me for remembering them too?'

'No.'

The waiter just then came to our table, and I asked madame if she would allow me to offer her some oysters. She winced a little and then accepted, not only the oysters, but everything else that was good on the bill of fare; among other things a leveret, which is a rare delicacy in London, excepting at the table of the rich, who preserve their own game. Champagne and liqueurs flowed freely, larks,

Digitized by Microsoft®

ortolans, truffles, preserves; nothing was wanting. I was not surprised when the waiter brought me a bill of ten guineas, but I was somewhat astonished to hear Monsieur M. F., who had not opened his mouth, except to eat like a Turk and drink like a Swiss, cry out loudly that it was too dear.

To show him I was not of his opinion, I gave the waiter half a guinea. The honest Swiss chargé d'affaires, so pale and serious an hour before, had become rubicund and affable; and Sara squeezed my hand under the table. I embraced Monsieur M. F., and as it was raining heavily, I begged them to accept my chariot, saying my negro would fetch me a chair. Monsieur M. F. accepted, on condition that he should occupy the chair, so I escorted the ladies home.

The mother asked me to go upstairs with them; they lodged on the second story. Everything was upside down. Madame M. F. and her eldest daughter having left the room on some pretext, I found myself alone with Sara. Without the slightest premeditation we sprang into each other's arms. Then we heard the father coming. If he had had any eyes in his head, he must have seen how disturbed I was, but he only poured forth a stream of vapid compliments, pressing my hand effusively. I wished him good night, and went off like a madman. When I got home I was in such a state of exaltation, that I had determined to leave England, and follow Sara to Switzerland.

Early in the morning I was at Monsieur M. F.'s door. I met him just as he was leaving the house.

'I am going to look for some rooms,' said he.

'They are found already,' I answered. 'My house is large, you must give me the preference. Let us go up and see madame and the young ladies.'

'They are in bed.'

'What does that matter?'

M. F. told his wife I wanted to let them some apartments, and we arranged that the whole family should take up their abode at my house that evening. After I had got home Sara

Digitized by Microsoft®

and her sister came to see me, and told me, in the most matter of fact manner, that the landlord would not allow the furniture to be removed, until they had paid him the forty guineas which they owed him. The father sent me a note of hand, asking if I could let him have the money. I took the note, and gave Sara fifty pounds, saying she could return me the balance. She thanked me without the slightest affectation. Towards evening, M. F.'s valet appeared with three great trunks, and a number of band-boxes, saying the family would follow. At nine o'clock they had not appeared. I went to see what had happened, and found them in the greatest consternation. Two men of doubtful appearance were in the dining-room. I guessed at once what had happened, but assuming a cheerful air, I said, 'Some obdurate creditor is causing you annoyance.'

'Quite true,' said the father. 'I have sent out to find bail.'

'Why did you not send to me?'

'Because, my generous friend, you are a foreigner, and bail is only accepted from a householder.'

I took Sara aside and asked her the amount of the debt. When she said one hundred and fifty pounds, I drew three bank-notes from my pocket-book and handed them to the bailiff, asking him if we were now at liberty to go to supper.

'Of course,' said he.

We all went off in the highest spirits, except the poor mother, who could not recover hers. Next morning I found her unpacking her trunks; she was going to sell everything, she said, except what was strictly needful.

'It is a pity to sell such beautiful linen and lace,' I said, 'for you will not get anything like its value.'

'May be,' she answered, 'but it is more satisfactory to pay one's debts than to have fine clothes.'

'You must not sell anything,' I exclaimed hastily; 'I am going back to Switzerland with you, you can pay me when you like.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Do you mean that, seriously?'

'Most seriously, madame, and here is the object of my desires.' At these words I took Sara's hand and covered it with kisses.

The girl blushed, but said nothing. The mother looked at us benevolently. Then she made a long speech, full of sense. She explained her position, the narrowness of her husband's means, the debts which he had contracted in London. She added that she was flattered at my request for Sara, but she did not think her husband would consent to the marriage. At the word marriage, which I had not expected, I saw Sara blush.

We did not speak of the matter for three days, when Monsieur M. F. told me that, while he thanked me for my honourable intentions, he must tell me his daughter was affianced to a merchant at Berne. In my heart I was not sorry, for, as the reader knows, the idea of marriage had always terrified me.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLVII

THE HANOVERIANS

I WAS walking in Hyde Park one day with Goudar, when he left me, to speak to two young ladies, who looked very pretty under their large hats. When he came back, he told me they were the daughters of a widow lady from Hanover, who had come to England with her family, in hopes of obtaining an indemnity from the Government for the damage done to her property by the army of the Duke of Cumberland. The mother was bed-ridden and saw no company; there were five daughters, whose ages ranged from twenty-two to fourteen.

'They are all pretty,' he said, 'and all speak German, English, and French equally well; they receive any one who chooses to visit them. I went to see them once, but as I could not afford to make them a present of any kind, I did not like to return, but if you like, we will go together.'

'I expect they are all Charpillons, but I will go; only I warn you I shall make no presents, unless I am pleased with my reception.'

We were shown into a large room where three of the girls were in the company of a man of sinister aspect. They replied politely to my compliments, but they seemed distracted and depressed. Goudar spoke to the man in a low voice, and then came over to me.

Business and pleasure.

'We have timed our visit badly,' he whispered. 'This man is a sheriff's officer, and has come to take the mother to prison unless she pays the twenty guineas she owes for rent.

Digitized by Microsoft®

It seems they haven't a penny; when the mother is in prison the landlord will turn the girls out into the street.'

'They can go to prison with their mother, and so will have no rent to pay.'

'Not at all, they can go and eat with her if they have money to pay for their food, but only prisoners are allowed to sleep in the place.'

I asked one of them where her other sisters were.

'They have gone to try and borrow, for the landlord insists on ready money.'

'How sad! what does your mother say?'

'She is crying, and ill as she is, they are going to send her to prison. The landlord says he will have her carried there.'

'Barbarous. But pretty as you are, it should not be difficult for you to find assistance. I will look after you if you will be grateful.'

'I don't know what you mean.'

'Your mother might be able to explain, perhaps. Go and consult her.'

'You don't know whom you are addressing, sir. We are respectable girls, and ladies of quality into the bargain.' Saying this, the little thing turned her back on me and wept. The other two, who were quite as pretty as she, said never a word. Goudar, speaking in Italian, told me, that unless we could help them we had better go, and I was inhuman enough to act on his suggestion. We met the two eldest sisters on the doorstep. I was struck by their beauty, and much surprised when one of them bowed to me, saying—

Five sweethearts at once.

'The Chevalier de Seingalt, I believe?'

'At your service, mademoiselle, and much distressed to find you in such trouble. Do you not know any one in London to whom you could appeal?'

She mentioned several names, among others Lord Baltimore and Lord Pembroke, and the Marquis Caraccioli.

'It seems incredible,' said I. 'I know the last-named

Digitized by Microsoft®

gentlemen, they are rich and generous. There must be some reason for their not helping you.'

'Yes, sir, there is a reason; these gentlemen will have nothing to say to us because we are too high principled.'

'That is to say, that as you will have no pity on them, they will have no pity on you.'

'Exactly.'

'Well, they are quite right, I agree with them. We leave you to enjoy your high principles, and take our money somewhere else. That you are so pretty is your misfortune; if you were plain, you would easily find twenty guineas; I would give them to you myself, for I should only be supposed to be doing an act of charity; as it is, people would say I gave them in the hope of reward, and would laugh at me for being so easily duped. How did you know my name?'

'I have seen you at Richmond with Miss Charpillon.'

'She cost me two thousand guineas, and all for nothing; but I shall profit by the lesson.'

The Hanoverian mother.

Just then her mother called from the next room, and the girl asked me if I would go in and speak to the invalid. I found her in bed; she was a woman of about forty-five, and must have once been beautiful. Her face was sad, but bore no traces of illness. Her eyes were bright and full of expression—in fact, everything about her told me to be on my guard; her manners were distinguished, but she reminded me, somehow, of Charpillon's mother.

'Sir,' she said, 'I heard what you said to my daughters, and you must own that you did not speak to them as a father.'

'I had no desire to play the part of a father towards them, madame. I have no pretension to virtue. If you want my help, you know the way to my purse. Adieu.'

'One moment, sir. My husband was the Count of ——, you see my girls are by birth entitled to your respect.'

'I will prove my respect for them by leaving.'

'Does not our sad situation inspire you with compassion?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Very much so, I would change it at once for you. You want twenty guineas, well and good! but if I give it you one of your fine young countesses must come with me.'

'What language to hold to a woman of my rank! No one has ever spoken to me like that before.'

'Forgive my frankness, but what is the use of rank in rags?'

'We are reduced to eating dry bread.'

'That is hard on countesses.'

'You seem to make fun of the title!'

'I do, I admit, but I have no wish to offend you. If you will allow me I will dine with the young ladies, and I will pay for their dinner and yours too.'

The girls are obdurate.

'You are an odd man! You would find my daughters sorry company, for I shall have been carried off to prison. You had better give them the money you would spend on the dinner.'

'No, madame, for I should have nothing for my money but I will have your arrest put off till to-morrow if you like, by that time, perhaps, Providence will come to your assistance.'

I sent Goudar off to the landlord, and for a guinea down and my word of honour that his lodgers should not leave the house, I obtained a delay of twenty-four hours. I ordered in a good dinner, and told the girls that they could rest in peace till the morrow. They devoured everything which was put before them, like savages after a long fast. As they were unused to wine, they all became more or less intoxicated, and as to the mother, she emptied a bottle of burgundy on her own account. In spite of this, however, their behaviour and their conversation was most circumspect. We supped gaily, and after a bowl of punch I left them, in love with the whole five of them.

I went to see them next morning about ten, and found that the two elder ones had already started on their quest.

'Am I to withdraw my bail, countess?' I asked.

'As you will, though I believe you to be incapable of such cruelty.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You are mistaken. Allow me to wish you good morning, and to leave you to your virtuous reflections.'

I went then and there to the landlord, and reclaimed my guinea. I then, tiger-hearted, went on to Lord Pembroke's. When I told him about the Hanoverians he burst out laughing.

He is still hard on them.

'They came to me yesterday,' he said, 'but I laughed in their faces. They are absolutely starving, but I would not give them a sixpence. I have spent ten or twelve pounds on them already, and have been as many times taken in. Baltimore the same. They are in the style of your Charpillon.'

'We shall see what will happen when the mother is under lock and key.'

I felt sure that they would try me again, and was not mistaken, for just as I was sitting down to supper, the four eldest ones appeared, weeping like Magdalenes; the youngest had gone with her mother to prison, they said, and they were turned out into the street.

'You shall sleep here,' I said; 'I promise you good beds and a good fire; but first, sit down and have supper with me.'

They eat heartily, but in sadness, and drank nothing but water.

'Your tears and your abstinence annoy me,' I said; 'you can go upstairs to the second story, where you will find all you require for the night, but you must leave in the morning before seven, and don't come back here.'

An hour later some one tapped at my door. It was the eldest sister. She argued with me, till, disgusted, I sent her away.

About seven o'clock in the morning I felt myself being gently shaken. On opening my eyes, I saw the second sister.

'What do you want?' I asked in a cold, stern voice.

'To touch your heart, and to ask you to keep us a few days longer. You can count on my gratitude. My sister has told me everything, but you must forgive her, for her heart is not in her keeping. She is betrothed to an Italian, who is now in prison for debt.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'And you too are in love with some one, I suppose?'

'No, I am not in love with any one as yet.'

'And could you love me, do you think?'

She cast down her eyes. I kissed her, saying, 'You have conquered.'

'My name is Victoria,' she answered, smiling.

'My dear Victoria, here are twenty guineas for you, go and set your mother free, and bring her here.'

The mother arrived in a bath chair about midday, and went straight to bed. I paid her a visit, and listened, without moving a muscle, to her long dissertation on my virtues. She wanted me to be persuaded that she thought all my actions proceeded from sheer philanthropy, and I left her undisturbed in her hypocrisy.

Victoria told me that her sister's betrothed was a Neapolitan, the Marchese Petina; that his debts only amounted to twenty pounds, but that the ministers of his country would not help him because he had left Naples without his sovereign's permission.

'Tell your sister,' I said, 'that if the minister assures me he is really the Marchese Petina, I will get him out of prison at once.'

After dining gaily with my five nymphs, I spent the evening with the Marchese Caraccioli, an amiable man whom I had known at Turin. He was able to assure me that the story of Petina was genuine, so when I returned home I gave the girl the money to release her lover, and bade her bring him to dine with us.

Next day, as I was just going for a ride, Augusta told me that her sister Hippolyta was an accomplished horsewoman, and would be glad to accompany me.

'I should be delighted,' said I, 'but has she a riding-habit?'

'No.'

'Then we must put it off till to-morrow.'

I sent for Pegu, the fashionable tailor, and ordered him to make her a habit at once, and the following day I took

Digitized by Microsoft®

her to Richmond Park, where she attracted a good deal of attention. At supper that evening I noticed that Gabrielle, the youngest of all, seemed silent and sulky. When I asked her what was the matter, she answered: 'I can ride as well as my sister.'

'Very well,' I answered, 'you shall go with me to-morrow.'

Gabrielle was only fifteen, and she was the one I liked best. We all three rode out next day, and went to Barnes, where we had lunch. On our way home we met Lord Pembroke, who at first did not recognise my companions. He was going to Saint Albans, and rode alongside of us. He asked me if I was in love with Hippolyta. I answered, 'No, with Gabrielle.'

'Then,' said he, 'you will allow me to come and see you?'

'With the greatest pleasure,' I answered, with an amicable '*shake hand*.'

Lord Pembroke's munificence.

I could not help sometimes giving way to melancholy, for my resources were drawing to an end. If my resources had been inexhaustible I should have asked nothing better than to remain as I was for ever. Lord Pembroke paid us a visit, and was struck with Augusta; he gave her a ten-pound note on leaving, which she accepted with a good grace. A few minutes after his departure the mother sent me a message, begging me to grant her a few minutes' conversation. She had never left her bed since her arrival; there she remained, eating, drinking, and sleeping, and doing nothing, not even reading. She told me, however, that she was always thinking of her children and their happiness, and spoke to me as follows:—

'I am convinced,' she said, 'that you love my daughters like a father, and I wish them to become as really your children as they are mine. I offer you my hand and heart. Marry me, and you will be their father, their master and mine. What do you say to my proposition?'

I bit my lips to keep from bursting out laughing. But

Digitized by Microsoft ®

my disgust and indignation at her effrontery restored my equilibrium. I saw that the old hypocrite had made her absurd proposition with an object. I replied that her offer was a most flattering one, but that I must have time to think it over.

A few days after this grotesque proposal, Lord Pembroke wrote to Augusta, and offered her fifty guineas a month, for three years, with rooms, board, servants and carriages, at his house at Saint Albans, if she would share the affection she had inspired in him. She consulted her mother, who declared she could give her no advice till she had discussed the matter with me, whom she was pleased to designate as the wisest and most virtuous of men. My readers are perhaps of a different opinion!

He signs a deed for Augusta.

It was decided that if Pembroke could induce a responsible merchant of the city of London to be guarantee as to his fulfilling his contract, Augusta would accept. The merchant was found, and I had the signal honour of affixing my signature to the deed, as a witness and friend of the family. The old woman, true to her system of keeping up appearances, solemnly declared that before long Augusta would be Lady Pembroke; with her appearance, manners and conduct, it could not be otherwise, and for this reason only did she give her consent.

The day that Augusta left my house I received a visit from a man who called himself Sir Frederick, and pretended to be the son of Theodore, Baron de Neuhof, King of Corsica, who, as all the world knew, had died miserably in London some years before.

'Do you know the Marchese Petina?' he asked me, 'for he wants me to discount a bill of two hundred pounds for him, and I want to know if he can meet it when it falls due.'

'Sir,' I answered, 'I have only known Petina since I have been in London, but the Neapolitan minister assures me he is really a marquis.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'If the people I have spoken to about the bill will not accept it, will you take it? You shall have it on most advantageous terms.'

'I have nothing to do with such things, and I wish you a very good morning.'

Next morning I received a letter from the betrothed of Petina. She told me that as she was convinced that her mother would never consent to their marriage, she had determined to go to Naples with him; they had enough money for the voyage, and once there, he would make her his wife. She begged me to break the news to her mother.

His pecuniary difficulties.

I felt in a measure responsible for this misfortune, for if I had left him in prison it would not have happened. I did everything for these sisters. They were well housed and well fed. I took them often to the theatre, and to pleasure parties in the country, and they adored me. Nevertheless, I was rapidly approaching pecuniary exhaustion. I had no more money, and I had sold all my best jewellery, only keeping my snuff-boxes, watches, and other bagatelles, which I treasured for sentimental reasons, and which would not have brought me a fiftieth part of their value had I parted with them. For the last month I had not paid my housekeeping bills or my wine merchant. I was in a state of indolent indifference when Victoria came to me and told me dismally that her mother had decided to return to Hanover.

'Without saying anything to me? She would leave my house as she would an inn, after having paid the bill?'

'On the contrary, she would like a private talk with you.'

I went up to her room, and she complained in the most affectionate manner that I rarely went to see her. Then she said solemnly, that as I had refused her hand she could not remain with me without giving rise to scandal. She thanked me for all my kindness to her daughters, adding that she must now go away with the three remaining to her, for fear they should leave her as the others had done.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I have a pretty house in the country,' she said, 'and if you will come there you are welcome to live with us as long as you choose.'

I thanked her, saying, that for the moment my business prevented me from accepting her invitation.

A few days after Victoria came to tell me that they were about to embark, that in three hours they would leave London. I said good-bye to them at the house door, not wishing to have any more private interviews. The mother evidently expected me to make her a parting present. When she saw that I had no intention of doing so, she told me, with a sudden and doubtless involuntary burst of sincerity, that she had a hundred and fifty guineas in her purse, which I had given the girls at different times.

After their departure I shut myself up, and spent three days making up my accounts. I had spent in one month all the money I had received by the sale of my jewels, and I was four hundred guineas in debt. I sold my diamond cross, six or seven gold snuff-boxes, all my watches except one, and two big trunks full of clothes. When I had paid my housekeeping bills, I had eighty pounds left over; all that remained of a fine fortune which I had dissipated like a fool, or like a sage, or a mixture of both.

He writes to M. de Bragadin for supplies.

I left the beautiful house in which I had led such a merry life, and took a humble lodging at a guinea a week, attended only by my negro, whom I believed to be faithful. I then wrote to M. de Bragadin, asking him to remit me two hundred sequins. I was sure of getting money from Venice, for I had not drawn any for over five years, and I waited calmly. About a fortnight after the departure of the Hanoverians, and towards the end of February, I went to dine at the 'Canon' tavern, as I often did. Just as I was sitting down to table, the Baron von Stenau came in, and begged me to join him and his mistress in the adjoining room. She was an Englishwoman, whom I had already met, and who spoke Italian well. We dined together very gaily. Towards the

Digitized by Microsoft®

The Baron de Stenau.

end of dinner she took up a dice-box. 'Let us throw for a guinea,' she said; 'the winner shall spend it on oysters and champagne.' After which, 'Let us throw again, whoever loses shall pay for the dinner.' She lost.

Not wishing to remain in her debt, I proposed to throw with the baron; he threw and lost, lost again, and after half an hour he owed me a hundred guineas.

'My dear baron,' I said, 'luck is against you, you had better leave off.'

With a curse at the luck, and at me for wanting to spare him, he got up, took his hat and stick, and going to the door said: 'When I come back I shall pay you.'

As soon as he was gone the woman said, 'I am sure you meant to go halves with me?'

'Certainly,' said I laughing, 'I will give you fifty guineas when the baron pays me.'

By and by he came back.

'I have been to the bank,' he said, 'to get this letter of credit cashed, and though it is drawn on one of the first houses in Lisbon, they refused to give me the money.'

I took the letter, which was endorsed, and I saw that the figures ran into millions. The baron, with a smile at my surprise, explained that these millions were Portuguese *milreis*, making in all about five hundred pounds sterling.

'If the signature is a good one, I can get it cashed to-morrow,' I said.

'In that case I will make it payable to your order.'

He gave me his address and we parted. I took the letter next morning to Bosanquet, who said that his employer, Mr. Leigh, wanted some letters on Cadiz. On looking at the one I had, he declared it was better than gold, and counted me out five hundred and twenty guineas, after I had put my name to it. The baron paid me my hundred guineas, and we dined together.

A week after this good action I was taken ill. I was already harassed and troubled with difficulties of every

Digitized by Microsoft®

kind, and I was on the eve of a long sea-voyage. I determined to go to the house of some good surgeon and remain there till I was cured. With a view to this, I packed up my trunks; the greater part of my linen, however, was at my washerwoman's, who lived some six miles out of London, and who washed for all the first families in town. The very day I was going to the surgeon's, I received a letter from Leigh, containing these words:—

A false letter of credit.

'The letter of credit you gave me was a forgery. You must repay me at once the five hundred and twenty guineas I gave you for it; if the man who gave it to you does not reimburse you, have him arrested, but for pity's sake do not force me to arrest you, as your life would be involved.'

For once in my life I was glad to be alone. I flung myself on my bed, and broke out into a cold sweat. I trembled like a leaf; I saw the gallows before me. There was no one in London who would give me five hundred guineas; given a month's delay, I could get the money from Venice, but I knew how such things were managed in England. I should be tried, condemned, and perhaps hanged before I could receive a reply from my friends. A burning fever took the place of my cold terror. With two loaded pistols in my pockets, I went off to the Baron von Stenau's, determined to blow out his brains if he did not give me back the money. When I got to his house I was told he had left for Lisbon three days before. I may mention that he was hanged in Lisbon four months later.

I was now in a terrible position. I had only twelve guineas in my pocket; I must raise some money somehow. I dared not go to Bosanquet, or Vanhel, or Salvador, who might already have got wind of the affair, so I went to a small Venetian banker named Trèves, who had been recommended to me by Count Algaroti of Venice. I got him to discount a letter of credit for a hundred sequins, drawn on Dandolo. Leigh had given me twenty-four hours, and I knew the honest Englishman would be as good as his

Digitized by Microsoft®

word. I did not want to lose my linen or three fine suits of clothes which were at my tailor's, still I had no time for shillyshallying. I asked Jarbe if he would rather I should make him a present of twenty guineas and dismiss him there and then from my service, or if he would prefer to remain with me and join me somewhere or other a week later.

The negro's fidelity.

'I would rather remain in your service,' he said, 'and join you wherever you may be. When do you leave?'

'In an hour, but my life depends on your silence.'

'Why do you not take me with you?'

'Because I want you to bring my linen and my clothes. I will give you the money for your livery.'

'I do not need it; you can repay what I spend when I join you.' Saying this, he went out of the room, and returned with sixty guineas in a bag.

'Take this, sir, please, I have credit here, and can get as much again if I need it.'

'Thank you, thank you, my friend, but I do not need it, though I shall never forget your devotion.'

My tailor lived in the next street, but as I found my clothes were not yet cut out, I arranged with him to take over the cloth. I also sold him the gold braid which was to have trimmed them, and for which he gave me thirty guineas.

He leaves England.

I paid up a week's rent in lieu of notice, said good-bye to Jarbe, and went off with Daturi, a godson of mine who had claimed acquaintance. I am not sure he wasn't my son. I had lent him money when I had it to lend. I was so ill that we were obliged to stop all night at Rochester. I was in a high fever and almost delirious, and owed my life to Daturi's kind care. On his own authority, he sent for a surgeon and had me bled, which I am convinced saved me from apoplexy. We arrived at Dover early next morning, and had only half an hour in that town, as the packet was sailing at once. I employed this half-hour writing to Jarbe, and telling him

Digitized by Microsoft®

where he would find me at Calais; but though my London landlady, Mrs. Mercier, wrote to me saying she had given him the letter with her own hands, he never came. We shall meet him again in two years' time. We got to Calais in six hours, and I went to the 'Bras d'Or,' and straight to bed. I was now so ill that my life was in danger; on the third day I was at death's door. I was bled a second, a third, and a fourth time, after which I fell into a stupor, from which I did not revive for over twenty-four hours. It was fifteen days before I could leave my bed.

I was terribly weak, and very sad and downcast, humiliated at the manner of my flight from London, indignant at Jarbe's infidelity, and angry at having to give up the idea of going to Portugal. Daturi was my only consolation; he waited on me like a son, and a servant combined. We posted to Dunkirk, where I saw S——, the merchant who married Mlle. de la Meure, the niece of the mistress of Tiretta. He asked me to dine with them and their three children. The eldest interested me. It amused me to think that I had planted scions all over Europe!

At Tournay I noticed a couple of grooms exercising some handsome horses; when I asked to whom they belonged, they told me to the Comte de Saint Germain,[1] the adept. 'He has

[1] This celebrated adventurer, who was Casanova's predecessor in the good graces of Madame d'Urfé, was at St. Petersburg in 1762, and is supposed to have played an important part in the conspiracy against the Emperor Peter. From Russia he went to Germany. He died at Schleswig in 1780, where he and the Landgrave, Charles of Hesse, had devoted themselves to the study of secret sciences. Of his parentage nothing is known. He is supposed to have been a Portuguese Jew, and to have been employed as a spy by one of the European courts. Grimm says he was the most accomplished man he ever knew. He spoke all languages, and his knowledge of history was vast; he was also undoubtedly a great chemist. He was protected for many years by Madame de Pompadour and the ladies of the court of Louis Quinze. He professed to have the secret of eternal youth, and admitted to an acquaintance with Pontius Pilate, whom he had met at Grenoble in exile, but found him so insipid and insignificant—this was before the publication of the Evangels, which had dragged him into notice—that he had preserved no recollection of him. He had a lock of hair of Herod of Galilee, and knew the Emperor Tiberius intimately.

Digitized by Microsoft®

been here for a month,' they said, 'but he never goes out, and he will not see anybody; he is quite inaccessible.'

This of course inspired me with a desire to see him, and I sent him a note asking if he would receive me. I kept his reply, and still have it.

'My occupation prevents me from seeing any one, but you are an exception. Come at the time which suits you best; you will be shown to my room; you need not pronounce my name or your own. I do not offer to share my dinner with you, for my food would not suit any one but myself, and you least of all, that is, if you have kept your old appetite.'

Interview with the adept Saint Germain.

I went to see him the following evening, and found he had grown a long beard. He was surrounded by about twenty gourds full of liquids, some of which were going through a process analogous to that of digestion, on hot sand. He told me he was working at dyes to amuse himself, and that he was going to establish a hat factory to please the Comte de Cobentzel. Speaking of Madame d'Urfé, he said, 'She poisoned herself with an overdose of the universal panacea; and her will shows that she believed she was about to be a mother at the time of her death. She might really have been so, had she consulted me; it is a very difficult operation, but a very sure one if properly performed, although science has not yet arrived at determining the sex of the child.'

He showed me a white liquid in a well-corked phial, which he called *ato éther*; this he claimed was the universal essence of nature, and the proof of this he said was that the spirit escaped if one made the tiniest pin-prick in the wax. He gave me a pin, and I pierced the wax; in a moment the phial was empty.

On his first meeting with La Pompadour he promised her that he would give her a philtre, which, if it could not make her younger, would at least prevent her growing older. He was expelled from France because of his interference in the dispute between the houses of France and Austria.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Superb!' I said, 'but what is the use of it?'

'That I cannot tell you; it is my secret.'

Anxious to astonish me still more, he asked me to give him some copper money. I handed him a piece of twelve sols.

He placed it on a piece of hot coal, dropped a little black grain on it, and then blew with a glass tube; in a minute it became red hot.

'Wait,' he said, 'until it cools. Now take it; it belongs to you.'

I picked it up, and behold it was a gold louis! I am quite sure he juggled mine away and substituted this in its place. I did not want to tell him so, in so many words; at the same time I did not choose him to think he had taken me in.

'The next time,' I said, 'I must watch the operation more carefully, so as to note the transformation.'

'Those who doubt my science,' he replied, 'are not worthy that I should speak of it to them.'

We never met again. This celebrated impostor died at Schleswig five or six years ago. The louis was a genuine one, and I gave it to Field-Marshal Lord Keith, whom I met a couple of months after at Berlin.

At Wesel I met the English general, Beckw——; he bought my postchaise from me, as the horses of the country I was now entering are not accustomed to shafts. He was garrisoned at Wesel, and he persuaded me to consult his doctor, Dr. Pipers. This young man, who was kindness itself, advised me to take up my abode at his house, promising that his mother and sisters would nurse me, and that in six weeks I should be completely cured. I was carried there in a bath-chair, holding a handkerchief over my face, for I was ashamed to let the ladies see me. Daturi undressed me and put me to bed.

The young doctor's medicaments were most efficacious; in one month I was all right, though I was as thin as a

Digitized by Microsoft®

skeleton. My poor Daturi was less fortunate, for during my illness he made friends with the soldiers of the guard, and then fell out with them. They set upon him, and beat him so ferociously, that he was brought home in a pitiable state, covered with blood, and with three teeth knocked out. As soon as he was well enough, I sent him off to Brunswick with a letter to General Salmon. The teeth he had lost made it impossible for him to be forced to enlist, which was some small consolation.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CHAPTER XLVIII

THE GREAT FREDERICK

MADAME DE RUMAIN, who had heard I wanted money, sent me a hundred florins, which I received the day before I left Wesel. She said I could pay her back at my convenience, but, unfortunately, she died before I was able to do so.

In Brunswick.

'I was not rich, and in very poor health, otherwise I should have stayed longer in Brunswick, for the city delighted me. It was *en fête*, as the Prince Royal of Prussia had just arrived from Potsdam to visit his future wife, the daughter of the reigning duke, whom he married the following year. The court was giving the most magnificent entertainments, to which the hereditary prince, who is now sovereign of the duchy, did me the honour to invite me. I had met him at Madam Cornelys's in Soho Square.

The prince had a small army of six thousand infantry, all very well set up. These troops were to pass in review on a plain some distance from the city, and I went to see them; it rained the whole time. There were a great many people there: many ladies in fine toilettes, all the nobility, and many foreigners. I saw the Honourable Miss Chudleigh among others, and she did me the honour of speaking to me, and asking me when I had left London. She was dressed in a simple robe of Indian muslin, and could have had nothing under it but a thin batiste chemise. She got wet through with the rain, and the thin garments clung to her beautiful form till she might as well, or better, have been naked, but she did not seem to mind. The other ladies sheltered from the deluge in tents.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I had occasion to discount a letter at Brunswick, and gave it to a Jew, who let me have the amount, less two per cent. The letter was to the order of the Chevalier de Seingalt, and naturally I endorsed it in this name. The following day the Jew came and told me I must return him the money, or find him bail for the amount, until he heard from the banker on whom it was drawn. I told him to leave me in peace, he had nothing to fear; but he replied, insolently, that he must have the money or the guarantee, adding, 'for you are well known here.' At these words the blood flew to my head, and seizing my cane I gave him a sound thrashing.

Dealings with a Jew at Brunswick.

Next day, when I was walking in the town, I met the prince, accompanied only by a groom.

'So you are going to leave us, chevalier,' he said.

'In two or three days, your highness.'

'So I heard from a Jew, who came to complain to me that you had beaten him because he asked for a guarantee of a letter of credit he had cashed for you.'

'Your highness, I own I acted hastily, but I could not, in reason, be expected to withdraw my letter, or give him bail for it; he insulted me by asking such a thing.'

'He says he would not have cashed it had you not mentioned my name; and that you signed it with a name which does not belong to you.'

'Both accusations are false, your highness. The name of Seingalt is very truly mine.'

'Well, anyhow, we have to deal with a Jew who has been beaten, and who fears to be cheated. He would like you to remain here till he hears from Amsterdam if your letter be genuine or not, but I shall take it out of his hands this morning; so you are free to leave when you like. *Au revoir*, chevalier, and *bon voyage!*'

So saying, the prince rode off without giving me time to answer. I might have told him that he was casting a slur on my integrity, by taking my letter out of the Jew's hands, and that I should prefer his not interfering in the matter. It is

Digitized by Microsoft®

not enough for a prince to be kind-hearted, generous, and magnanimous, as was the Duke of Brunswick. He ought to have tact as well, and refrain from wounding the feelings of the person to whom he wishes to be civil.

The library of Wolfenbüttel.

Profoundly hurt, I walked slowly away, pondering the prince's speech, especially over his *bon voyage*! In a royal mouth such words sounded very much like an order to depart. After reflection I determined that I would neither go nor stay, so I packed my trunks, paid my bill, and without bidding farewell to any one, went off to Wolfenbüttel with the intention of remaining a week there, and then returning to Brunswick; this I thought a good way out of my difficulty. It was soothing to my dignity, and at the same time agreeable, as Wolfenbüttel then possessed the third greatest library in the world. I was sure I should not be dull.

The amiable librarian not only placed a man at my disposal to find any books I might require, but actually allowed me to study magnificent manuscripts at my own rooms.

(I carried away from Wolfenbüttel many notions about the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which are not to be found in any treatise on these works, and of which the great Pope himself was ignorant. A part is to be found in my translation of the *Iliad*; the rest will remain here, and will probably be lost with my other documents, for I shall not burn my papers, not even these Memoirs, though I have often thought and spoken of doing so.)

I was delighted to find on my return to Brunswick that no one knew I had been away; it was supposed in the town that I had withdrawn the letter of credit from the Jew's hands. The time had come now for him to have received the reply from Amsterdam, and I was not astonished to see the son of Israel appear while I was dining with several friends, and humbly beg my pardon for having doubted the validity of my signature.

'You have been sufficiently punished,' I said; and with a profound bow he withdrew.

Digitized by Microsoft®

From Brunswick I went to Magdeburg, and then on to Berlin, without stopping at Potsdam, as the king was not there. The roads are terrible in Prussia; they were in so bad a state, that it took me three days to do eight miserable little German miles. Prussia is a country in which gold and industry could achieve marvels, but I doubt if it will ever become a prosperous country.

The first visit I paid in Berlin was to Calsabigi, the younger brother of the one who was my partner in Paris, in the lottery. The one whom I knew in Berlin had left Paris, with his wife (who was always called Madame la Générale de la Motte.) He was a good talker, and he persuaded the King of Prussia to let him establish a lottery in his states, promising his Majesty a revenue of at least two hundred thousand crowns out of the profits. The lottery had been running for two years, and up to then everything had gone well, but the king was in continual terror lest luck should turn against him. He informed Calsabigi that he would not have anything more to do with it, and would content himself with drawing half the amount. I arrived at Calsabigi's house the very day the king had signified his intention of withdrawing his support.

A lottery scheme.

'Superstition apart,' cried Calsabigi, 'it is the goddess of chance which brings you here! I will guarantee you ten thousand crowns a year if you can induce the king to change his mind.'

He then proceeded to recall to my memory the time, seven years before, when I had had wit enough to persuade the whole Council of the École Militaire to collaborate with me in my schemes. 'What you did once you can do again,' he declared. I laughed at his illusion, and pitied him, pointing out to him the impossibility of convincing a man whose mind replied to every argument addressed to it by the invincible one of 'I am afraid, and I do not wish to be afraid.'

At the last drawing which took place under the king's guarantee, all Berlin rejoiced, for the lottery lost twenty thousand crowns. The king sent the money to Calsabigi,

Digitized by Microsoft®

saying he had foreseen what would happen, and that he was thankful to have got out of it so cheaply.

The fifth day of my arrival in Berlin, I went to present my respects to the Lord Marshal, who, since the death of his brother, had become Lord Keith.[1] The last time I had seen him was in London, when he was returning from Scotland, where he had been to retake possession of his estates which had been confiscated because of his devotion to the Stuarts. His rehabilitation was due to the intercession of Frederick the Great. At the time I am writing of, Lord Keith was living in Berlin, resting on his laurels, beloved and cherished by the king, but taking no active part in politics, as he was over eighty years of age, but simple and charming as ever. He received me kindly, and expressed a hope that I should remain some time in Berlin, as he knew, to a certain extent, the vicissitudes of my past life. I replied that I would gladly settle there if the king would give me a suitable appointment; but when I asked him to speak to the king for me, he replied that that would do more harm than good. 'His majesty piques himself on knowing men better than any one else. He likes to judge them himself; sometimes he discovers merit when no one else sees any, and sometimes *vice versa*.'

[1] Casanova makes a confusion here between the two brothers—George, tenth Earl of Keith, and Francis, Field-Marshal Keith. It was the former, Governor of Neuchâtel, whom he knew. The estates of the Keith family were confiscated for the part the two brothers took in the rebellion of 1715. Through the influence of his brother with Frederick the Great, George was made Governor of Neuchâtel, and also by the influence of Frederick the attainder on the estates was reversed. He was the friend and patron of Rousseau, who speaks of him with great affection. 'I went,' he says, in *The Confessions*, 'with Monsieur Martinet, to see him. The venerable aspect of this illustrious and virtuous Scotchman moved my heart greatly, and from that moment began between us the strong attachment which, for my part, has always remained the same, though traitors have tried to vilify me in his eyes.' According to Rousseau, the inhabitants of Neuchâtel did not appreciate the haughty but kind-hearted old man at his proper value. Further on he relates how, tired of their ingratitude, Keith left them for his castle of Keith Hall, near Aberdeen, where he invited Rousseau to join him. He did not, however, remain long in Scotland, but returned to Berlin, where he died in 1788.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He advised me to write to the king and beg an interview. 'When you speak to him, you can say that you know me, and he will then probably ask me about you; you may be sure that I shall say nothing but what is to your credit.'

'I, my lord, write to a king to whom I have no introduction? I could not think of it.'

'But you wish to speak to him, do you not?'

'Certainly.'

'That is enough; your letter need contain nothing but the expression of your desire.'

'Will the king answer me?'

'Without doubt, for he answers everybody. He will tell you when it will please him to receive you. Take my advice, and let me know how you get on.'

I did as he suggested, and wrote a simple and respectful letter, asking when and where I might present myself to his majesty. The day but one after I received a reply signed Frederick, acknowledging the receipt of my letter, and saying I should find him at four o'clock that day in the gardens at Sans Souci.

In the gardens of Sans Souci.

As my readers may imagine, I was delighted at having obtained a rendezvous, and arrived at the palace an hour before the appointed time, very simply dressed in black. I entered the courtyard, and as I did not see any one, not even a sentinel, I went up a short staircase, and opening a door, found myself in a picture-gallery. A guardian came up and offered to show me the collection.

'I did not come here to admire these works of art,' I said, 'but to speak to the king, who told me he would be in the garden.'

'At this moment he is at his concert, playing the flute. 'Tis his dessert after dinner, and he treats himself to it every day. Did he fix any hour?'

'Yes, four o'clock, but he may have forgotten.'

'He never forgets. He will be punctual, and you had better wait for him in the garden.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I had not been there long, when I saw him approaching, followed by his secretary and a fine spaniel. As soon as he saw me he pronounced my name, at the same time taking off his bad old hat; he then asked, in a terrible voice, what I wanted.

The king interviews the adventurer

I stood looking at him in silence.

'Well, can't you speak? Isn't it you who wrote to me?'

'Yes, sire; but now I can't remember what I had to say. I did not think the majesty of a king could so dazzle my senses. I shall be better prepared in future. My lord marshal ought to have warned me.'

'Ah! he knows you, does he? Come, let us walk about. What did you wish to say? What do you think of this garden?'

He ordered me to speak of his garden! I should have said I knew nothing of gardens to any one else, but if he chose to think me a connoisseur I must fain pretend to be one. At the risk of exposing my ignorance, I replied that it was superb.

'But,' he said, 'the gardens at Versailles are far finer.'

'I own it, sire; but that is because of the fountains.'

'True; but it is not my fault. There is no water here. I have spent more than three hundred thousand crowns, but without success.'

'Three hundred thousand crowns, sire! If your majesty spent that sum, there should have been abundance of water.'

'Ah! ah! I see you are a hydraulic architect.'

Could I tell him he was mistaken? I was afraid of displeasing him, so I simply bent my head. This could be taken for yes or no. Thank God, he did not continue to talk on this subject, or I should have been terribly put to it, for I did not know the very rudiments of hydraulics.

Still walking up and down, and turning his head right and left, he asked me what the Venetian forces, naval and military, amounted to. Now I was on my own ground. 'Twenty men of war, sire, and a large number of galleys.'

'And what land forces?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Seventy thousand men, sire, all subjects of the republic; and counting all that, only one man from each village.'

'That is not true. I suppose you want to amuse me with your fables. You must be a financier; tell me, what do you think of the taxes?'

This was the first interview I had ever had with royalty. Considering his style, his abrupt change of subject, and his sudden digressions, I felt as though I had been called on to act in one of those improvised Italian comedies in which, if the actor stops short for a word, the pit and the gallery hiss him mercilessly. I immediately assumed the style of a financier, and replied that I was acquainted with the theory of taxation.

'That is what I want,' he replied, 'for the practice does not concern you.'

A discussion on taxation.

'There are three kinds of taxes, taking into consideration their effects: one is ruinous, one is unfortunately necessary, and the third is always excellent.'

'That is good; go on.'

'The ruinous tax is the royal tax; the necessary one is the military one; and the excellent one is the popular tax.'

I wanted to throw him off his beat a little, as I had not got up my subject.

'The royal tax, sire, is the one which empties the purses of the subjects to swell the coffers of the sovereign.'

'And that is the ruinous one, you say?'

'Always, sire, for it stops the circulation of money, which is the soul of commerce and the backbone of the state.'

'Yet you consider the army tax necessary?'

'Unfortunately necessary, for war is a dire calamity.'

'Perhaps. And how about the popular tax?'

'It is always excellent, for what the king takes from his people with one hand, he gives them back with the other, turning it into useful channels, protecting science and art, and so contributing to the general social well-being; in fact, the king adds to general happiness by employing the money drawn from the taxes as his wisdom dictates.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'There is a good deal of truth in what you say. No doubt you know Calsabigi?'

I ought to know him, sire, for we established the Genoese lottery in Paris together, seven years ago.'

'And under what head would you class that tax, if you admit it to be one?'

'It is one, sire, and not one of the least important. It is a good tax, if the king spends the profits in a useful manner.'

'But supposing he loses?'

'One chance in fifty, sire.'

'Is that the result of an exact calculation?'

'As exact, sire, as all political calculations.'

'They are often wrong.'

'They are never wrong, sire, if God remains neutral.'

'Why drag the Deity into such a question?'

'Let us say then, sire, luck, or destiny.'

'That is better. Perhaps I agree with you about the moral calculations, but I do not like your Genoese lottery. It seems to me a mere swindle, and I would not have anything more to do with it, even if I were certain to win always.'

'Your majesty is right, for the public would never support lotteries were they not led away by false security.'

Then he tried one or two other points, but I met him without flinching. Suddenly he stopped short and looked me over from head to foot.

A compliment from Frederick the Great.

'Do you know that you are a very handsome man?'

'Is it possible, sire, that after a long scientific dissertation, your majesty can credit me with merely the qualities which distinguish your majesty's grenadiers?'

The king smiled, with kind malice, then said: 'As it seems that Lord Keith knows you, I will speak to him about you.'

He then took off his hat again, for he was never chary of his bows, and I, making him a profound reverence, withdrew.

Three or four days after the lord marshal told me the king was very pleased with me, and had said he would try and find me something to do.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I was curious to know what form this employment would take, but there was nothing to do but wait. I was not sorry to remain in Berlin, for time passed pleasantly enough there. Calsabigi had obtained permission to continue the lottery on his own account; the first drawing brought him in a hundred thousand crowns profit. He paid off the greater part of his debts, and gave his mistress the promised ten thousand crowns. His successes continued for two or three years, but he ended in bankruptcy, and died poor in Italy.

At the time I am writing of, the Duchess of Brunswick, Frederick's sister, paid him a visit. She was accompanied by her daughter, the one who the following year married the Prince Royal of Prussia. On this occasion the king came to Berlin, and ordered a performance of the Italian opera at his little theatre at Charlottenburg. I saw him there, dressed in a suit of lustrine, with gold braid on all the seams, and black silk stockings. He was really a comical figure, and looked more like a stage grandfather than a mighty monarch. He came into the theatre with his hat under his arm, leading his sister by the hand. Every one was staring at him, for only a few very old men could remember having seen him clad in anything but riding-boots and uniform.

At Potsdam I saw the king commanding the first battalion of grenadiers of the guards in person. This battalion was composed of men chosen for their looks and their bravery. The room in which I lodged at the inn was opposite a corridor, up and down which the king passed when he went to the château. The shutters of the windows in this corridor were always closed, and the landlady told us that once when the pretty dancer Reggiana was lodging in the room we were then occupying, the king chanced to see her through the window *en deshabillé*, and was so shocked that he ordered the shutters to be put up; and though the incident was four years old at the time of our visit they had never been taken down. The king was no doubt afraid of being treated as severely as la Barbarina had treated him. We saw a portrait of this lady

Digitized by Microsoft®

in his bedroom, and one of La Cochois, who was the sister of the actress who became the Marquise d'Argens, and one of the Empress Maria Theresa, with whom he had been in love, principally, I imagine, from a desire to call himself emperor.

Rooms in the castle were a contrast to that in which the king slept. A miserable little room, with a small bed hidden behind a screen; no slippers, no dressing-gown, only an old nightcap, which a *valet de chambre* told us Frederick put on when he had a cold, and on the top of which he wore his hat. It must have been inconvenient for sleeping in. A table stood before a sofa, covered with paper, pens, an inkstand, and some half-burnt copybooks. The same valet told us these books had contained the history of the last war; and some of them having been burnt by accident, the king had given up the work. He probably began it again later on, for it was published immediately after his death.

The king makes him an offer.

About five or six weeks after my interview with Frederick, Lord Keith informed me that his majesty had accorded me an official position; it was that of governor or tutor to the corps of Pomeranian Cadets, which he had just formed. The number of the cadets was limited to fifteen, and there were to be five tutors; thus each one would have three pupils. The pay was six hundred crowns, and food at the cadets' table. The duties consisted in following the cadets wherever they went, even to court, when a braided uniform must be worn. I was told I must make up my mind at once; my four confrères were already installed, and his majesty liked things to be settled without delay. I asked Lord Keith where the college was, and promised him an answer for the following day.

I had need of all my self-command to keep from bursting out laughing when this absurd proposition was made me; but my surprise was still greater when I saw the habitation of these fifteen noblemen from wealthy Pomerania. Three or four large halls almost without furniture, and several whitewashed bedrooms, each of which contained a wretched little bed, a

Digitized by Microsoft®

deal table, and two chairs in the same wood. The cadets, who were from twelve to thirteen years of age, were dirty and shock-headed, tightly buttoned up in a scanty uniform, which showed up their dull, bucolic physiognomies. As for the other tutors, I took them for servants; they eyed me in an alarmed and aggressive manner, not daring to suppose I could be their expected colleague.

I hastened to Lord Keith's, anxious to tell him of the brilliant offer that had been made me through his interposition. The good old man said I was right to refuse such an occupation, but that I ought, all the same, to thank the king before leaving Berlin. I told him that I did not much care about presenting myself again to the king, so he promised to make my apologies for me.

He refuses it.

I decided to go to Russia, and I began to make preparations for the voyage. Baron von Treidel offered me an introduction to his sister, the Duchess of Courland, and I wrote to M. de Bragadin for letters to a banker in Petersburg, who would pay me monthly the sum necessary for my maintenance. Chance sent me a servant, a man named Lambert, from Lorraine, who gave himself out as a deserter from his regiment, on account of a quarrel he had had with his superior officer. I found out afterwards that this was a trumped-up story; but at the time he interested me.

I decided after all to take Lord Keith's advice, and see the king again before leaving. So I went to Potsdam with the Venetian, Baron Bodisson, who had a picture by Andrea del Sarto, which he wished to sell. Frederick was on parade with his troops when I arrived. He came up to me, and asked familiarly when I thought of going to Petersburg.

Second meeting with Frederick.

'In five or six days, sire, if your majesty permits.'

'Well, good luck to you, but what do you hope to do in that country?'

'What I hoped to have done in this, sire: please the master of it.'

'Have you been recommended to the empress?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No, sire. I have only an introduction to a banker.'

'That is better worth having. If you pass through here on your return, come and tell me the news from Russia. Adieu!'

'Adieu, sire.'

Journey to Russia.

I had two hundred ducats when I left Berlin, but I had foolishly gambled away a hundred at Dantzig; when we reached Mitau, I had only three ducats left; nevertheless, I went to the best inn. The next morning I called on Herr von Kaiserling, who undertook to present my letter to the Duchess of Courland. He left me with his wife, who ordered chocolate to be served me; it was brought by a pretty young Polish maid-servant. She stood in front of me with downcast eyes while I drank it, and her appearance and manners charmed me, so that I slipped my three ducats under the saucer when I replaced it on the tray. It was a most foolish piece of ostentation, but as my readers know by this time, I never could resist the caprice of the moment.

Von Kaiserling brought me an invitation from the duchess to supper and a ball, which she was giving that night. I accepted the supper, but refused the ball, saying as an excuse that I had no suitable dress, my best suits being summer ones. Half an hour after, the duchess sent word that I could go in a domino, 'which,' said Kaiserling, 'you can easily hire from a Jew.' He added that masks were not originally intended to be worn, but that the duchess had sent word to her guests that they must wear them, so as to enable a foreigner who had just arrived without his baggage to be present.

I was much embarrassed, but my usual good fortune came to my assistance. A Jew presented himself at my inn, and asked me if I had any gold Fredericks with me, as he would change them for me without my paying discount.

'I have no need of your services,' I said, 'my money is all in ducats.'

'I know, sir, and you part with them very easily.'

Not understanding his allusion, I stared at him. He

Digitized by Microsoft®

went on to say that he would give me ten hundred ducats if I would be so good as to change them into roubles for him at Petersburg. I was much surprised at the credulity of this man, and told him, in an affectedly indifferent tone, that I would take a hundred from him, for which I gave him a receipt and a note drawn on Demetrio Papane Lopolo, the banker. He went off, promising to send me a magnificent domino for the ball. When Lambert came in, he told me the landlord was telling every one that I was throwing money out of the windows. The Jew had told him I had given a chambermaid three ducats for bringing me a cup of chocolate. This, then, was the key to the enigma!

I went to court at the appointed hour, and von Kaiserling presented me to the duchess, who presented me to the duke, the celebrated Biron, or Birlen, once the favourite of the Empress Anne Ivanovna, and Regent of Russia on the death of that sovereign, and afterwards condemned to twenty years in Siberia. He was over six feet high, and was still a very handsome man.

The ball opened with a *polonaise*, which I danced with the duchess, after which I danced a *contredanse* with Mlle. de Manteuffel, one of the prettiest of the maids-of-honour. I sat next to the duchess at supper, and was, in fact, the only cavalier for eleven ladies. They were all respectable dowagers, and had long left their charms behind them. The duchess was most attentive to me, and after supper I was given a glass of what I took to be tokay, and which I afterwards found to be nothing but very old English ale.

He dines with the Duke of Courland.

The next day but one I dined with the duke. There were no ladies present, and the conversation turned on mines and minerals, and though I knew nothing whatever of these subjects, I was fool enough to talk as though I had studied them all my life. An old chamberlain, who had the direction of all the mines in the duchy, saw fit to contradict some of my statements, but the duke took my part. After dinner

Digitized by Microsoft®

he asked me, if I was not in a great hurry to get to Petersburg, to spare him a fortnight, as he would like me to visit his mining establishments and write down my observations on them. I consented, and it was arranged that I was to set off on my tour of inspection next day, and that the old chamberlain was to fetch me with a carriage and six horses. Our tour lasted fifteen days. We changed horses every three or four hours, and we refreshed ourselves copiously from a store of fine wines which the chamberlain took along with him. We went over five copper and iron works. It was not necessary to know much. Here I recommended some slight reforms; there I recommended an increase of workmen. Knowing that it was economy the duke had in view, I devoted myself to reducing the expenses wherever it seemed possible, notably in one mine where thirty labourers were employed; I suggested the construction of a short canal, which could be fed by a little river, and which, by means of a simple lock, could be made to turn three wheels, and so suppress twenty hands. The duke was delighted with my observations and suggestions. He told me he would send me to Riga in one of his own carriages, and would give me a letter to his son, Prince Charles; finally, he told me to tell him frankly whether I would prefer a piece of jewellery, or its equivalent in money.

'Prince,' said I, 'I can accept money from a man such as your royal highness. It will be of far more use to me than jewellery.'

He gave me an order on his privy purse for four hundred Albertsthalers, which were immediately paid over to me. An Albertsthaler was worth half a ducat. The next day, a young chamberlain brought me the letter for Prince Charles, wished me good speed, and told me the carriage was at the door. I went off well pleased with myself, and with my manservant Lambert, who had done me good service. We arrived at Riga about noon, and I at once sent the letter to Prince Charles.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER XLIX

THE GREAT CATHERINE

Prince Charles de Biron was the youngest son of the reigning Duke of Courland.[1] He was a major-general in the Russian service, and Knight of the Order of Saint Alexander-Newski. He was then thirty-six years old, of agreeable appearance, but not handsome. He spoke French well, and told me that his table, his society, his pleasures, his horses, his advice, and his purse were at my disposal for as long as I was in Riga. 'I don't offer to lodge you,' he said, 'because I am very much cramped for room, but I shall see that you have a comfortable apartment.'

I dined quietly with the prince and his mistress. She was pretty, but pale, sad, and dreamy, somewhere about twenty years of age. She ate hardly anything, and when the prince urged her to take food or wine, she refused disdainfully. The prince teased her, but not unkindly. I heard afterwards from a dancer named Campioni, and a friend of mine, whom I met at the prince's table, that the prince was head over ears in debt, and spent a great deal on his mistress, who made him very unhappy with her bad temper.

'Why is she so unamiable?'

'He has not kept his word to her, she says. He promised

[1] On the death of Peter II. in 1730, Anna, Duchess of Courland, and niece of Peter the Great, was proclaimed empress. She was a cold, repulsive woman, who threw herself entirely into the hands of German advisers, especially Biron, a Courlander of low origin. This period of their history is called by Russians *Bironovstchina*. At the death of Anna, Biron was exiled to Peliur, in northern Prussia, but was recalled by Elizabeth Petrovna.

Digitized by Microsoft®

to find her a husband at the end of two years; the time has elapsed. Two young lieutenants have proposed for her, but she will not take anything below a major.'

The empress[1] came to Riga while I was there; and I was witness of the affability and gracious gentleness with which she received the homage of the Livonian nobility, and the manner in which she kissed on the mouth all the young ladies who were presented to her. She was surrounded by the Orloffs, and some of the other nobles who had taken part in the conspiracy. To please these faithful servants, she played faro with them, and held a bank of ten thousand roubles against them. The bank was broken at the first deal. The next day she went on to Mitau, where they erected triumphal arches of wood, stone being scarce in that country.

The very day after her arrival, the news that a revolution had broken out in Petersburg caused great consternation. They wanted to drag Ivan Ivanovitz[2] out of the citadel where he was detained, and proclaim him emperor. As a matter of fact the unhappy prince had already been proclaimed emperor, when a baby in the cradle, and it was Elizabeth Petrovna who had dethroned him. Two of the officers to whose keeping he was confided, seeing that they were powerless to prevent his being released, slew him. Poor innocent victim!

The affair made such a sensation that the prudent Panin sent courier after courier to beg the empress to come back.

[1] The Empress Anna, who died in 1740, left the crown to her grand-nephew Ivan. But a successful conspiracy, headed by Lestocq, a French physician, placed Elizabeth on the throne. Elizabeth ingratiated herself with the soldiers, by whom the memory of Peter the Great was still cherished. On ascending the throne she summoned Peter, the son of her sister Anna and the Duke of Holstein, to court, and declared him heir-presumptive.

[2] Ivan VI. is said to have become an idiot from long confinement. He was murdered by his guards on account of the attempt of a certain Lieutenant Mirovick to set him free. Whether Mirovick was incited to this adventure by secret promises of the government, so that there might be an excuse for the murder of Ivan, has never been clearly shown. He was publicly executed, but is said to have expected a reprieve to the last moment.

Digitized by Microsoft®

She hastened back to her capital; but by the time she reached it all was quiet. She rewarded the murderers of the unfortunate Ivan, and cut off the head of the audacious man who had sought to dethrone her. It was reported that she was in connivance with the assassins, but this I believe to be a calumny. She was strong-minded, but not perfidious or cruel. When I saw her at Riga she was thirty-five years old, and had reigned on the throne two years. Without being beautiful, she was pleasing, with gentle, easy manners, and an air of calm tranquillity which never left her.

He leaves Riga, 15th December.

I left Riga on the 15th of December, when the thermometer registered fifteen degrees of frost. I did not suffer from the cold, although I travelled day and night, for I never left my carriage. I had paid in advance all the relays from Riga to Petersburg; and Marshal Braun, the governor of Livonia, had given me a passport. I had a French manservant on the box, who had offered me his services for no other wages than his travelling expenses. He bore the awful cold of those two days and three nights without appearing to suffer in the least. Only a Frenchman would put up with such hardships. A Russian dressed as lightly as my servant was would have been frozen to death in twenty-four hours, notwithstanding the amount of corn brandy he would have swallowed. I lost sight of this man on arriving at Petersburg, but met him three months after, when he was my fellow-guest at a dinner given by M. de Czernitscheff. He wore a rich uniform covered with gold braid; and I learned he was acting as tutor to a young count who sat beside him.

As for my valet, he stayed in the carriage with me, and did nothing but eat, drink, and sleep, without so much as saying a word. I arrived in Petersburg as the first rays of the rising sun were gilding the horizon; we were then in the winter solstice, and as the sun was rising at exactly twenty-four minutes past nine, I can certify that the longest night in that part of Russia is eighteen hours and three-quarters.

St. Petersburg.

I took lodgings in a wide, handsome street called the

Digitized by Microsoft®

Milliona. I had two fine rooms at a low rent; they were furnished with two beds, four chairs, and two small tables. On seeing the enormous stoves, I thought it would take a great deal of wood to heat them, but this was a mistake. Russia is the only country where they know how to make stoves, as Venice is the only place where they know how to make cisterns. The fireplaces are only filled up once in twenty-four hours, for there is a trap which is carefully shut as soon as the wood is reduced to charcoal. It is only in the houses of very rich people that the stoves are charged twice a day, because it is strictly forbidden for the servants to close the trap; and for this reason: the master may come back from hunting tired, or drunk; he goes to bed, and from inadvertence or carelessness the servant shuts the trap before the wood is all reduced to ashes; the master closes his eyes never to open them again. In the morning the servant is taken to prison, and no matter what he may say in his defence, is hanged.

I found everything very cheap in Petersburg (I am told that this is no longer the case, and that prices are as high as in London). I bought some more furniture; a chest of drawers, a writing-desk, and other articles not then in general use in Russia, and installed myself comfortably.

The language there spoken, except among the lower orders, was German, which I spoke as badly then as I do to-day. I explain myself with difficulty, which makes my listeners laugh; but it seems it is the custom of the country to laugh at foreigners.

One evening my landlord presented me with a ticket for a masked ball, given at the court, for five thousand people. The ball would last *sixty hours* he informed me. I went to it in a sedan-chair, wearing a domino I had bought at Mitau. I found a great crowd of people dancing in different rooms, a band for each. The enormous buffets were laden with eatables and drinkables, and every one ate and drank freely. Gaiety and licence were apparent on every face.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Thousands of wax candles lighted up the scene, which I must own I thought admirable.

All at once some one said, 'Here comes the Czarina,' and we caught sight of the tall figure of Gregory Orloff[1] following a masked figure, draped in a domino, which might have been worth five copecks, not more.

The masked figure moved in and out of the crowd, getting bumped by people who really did not know her. Sometimes she sat down by people who were very likely talking about her. She probably heard many remarks which were not intended for her ears, and which may have wounded her pride, but the experience must have been extremely useful to her.

I had an introduction to Peter Ivanovitch Melissino, Colonel of Artillery. He invited me to sup at his house every night while I remained in Petersburg. His establishment was managed on the French system—no tiresome ceremony prevailed. His elder brother was married to a Princess Dolgorouki. We generally played at faro, and the society was composed of reliable people, who would not go about complaining of their losses and vaunting their gains, so there was no fear of the Government stepping in to hinder our amusements.

The morals of Russian card play.

Talking one night with Baron Lefort, the son of Peter the Great's celebrated admiral, I mentioned a certain nobleman, and praised the indifference with which he bore his losses at cards. The baron laughed, and said that the prince's disinterestedness was not difficult to assume, as he played on credit, and never paid.

'But his honour is at stake!'

'Russians have a code of honour of their own, and it is not

[1] The brothers Orloff, officers in the Russian Guards, belonged to an old and influential family. The eldest, Gregory, was Catherine's lover for many years, and was mainly instrumental in placing her on the throne. When she made her appeal to the army he easily persuaded his regiment to support her, and while the priests anointed her in church regent in the name of her son, the Orloffs outside proclaimed her empress in her own right. After attempting to poison the miserable Peter, the Orloffs strangled him with their own hands in the most revolting manner.

Digitized by Microsoft®

affected by leaving their gambling debts unpaid. It is tacitly understood that he who plays on credit pays if he chooses; if he does not choose, his creditor would only make himself ridiculous by claiming the debt. In fact, dishonesty at play has reached a point in Russia impossible to conceive in any other part of Europe. I know several young men belonging to the first families, who boast of having learned how to outwit fortune—in other words, to cheat. One of the Matuschkins defies the cheats of all nations. It is impossible, he says, for them to outwit him. He has just obtained permission to travel for three years, and he declares he will come back laden with spoils.'

He visits Princess Daschkoff.

I had a letter to Princess Daschkoff,[1] and I took it to the country house, three versts from Petersburg, where she lived in exile. She had helped the empress to mount the throne, which she hoped to share with her. This was her crime. The great Catherine, unable to indulge her favourite's ambition, thought proper to mortify it.

The princess wore black for her husband. She received me kindly, and promised to speak to M. Panin about me. Three days later she wrote that I might present myself to him whenever I chose. This little incident showed me

[1] Catherine Romanofna, third daughter of Count Woronzoff, a Russian senator, married, before she was sixteen, Prince Daschkoff, and went with him to Moscow. Her elder sister, Elizabeth, was the mistress of the unfortunate and almost imbecile Peter. He made no secret of his passion, and his intention of deposing Catherine in favour of Elizabeth, and it was probably jealousy of her sister which induced Princess Daschkoff to take a leading part in the *coup d'état* of 1762. She was devotedly loyal to Catherine, but her disapproval of the licentious immorality of the empress, and her open scorn of many of the royal favourites, produced an estrangement between the two friends. In 1768 Princess Daschkoff started on a tour through Europe. She was well received at foreign courts, and when she returned to Petersburg in 1784, was appointed first president of the Russian Academy. She also edited a magazine, and wrote two dramatic works. On the accession of the Emperor Paul, she was deprived of all her offices, and ordered to withdraw to a wretched village near Novgorod, 'there to meditate on the events of 1762.' After some time the sentence was partially remitted, and she returned to her estate near Moscow, where she lived till her death in 1810. Her Memoirs, written by herself, were published in London in 1840.

Digitized by Microsoft®

that Catherine was truly great; she had disgraced the princess, but she allowed her favourite minister to pay her court every evening. Well-informed people have told me that Panin was the father of Princess Daschkoff, not her lover. The princess is now the president of the Academy of Science, the members of which, no doubt, recognise in her another Minerva, or they would blush to have a woman at their head.

On the Feast of the Epiphany, I assisted at an extraordinary function, the blessing of the Neva, which was then covered with five feet of ice. After the blessing of the water, children are baptized in it by immersion. On that occasion the priest let one of the children slip.

'*Drugoi*,' was all he said, which, being interpreted, means 'Give me another!' But what was my surprise when I saw the mother and father wild with joy. They were convinced that their child had gone straight to heaven!

We were dining at Catherinhoff one day, when, having wandered away from the rest of the party, in company with a young officer, we noticed a peasant girl coming towards us. She was extraordinarily beautiful, slim and graceful as a doe. When she saw us she ran into a little cottage. We followed, and entering the hut saw her father and mother, and several children; she herself was hiding in a corner, like a rabbit which has fled from the dogs. My companion Zinovieff (who by the bye was afterwards ambassador to Madrid) spoke to the father in Russian. I could not understand what they said, but found they were speaking about the girl, for her father called her out of her corner, and she came and stood before us, obedient and submissive, her eyes modestly downcast. When he left, Zinovieff told me he had asked the father if he would give him the girl for a servant, and he had replied that he asked nothing better, but he wanted a hundred roubles for her.

'So you see,' said Zinovieff, 'that there is nothing to be done.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'But if I am disposed to pay the hundred roubles!'

He buys Zaira.

'Then she would be your servant, and you could do what you like with her, except kill her.'

'And suppose she objected?'

'Not likely, but if she did you could beat her.'

'And suppose, on the contrary, that she liked me, could I continue to keep her?'

'You would be her master, I tell you, and could have her arrested if she ran away, unless she repaid the hundred roubles.'

'And what must I pay her?'

'Nothing. You must feed her and let her go to the baths on Saturday, so as to be able to attend church on Sunday.'

'And when I leave Petersburg, could I take her with me?'

'Not unless you have obtained permission to do so, for although she would be your slave she would be first of all the slave of the empress.'

'Good. Will you arrange the matter for me? I will give the hundred roubles, and I promise you I shall not treat her as a slave, but as I do not wish the others to know of the bargain, will you return here with me to-morrow?'

'With pleasure.'

The following day we presented ourselves at the hut, and Zinovieff told the parents bluntly what he had come for. The father thanked Saint Nicholas for this stroke of fortune, and the girl meekly acquiesced. My servant and the coachman were called in as witnesses, and the girl, whom I rechristened Zaira, went back to the city with us. She was dressed in coarse cloth, and had not so much as a chemise of her own. I dressed Zaira in French fashion, tastefully but not luxuriously. It was tiresome my not being able to speak Russian to her, but in three months she picked up enough Italian to understand all I said to her, and to say all she wanted to me. She soon learned to love me, but she was very jealous. I remember one night I had been out to

Digitized by Microsoft®

She has a temper.

dinner, and got home very late. As I was crossing my room, I just missed a heavy bottle which Zaira flung at my head, and which would certainly have killed me had it struck me. After this exploit she threw herself on the ground, screaming and striking the floor with her forehead. I held her down, and let her call me traitor, murderer, and all the other pretty names she could lay tongue to. She had, she said, discovered my infidelity by the cards. I threw them in the fire, sternly assuring her that she had forfeited my affection, and that she should go home to her family next day. She flung herself at my feet, imploring forgiveness, swearing she would never consult the cards again. I forgave her, and we left for Moscow together, where I went to a good inn, and took two rooms and a stable, for my carriage and four horses. I had five or six letters of introduction, which I delivered in person.

All the people to whom I had introductions called on me and invited me to dinner, including Zaira in the invitations. No one thought of asking whether she was my daughter, my mistress, or my servant; in this respect, as in many others, the Russians are extremely well-bred. Those who have not seen Moscow have not seen Russia, for Petersburg is not Russia, properly speaking. The citizens of Moscow pity those who expatriate themselves from ambition, and for them expatriation means living out of Moscow, which they consider their veritable country; they look on Petersburg with an envious and suspicious eye, as the cause of their ruin. The women of Moscow are better looking than those of Petersburg. The air of Moscow is much more healthy. As for the food, it is coarse, but abundant. A Russian's table is always open to his friends and acquaintances, and a man can without warning take five or six people to dine at a friend's house, even after the dinner hour. You never hear a Russian say, 'We have finished dinner, you are too late.' They are not mean. It is the business of the cook to serve up another dinner.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The first piece of news which greeted me on my return to the capital was that Prince Charles of Courland had arrived. I went to see him. He was in a house belonging to Count Demidoff, who possessed immense iron mines, and his house was built entirely of iron; all the furniture was also of iron, so there was no fear of fire. The prince was accompanied by his mistress, who was as bad-tempered as ever, and whom he was beginning to hate; he could not get rid of her unless he found her a husband, and there was daily less and less chance of a man, such as she would accept, presenting himself. When the prince saw how comfortable I was with Zaira, and at how small a cost, he must have envied me my simple, sweet-humoured little mistress.

In reality, I was far from happy. Since my detention in 'The Leads,' I had suffered terribly from internal hemorrhoids, which made me ill three or four times a year. At Petersburg I was so ill that an operation was considered necessary; fortunately, a clever surgeon who was called in in consultation advised me to wait before the knife was used; and, thanks to his advice and severe régime, I recovered.

One day at dinner at Orloff's, I sat next to the secretary of the French embassy, who, wanting to drink as the Russians do, and thinking that Hungarian wine is as harmless as champagne, was soon under the table. Count Orloff had him propped up, and given more, which made him sick; after which he was carried to bed. Zinovieff, who was on my other side, explained the jokes to me. The main thing was to propose a health with a neat sentiment, and to respond in an equally brilliant manner. For instance, Melissino got up with a great goblet of wine in his hand and proposed General Orloff's health, adding, 'May you die the day that you become rich!' in allusion to his well-known generosity. Orloff's reply seemed to me more sensible. 'May you,' said he, rising, and also holding a goblet in his hand,—'May you not die until you are slain by my hand!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I intended to leave Petersburg at the beginning of the autumn, but Panin,[1] Alsuvieff, and several others told me I ought not to go without having spoken to the empress. I quite agreed with them, but as I had not been able to find any one to present me, I had given up the idea. At last Panin told me to go to the summer gardens early in the morning, where her majesty often walked; if she met me it was more than probable she would speak to me, he said. One day I was strolling about looking at the statues which bordered the walks; they were in bad taste, and so vilely executed as to be grotesque. Names were engraved on the pedestals. One weeping figure was supposed to represent Democritus; another with a wide, grinning mouth, Heraclius; an old man with a long beard was labelled Sappho; and an old woman with a dilapidated bust bore the name of Avicenna.

He meets the empress in the Summer Garden.

As I was smiling at these nonsensical appellations, I saw the czarina approaching, preceded by Gregory Orloff, and followed by two ladies; Count Panin was walking at her side. I drew back to let her pass, but when she got up to me she asked me laughingly if the beauty of the statues interested me. I replied that I supposed they had been put there to impose on the ignorant, and to cause the wise to smile.

'All I know,' answered the empress, 'is that my good aunt who bought them was taken in, but she did not let small deceptions of that kind trouble her. I hope that everything else which you have seen here is not as laughable as the statues.'

I assured her that that which was comic was as nothing compared to that which commanded admiration. She invited me to walk by her side, and for more than an hour I talked to this great sovereign of my impressions of Petersburg. The conversation turning on Frederick of Prussia, I spoke warmly in his praise, but at the same time I mentioned his insupport-

[1] Count Panin was tutor to Catherine's son, Paul, and one of her most devoted adherents. He took a leading part in the conspiracy, with the Orloffs and Princess Daschkoff, for the overthrow of Peter.

Digitized by Microsoft®

able habit of never giving a person time to answer his questions. Smiling in the most gracious manner at this appreciation, Catherine asked me to describe my interview with Frederick. After which she was good enough to say that she had never seen me at the *Courtag*, an instrumental and vocal concert which she gave at her palace every Sunday after dinner, and to which every one had access. She walked about the concert-room speaking to those whom she wanted to honour. I told her that, unfortunately, I was not fond of music. She answered that she knew some one else who did not care for it either. She then turned from me to talk to Bezkoi, who had just come up, and I left the gardens enchanted with the honour she had done me.

She was of middle height, well made, and of a majestic carriage. She knew how to make herself agreeable to those whom she cared to interest. She was not beautiful, but pleasing, gentle, affable, and witty, devoid of all pretension, which was the more remarkable as she had every reason to have a good opinion of herself.

Some days afterwards, Panin told me she had twice asked him about me, a sign that I had pleased her. He advised me to try and meet her again, as she would be certain to call me to her, and that if I cared to accept office in Russia she would no doubt find me a place somewhere. Although I did not know myself what employment she could offer me which would induce me to stay in a country that, when all was said and done, I did not like, I was pleased to think that I could gain admittance to the court. I walked daily in the summer gardens, and was rewarded by a second interview. This time she sent an officer to fetch me. We spoke of a fête which was to have been held out of doors, and which the bad weather had prevented. She asked me if in Venice we often had such entertainments. I answered that so far as climate was concerned my country was certainly happier than Russia, for with us fine days were the rule, whereas in Russia they were the exception.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Last interview with the empress.

At this interview, and at a third which took place some ten days later, we discussed the reformation of the Russian calendar, and she surprised me by the intelligence and depth of her arguments. She spoke modestly and simply, but with great precision, and her reasoning was as imperturbable as her good humour. Her manner, the very opposite of that of the King of Prussia, denoted a genius far superior to his. The kindness and gentleness of her demeanour gave her an advantage over her opponents, while the affected roughness and brusqueness of Frederick caused him to be frequently duped.

One day when I was in the gardens it began to rain, and the empress sent a servant to tell me to join her in the hall of the palace. We spoke again of the calendar, and she asked me if it was true that in Venice we did not divide the twenty-four hours of the day.

'It must be very inconvenient,' she said; 'and to the rest of the world it seems rather ridiculous.' She then spoke of the manners and customs of the Venetians, and of their fondness for games of chance. She asked me if the lottery had been established at Genoa.

'They tried to persuade me to permit it here,' she said; 'if I had consented, it would only have been on condition that nothing less than a rouble could have been staked; this would have prevented the poor from playing.'

I replied to this wise observation by a profound bow. This was the last interview I had with this celebrated woman, who reigned for thirty-five years without committing a single essential mistake.

He leaves St. Petersburg, Oct. 1765.

I had to leave Petersburg and Zaira, but I left her in kind hands. I set off for Warsaw, where Prince Adam Czartoryski lived, to whom I had an introduction.

I found Prince Adam Czartoryski[1] seated at a large table covered with papers. There were about fifty people in the

[1] Father of the patriot, Prince Adam George Czartoryski, principal actor in the Polish revolution of 1830.

Digitized by Microsoft®

room, which was his bedroom as well as his library. He told me, in very stilted French, that he thought most highly of the person who recommended me, but that as he was very busy at that moment, he begged me to sup with him *if I had nothing better to do.*

He is introduced to the King of Poland.

At nine o'clock, 'having nothing better to do'—I found this was a cant phrase in the mouth of Polish gentlemen—I went to sup with Prince Adam. He presented me to all present, and just as we were sitting down to table, a tall, handsome man came in. Prince Adam again mentioned my name, then turning from the newcomer to me, said in a cool tone, 'This is the king.'

I advanced towards the king, and was about to kneel, when his majesty, with the best grace in the world, gave me his hand to kiss. Prince Adam handed him the minister's letter, which he read standing, then he began to question me about the czarina and the principal personages of her court. The king seated me at his right hand and continued to talk to me all supper-time. On leaving, he told me he would always be pleased to see me at his court, and Prince Adam said that he would present me to his father the following morning. I went back to my inn, and next day, at eleven o'clock, made the acquaintance of that rarest of men, the magnificent Prince Palatine of Russia. He was in his dressing-gown, surrounded by gentlemen wearing the national dress, high boots, moustaches, and the head bare and shaven. The prince spoke with affability. He did not intimidate me, but he did not inspire me with confidence. When he heard that I had done nothing in Russia but amuse myself and frequent the court, he concluded I had come to Poland to do so likewise, and he promised to introduce me to every one. He added that he lived alone, but would be glad to see me at his table, morning or evening. He then withdrew behind a screen, from which he emerged, dressed in the uniform of his regiment, and a blond wig with a pigtail. After a low bow to the company, he withdrew

Digitized by Microsoft®

to his wife's apartments. She was the last of the noble family of d'Enoff, and had brought her husband an immense fortune. He was a Knight of the Order of Malta when he married her, and won her hand in a duel fought with pistols on horseback. The lady had given her word to marry the victor, and he was fortunate enough to kill his rival. They had only two children, Adam, and a princess, who is now a widow, and known by the name of de Lubomirska.

It was this Prince Palatine of Russia, and his brother, the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania, who brought about the first troubles in Poland. The brothers, displeased at the small amount of interest they possessed at court, plotted to overthrow the sovereign and place their nephew on the throne. This young man was Stanislas Poniatowski, son of Constance Czartoryski and the celebrated Poniatowski, the friend of Charles XII. As fate would have it, there was no need of a conspiracy, for the king, Frederick Augustus II., Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, died and made way for Poniatowski, who, under the name of Stanislas Augustus,[1] had been reigning for two years when I went to Warsaw. As my purse was too depleted to allow of my playing with the Polish nobles, or of seeking consolation among the ladies

[1] Stanislas was elected king chiefly through the influence of Catherine, whose lover he had been. He was a man of refined mind and manners, but weak, and a mere puppet in Moscovite hands. His reign began under most favourable auspices; his court was brilliantly organised; his principal opponent, John Clement Branecki, withdrew to his estates, and the other personages who had opposed his election recognised his authority. This calm did not last long; Russia became more and more imperious in her demands, and Stanislas, through indolence or fear, acceded to them. In 1768, a few patriots met at Bar, in Podolia, and hatched what is known as the 'Conspiracy of Bar,' a conspiracy which sounds like a bit of a comic opera. Their plan was to kidnap their king, and placing him beyond foreign influence for a time, to do what they should dictate. His carriage was surrounded as he was returning from his uncle Michael Czartoryski's house, and the conspirators succeeded in carrying the king beyond the ramparts. Here they became confused and separated, and Stanislas was able to regain his palace. He died in exile at St. Petersburg, having lived to see the dismemberment of his unhappy country, and the name of Poland wiped off the map of Europe.

Digitized by Microsoft®

of the dramatic profession, I took refuge in the library of Joseph Zaluski,[1] the Bishop of Küov, and passed all my mornings with him. He furnished me with authentic documents dealing with the plots and intrigues which were tending to overthrow the old Polish system, of which he was one of the strong supporters. He was one of those whom Russian tyranny snatched from under the very eyes of the king, and whom Catherine sent into exile in Siberia about two months after my departure.

I led a very quiet life, and I often think of it with pleasure; yet in spite of my economy, in three months' time I was heavily in debt, my carriage, servant, and the obligation to be always well dressed, cost more than I could afford. I was seriously embarrassed, but coming out of Mass one day Stanislas Augustus put a rouleau containing ten hundred Dutch ducats into my hand, telling me not to mention his gift to any one.

[1] Zaluski founded a library, on which he expended enormous sums of money. He lived in the most frugal manner, so as to consecrate all his revenue to it, and would often content himself with a meal of bread and cheese. His library surpassed all private collections, and ranked with the finest public libraries of Europe. He also founded at his own expense a college at Warsaw. He was arrested, at the instigation of Repnier, and exiled.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER L

THE DUEL WITH BRANECKI

My readers will remember my old friend la Binetti, whom I had last seen in London. She came to Warsaw with her husband and the dancer Pic while I was staying in that city. I heard of their arrival while supping with the prince palatine and the king. His majesty said he would give them a thousand ducats if they would stay a week in Warsaw. Next morning, I went to see them, impatient to tell them of the good fortune awaiting them. While I was there, Poniatowski came in person to transmit to them the king's offer. Pic organised a ballet, with costumes, decorations, orchestra, and figurantes. In three days all was ready. Tomatis, the director of the theatre, spared no expense. Their success was so great that they were engaged for a year. This was anything but pleasing to la Catai, who till then had been the public favourite; and what was worse, Binetti took her admirers from her. Tomatis, influenced by la Catai, found means to torment Binetti in a hundred ways, and hence arose one of those complicated and implacable quarrels so frequent in the theatrical world. Branecki, a great friend of the king's, was one of Binetti's most fervent admirers, but Prince Lubomirski and the whole family of Czartoryskis were for la Catai. The obligations I was under to Binetti have been set forth at length in these Memoirs, but it was evident that even for her I could not desert my friends' side, the Czartoryskis, Prince Lubomirski, all admirers of la Catai.

La Binetti reproached me bitterly for what she considered

Digitized by Microsoft®

my treachery. When I explained the case to her, she made me promise to refrain from going to the theatre, so as at least not to be forced to applaud her rival; at the same time she told me she was preparing a revenge on Tomatis which would make him sorry he had ever offended her. This was her vengeance. On the thirtieth of February, Xavier Branecki,[1] a colonel of Uhlans, a handsome, well-preserved man, and la Binetti's admirer, repaired after the ballet to la Catai's dressing-room. She was naturally surprised to see her enemy's admirer, but concluded that they must have quarrelled. Tomatis was with her, and they both showed in word and manner how pleased they were to welcome him to their side. Branecki then offered her his arm and led her to her carriage, and seated himself beside her, calling out to Tomatis in a rude voice that he could follow in another one. The director answered that he would use no carriage but his own. Branecki ordered the coachman to drive on, and Tomatis forbade him to move. Naturally, the man obeyed his master, and my fine gentleman was obliged to get out; but at the same time he ordered his servant to box Tomatis's ears. The hussar obeyed him with such good-will that it was some time before the poor director could recover himself sufficiently to remember that he wore a sword. I witnessed the scene, and went home sad and thoughtful, feeling almost as though I had shared the insult. This incident became the talk of the town. Tomatis remained in his house for a week, vainly imploring the king to revenge him. He told me in confidence that he would have punished Branecki himself, but that he had put all his fortune into the theatre, and should have been ruined had he taken vengeance into his own hands.

La Binetti was radiant when I saw her; she condoled with me ironically on my friend's misfortune. This annoyed me, but I did not then know that it was she who had egged Branecki on, and furthermore, that she was plotting to injure me

[1] Xavier Branecki, not to be confounded with John Clement Branecki, an older man, and occupying a like position.

Digitized by Microsoft®

too. I had never spoken to Branecki, and never met him; he was not in favour at court, for he was the catspaw of the Russians and the enemy of all who did not bow to the yoke of the great Catherine. The king alone, of all the royal family, was fond of him, partly for old friendship's sake, and partly because he owed him particular and personal obligations.

One evening as I was passing before la Binetti's dressing-room, I noticed that the door was open, so I stepped in to wish her good night. While I was there Branecki came in; so with a low bow I left the room. I went to pay my homage to another actress named Casacci; she reproached me playfully for not visiting her oftener, and I was excusing myself and kissing her affectionately, when in walked Branecki; he had evidently followed me.

The affront to Branecki.

'I seem to have come at the wrong moment,' he said. 'You appear to admire this lady, sir!'

'Certainly I do; does not your excellency think her agreeable?'

'So much so that I love her, and am not inclined to admit a rival.'

'Now that you have told me, sir, I will withdraw.'

'You give way to me, then?'

'With the greatest pleasure; every one must give way to so great a man as you.'

'Very good, but it seems to me that the man who does so is a coward.'

'That is rather a strong expression,' I answered, touching the handle of my sword with a haughty gesture.

I had not got four paces away from the door when I heard him call me a Venetian coward. I turned back, and said as calmly as I could, that a Venetian coward might possibly kill a brave Pole; then without waiting for his answer I left the theatre. Next morning I wrote to him as follows:—

Warsaw, 5 March 1766.
5 o'clock in the morning.

MONSEIGNEUR, — Yesterday evening, at the theatre, your

Digitized by Microsoft®

excellency thought proper to insult me from pure lightheartedness, and without any reason for so doing. From this, I imagine that you hate me, and wish to efface my name from the list of the living. I can, and I will, give you satisfaction. Be so kind as to fetch me in your carriage and take me to some place where my defeat will not bring you under the Polish law, and where I shall be equally safe if God helps me to kill you. I should not make this proposition to you if I did not believe you to be generous.—I have the honour to remain, etc. etc.

In half an hour I received his reply.

Sir,—I accept your proposal; be good enough to tell me when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you.—I remain, sir, etc. etc.

I answered that I would be at his house at six o'clock next morning, to which he wrote back that our differences must be settled that very day, and he placed his carriage at my disposal. To this I replied that as I had business which would occupy me the whole of the day, I must send back the carriage.

Pourparlers.

An hour after he came in person, entered my bedroom, locked the door, and sat down on my bed. Not knowing what to make of these proceedings, I took up my pistols.

'Do not be afraid,' he said, 'I have not come to assassinate you, but merely to tell you that when I have a duel to fight, I never put it off till the next day; it must be now or never.'

'I cannot fight you to-day, it is mail day; and besides I have some work to finish for the king.'

'You can finish it afterwards; you will probably not succumb, and if you do the king will forgive you.'

'I must make my will.'

'Your will! What the devil! You are afraid to die, then! You can make your will fifty years hence.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

He discusses the conditions of the duel with Branecki.

'But what can it matter to your excellency if we wait till to-morrow?'

'I don't wish to be caught; we should both be put under arrest. You have challenged me, and I mean to give you satisfaction; but to-day, or never.'

'I am too anxious to fight you to seek for a pretext, so you can fetch me after dinner, for I want all my strength.'

'With pleasure. As for me, I would rather sup afterwards than dine beforehand.'

'Every man to his taste.'

'And moreover, why did you send me the measure of your sword? I intend to use pistols; I don't fight unknown people with swords.'

'What do you mean by unknown people? I can call twenty people in Warsaw to prove that I am no fencing-master! I will not use pistols, and you cannot force me; you gave me the choice of weapons; I have your letter to prove it.'

'Strictly speaking you are right, but you are too gallant a man to insist when I say I prefer pistols. If we miss the first shot, I will fight you with swords.'

'I like your frank way of speaking. I give way, though I consider a duel with pistols barbarous. I agree on these conditions, that you bring two pistols and load them in my presence, I to take the one I choose; if we miss, we will fight with swords, either to the first blood, or *à outrance*, as you please. You will come and fetch me at three o'clock, and we shall go somewhere where we shall be safe from interference.'

'You are an amiable man, Seingalt: let me embrace you, and give me your word of honour not to speak of this to any one.'

At three o'clock Branecki arrived. I was at the window waiting for him. He came in a berline with six horses, preceded by two mounted grooms, leading his saddle horses, and accompanied by two officers, his aides-de-camp, and two hussars, besides four servants behind the carriage. A

Digitized by Microsoft®

lieutenant-general and a chasseur were inside. I told my servants not to follow me, and to await my orders at home.

'You may want them,' said my adversary. 'You had better let them come.'

'If I had as many as you I should bring them; and I am sure that should I need them your excellency will lend me yours.'

He held out his hand to me, saying he would prefer to nurse me himself. Yet he did not volunteer any further remarks. I began an unimportant conversation, talking of the weather and the court functions. After half an hour or so, the carriage stopped before some gates opening into a fine garden. We got out and walked towards an arbour, which at that time of year was anything but green; in it was a stone table, on which one of the servants deposited two pistols, about a foot and a half long, some black powder, and a pair of scales.

'Choose your weapon, sir,' said Branecki.

The general then asked in a loud voice—

'Gentlemen, is this a duel?'

'Yes.'

'You cannot fight here, you are in the *starostie*.'[1]

They are forbidden to fight.

'That does not matter.'

'It matters a great deal. I am on guard at the château; you have taken me by surprise. Signor Casanova, you cannot fight here.'

'Then, general, why was I brought here? I defend myself whenever I am attacked; if, however, his excellency will consent to say in your presence that he regrets what happened the other night, I will withdraw.'

At these words Branecki looked at me proudly, and said in an angry voice that he had come to fight, not to palaver.

'General,' said I, 'you are my witness that as far as it was possible I tried to avoid this duel.'

[1] *Starostie*. In Russian *starosta*, a castle or domain belonging to the crown, or conferred on a nobleman by the crown. All duelling was forbidden within such bounds.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Throwing off my pelisse, I took the first pistol which came to my hand; Branecki took the other, saying he would guarantee its worth on his honour.

'I am going,' said I, 'to prove its worth on your head.' At these words he turned pale, and flinging down his sword bared his chest. I did the same, and stepped back five or six paces.

He wounds Branecki.

The signal was given, we fired simultaneously, and the lookers on afterwards declared they only heard one detonation. I felt myself struck on the left hand, and putting it in my pocket, I ran towards my adversary, who had fallen. What was my surprise when I saw three naked swords flash from their scabbards and meet over my head! Three noble assassins were ready to chop me to pieces on their master's body! Fortunately for me Branecki had not yet lost consciousness, and cried out—

'You scoundrels, leave this brave man alone!'

His voice seemed to stun them. I put my right hand under his arm, and the general took him on the other side, in this way we got him to the inn, which was close by. He walked with difficulty, bent double, but I saw he was examining me attentively, as he could not understand where the blood came from which was running down my breeches, and staining my white stockings.

In the inn Branecki threw himself into an armchair. They undressed him and examined his wound. It seemed very serious; my ball had penetrated beneath the seventh rib on the right side, and come out under the last rib on the left. He said feebly—

'You have killed me. You must escape, or you will lose your head. You are in the jurisdiction of the starostie, and I am grand officer of the crown, and grand cordon of the White Eagle. Lose no time; if you have not enough money, take my purse.'

His heavy purse fell on the floor. I picked it up, and put it back into his pocket, telling him it was useless to me,

Digitized by Microsoft®

for if I was guilty I should lose my head, and I meant to go and lay it on the steps of the throne.

'I hope,' said I, 'that your wound is not mortal. I am sorry you forced me to inflict it on you.' With these words I kissed him on the forehead and left the inn. I could see neither carriage, nor horses, nor servants. They had all scattered in search of doctor, surgeon, priest, relations and friends. I was alone in a desolate country covered with snow. After wandering at haphazard some little way I met a peasant in a sleigh.

'Warsaw,' I cried, showing him a ducat. He understood; and lifting up a coarse mat, I crept under, and he started off at a gallop.

Flight.

Ten minutes after I saw Bininski, Branecki's devoted friend, tearing along, his drawn sabre in his hand. He was evidently running after me. Fortunately the humble sleigh did not excite his suspicions. Had he seen me I am sure he would have cut my head off like a reed. When I got to Warsaw I went straight to Prince Adam Czartoryski's. He was out. Without losing further time I determined to take refuge in a convent. I rang the bell. The porter, seeing me covered with blood, guessed the nature of my errand, and hastened to shut the door on me. Quick as thought I knocked him over, and forced my way in. At the sound of his cries a flock of monks came running. I told them I was seeking sanctuary. One of them led me to a little room like a prison cell. I asked them to send for my servants and a surgeon. Before these persons could arrive, the Prince Palatine of Polachia, Prince Jablonowski, Prince Sanguska, and several other nobles of the court appeared. They all began to abuse the poor monks for treating me like a galley-slave. Their excuse was that I had assaulted their porter; but in less than no time I was installed in a fine chamber and examined. The ball had gone into my hand below the index finger, the first joint of which it had broken. An unskilful surgeon caused me great pain in probing for it, and made my wound twice as bad as it was at first.

His own injuries.

After the surgeon had left, I received a visit from the Prince

Digitized by Microsoft®

Palatine of Russia. While he was with me, Prince Lubomirski arrived and told me what had taken place immediately after the duel. It seems that Bininski had followed us, and on finding his friend wounded, had jumped on his horse and ridden off like a madman, swearing to kill me wherever he should find me. He rushed to Tomatis, and asked where I was. Tomatis answered that he did not know, and he fired a pistol at his head. On this Count Moszczinski seized him round the body and tried to throw him out of the window, but Bininski drew his sabre, and freed himself, after inflicting three cuts on the count, one of which crossed his face and knocked out three teeth.

'After this exploit,' continued Lubomirski, 'he caught me by the collar, and putting his pistol to my head threatened to discharge it if I did not conduct him in safety past the servants, and see him on his horse, which I did. Moszczinski has gone home, where he will be for a long time in the doctor's hands, and I went out to witness the confusion caused in the town by this duel. As soon as it was known that Branecki was hurt, his Uhlans began to scour the country, declaring they would revenge their colonel. It is a good thing you took refuge here. The marshal has ordered the convent to be surrounded by two hundred dragoons, under pretext of seeing that you do not escape, but in reality to protect you from the fury of the mob. Branecki is in great danger; they do not know yet if the ball has perforated his intestines. It is lucky for you that Bininski did not see you when you were in the sleigh.'

'The luckiest thing is that I did not kill Branecki on the spot, for I should have been chopped to pieces on his body by his friends. As it was, they were about to slay me when he stopped them by calling out, "Villains, respect this brave man!"'

At this moment a servant brought the prince a note from the king, which he handed to me, after reading it, and which I have still—

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Branecki, my dear uncle, is dangerously ill. My surgeons are with him, exercising all their skill; but I have not forgotten Casanova. You can assure him of my pardon, even if Branecki dies.'

Next day visitors came in crowds. I also received several purses full of gold from Branecki's opponents. These purses were all presented with the same formula: being a foreigner it was probable I was in need of money, and so the givers took the liberty of sending me these few pieces, etc. I thanked the donors, but refused the gifts; the only present I would accept was that of a well-cooked meal for four persons which Prince Adam Czartoryski sent me every day. On the fourth day the wound in my hand showed signs of gangrene, and the surgeons declared that amputation was necessary. They came together, three of them.

'Why in such force, gentlemen?' I asked.

'Because,' answered my own surgeon, 'I wanted the opinion of these gentlemen before operating. We will now examine the wound.'

The wound was raw and bleeding, the flesh livid and discoloured; it was decided that the hand must come off that evening.

'Not with my consent,' I said. 'So long as I am master of my hand it will remain attached to the arm.'

'But gangrene has set in; to-morrow it will have spread to the arm.'

'Then you shall cut off the arm, but if I know anything of gangrene you are mistaken.'

Highly indignant, the surgeons withdrew, and then came a procession of people, all trying to persuade me to listen to reason. The prince palatine wrote that the king was surprised at my want of courage. Much hurt at this, I wrote a long letter to the king, half joking, half serious, in which I said that as my arm would be no good to me without my hand, I was determined to wait till the arm was diseased.

The evening brought four doctors instead of three, they

Digitized by Microsoft®

found my arm twice its natural size, and livid, but to my joy I saw that the edges of the wound were less inflamed. To get rid of them, I promised that they should do what they pleased the following day, and as soon as their backs were turned I ordered my servant to lock the door, and not admit them again. To cut a long story short, a French physician, braving the displeasure of his confrères, undertook to save hand and arm, both of which I possess to this day.

The cure lasted twenty-eight days. I was able to go to Mass on Easter Day with my hand in a sling, but I was not able to use it easily for a year and a half. After Mass I went to pay my homage to the king. He asked me why I wore my arm in a sling (as he was supposed to know nothing of the duel), and I answered that I was suffering from rheumatism. 'Take care not to expose yourself to it again,' he said, smiling.

A visit to Branecki.

After leaving the king I went to see Branecki, who had inquired after my health every day, and had returned me my sword. He was in bed, and was to remain there for six weeks more. He was sitting up, as pale as death, dressed in a magnificent gown, and supported by pillows trimmed with pink ribbons.

'I have come,' I said, 'to present you my homage, and to say how ashamed I am to have allowed a trifle to offend me so deeply.'

'You have nothing to reproach yourself with, Monsieur Casanova.'

Branecki's generosity.

He ordered chocolate to be served, and for some time we conversed amicably about the duel and our several wounds. The news having spread that I was visiting him, several ladies and gentlemen of the court came trooping in to see how the *ci-devant* enemies were conducting themselves. Branecki having expressed surprise at his ball piercing my hand, I placed myself in the position I was in at the time of the combat.

'You ought to have sheltered your hand behind your body,' one of the ladies said.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Pardon me, madame; what I was thinking of, was how to put my body behind my hand.'

Branecki told me that had he dined before fighting, he would certainly have been killed, as it was, the intestine being empty, it did not resist the pressure of the ball, which slipped over it. One thing is certain, and that is, that as soon as he knew he was to fight at three o'clock, he went to Mass, and to confession and communion. The priest could not refuse him absolution when he said that honour forced him to fight. This proceeding was in conformity with the teachings of the old school of chivalry. As for me, who am not so orthodox as he was, I had only said, 'Lord, if my enemy kills me, I shall surely be damned; therefore, I pray Thee, preserve me from death. Amen.'

For the next fortnight I received nothing but invitations to dinners and suppers. I was the lion of the moment. Once, when I went to see Count Moszczinski, I found La Binetti there. She ran away on seeing me.

'What has she against me?' I asked.

'She is afraid of you. She was the cause of your duel, and now Branecki, who was her lover, won't hear her name mentioned!'

At the height of my popularity I started out to make a little tour, well furnished with letters and introductions. I stayed at Leopol, as the guest of the young Count Zamoiski; and Christianpol, Pularia, and a small town whose name I have forgotten. In this way I visited Podolia and Volhynia, or, as they have since been named, Gallicia and Lodomeria.

On my return to Warsaw, I found my place as 'lion' taken by Madame Geoffrin,[1] who was fêted everywhere. Instead of

[1] Madame Geoffrin owed much of her popularity in Poland to her friendship with the king, Stanislas Poniatowski. She had been a warm friend of his father and mother, and had rendered him great pecuniary services during his stay in Paris. He called her mother, and when called to the Polish throne wrote to her, saying, 'Mamma, your boy is king.' When pressed by him to go to Warsaw, she undertook the long voyage, though she was then sixty-eight years old, and was received with every mark of attention. When passing

Digitized by Microsoft®

meeting friendly faces, I found only cold looks. I was received not merely with indifference, but with positive rudeness.

'We did not expect to see you again,' people said; 'why have you come back?'

'To pay my debts.'

The King of Poland snubs him.

It was positively revolting! At the houses to which I had a standing invitation, no one spoke to me. Only the princess, Prince Adam Czartoryski's sister, was at all kind to me. She asked me to supper. I went, and sat at a round table opposite the king, who did not address a single word to me.

Prince Augustus Sulkowsky, though he received me with somewhat of his old cordiality, told me frankly I had made a mistake in returning to Warsaw, for the Poles had changed their minds about me.

'But what have I done?'

He is advised to leave the country.

'Nothing; but such is the Polish character; inconstant, inconsequent, affected and superficial. You have missed your opportunity; had you seized it, your fortune had been made. I advise you now to leave Poland.'

'I will certainly take your advice, but it is very hard.'

On returning home I found a letter, unsigned, but evidently written by a friend. It informed me that the king had declared he could not receive me at his court, as he had been assured that I had left Paris secretly, taking with me a large sum of money belonging to the lottery of the military college; that I had been hanged in effigy there for this misdeed; and that, furthermore, I had, in Italy, followed the low profession of strolling player. These calumnies were easy to spread and difficult to contradict. I should have left at once for Portugal, but I was in debt, and had not enough money for the voyage. I wrote to Venice and other places, where I thought I could raise money, and was awaiting the answers,

through Vienna, this simple Paris 'bourgeoise' was received by Maria Theresa and her son. It is even said that, guessing at the project of marriage, which seemed so auspicious for France, she exclaimed on seeing Marie Antoinette, 'What a charming little duchess. I wish I could carry her off to Paris'; and that the empress laughingly replied, 'Take her, take her!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

when the general who had been present at the famous duel came to me, and told me that the king ordered me to leave the starostie of Warsaw within a week.

Boiling with indignation, I seized my pen and wrote—

'My creditors, sire, will forgive me when they know that I only left Poland because your majesty compelled me to do so.'

The following morning Moszczinski brought me a thousand ducats, saying that the king did not know that I was in need of money, and that the most important thing for me was to preserve a whole skin. It was with a view to enabling me to do so that he had ordered me to leave the country! The danger to which he alluded arose, I suppose, from five or six challenges which I had received, and of which I had taken no notice. To revenge themselves for this indifference, my adversaries might possibly attack me at night, and do me serious mischief. I gave my word of honour not only to leave Poland, but to do in all things the pleasure of the king; at the same time I sent him my humble thanks for the interest he showed in me.

Before leaving Warsaw, I learned that La Binetti's husband had gone off with her waiting-maid, and all her diamonds and money, linen and plate. Her friends had got up a subscription for her to replace her losses.

From Breslau to Dresden.

I paid my debts, which amounted to two hundred ducats, and started for Breslau, in company with Count Clary, each of us travelling in his own carriage. From Breslau I went on to Dresden, where my mother was living. The dear woman was delighted to see me, and my arm, still in a sling, produced a most romantic effect. My brother Jean,[1] and his wife Teresa, were also in Dresden, as well as my sister and her husband, Peter Augustus. I had very good luck at cards while at Dresden, and played with a safe reserve, the result of which

[1] Jean Casanova was currently reputed of royal blood. His mother, the actress Farussi, had a great success in London, and was much run after by the nobility. The King of England himself is supposed to have succumbed to her fascinations, and to have kept her for one year. Our hero's brother was the result.

Digitized by Microsoft®

was that I left the city for Leipsic taking with me a letter of credit for three thousand Saxon crowns. This letter was drawn on the banker Hoffman, who told me something about the Empress Catherine the Second, which many Russians do not know. They are under the impression that their empress is a brunette, as they always see her with brown, or rather black hair; the actual fact is that she is blonde, but at the age of ten years they began to comb her hair with leaden combs, and to anoint it with a certain ointment, so as to darken it. She was betrothed to the Duke of Holstein, afterwards Peter III., and as most Russians are fair, it was decided the reigning family should be dark.

The indiscretion of the Princess D'Aremberg.

Princess d'Aremberg, who was lodging in the same hotel with me at Leipsic, was seized with a desire to visit the fair, *incognita*. She changed clothes with one of her waiting-maids, and mixed with the suite of servants who were ordered to follow the false princess. I suppose my readers know that the princess was very pretty and very witty, and that she had been the delight of the Emperor Francis the First. I got wind of this masquerade, and followed the princess. When she stopped to admire some jewellery on one of the stalls, I approached her, and entering into conversation with her as though she were really a waiting-maid, I asked—pointing to her pretended mistress—if that was really the celebrated Princess d'Aremberg?

'Certainly,' she answered.

'I can hardly believe it,' I said, 'for she is not pretty, and she has neither the walk nor the manner of a princess.'

'Probably you don't know much of princesses and their ways.'

'Not from want of having seen plenty, and pretty closely, too; and to prove to you that I am a good judge, I will tell you that it is you who ought to be the princess, and I will give you a hundred ducats if you will come back with me.'

'A hundred ducats! it would serve you right if I took you at your word.'

'Do! I lodge in the same hotel as you, and if you can

Digitized by Microsoft®

arrange matters I will give you the money, but only when I am sure of you, for I don't like to be tricked.'

'Very well. Don't say anything to anybody, but try and speak to me before or after supper. If you have the courage to run a few risks, I will come to you.

'What is your name?'

'Caroline.'

I knew, of course, she was laughing at me, but I was glad to have afforded her some amusement, and at the same time to have let her know that I thought her charming. About supper-time I began to hang round the princess's apartments, till one of the women asked me what I wanted.

'I want to speak to one of your comrades, whom I saw at the fair.'

'You mean Caroline, no doubt; she is waiting on the princess just now, but she will be out in about half an hour.'

By and by she came back to say that Caroline would come in a minute, and that she would show me where to wait for her. She put me into a kind of cupboard, small and dark and stuffy, where, after a moment or so, I was joined by a woman. This time I knew it was the real Caroline. She took hold of my hand, telling me I must stay there quietly, and when her mistress was in bed she would join me.

'Stay here in the dark! no, charming Caroline, no light, no heart! You had better come to my room, which is on the next landing; no one will come near us, and I have the hundred ducats here.'

'It is impossible, I dare not, not for a million.'

'So much the worse for you. I wouldn't stay in this hole for a million, so farewell, pretty Caroline.'

'Wait—let me go out first.'

But I was too sharp for her. I caught hold of the tail of her gown, so that she was obliged to let me leave the cupboard with her. Once outside, I said: 'Good-bye, Caroline, the trap was not well set,' and went up to my room laughing to

Digitized by Microsoft®

myself at having fooled them. It was evident they intended making me pass the night in the dark hole as a punishment for having offered money to a princess and the mistress of an emperor.

I was bargaining for some lace a day or two after, when the princess came into the shop accompanied by Count von Zinzendorf, whom I had known in Paris. He recognised me, and asked me if I was any relation to the Casanova who had fought the celebrated duel.

'I am the very man, sir, and you see I still wear my arm in a sling.'

The count then presented me to the princess, asking her if she had heard of the duel.

'I saw something about it in the *Gazette*,' she replied; 'so you, sir, were the hero? I am delighted to make your acquaintance.'

She talked to me most amiably for some minutes; and with that perfect dissimulation which one can only learn at court, gave the impression that she had never seen me before. She invited me to dine with her that evening, and tell her all about my singular adventures. She was perfectly attentive; her maids never looked me in the face. She left Leipsic the following day, and that was the end of our little comedy.

Madame Castel-Bajac again.

Towards the end of the fair, I received an unexpected visit. My readers who will remember Castel-Bajac, whose acquaintance had been so disastrous to me in London, and whose accomplice, the Baron Schwerin, had palmed a forged note off on me, may imagine my surprise, when my servant ushered in the beautiful Madame Castel-Bajac, with whom I had dined at Lord Pembroke's.

'You here, madame!'

'Alas, yes! I have been here for three weeks, and have seen you often, but we always avoided you.'

'Who do you mean by *we*?'

'Myself and Schwerin.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What! that scoundrel here?'

'Yes, and in prison for a forged bill which he cashed. I do not know what they will dô with him, but I fear he will be hanged.'

'And you have been with him ever since you left England three years ago?'

'Yes; thieving, cheating, deceiving every one, and flying from place to place. I am the most miserable woman in the world.'

'How much was the forged bill for?'

'Three hundred crowns. O Signor Casanova, do a noble action, forget the past and deliver this wretched man from the gallows, or the galleys, and me from death, for I shall kill myself.'

'I shall let him be hanged, if that is his fate, madame, for he put me in peril of the gallows with his forged bank-notes; but I own I feel sorry for you—so much so, that I invite you to come to Dresden with me, and I promise I will give you three hundred crowns the day I hear that Schwerin has met with his deserts. I do not understand how a woman like you could care for a man like that.'

'Alas! I own to my shame that I never loved him, but Castel-Bajac, who, by the bye, was not really my husband, deserted me. I stayed with Schwerin because he forced me to, but if an honest man to whom I could really have attached myself had asked me, I should have abandoned the wretch, who will sooner or later be the cause of my death.'

'Where do you live?'

'Nowhere, for I have been turned out of my hotel. Have pity on me.'

Saying this she flung herself at my feet in floods of tears. I could not help being moved. She was certainly one of the most beautiful women in France, and was then about twenty-six years old. I raised her from the ground, promising that I would not desert her in her trouble. The next day I sent to her hotel and arranged with her landlord for the restitution

Digitized by Microsoft®

of her goods, which he had confiscated; the poor woman's gratitude knew no bounds.

Before leaving for Dresden we heard that the banker whom Schwerin had cheated had sent to Berlin to ask his minister there if the King of Prussia would object to his proceeding with all the rigour of justice against Schwerin.

'There!' cried my new companion, 'that is what he was most afraid of. The king will pay his debts, but he will be sent to finish his days at Spandau.'

She went off with me to Dresden, happy and grateful. I called her Countess de Blasin, and presented her to my mother and my relations. I took her to the theatre and went everywhere with her. But the time was approaching for my voyage to Portugal. I could not go there with a beautiful woman, besides my means would not allow me to travel so far with a companion. We talked the situation over amicably, and she assured me that what she most desired was to return to Montpellier, her native place, and where her husband lived. 'I have relations there,' she said, 'who will take me in, and I hope that my husband will forgive me; I shall go to him as the prodigal child, and I believe he will receive me as a kind father.'

He leaves for Dresden with La Castel-Bajac.

About the middle of December we left Dresden together, and the Countess de Blasin was once more transformed. She now became Mlle. Blasin, milliner. In this character she was to travel back to Montpellier, while I returned to Vienna, where I lived for some time very quietly; I frequented neither good nor bad company, only a few old friends who were living there, Calsabigi,[1] a Venetian named Uccelli, and my friend Campioni.

[1] Calsabigi, or, as it is sometimes written, Calsiabigi, was a Florentine, to whom is due the doubtful honour of having first introduced state lotteries into France and Russia: the reader will remember that he was associated with Casanova in the French lottery scheme patronised by Louis XV. His brother, Ranieri Calsabigi, was the collaborator of Gluck when the latter, disgusted with the emptiness of the lyric poems suitable for opera, was looking for something more in harmony with his ideas. He had the luck to encounter Ranieri, whom

Digitized by Microsoft®

One day when I was at dinner with the last named, the door opened and a pretty little girl about twelve years old walked in. She came up to me with a mixture of boldness and timidity, and when I asked her what she wanted, answered me in Latin verse that her mother was waiting in the antechamber and would come in if I desired it. I replied in Latin prose, that I did not wish to see her mother, and I told her frankly the reason. She continued, always in verse, saying that her mother must come in, or she might be put in prison if the *Commissaires de chasteté* (officials peculiar to Vienna, whom I have already spoken of in these Memoirs) knew that she was alone with me. Her language was exceedingly simple. I could not help laughing at her; I asked if her father was in Vienna; she answered yes, and then began to recite erotic verses. I gave her a couple of ducats, and she left me her address. I could not help admiring her father's inventive genius, which had found this means of living at the expense of his daughter, but in Vienna it was bound, sooner or later, to get him into trouble. My evil genius inspired me with a desire to go and see this girl at her own lodgings. At the age of forty-two, and with my great experience, I was yet fool enough to go alone. She saw me from the window, and beckoned me. Imagine my horror on entering her room to find myself in the presence of the infamous Pocchini, a blackmailing thief, with whom I had had dealings in London, and whom I had then treated with the severity he deserved. His supposed wife, Catina, and two brigands of the lowest type were with him. He began by cursing and swearing, declaring

He raises scandal in Vienna.

he had known in Paris, and he undertook to write lyrical dramas for the musician, in which all the parts should be connected and final, without the vague episodes and ridiculous buffooneries then in vogue, when the aria served only as a pretext for the caprices of the singer. He composed in Italian the librettos of *Hélène et Paris*, *Alcestis*, and *Orphée aux Enfers*, which Gluck set to music. The first is little known, the other two are numbered among the five which make Gluck immortal. Catulle Mendès, warm in his praises of Ranieri Calsabigi, says that he was the inventor of 'new or modern opera, by which is meant a musical drama.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

that the time for his revenge had now come, and that my life was in his hands, but one of his comrades intervened, saying we must make up our differences and be friends; thereupon he produced a bottle which I was forced to share with them. When I refused a second glass, Pocchini shouted in a furious voice that it was because I did not want to pay for the wine. 'You are mistaken,' I said, 'I am willing to pay.' I put my hand in my pocket to get a ducat without taking out my purse, but one of the men said I need not be afraid, I was in honest company. I was forced to give way again; Pocchini snatched the purse from me, saying he would keep it in part payment of what I owed him.

Putting the best face on the matter I could, I said he was master in his own house, and rose to leave. One of the brigands insisted on my embracing him, and when I protested he drew his sword; his companion imitating him, I thought I was lost. I embraced them all, and after this they allowed me to depart. More dead than alive I returned to my inn.

I wrote out an account of the whole affair, beginning with the girl and the Latin verses, with the intention of taking it to the chief of police, but they did not give me time. I was summoned next morning to appear before the Count von Schrotembach, statthalter.

The statthalter was a stout man, who received me standing, a watch in his hand.

'Do you see the time?' he said. 'If to-morrow at the same hour you are still in Vienna, I will have you put out of the city by force.'

'May I ask the reason of this unjust and arbitrary order?'

'I owe you no explanations, but I will say this much: you would not have received such an order had you not transgressed her majesty's laws, which forbid games of hazard, and condemn swindlers to hard labour. Do you know this purse, and these cards?'

'I recognise my purse, which doubtless does not contain

Digitized by Microsoft®

what was in it when it was taken from me yesterday; as for the cards, I have never seen them before.' I then gave him the written recital of my wrongs. He read it, and then burst out laughing; it was a tissue of lies, he said; every one knew who and what I was, and why I had been expelled from Warsaw. 'However,' he added, 'you must go at the time I have appointed, and, furthermore, I must know where you are going.'

'I have not made up my mind to leave yet!'

'Ah! you mean to say you will not obey me! I advise you to do so if you wish to avoid worse treatment.'

'Give me back my papers.'

'No; I shall keep them. Now, be off!'

This was one of the most terrible moments of my life, and I shudder when I recall it. Only a cowardly love of living prevented me from thrusting my sword through the body of the infamous statthalter, who behaved to me, not as a judge, but as hangman's boy.

Prince Kaunitz smiles.

I went off in haste to Prince Kaunitz, who I fancied would perhaps help me, although I did not know him personally. I found him surrounded by guests, among others Signor Polo Renieri, the Venetian ambassador.

The prince asked me what I wanted, and I told him.

'Write out a petition,' he said, 'and I will see that the empress receives it; but you had better only ask her to suspend the order for your departure, not to abrogate it, as that would offend her.'

'And if she does not grant my request, shall I be violently expelled?'

'Put yourself under the protection of the ambassador of your country.'

'Alas! prince, I have no country, though mine is ever dear to me. Legal and unconstitutional violence have deprived me of my rights as a citizen. I am a Venetian. My name is Casanova.'

Prince Kaunitz looked at Renieri, smiling. Renieri looked

Digitized by Microsoft®

amused, and drew him aside. They talked together for ten minutes in a low voice.

'It is unfortunate for you,' said the prince kindly, 'that you cannot claim the protection of any minister.'

Just then a man of colossal stature came forward, and told me I could claim his protection, as my whole family was in the service of the prince, his master, whom I had myself served. This was a fact, for the tall man was the ambassador of Saxony, Count von Vitzthum.

'Write your petition to the empress,' said von Kaunitz, 'and if you do not immediately receive an answer, go to the Embassy, where you will be safe from violence, until such time as you choose to leave.'

I sat down, and in ten minutes composed the following:—

The worm's letter to the empress.

'MADAME,—I am sure that if some poor insect were in a plaintive voice to implore your imperial and royal majesty not to step on it, your highness would turn away her foot so as not to crush the poor creature. I am that insect, madame, and I dare to implore you to order the Statthalter von Schrotembach to wait eight days before crushing me with your imperial slipper. It is possible that after the expiration of this short time, your majesty may take out of his hands the slipper which you confided to him for the punishment of scoundrels only, and not for that of a poor Venetian, who, in spite of his escape from the state prison of his country, is an honest man, and profoundly submissive to your majesty's laws. CASANOVA.

'VIENNA, 21*st Jan.* 1767.'

I gave the letter to a servant and went away, trembling like a paralytic man; I really feared my rage would make me seriously ill. About seven o'clock Vitzthum paid me a visit; he asked me to tell him the story of the girl and to write him down the verses.

'But I am much afraid,' he said, 'that justice will not be done you.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What! I shall be forced to leave to-morrow?'

'Oh no, she cannot help being touched by your remarks about her slipper! I never read a petition written in that vein before. Even the cold von Kaunitz was obliged to smile; he read it to the Venetian ambassador, who gravely asked him if he meant to send it as it was to her majesty. "Why, yes," he answered; "it could be sent to God if one only knew the address!" He despatched it there and then by one of his secretaries. We talked about you all dinner-time, and I was pleased to hear Renieri declare that no one knew *why* you had been imprisoned in 'The Leads.' They also spoke of your duel with Branecki.'

Next day at noon von Vitzthum's secretary came to tell me that I had no cause to fear, either at home or even abroad, if I went in a carriage, but that I must not go out on foot.

This favour could only come from the empress, and I immediately began to build castles in the air; my enemies would be punished, my money returned to me. I determined to pay a visit to the Countess de Salmor, who had constant access to the empress, and to whom I had had a letter of introduction. This lady told me that I ought to leave off wearing my arm in a sling, that it was a ridiculous piece of charlatanism; after nine months I could not possibly need it. I replied, very much astonished, that I certainly should not wear a sling unless I required it, and that I was not a charlatan, adding, 'I came to see you, madame, on a very different matter.'

'I know, but I do not wish to be mixed up in it; you are all scoundrels, the whole lot of you.'

I turned on my heel and left the room without bowing.

Discrepancy between the publicopinion of Casanova and his own.

I was completely crushed; ill-used and insulted by rogues of all degrees, powerless to revenge myself, rejected by justice itself. What! a miserable wretch of a countess to dare to make fun of my sling! If I had received such an insult from a man, I would have taken the glove off my left hand and slapped his face with my right. I could not prevent my left hand swelling if I kept it out of the sling for an hour, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

then the slightest movement caused me intolerable pain. I was not entirely cured till twenty months after the duel.

Schrotembach treated my whole story as a romance, and said I had kept a faro-table, and played with marked cards; that I had used both hands to deal with, and my sling was only a pretence. This came from the empress through Prince Kaunitz, who told Vitzthum, who told me. The empress was of course obliged to believe what Schrotembach told her; if she had listened to me she would have been forced to discharge him, and he was useful to her. The girl with her Latin verses and supposed parents had disappeared from Vienna, no one knew where they had gone; he advised me to forget my two hundred ducats, and to depart quietly.

I left Vienna full of bitterness and regret, at not being able to kill the barbarous despot who tyrannised over me. I stopped at Lintz and wrote to Schrotembach, a more biting letter even than the one I had addressed seven years before to the Duke of Würtemburg, and I put it in the post myself, and took a receipt for it so as to be sure it would reach him.

From Lintz I went to Augsburg, where I passed four months as agreeably as possible. My pockets were not too well lined, but I lived plainly and played moderately. While I was at Augsburg several Poles took refuge there from the troubles which were devastating their country. The crown notary, Rzewuski, who was on his way to Spa, assured me if I went there I should meet Prince Adam's sister, Tomatis, la Catai, whom he had married, and many other friends. I decided to take his advice, and as I was short of money, looked round for some means of procuring three or four hundred ducats.

I wrote to Prince Charles of Courland,[1] who was then at

[1] This great friend of Casanova's, though of superior rank, was a man of his own kidney. Charles Ernest, Prince of Courland, was thirty-nine; and was sent to the Bastille under a *lettre de cachet* in 1768. He was arrested on suspicion as a forger of bills of exchange and of signatures. He took his arrest quietly, says his chronicler, only begging to be allowed to keep a packet containing a white powder. He was known to have the secret of eradicating ink and mending torn edges of paper—a forger's stock in trade, in fact.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Venice, and asked him to send me a hundred. To induce him to do so at once I sent him an infallible recipe for the philosopher's stone. As my letter was not written in cipher, I asked him to burn it; he did not do so, and it was seized in Paris with his other papers when he was put in the Bastille.

My letter, which was kept within the archives of the prison, would never have seen the light again but for the Revolution. When the Bastille was destroyed it was found, and printed with several other curious documents, and translated into German and English. The ignorant fools who abound in the country where my destiny wills that I end my life, were delighted to have this fact to bring against me. They were stupid enough to consider the authorship of this letter a terrible stain on my character, and imagined they were confounding me when they told me it had been translated into German, and would stand for my everlasting confusion. The brutal Bohemians, who thus reproached me, were thunderstruck when I laughed in their faces, and said, that on the contrary this letter immortalised me.

I do not know if the text of the letter has been changed, but as it has been made public I will give it here, as a homage to that God of truth, the only Deity, I adore. I have in my hand an exact copy of the original, written at Augsburg, in the month of May 1767, and we are now at the first day of the year 1798.

Augsburg, May 1767.

'MONSEIGNEUR,—Your highness will please to burn this letter after reading it, or at least preserve it with the greatest secrecy. It would be better to burn it, and keep only a copy of it in cipher, so that if it should be lost or stolen, the contents will remain undecipherable. My attachment to you is not my only reason for writing it; I will own that my interest counts for something. Permit me to say that it is not enough for me that your highness approves certain qualities in me; though this flatters my self-love, I cannot but dread the natural inconstancy of princes. I wish to give you, mon-

Digitized by Microsoft®

seigneur, a better reason, for your preference; I wish you to be under an obligation to me. I give you the secret of making, or rather increasing, gold, the only thing of which your highness stands in need. Had you been a miser you would be rich; but you are generous, and you would remain poor all your life, but for this secret of which I am sole possessor.

'Your highness asked me at Riga to tell you my secret for the transmutation of iron into copper; I did not do so: now I am going to give you a far more important secret. But I must tell you that the place where you live now is not suitable to the operation, although you could easily obtain there all that is necessary. My presence is necessary for the construction of the furnace, which demands great nicety of execution; the smallest fault would render the operation null.

'The transmutation of Mars is easy and mechanical; the secret I am now going to explain to you is philosophical. When your gold is precipitated, it will be equal to that of which Venetian sequins are made. Remember, monseigneur, that I am not only putting you in a position to be independent of me, but I am also putting my life and my liberty in your hands. The step I am taking ought to bring me your eternal goodwill, and set you above the prejudices under which chemists and their methods of procedure and application generally labour. My vanity will be much hurt if your highness does not place me above my fellows. Will you wait until we can make the experiment together? You cannot work alone, and you must not trust anybody, for even if the operation succeeded, the man who helped you would sell your secret. I will tell you that it was with the same ingredients, with mercury and nitre added, that I made the *tree of projection* for Madame d'Urfé; the Princess of Anhalt-Zerbst calculated the *végétation*, which was fifty per cent. I should now be the possessor of an enormous fortune, had I been able to trust a prince who was master of a mint. I am now for the first time in a position to do so, for your divine character is above all suspicion. But to come to facts.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You must take four ounces of good silver, dissolve it in aqua-fortis, and then precipitate it with a copper blade; after which wash it in tepid water to separate the acids, then dry it well; mix it with half an ounce of sal ammoniac, and place it in a retort. After this take a pound of feather alum,[1] and a pound of Hungarian crystal, four ounces of copperas, four of native cinnabar, and two of sulphur. Pulverise these ingredients, and mix well together; then place them in a cucurbite, capable of holding twice as much again. This cucurbite must be placed on a four-blast furnace, and the fire heated to the fourth degree. You must begin with a slow fire, which will only extract the vapours of watery parts; and when the spirits begin to be thrown off, you must place over the retort the recipient containing the mercury, and the sal ammoniac. All the fissures must be carefully stopped with *lut de sapience*, and as the spirits are thrown off, the fire must be decreased to the third degree. When the sublimation begins, open the fourth blast, but take care that the sublimate does not pass into the recipient where the mercury is; close the opening of it with a triple bladder and put it in a circulation furnace for twenty-four hours, then take off the bladder and turn the retort towards the centre so that it can distil. After having repeated this operation three times you will see gold in the retort. You must take it out and melt it with the addition of a *corps parfait*.[2] If you melt it with two ounces of gold and then plunge it in water,

[1] Feather alum, or halotrichite, is the double sulphate of iron and potassium.

[2] It is noticeable that Casanova carefully omits to give the composition of this *corps parfait*, and thus renders his recipe entirely valueless, unless tried under his own supervision. Indeed, all those who laid claim to the possession of the philosopher's stone were very careful to keep the secret of their *materia prima*. Ernst von Meyer, in his *History of Chemistry*, says 'that the most unexpected substances, natural products of every kind, were taken as raw material for the manufacture of this preparation, and worked up in every conceivable way.' It should be remembered that one of the very first questions addressed by the adventurer to Madame d'Urfé related to this *materia prima*, a question to which the old lady replied in the affirmative.

Digitized by Microsoft®

you will find four ounces of gold, which will stand any proof, perfect in weight, malleable, but rather pale coloured.

'Here, monseigneur, is a mine of gold for your mint at Mitau, by means of which a director with four men under him can produce a revenue of a thousand ducats a week for you, or the double or quadruple, if your highness chooses to multiply the workmen and the furnaces. I ask to have the direction of it myself, and I only want for my part such share in the gold produced as your highness shall see fit to give me, and which you will allow me to strike in such coin as I shall point out. Remember, monseigneur, that this must remain a state secret. Consign this letter to the flames, and if your highness wishes to reward me in advance, I will only ask a return of the affection I feel for you. I shall be happy if I can so far flatter myself as to call my master my friend. I deliver my life with this letter into your hands, and I shall always be ready to sacrifice it in your service; at the same time I shall know how to protect myself, if I ever have cause to repent having written so openly to your highness, of whom I have the honour to be,' etc.

If this letter, no matter in what language it is printed, is expressed otherwise than above,[1] it was not written by me, and I give the lie to all the Mirabeaus in the world. I have been wrongly called an exile; a man who leaves his country because of a *lettre de cachet* is not an exile. He is forced to obey an order of a monarch, who, by an arbitrary decree, kicks out of his house, so to speak, whoever displeases him, without listening to any defence he may offer.

He leaves Augsburg, 14th June 1767.

As soon as my purse was respectably filled out, I left Augsburg; this was on the 14th June 1767. I was at Ulm when a courier of the Duke of Würtemberg passed through on his way to Louisberg; he brought a letter for me from Prince Charles of Courland,[2] treating of our private affairs.

[1] The Bastille archives were ransacked and published, and among the papers of the Duke of Courland this letter was found, expressed more or less as above.

[2] Casanova does not anywhere reveal the prince's reply to his proposition !

Digitized by Microsoft®

I went on to Mayence, where I embarked with my carriage on a big barque, and I arrived at Cologne towards the end of July. I was looking forward with pleasure to meeting again the burgomaster's charming wife. But this was not the only reason I had for stopping in this hideous town. While at Dresden I had read in the *Cologne Gazette*, that 'the individual known as Casanova having reappeared at Warsaw after an absence of two months, had received orders to leave that city at once, the king having heard several stories about him which obliged him to forbid his court to this adventurer.'

I could not digest this article, and determined to pay a visit to Jacquet, the editor of the *Gazette*.

The wife of the burgomaster again.

When I called at the burgomaster's house, I found him at table with his pretty Mimi. My welcome was all that I could desire, amiable and cordial. I recounted my adventures to them, and the recital took two hours. As Mimi was going out that day, they invited me to dine on the morrow. She appeared to me more beautiful than she was seven years previously, and my imagination began to run away with me. After an agitated night, I made a careful toilette, and went to my host's house betimes, so as to find his wife alone. She was alone, but though she listened with patience to my transports, her manner was frigid.

'Time is an excellent physician,' she said, 'and has cured my heart of a malady, in which there was too much bitter in proportion to the sweet. I do not wish to again expose myself to a passion which only leaves remorse behind it.'

'What! the confessional——'

'Is the place in which to repent our sins, and fortify ourselves against fresh temptations.'

'God preserve me against a repentance and remorse which are based on mere prejudice. I shall leave here to-morrow.'

'I did not tell you to go away.'

'If there is no hope for me I cannot remain. Is there any hope?'

'No—none whatever.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Nevertheless, she was charming to me at dinner; but I was so discouraged that I must have seemed ill-tempered; women have always had the power to raise or depress my spirits. The next morning, at seven o'clock, I got into my chaise. As soon as we were out of the gates and on the road to Aix-la-Chapelle, I got out, and telling the postillion to wait for me, I went to Jacquet's house, armed with my cane and a pistol. The servant, in answer to my knock, showed me into the room where he was at work. The door, on account of the heat, was open. At the sound of my entrance he turned round and demanded what my pleasure was.

As Jacquet was a man with whom I could have fought, I had no scruple in beating him.

'Infamous scribbler,' I said, 'I am that adventurer Casanova, whose name you defamed in your paper, some four months ago.' Saying this, I grasped my pistol in my left hand, and raised my cane. But the miserable wretch fell on his knees and asked for mercy, with clasped hands, at the same time offering to give me the letter from Warsaw, so that I could read the name of the person who had calumniated me.

'Where is the letter?'

'I will give it you in one moment.'

I moved aside to let him pass, and I drew the bolt of the door. He began to search for the letter, trembling like a leaf. I showed him the date of the article in his *Gazette*, which I had in my pocket, but his correspondence was all in disorder. At the end of an hour he again flung himself on his knees and, trembling and stammering, told me to deal with him as I would. I gave him a kick, and putting my pistol in my pocket, ordered him to follow me. He accompanied me without a word, and without a hat, to my postchaise; when he saw me get into it, he thanked God for having got off so cheaply. I arrived that evening at Aix-la-Chapelle, where I found the Princess Lubomirska, General Roniker, several other distinguished Poles, Tomatis and his wife, and a crowd of Englishmen of my acquaintance.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LI

A LETTRE DE CACHET

The quantity of adventurers who frequent Spa[1] at the season for taking the water is enormous, and they all go hoping to make a fortune. The amount of money in circulation is extraordinary, but it all passes into the hands of the gamblers and the shopkeepers, usurers who do good business. The passion for play is even stronger than that for gallantry, and the gambler at Spa has neither the time to consider a woman's attractions, nor the courage to make any sacrifices for her. The profits of the tables are divided into three: the first and smallest share goes into the purse of the Prince Bishop of Liége; the second to the nameless scoundrels who haunt the place; and the third and largest part, which is estimated at half a million yearly, is engulfed in the coffers of twelve professional cheats, owned to, and authorised by the sovereign who is associated in their gains. In a place like this, where one does nothing but eat, drink, promenade, gamble, and dance, living is not dear; at a richly spread *table d'hôte* I only paid half a French crown piece, and for the same sum I was well lodged.

I had been some days at Spa, winning and losing little sums, when my landlord informed me that an Italian gentleman had taken rooms in my hotel. I asked his name, and was shown a card bearing the title 'Le Marquis don Antonio della

[1] The name of Casanova does not figure in the *Livre d'or* here, but it is among those of the notabilities who have visited Spa, and whose names are inscribed on the vase of what is called *La Cascade memoriale*, just outside the 'Pouhorn,' the principal spring.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The villain Croce reappears.

Croce.' Could it be Croce? It was very possible. I was told that he had a secretary and two menservants, and his wife a maid. I was impatient to see this marquis, and had not long to wait, for learning that I was his neighbour he came to pay me a visit. It was indeed Croce—Monsieur de Sainte Croix—Il Marchese della Croce!

We spent two hours talking over our adventures since our separation at Milan. He had heard what I had done for the girl he had abandoned, and in the six years which had passed since then, he had overrun half Europe. He had made money in Paris and Brussels; and in the last-named city had fallen in love with a young lady of quality, whose father had shut her up in a convent. They had eloped together, and she was the Marquise de la Croce, and soon to give him an heir to his self-assumed title. He passed her off as his wife, because, he said, he firmly intended to marry her.

'I have fifty thousand francs in gold, as much again in jewels and carriages, and I intend to have a table in our room and give suppers; if I play without attempting to *correct the cards* I am always certain to lose.'

He intended to go on to Warsaw, and expected me to give him letters to my acquaintance there; but he was mistaken, I did not even present him to the Poles I knew at Spa. His pretended secretary was only his accomplice, a tricky Veronese, named Conti. I promised to remain perfectly neutral, and I accepted his invitation to dinner. His supposed wife was about sixteen or seventeen years old, a tall, pretty blonde, with all the style of the nobility to which she belonged. The story of her elopement is known to her brothers and sisters, and as her distinguished and honourable family is still extant, I must not mention her name. She wore fine earrings and two superb rings, which gave me an opportunity to admire her hands. I could not keep my eyes off her. I could not help speculating as to what could be the charm of Croce, that women of such superior breeding fell in love with him. He was not handsome or cultivated; he had not the ways of one

Digitized by Microsoft®

accustomed to good society; he was not witty in conversation, and yet here was the second girl of good family who had deserted the paternal roof to follow him. After dinner I drew him aside, and read him a little lecture. I pointed out to him the necessity of being more circumspect in his conduct, and told him he would be the most execrable of men did he grieve this excellent creature.

'I shall marry her at Warsaw, and you may be sure that I shan't leave *this one* to your care. If you are in want of money, my purse is at your disposal.'

At the end of a week, as Croce failed to attract people to his house in spite of his suppers, he took to playing at the public tables, and lost continually. At the end of three weeks, Conti, who played prudently, had won a considerable sum, and went back to Verona with his wife and one of the menservants. About the same time Charlotte—this was the name of the marquise—discharged her waiting-maid. I only stayed on at Spa because I foresaw the approaching catastrophe, and had not the heart to leave Charlotte. Croce sold all his jewels, then those of his companion, then her lace, and her best clothes, then his own wardrobe, and with the two hundred louis this yielded made one last effort. He played like a madman in my presence. He rose from the table, and making me a sign to follow him, said, 'My friend, there is nothing left for me but to kill myself, or to leave Spa at once, without returning to the inn. I shall go on foot to Warsaw; leaving my wife to your charge; I know you will take care of her, for you adore her. Tell her I only wanted to make a fortune for her, and if I am more lucky in future I shall devote my whole life to her. Take care of her, she is worthy of a better man than I; take her to Paris, where I will write to you. I know you have money. Farewell, I commend Charlotte to you; better for her if she had never known me!'

Croce again recommends the care of his mistress to Casanova.

He embraced me weeping, and set off, then and there, without a cloak, or a second shirt, in silk stockings, a cane in

Digitized by Microsoft®

his hand, and a fine apple-green velvet coat on his back, leaving me speechless and in despair at having to communicate such news to a woman in her position.

I told her that we must not wait dinner for the marquis, who was detained at the tables; she sighed, wished him luck, and we sat down. After dinner we went for a turn in the Capucin convent garden, and there, as gently as I could, I told her the story, winding up with Croce's parting words, 'I commend Charlotte to your keeping.'

She was silent; her eyes cast down, her hands clasped. I could tell by her irregular breathing what she was suffering. Then wiping two big tears from her beautiful eyes, she said: 'My generous friend, if I may still count on you, I am far from being wretched.'

He undertakes the care of Charlotte.

'Charlotte, I swear I will never leave you, till I leave you in the arms of your husband.'

'Enough. I swear to be eternally grateful and submissive to you.'

We sold Croce's carriage, and what was left of his wardrobe, dismissed the servants, and remained on at Spa, seeing no one. She saw that I loved her as a father. I would hold her in my arms for hours, kissing her beautiful eyes, and content to see that she was happy and at ease. Our affection had all the purity of first love.

We left Spa, unattended, and when we reached Liége, went by the Ardennes to Paris, thus avoiding Brussels, where she was afraid of being seen.

An altered Paris.

Paris seemed a new world to me. We lodged at the hotel Montmorency,[1] in the street of the same name. Madame d'Urfé was dead; my old friends had changed house or fortune. I

[1] Called after Mathieu de Montmorency, who built a house there in 1215. The hotel of which Casanova speaks is still existing, portions of it can be traced at No. 8. It will be remembered that during Madame d'Urfé's life Casanova had always lived in the Rue du Bac, so as to be near her. In a plan of Paris dated 1750, Nos. 85 and 89 Quai des Théatins are set down as belonging to Monsieur le Camus. These two houses were situated at the right and left of the Rue du Bac.

Digitized by Microsoft®

found poor people become rich, rich poor; new buildings, new streets; I no longer knew my way about. The craze for plays had introduced a new system, new rules, new actors; everything had become dearer. Crowds of miserable people, to distract their minds from their troubles, paced up and down the false ramparts, which went by the sonorous name of boulevards. The luxury of those who drove was only apparent because of the contrast. The two extremes were turn and turn about, beheld and beholders. Paris is perhaps the only city in the world which can change its face completely in five or six years.

My first visit was to Madame de Rumain, who was delighted to see me. I returned her the money she had had the goodness to send me in my distress. My brother and his wife were living in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. They begged me to stay with them, which I promised to do as soon as the lady who was with me should be confined. I did not think it necessary to tell them her story, and they were delicate enough not to ask questions. These duties performed, I remained at Charlotte's side. On the 8th of October I arranged for her to board with Madame Lamarre, a nurse, who lived in the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis, and on the evening of the same day we went together in a *fiacre*.

We were obliged to stop for a funeral to go by, and Charlotte covered her eyes with her handkerchief.

'Dear friend,' she said, 'it is very foolish, no doubt, but this seems to me a bad omen.'

When I had seen her installed, I went off to my brother's; but only to sleep, for as long as Charlotte lived, I spent the entire day with her, from nine in the morning until past mid-night. On the 13th of October she had a feverish attack, and on the 17th she gave birth to a fine boy, who, by the express wish of his mother, was taken that morning to church and baptized.[1] She wrote with her own hand the name she wanted

[1] It will be observed that, contrary to his usual habit, Casanova does not allow himself to imply any doubts of the paternity of the child of Croce.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Her child a foundling.

him to have. James (my name) and Charles (her own), son of Antonio della Croce, and Charlotte —— (she gave her own name). On the child's return from church, she insisted that Madame Lamarre should take him to the Foundling, with the certificate of his baptism, the place where he was born, and his name pinned to his clothing. I tried in vain to persuade her to let me bring him up. She said that if he lived, his father could easily remove him from the Foundling. The same day the nurse gave me the following certificate, which I copy from the original, still in my possession:—

'We, J. B. Douval, councillor of the king, commissary of the Châtelet of Paris, formerly chief of the police of the quarter of the city, certify that to our knowledge, a male child has this day been taken to the Foundling Hospital. The boy, apparently about one day old, was brought from the Rue du Faubourg Saint-Denis by the midwife Lamarre, wrapped in its swaddling-clothes, in which was found a certificate, stating that he had been baptized this day at the church of Saint-Laurent by the names of James Charles, son of Antonio della Croce and Charlotte de ——. In support of which we give the present certificate at our hotel in the Rue des Marmousets,[1] in the city, this 18th day of October 1767, at seven o'clock in the evening. DOUVAL.'

Death of Charlotte.

After this I never left Charlotte's bedside day or night; the fever did not diminish for one moment, and she died on the 26th of that month. One hour before she died she said good-bye to me, and kissed my hand in the presence of the priest

[1] Casanova probably means the Rue des Marmousets de la Cité, a street which owed its name to a house called 'Des Marmousets' (marmosetarum), which existed in the thirteenth century. It was at the corner of this street, and that of the Two Hermits, that tradition placed the dwellings of the barber and the pastry-cook, one of whom cut the throats of his customers, while the other made their bodies into excellent meat-pies. At the base of the house which formed the angle of the two streets was to be seen, until a year or two ago, a square stone bearing vestiges of sculpture, supposed to have been placed there to perpetuate the memory of the French Sweeny Todd and his accomplice.

Digitized by Microsoft®

who had heard her confession. The tears which are falling as I write these lines are probably the last I shall shed in memory of this charming creature, victim of her love for a villain who is still living, and whose mission it seems to be to make others miserable.

At midday my brother and his wife came to inquire for me. They found me in tears beside the body of a young and beautiful woman. They brought me several letters, which I did not open until the day after the funeral. The first one I read was from M. Dandolo, and announced the death of M. de Bragadin. For twenty-two years this man had been to me as a father. He had lived economically—he had even run into debt, in order that I should want for nothing; yet, great as my loss was, I could not weep. His fortune was all held in trust, so he could not leave me anything; his furniture and his library went to his creditors. His two faithful friends, who were mine as well, were poor, and could only give me their affection. This terrible news was accompanied by a letter of exchange for a thousand crowns, which the dead man, foreseeing his end, had sent me twenty-four hours before.

He decides to go to Spain, and intrigues for letters of introduction.

I remained shut up for three days, and on the fourth I began to pay court to the Princess Lubomirska. I had decided to go to Madrid, and the princess gave me a letter to the Count d'Aranda, who was then all-powerful. Marchese Caraccioli, then in Paris, gave me three others: one to the Prince de la Catolica, the Neapolitan minister to Madrid; one to the Duc de Lossada, chief butler to the king and his favourite; and a third to the Marchese Mora Pignatelli.

On the 4th of November I went to a concert given in a hall opposite the Orangery, with a ticket presented to me by the Princess Lubomirska. When the concert was half over, I heard some one pronounce my name sneeringly. I turned round and saw who it was; it was a tall young man,[1] seated between two older ones. As I looked at him he turned away, but continued insolently speaking. He said, among other

[1] The young man was the Marquis de Lille.

Digitized by Microsoft®

things, that I had cost him at least a million, which I had stolen from his aunt, the late Marquise d'Urfé.

'You are an insolent fellow,' said I; 'if you were outside, I would give you a kick to teach you how to talk of your betters.'

Saying this I rose up and went out. The two older men were holding the younger back. After waiting a while to see if he would come, I went on. The day but one after, I was at table with my brother, my sister-in-law, and some Russians who boarded with them, so as to learn how to paint battle-pieces, when the servant said a Chevalier of Saint-Louis was in the hall, and desired to speak to me. I went out, and he handed me a paper. I opened it; it was signed *Louis*. The king ordered me to leave Paris within twenty-four hours, and the kingdom within three weeks, and all the reason he alleged was, that *it was his good pleasure*.'

A *lettre de cachet*.

'Very well, sir. I have read the order, and I will try and please the king by going as soon as possible. If I am not able to leave in twenty-four hours, his majesty will have the satisfaction of doing with me what he pleases.'

'The twenty-four hours, sir, are only assigned as a formality. Sign the order, give me a receipt for the *lettre de cachet*, and you can go when it suits you. I simply ask you to give me your word of honour that you will not go to any of the theatres or public promenades on foot.'

'I give you my word, sir, and I thank you for relying on it.'

I took the chevalier to my room, where I wrote what he dictated to me. As he said he would like to see my brother, whom he knew, we went into the dining-room, where I announced as gaily as I could the object of his visit.

My brother began to laugh. 'My dear Monsieur Buhot,' said he, 'this news comes like the month of March in Lent; my brother intended to leave during the week.'

'So much the better; if the minister had known it, he would not have troubled himself to sign the letter.'

'What is the reason of this order?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'They say there was some talk of a chastisement to be dealt to some one who, though very young, is not to be treated so.'

'You must know, chevalier,' said I, 'that those words were only a formality, like your twenty-four hours, for if the impertinent young fellow whom I thought it necessary to threaten in such a way on account of his insulting words had followed me, why, he wore a sword with which he could easily have protected himself!'

I then told him the affair from beginning to end, and he agreed with me that I was in the right. He advised me to tell the story to M. de Sartine, who knew me, and would listen to me; I did not say anything to this, as I remembered the celebrated lieutenant of police, and what a preacher he was. The *lettre de cachet* was dated the 6th of November, and I did not leave Paris till the 20th.

A new view of 'the king's pleasure.'

I informed all my acquaintances of the honour the King of France had done me, in signifying to me his good pleasure—the most atrocious and humiliating formula in the world—and I would not listen to Madame du Rumain, who wanted to go off at once to Versailles, saying she was certain she could get the king to cancel the letter. My passport for post-horses was given me by the Duke de Choiseul, and was dated 19th November. I have it still.

He leaves Paris.

I left alone, without a servant, sorrowing for my Charlotte, but otherwise in a tranquil frame of mind. I had a hundred louis in my purse, and a letter of credit for eight thousand francs on Bordeaux. I was going to a country where I had need of circumspection. I had lost all my extraneous resources; death had isolated me; I began to see that I had arrived at what is called *a certain age*, an age at which fortune frowns on one as a rule, and the smiles of women become rare.

I got into my postchaise at six o'clock in the evening, intending to travel all night, and dine at Orleans. I reached Bourg-la-Reine in half an hour, and then I fell asleep, to wake at Orleans at seven o'clock in the morning.

O my dear, my beautiful France! where in those days

Digitized by Microsoft®

Panegyric on France.

things went so well, in spite of the *lettres de cachet*, in spite of the *corvées* and the misery of the people, and the good pleasure of the king and his ministers, dear France, what hast thou become to-day? The people is thy sovereign, the people, most brutal and most tyrannical of all rulers. Thou hast no longer to submit to the good pleasure of the king, it is true, but thou hast to submit to popular caprice and the republic; a frightful government, which means public ruin, and which is not suited to modern peoples; too rich, too learned, and, above all, too depraved for a government which presupposes abnegation, sobriety, and all the virtues. It cannot last.

I hoped to see Noël, the King of Prussia's cook, at Angoulême, but I only found his father, who treated me very well, and also possessed, I found, a veritable talent for making pâtés. He assured me that he would undertake to send any pâtés I might order all over Europe, to any address I gave him.

'What! to Venice, London, Warsaw, Petersburg!'

'Constantinople, if you like, and to prove that I am not deceiving you, you need not pay for them till you hear they have arrived at their destination.'

I took him at his word, and sent some to my friends in Venice, Warsaw, and Turin, and received thanks and compliments for each.

This man had grown rich by his trade. He told me he sent many to America; and with the exception of those which were shipwrecked, they all arrived in perfect condition. They were made for the most part of turkey, partridge, and hare, stuffed with truffles, but he also made them of *foie gras*, larks, and thrushes.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LII

SPAIN

The roads of Spain.

I TRAVELLED from Bordeaux to Bayonne and Saint Jean-de-Luz in my chaise; here I sold my carriage and went to Pampeluna, across the Pyrenees on a mule's back, with my baggage on a second mule. These mountains seemed more imposing than the Alps; at any rate, they are more pleasant to look on.

At Pampeluna I hired a guide, named Andrea Capello, and we started for Madrid. The road is as good as any in France. It was made by the famous General de Gages at his own expense, and does him more honour than his bloodstained laurels. Twenty leagues further on I cannot say the roads were bad, for there simply were not any; up the rugged ascents, down the steep declines, there was no sign of anything on wheels having ever passed that way before. I do not advise travellers who love their ease to take that route to Madrid. There are no inns, only a miserable tavern here and there. Signor or Senhor Andrea carefully chose the best among them, and after having seen to his mules and procured all that was needful for them, he would hunt through the village for something for me to eat. The landlord of the establishment would never think of putting himself out. He would show me a room in which I could sleep, and a fireplace in which I could make a fire if I chose, but would not procure me either food or fuel. He would sit nonchalantly smoking his cigarette of Brazilian tobacco rolled up in a bit of paper, and looking like the quill of a pen, puffiing out long columns of smoke, as grave as a judge. In no part of Europe do the people live as soberly as

Digitized by Microsoft®

the lower-class Spaniards. Two ounces of white bread, or the roasted cones of the cork-tree, suffice for a Spaniard's daily nourishment. He is proud to be able to say when his guest departs: 'I did not give myself any trouble about him.' This is the result of laziness and pride. 'A Castilian must not abase himself by serving a *gavacho*.' The French, and by extension, all foreigners, are to them *gavachos*—a much more unpleasant name than dog, which the Turks give us, and which term is also bestowed liberally by the English on all who are not born within the three kingdoms. It is, of course, understood that polished and educated people do not speak or think in this way. A well-conducted and well-mannered foreigner is well received all over, in Spain as in England or Turkey.

Recollections of St. Maria of Agreda.

I slept one night at Agreda, where a nun, Maria d'Agreda, once carried her madness to the point of writing the life of the Blessed Virgin from her own dictation. The reader may remember that I was given this book to read in 'The Leads,' and that the reveries of this holy visionary almost drove me mad.

I noticed that though the chamber doors in each inn where I slept were furnished with bolts on the outside, on the inside there was nothing but a latch. When I asked Andrea the meaning of this: 'Senhor, you must put up with the arrangement, for the holy Inquisition must be free to see at any moment what foreigners are doing in their rooms.'

'But what has your cursed Inquisition——'

'For the love of God, Senhor Jacob, don't talk like that! or we are both lost.'

'Well, then, what has your holy Inquisition got to be curious about?'

'Everything: whether you eat meat on fast days; whether there are two unmarried persons of different sexes in one room. The holy Inquisition, Senhor Don Jaïmo, watches continually for our eternal salvation in this country.'

Whenever we met a priest taking the viaticum to a dying person, Andrea would stop and bid me imperatively to get

Digitized by Microsoft®

down and kneel in the mud, and there was nothing to do but to obey. Just then the burning religious question of the day was breeches. An edict had been issued forbidding the wearing of breeches with buttoned fronts; flaps only were allowed. The tailors who made the other model, and the men who wore them were punished. In spite of all, however, the fashion persisted, and priests and monks preached themselves hoarse. Matters had come to such a pass that a revolution almost broke out—a revolution which would have enriched history with an episode worthy of Tacitus, and which would have made all Europe hold its sides for laughing. Fortunately it was settled without bloodshed. A notice was stuck on the doors of the churches, declaring that buttoned breeches would be permitted to the executioner only. This had the desired effect, for no one cared to emulate that worthy.

Spanish customs criticised.

I entered Madrid by the Alcala gate. I was searched, and my books were taken from me, but returned to me three days after. One of the clerks asked me for a pinch of snuff; I handed him my box. He calmly threw the contents into the road, saying: 'Senhor, in Spain this tobacco is accursed.' It was good Paris *râpé*. But they are rigorous on this head. The king, who only stuffs one enormous pinch into his enormous nose in the morning on rising, insists that others should keep his factory going. Spanish tobacco is very good when it is pure, which it rarely is.

A friend at Bordeaux had given me the address of an hotel, where I took comfortable rooms, but I suffered somewhat from the cold, which is drier and more stinging than in Paris, in spite of Madrid being forty degrees further south. One reason is that the city site is the highest in Europe, and is furthermore surrounded by mountains. The air is bad for foreigners, especially those of a full habit. Spaniards, who are generally thin and wizened, never go out without their long black mantle. The poor people wear a regular Arab burnous. The men are narrow-minded and prejudiced, while the women, although ignorant, are generally intelligent. Both sexes are

Digitized by Microsoft®

animated by desires and passions as lively as the air they breathe, and as burning as the sun which shines on them. The men hate foreigners, but the women revenge us by loving us, though with the most extreme caution.

I had need of a servant who could speak French, and after much difficulty succeeded in finding one, and at an exorbitant wage. He was what is called in Madrid a *page*. I was not to ask him to ride behind my carriage, to carry parcels, or to light me at night with a lanthorn or a torch. This page was about thirty years old, and repulsively ugly. I wish to God he had broken his leg on his way to take service with me!

I presented my letter from the Princess Lubomirska to the Count d'Aranda.[1] It was he who purged Spain of the Jesuits, and he was more powerful in Madrid than the king himself. He had proscribed the wide-brimmed hats and long cloaks. He was President of the Council of Castile, and never went out without a bodyguard; needless to say he was the *bête noire* of the whole nation. He was a great statesman, of a profound daring, an inflexible thinker, an epicurean; but with an appearance of strictness he permitted himself everything which he denied to others. This hideous personage, who squinted disagreeably, received me with coldness.

'What have you come to do in Spain?'

'To instruct myself by observing the manners and customs of an esteemed nation, and at the same time to put my poor talents to account, if I can find some employment under the government?'

'You have no need of me; if you live quietly and conform to the laws no one will molest you. As to what you propose to do with your talents, you must address yourself to your

[1] D'Aranda succeeded the Italian Squillace as minister of finance. He was an Arragonese noble, imbued with the French spirit of philosophical speculation. He was the first layman to preside over the Council of Castile, and induced the King of Spain to sign an order for the banishment of the Jesuits. His further intention of abolishing the Inquisition was prematurely disclosed, and great indignation excited against him. He was dismissed from office and sent as ambassador to Paris. He was succeeded in the presidency by his political adversary Grimaldi.

Digitized by Microsoft®

ambassador. He will introduce you, and make you known to the people who might employ you.'

'Monseigneur, the Venetian ambassador can do me no harm, but he can do me no good, for I am in disgrace with the State Inquisitors. I am certain he will not even receive me.'

'In that case you must not expect anything from the court. I advise you to make amusement your object during your stay here.'

The Neapolitan ambassador spoke in the same strain; so did the Marquis de Moras, and the Duke de Lossada. The latter advised me to try by some means to conciliate the Venetian minister. With this end in view, I wrote to Signor Dandolo, asking him for a letter which would instigate the ambassador to be favourable to me in spite of my quarrel with the inquisitors. I furthermore wrote to his excellency himself, claiming his protection, not as ambassador of the State Inquisitors, but as ambassador of the republic of which I had never ceased to be a citizen. The following morning my servant announced Count Manucci; and a handsome young fellow, with a charming manner, came in. He told me that he lived in the ambassador's house, and that his excellency had sent him to say that though for certain reasons he could not openly receive me, he should be delighted to see me privately.

The favourite of the Venetian ambassador.

Manucci told me he was a Venetian, and knew me by reputation, having heard his father and mother speak of me a hundred times. I was not long in discovering that he was the son of John Manucci, who had acted as spy to the inquisitors to put me in 'The Leads'; it was he who had so cunningly taken away my books of magic, those fatal books which were probably the cause of my incarceration. I said nothing of all this, however, to the young man; but I asked him if he was called count by the ambassador and his household (his mother was the daughter of Signor Loredano's footman, and his father was a poor setter of precious stones). He answered yes, because he was a count by virtue of a diploma given him by the Elector Palatine. Seeing that I was acquainted with his origin and

Digitized by Microsoft®

family history, he spoke to me openly. He was Signor de Mocenigo's favourite, and led him by the nose. 'I will do everything I can for you,' he said, and he invited me to take coffee with him in his rooms that evening, saying that the ambassador was certain to come in. He did, and spoke most kindly to me.

He calls on the painter Mengs.

I had already made two or three visits to the painter Mengs,[1] who had been for the last six years in the service of his Catholic Majesty, and in receipt of large remuneration. His wife and family were at Rome, and he was alone with his servants; he had lodgings in the royal palace, and was highly considered, because he had the ear of the king.

I often went to the theatre, which was a hundred paces from my hotel, and to the masked balls which the Count d'Aranda had established in Madrid. In a big box, just opposite the stage, sat *los padros* of the Inquisition, to watch over the morality of actors and spectators. One evening when my eyes were fixed on these venerable and hypocritical faces, the sentinel who was at the door called out '*Dios!*' and immediately men, women, and children in the audience, actors and actresses on the stage, fell on their knees, and remained in this position till the sound of the bell could no longer be heard down the street. It was a priest on his way to administer the Last Sacrament. I felt strongly inclined to laugh, but aware of Spanish prejudices, I restrained myself. The Spaniards put all their religion in exterior observances: a woman, before yielding to her lover, will cover up the picture of Christ or the Virgin, if there is such a thing in the room.

[1] Antony Raphael Mengs, a celebrated representative of the eclectic school of painting. He played a great part in the early days of classic revival. He was intelligent, but above all endowed with an extraordinary capacity for work. The Elector of Saxony appointed him court painter, but he spent much time in Rome, where he married and abjured Protestantism. In 1754 he was made director of the Vatican School of Painting, but his best work was done in Spain, notably the ceiling of the banqueting-hall at Madrid. The colleges of All Souls and Magdalen at Oxford have altar-pieces by him. He wrote much in Italian, Spanish, and German.

Digitized by Microsoft®

The first time I went to a masked ball, an elderly gentleman who sat next me at supper, and who saw I was a foreigner, asked me what I had done with my feminine companion.

'I have none,' I answered; 'I came alone merely to see this charming establishment where pleasure and decency go hand in hand together.'

'That is all very well, but to really enjoy yourself you must have a companion. I should say, to look at you, that you loved dancing, but unless you come provided with a partner you must not hope to dance, for each woman has her *parego* (cavalier), who allows her to dance with no one but himself.'

'In that case I must be content to sit still, for I know no lady whom I could invite to come with me.'

A masked ball.

'But in your quality of stranger you could easily procure a companion. All the women are mad about these balls. You see there are about two hundred dancers here; well, I do not exaggerate when I say there must be four thousand young persons in the city to-night weeping and sighing because they have no one to bring them here. I am sure if you presented yourself to one among them, stating your name and address, she would be allowed to accompany you; there is no father or mother courageous enough to refuse, if you sent the girl a domino, mask, and gloves, and took her in a carriage to and from the ball.'

'And suppose she denies me?'

'You will make your bow and withdraw, and the parents will repent them bitterly, for the daughter will be ill, and pretend to have convulsions and have to be put to bed, cursing the paternal tyranny. She will swear she never spoke to you before, so that nothing could be more innocent than your request. I hope you will come and tell me the result of your efforts,' continued my new friend, who spoke Italian admirably. 'I am here every night when there is a ball, and you will find me in the box to which I shall now have the pleasure of conducting you. If you will allow me, I will present you to a lady whom you will also find here on future occasions.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

I was much touched with his politeness, and told him my name. He took me to a box where I saw two ladies and another middle-aged man. The conversation turned on the ball and my opinion of it. One of the ladies, whose features bore traces of great beauty, asked me in good French what *tertulias*, *i.e.* what society, I frequented.

'Madame, as I have only been in Madrid a very short time, and have not yet been presented at court, I am absolutely without acquaintance.'

'Oh, how I pity you! Come and see me, you will be most welcome; my name is Pichona, any one will tell you where I live.'

He dances the *fandango* at Madrid.

About midnight the wildest and maddest of dances began, at a given signal from the orchestra. It was the *fandango*, which I fondly supposed I had often seen, but which was far beyond my wildest imaginings. I had seen it on the stage in Italy and France, where the dancers there are careful not to make the gestures which render this the most voluptuous of dances. Each couple, man and woman, only make three steps, then keeping time with their castagnettes to the music, they throw themselves into a variety of lascivious attitudes; the whole of love, from its birth to its end, from its first sigh to its last ecstasy, is set forth. In my excitement I cried aloud. My new friend told me that to see this dance to perfection, one should see it danced by *gitanos*.

'But,' said I, 'has the Inquisition nothing to say to it?'

La Pichona, interposing, said that it was absolutely forbidden, and no one would dare to dance it if the Count d'Aranda had not given permission. I told my wretched page to get me a teacher for the *fandango*. He brought me a dancer from the theatre, who also gave me Spanish lessons; in three days I learned it so well, that in the opinion of Spaniards themselves I could dance it as well as any of them.

On the feast of St. Anthony, as I was passing the church of the *Soledad*, I went in with the double intention of hearing Mass and finding a partner for the next ball. A tall, good-

Digitized by Microsoft®

looking girl was coming out of one of the confessionals; her eyes were cast down and she wore a look of contrition. Her graceful walk, well-formed figure and small foot led me to believe that she would dance the *fandango* like a *gitana*, and I determined she should be my *parega*. I waited till she had accomplished her devotions, and followed her as she went out accompanied by another girl. She went into a small one-storied house. I took down the number and name of the street, and at the end of half an hour went back and rang the bell.

'Who is there?'

'A man of peace,' I answered, according to the custom of the country.

Doña Ignazia.

The door opened and I found myself in the presence of a man, a woman, the devout young girl whom I had followed, and another about the same age, but very plain.

With my hat in my hand, and in the best Spanish I could muster, I explained that I had come in by chance to ask if I might have the honour of conducting his daughter, if he had one, to the ball.

'Señor, here is my daughter, but I do not know you, and I do not know if my daughter cares to go to the ball.'

'If you will allow me, father, I should be only too happy to go.'

'Do you know this gentleman?'

'I have never seen him before, and I doubt if he has ever seen me.'

The man then asked my name and address, and promised me an answer by dinner-time. When he appeared it was to tell me that his daughter accepted my invitation, but that her mother would accompany her, and would remain in the carriage.

Her father, the gentleman-cobbler.

'She can do as she likes,' I said; 'but I fear she will be cold.'

'She will have a cloak,' he answered.

He then told me he was a cobbler by trade.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'In that case,' said I, 'I will beg you to measure me for a pair of shoes.'

'That I cannot do, as I am an *hidalgo* (nobleman), and in measuring any one I should be obliged to touch their foot, and that would degrade me.'

'Well, will you at least mend my boots?'

'Certainly, and will return them as good as new; but I see there is a great deal to do to them, it will cost you five francs.'

I assured him I thought this exceedingly cheap; he bowed profoundly, and left me.

Next day I sent a mercer with dominoes, masks, and gloves to the gentleman-cobbler's house, but was careful not to show myself till it was time to fetch my partner. I hired a good carriage, to hold four. The bright colour in the girl's cheeks betrayed her pleasurable anticipations. We all three got into the carriage, the mother wrapped in an enormous cloak; but it was not until we were alone that my pretty *parega* told me she was called Doña Ignazia. We danced minuets and country dances until ten o'clock, when we went to supper, talking very little, for I knew hardly any Spanish, and she was too timid. After supper came the *fandango*, which she danced marvellously, and seemed astonished to be so well seconded by a foreigner. The hour of parting being now come, we went back to the carriage and woke up the mother. When the coach started, I took the daughter's hands, meaning to kiss them. But my hands were seized, and held as in a vice, and in this position Doña Ignazia calmly gave her mother an account of the evening. She held them till we got to the corner of the street, and the mother called out to stop.

The Duke de Medina Cœli befriends him.

La Pichona had kindly asked me to visit her. I had asked about the woman, and learned that she had been an actress, and owed her fortune to the Duke de Medina Cœli. The duke had once paid her a visit on a cold day, and had found her without a fire, as she could not afford one. Ashamed at seeing a

Digitized by Microsoft®

woman so poor while he was so rich, the gallant gentleman sent her next day a silver brazier, in which instead of coal he put a hundred thousand *pezzos duros*, in gold, making about three hundred thousand francs. From this time forth La Pichona lived at her ease, and received good company. When I went to visit her I found her looking sad. I told her that not having had the happiness of seeing her at the last ball, I feared she might be ill.

'I was not there,' she said, 'for on that day I lost the only friend I had in the world, the Duke de Medina Cœli, who died after three days' illness.'

'Receive the expression of my sincere sympathy, madame. Was the duke very old?'

'No, barely sixty. You saw him; he did not look his age.'

'When did I see him, madame?'

'Was it not he who brought you to my box.'

'What, was that the duke! He did not tell me his name.'

Towards the end of the Carnival, Don Diego, the cobbler, brought me back my boots. His daughter, he said, did nothing but talk of the ball, and how she had enjoyed it.

'She is as good as she is pretty,' said I, 'and if I have not been to see her, it was because I did not wish to injure her reputation.'

'Her reputation,' said he, 'is above scandal, and so is mine, Senhor Caballero; we should be most happy to see you whenever you care to come.'

Doña Ignazia says her prayers.

I went that same day, and found Ignazia seated on the ground, her rosary in her hand, and her legs crossed like a Moorish woman. She thanked me for the honour I did her in visiting her, and said she had not dared to hope to see me again, as without doubt I had now found some more worthy partner.

'I have not found any one worthy to replace you,' I answered; 'and if you would like to go to the ball again, I will take you with the greatest pleasure.'

As the ball was that very night, we sent the mother off to

Digitized by Microsoft®

get dominoes and masks. As soon as we were alone I told Ignazia that she could do what she pleased with me, for I adored her, but if she meant to make me languish I should leave her and seek a more amenable *parega.*

'What can you want of me? I am secretly betrothed to Don Francisco de Ramos, who comes under my windows each night to pay me court. He is to be my husband, and I must do my duty.'

The idea of duty is strong in Spanish women. I made up my mind to try to destroy the idea of duty. 'If your duty,' I said, 'forces you to repulse me in spite of yourself, then your duty is inimical to your happiness; you must cast duty out.'

'Impossible.'

'Yes, shut your eyes.'

But it was no use. She replied sadly that I ought to spare her.

'My adorable Ignazia! I will ask nothing from you, unless you love me.'

'But if I listen to you, how can I convince you that I do so from love and not from a shameful complaisance?'

'My vanity will help you to persuade me.'

His courtship of Doña Ignazia.

During the evening I was tender and full of attention, and took care at supper to see that she was served with the things she liked best. I filled her pockets with sugarplums and my own with two bottles of ratafia, which I gave to her mother. She refused gently to accept a gold piece which I pressed on her, saying if I wished to make her such presents to give them to her lover, who intended to pay me a visit. The young man was not long in appearing; the day after the second ball my page announced him, at eight o'clock in the morning.

Her betrothed.

He told me that Doña Ignazia, to whom he spoke every night from the street while she was at her window, had confided to him that I had taken her to the ball, and that, persuaded as she was that I loved her like a father, he had ventured to present himself to me, and to beg me to lend him

Digitized by Microsoft®

a hundred doubloons, which would put him in a position to marry his *fiancée* at the end of Carnival.

'I am,' he said, 'employed at the mint, and hope to be soon promoted. My parents live at Toledo; therefore, when we are married, I shall only see my father and mother-in-law and you, as I have no friends or relations here.'

'I am sorry,' said I, 'but I am very short of money just now. I shall not mention your request to any one, and shall be delighted to see you whenever you can spare time to visit me.'

He left me with a mortified air. My devout Spanish girl wished me to understand that I might hope for everything after her marriage, and she intended to make me pay a hundred doubloons for this privilege; but I did not see things in quite the same light.

In the evening I went to see Don Diego, who regaled me with my excellent ratafia. We spoke of the benefits conferred by the Count d'Aranda, but for whom the innocent pleasure of dancing would have been forbidden.

'The poor bless his name,' said the mother, 'for all the profits go to them.'

More balls.

'Thus,' said the gentleman-cobbler, 'one performs a meritorious and pious action in going to the ball.'

'I have two cousins,' said Ignazia, 'who are as good as gold. I told them I went to the ball with you, and as they are poor they have no chance of ever going themselves, unless you will make them both happy by taking them the last day of the Carnival. Their mother would allow them to go the more readily because that night the dancing ceases on the stroke of midnight, so as not to encroach on Ash Wednesday.'

'I am quite willing, my dear Ignazia, to give them this innocent pleasure; and it will save your mother the trouble of waiting for us in the carriage.'

The younger of the two cousins was plain, but had some little feminine charm, whereas the elder was most remarkably

Digitized by Microsoft®

ugly; she looked like a hideous man in petticoats. The contrast between the girls amused me, for Ignazia was perfectly lovely, and most seductive when she put off her devout airs. On the appointed day, they dined with me, and did full justice to the excellent fare and exquisite La Mancha wine which I had provided. I had ordered everything necessary for their toilette to be placed in my dressing-room, and after dinner I told the eldest one that I had arranged to disguise her as a man; she looked alarmed, and her sister asked if this would not be sinful. 'Do you think I would suggest it to your sister if it were wrong?' I asked in indignant tones, and Doña Ignazia, who knew the legends by heart, corroborated my assertion by saying that the glorious Saint Marina spent her whole life in male attire.

'Come with me,' said I to the ugly girl, 'come, and you will be surprised to see how handsome you look!'

Ignazia's cousin in male attire.

Making a strong effort to overcome her scruples, she followed me into the dressing-room. I made her put on white silk stockings, and some smart shoes. I fastened her garters for her, telling her I should never have imagined she had such beautiful feet. I gave her a lace-trimmed shirt, and a pair of my breeches, which fitted her very well, although I was five inches taller than she was. Then putting on her domino and mask, I led her back to the others.

'Now it is for you to come,' I said to the younger one. There was little to change in her costume as she was simply to wear a domino; but I wanted to detain her as long as possible so as to have an excuse for staying some time with Ignazia, whom I had left to the last, so I advised her to change her stockings and her fichu, to rearrange her coiffure, and a hundred other trifles.

At last it was the turn of my pretty Ignazia to be attired. She came with the prettiest mixture of resignation and affection. When we went back to the others, she said naïvely to her cousins, 'I thought I should never be ready, I had to resew nearly the whole of the domino.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

This day being a specially privileged one, Count d'Aranda had given permission for the *fandango* to be danced as often as the people thought fit, but the crowd was so great it was impossible to dance at all. At ten o'clock we had supper, after which we walked about until the first stroke of midnight, when the orchestra stopped instantaneously. This passage from folly to devotion, from dissoluteness to piety, from paganism with its bachanalia to Christianity with its myteries, was to me most shocking.

When we had seen the sisters safely home, Doña Ignazia expressed a desire for some coffee; I guessed at once that this was merely an excuse. At the door we found ourselves face to face with Don Francisco, who smilingly asked to be allowed to make a third. There was nothing for it but to accept his presence with the best grace possible; but Doña Ignazia was less amiable than I. She told him with much severity that she would not have asked me for coffee if she had known that he meant to force himself upon us; after which she would not deign to speak or look at him, but talked all the time to me, thanking me again and again for the pleasure I had given her and her cousins.

A domiciliary visit.

Two days after, as I was returning home from dining with Mengs, a man of somewhat doubtful exterior came up to me and said if I would follow him to a neighbouring cloister, he would tell me something which would interest me greatly. As soon as we were safe from listeners he informed me that the Alcalde Messa intended to visit me that very night, with his police, 'of which,' he said, 'I am one. He knows that you have arms in your room, and that you have hidden them under a mat behind the chimney; he also knows other things about you, by virtue of which he considers himself authorised to arrest you, and conduct you to the prison where malefactors destined to the galleys are detained. I warn you, because I believe you to be an honourable man; do not despise my warning, put yourself at once in some place of safety.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

The painter Mengs gives Casanova an asylum.

I gave the man a doubloon, and going at once to my hotel, I took my weapons under my coat, and repaired to Mengs's rooms; there I knew I should be in safety, as they were in the king's palace. The painter, who was an honest man, but ambitious, proud, and suspicious to a degree, did not refuse me an asylum for the night, but gave me to understand that I must find another one next day. The Alcalde, he said, must have other and stronger motives for arresting me than the mere possession of prohibited arms. While we were discussing thus, my landlord arrived to tell me that the Alcalde and thirty of his men were in my apartment, having broken open the door; they had searched everywhere, but finding nothing, they were now sealing up the trunks they had forced. My page had been taken off to prison, accused of having warned me.

'My page must be a dirty scoundrel,' said I, 'for if the Alcalde accuses him of having warned me, it is a proof that the Alcalde knew that my page knew of his intentions. From this, I deduce that the page is himself the traitor who betrayed me.'

Early the following morning, the great Mengs sent body linen, and everything else necessary for my toilette, to my room. His servant brought me chocolate, and his cook came to ask if I had permission to eat meat. By such means a prince impresses on his guest that he wishes him to remain in his house, but a private person conveys a hint to the contrary. I declined everything but the chocolate and a pocket-handkerchief.

My carriage was at the door, and I was just thanking Mengs for his hospitality, when an officer came in and asked the painter if the Chevalier Casanova was with him.

'I am Casanova, sir,' I said.

He is arrested.

'Then, sir, I beg you to follow me to the guard-house, Buen-Retiro, where you will be a prisoner. This house being royal, I cannot employ force, but I warn you that if you do not come of your own free will, in one hour from now the

Digitized by Microsoft®

Chevalier Mengs will receive orders to turn you out, and then you will be taken in a far more disagreeable manner.'

I embraced Mengs, who looked excessively mortified, had my weapons taken down to my carriage, and went off with the captain, who seemed a perfectly honest man.

He conducted me to the palace known as the Buen-Retiro, a strong place which had once belonged to the royal family, and was now used partly as a prison, partly as a barracks. It was in this palace that Philip v. used to retire with his queen to prepare for his Easter Communion.

He is thrown into prison.

The captain handed me over to the officer commanding for that day, a man worthy to be a gaoler of the galleys. A corporal took me to an immense hall on the ground floor in the interior of the castle, where I found about thirty prisoners, ten of whom were soldiers. The atmosphere was almost insupportable; there were ten or twelve large beds, some few benches, but no other seats, and no tables. I asked one of the soldiers to get me some paper, pen and ink, and I gave him a *duro*, to pay for these things. He took the money and went off laughing.

What astonished me the most was the sight of my page among the prisoners, and of another man named Marazzani, whose acquaintance I had made in Madrid. This latter told me that we should probably be kept where we were for a fortnight or so, and then be sent under escort to some fortress where we should be made to work, with the hope of being delivered in three or four years. 'That is,' he added, 'if the Venetian ambassador does not claim you.'

Dissimulating my consternation as well as I could, I sat down on one of the beds, to leave it three hours later covered with the hideous vermin which seem endemic to Spain, and the sight of which makes a man sick. At midday Marazzani told me I could send out for some dinner; there was one soldier, he said, whose honesty he would guarantee. 'I have no desire to eat,' I said, 'and I shall not give any

Digitized by Microsoft®

money to any one till the crown I gave for paper and ink has been returned to me.'

My page had begged him to ask me for something, as he had not a penny and was starving. 'Not one penny will I give him,' was my reply; 'he is no longer in my service, and I wish to God I had never seen him.'

At four o'clock one of Mengs's servants brought me a delicate dinner, sufficient for four persons. As I would not share with the wretches round me, I made him wait till I had finished and take away what remained. Marazzani remarked in a rude voice that I might at least have kept a bottle of wine. At five o'clock Manucci appeared with an officer. After listening to his condolences, I asked his companion if it was forbidden to write to one's friends; on his answering no, I asked if a soldier would be allowed to keep money given him to buy necessaries.

Manucci rescues him.

'Which soldier was it?' was his answer. 'I promise you he shall give you back your money, and be punished into the bargain; furthermore, you shall have pen, ink, paper, a table, and a lamp immediately.'

'And I,' said Manucci, 'promise you that one of the ambassador's servants shall come here at eight o'clock to take the letters you write to their destinations.'

I took three crowns out of my pocket, and holding them up said I would give them to the man who named the faithless soldier; it was Marazzani who got the name out first. The officer, much amused, wrote it down on his tablets; he was learning to know me, for a man who would spend three crowns to get back one was assuredly not a miser.

When these gentlemen had gone, I sat down to write, but had to exercise the greatest possible patience, for my fellow-prisoners came and read what I wrote over my shoulder. When they did not understand it, they asked for an explanation; or on pretence of snuffing the candle they would put it out. One soldier dared to say that if I would give him a crown he would keep the others quiet. I got the letters written however and

Digitized by Microsoft®

sealed, in spite of the infernal tumult; they were not composed with much art, but I had put in all the fire with which I was burning. According to my custom I kept a copy of all my letters.

I spent as frightful a night as any that Dante has depicted. The beds were all full, and even had there been a place I would not have occupied it. I asked in vain for some straw, but had they given it me, I could not have slept on it, as the ground was running with water. There was no provision of any kind made for cleanliness, and my readers may imagine the consequences. I sat up on a bench without a back, resting my head on my hand. At seven o'clock, the good Manucci came again; he *was* good then, and a second Providence for me. He brought me some chocolate, which I drank while I related my horrible experiences. He said that my letter to the ambassador was cruel, and when I showed him the copies of the others, he told me that one obtained more with gentleness than with abuse. He was too young to know that these situations make it impossible for a man to moderate himself. An hour after his departure, Doña Ignazia and her father appeared. This visit hurt my pride, but I had to make the best of it and appear grateful; it was pure kindness on their part. When the honest cobbler was leaving, he embraced me; at the same time slipping a rouleau of money into my hand, he whispered to me that it contained four quadruples, and that I was to repay them when I could. This was more than a thousand francs! I was thunderstruck, but whispered back that I had fifty quadruples in my pocket, but did not dare show them to him because of the scoundrels who were watching us. He put his rouleau back in his pocket, weeping the while. I promised I would go and see him as soon as I was free. The good man had not given his name, and as he was very well dressed, he was taken for a person of importance. Characters such as his are not uncommon in Spain, where a kind of heroic exaltation is very general.

Doña Ignazia visits him in prison.

Mengs sent his servant again at noon, with a more delicate

Digitized by Microsoft®

and less abundant dinner than the day before; this was what I wanted.

He appears before the Alcalde.

At one o'clock I was taken before the Alcalde, but refused to answer any of his questions, alleging my imperfect knowledge of Spanish. Finally he told me to write down my name, qualities, and reasons for being in Spain, in Italian; which I did. I passed a second night more frightful than the first, and when Manucci came in the morning he was alarmed at my appearance. While he was there a superior officer came in.

'Monsieur le Chevalier,' he said, 'Count d'Aranda is at the door; he regrets extremely the misfortune which has befallen you; if you had written to him sooner, your detention would have been shorter.'

'It was my intention to write to him, colonel,' I said, 'but a soldier'—and I told him the story of the stolen crown.

The colonel having learned the man's name sent for his captain, and after severely reprimanding him, ordered him to refund the money himself, and to have the soldier bastinadoed in my presence.

I recounted to him in detail the circumstances of my arrest, and what I had endured in the stinking, filthy hole where I had been put. I told him if I did not that day recover my liberty, my arms, and my honour, I should either go mad, or kill myself. He assured me that my arms would be returned to me, and that I should be able to sleep in my own bed before nightfall. He added that my arrest was due to a mistake; that the Alcalde Messa had been deceived by my infamous page.

'He is here,' I said; 'and I beg you to have him removed elsewhere, for it is quite possible I may kill him in my first fury.'

The colonel ordered two soldiers to take the scoundrel away, and I have never seen or heard of him since. I went down into the guard-room with the officer and Manucci, to witness the punishment of the bastinado inflicted on the wretch who had robbed me. On my return to the filthy prison I found

Digitized by Microsoft®

an arm-chair, which had been brought for me, and never did seat seem so comfortable.

After dinner the Alcalde Messa came and ordered the officer of the guard to restore me my sword; after which, walking at my side, and followed by thirty of his men, he conducted me to my hotel, where he removed the seals, and I found all in order.

He is restored to liberty.

I need hardly say in what haste I was to make a complete toilette, after which I went to see the gentleman-cobbler.

Ignazia was mad with joy. I invited these worthy people to dine with me next day. After this I went on to see Mengs, who was much surprised at my appearance. He was in full court costume, and when I asked the reason told me that he was just going to implore Don Emmanuel de Ricla to intercede for me. He gave me a letter which had come for me from Signor Dandolo, and inclosing one for the ambassador. Mengs declared that it only depended on me now to make my fortune in Spain, as all the ministers would be anxious to make me forget the outrage which had been put on me. He sent me home in his carriage, and getting into bed, I slept for twelve hours.

Manucci came early; he told me the ambassador had heard from Venice that he could present me anywhere, as the grievances which the tribunal had against me were not in any way prejudicial to my honour.

'The ambassador will present you at court next week,' he said, 'and he wishes you to dine with him to-day; he has a large party.'

'I am engaged to dine with Mengs.'

'That does not matter, I will go at once and invite him; even if he refuses you must come, for you can imagine what an effect your presence at the ambassador's table will produce, the day after your release from prison.'

'You are right; go and ask Mengs, and I will accept with pleasure his excellency's invitation.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LIII

WELL-MERITED DISGRACE

Through all the vicissitudes of my life, it would seem as though circumstances had combined to make me somewhat superstitious. Dame Fortune plays with a man who surrenders himself to her caprices as a child plays with an ivory ball on a billiard-table, pushing it hither and thither, and laughing with joy, when by chance he sends it into the pocket; an expert player, who calculates speed, reaction, distance, angles, and a crowd of other things, does what he pleases with the ball; but Fortune is not a learned geometrician, and he who abandons himself to her must stand the hazard of the die. She seems, indeed, to take a malicious pleasure in proving that she is not blind; she has never raised me up except with the intention of casting me down afterwards.

His theories on colonisation.

At the time of which I am writing, the heads of the Cabinet at Madrid were much taken up with a fine scheme of colonisation. The beautiful country of Sierra-Morena, celebrated throughout the world as the scene of the adventures of Don Quixote, was so depopulated as to be almost a desert; the scheme was to induce a thousand families from the Catholic cantons of Switzerland to come and make their home there. Nature had been prodigal in her gifts to this country: delicious climate, fertile soil, pure and abundant water, and an advantageous situation between Andalusia and Grenada. In spite of all, the vast country had remained uninhabited. Desiring to change this state of affairs, his Catholic Majesty decided to offer great inducements to whoso would settle there. He

Digitized by Microsoft®

paid the travelling expenses of the Swiss colonists, and the Spanish government saw that they were provided with homes, and with a good temporal and spiritual police. There were magistrates to render prompt justice, priests, a governor, artisans to build houses and churches, and above all an arena for bull-fights; this latter was an extra, and against the taste of the good Swiss, but Spaniards cannot conceive life without this adjunct.

He dines with the Venetian ambassador.

During the much talked-of dinner with the Venetian ambassador, the subject of this colony cropped up; indeed, two of the principal projectors of the scheme were at the table. I listened modestly to the discussion, and when I could with advantage put in a word, remarked that in a few years the colony founded with so much expense would evaporate like smoke. The reason I alleged was, that the Swiss are different from all other nations.

'A Swiss,' said I, 'is a vegetable, which, transplanted to a soil other than that on which it is born, pines away and dies. The Swiss are of all people the most subject to nostalgia. When this malady attacks an individual, the only remedy is for him to go back to his country—to the chalet, the bourg, the lake where he first saw the light. It would be a good thing to combine a Swiss colony with a Spanish colony, so as to induce them to intermarry. They should have, in the beginning, nothing but Swiss priests and Swiss magistrates, and it should be declared to them that the tribunal of the Inquisition has no power over them, for the Swiss have laws, usages, a manner of making love, all inseparable from their nature, and all utterly opposed to the points of view of Spanish ecclesiastics. The slightest restraint in these matters would bring on violent and general nostalgia.'

My speech, which was begun half in fun, seemed to interest one of the guests, the celebrated Don Pablo Olavidès. He begged me to write down my reflections, and to communicate them to him, and to him alone. I promised, and Mengs fixed a day on which we could dine together at his house.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Fifteen days after Easter, the king left Madrid to go to Aranjuez with the court. Signor de Mocenigo invited me to go as his guest, saying he should easily find an opportunity for presenting me to the king. Of course I accepted, but the day before leaving I was taken with a fever while driving with Mengs in his carriage. I broke his window-glasses to pieces, and alarmed him terribly. I was put to bed, where after four hours' delirium, I began to sweat, so abundantly that I soaked through two mattresses and the paillasse, and watered the floor round my bed. Forty-five hours after, the fever ceased, but I was so weak I had to stay in bed, and did not go to Aranjuez for a week. I was well received and well lodged in the ambassador's house, but a boil which I had felt coming on during the day became as big as an egg. It increased in size until it became as large as an ordinary melon. Every one who saw it was amazed, and the king's surgeon, a Frenchman, declared he had never met with its like. After this abscess was lanced I was very weak, and while in this state received the following letter from Mengs, in whose house I had been staying at Madrid :—

Mengs casts him out as a heretic.

'Yesterday the priest of my parish posted a list on the church door of those unbelievers who have not fulfilled their Easter duties. Among those names yours figures prominently, and I have had to submit to a reproach from the said priest for harbouring heretics. I did not know what answer to make him, for it is certain you might have remained one day longer in Madrid, and done your duty as a Christian, had it only been out of regard to those to whom you are under obligations. I owe it to the king my master, to my own reputation, and to my future tranquillity, to warn you that my house is no longer open to you. On your return to Madrid you must seek other lodgings, and my servants will take your belongings to any place you may select.—I remain, etc.,

ANTONIO RAFAËL MENGS.'

This brutal and uncalled-for letter made such an impression

Digitized by Microsoft®

on me, that had the writer of it been there, he would surely have suffered for it. The bearer of it told me he was waiting for an answer, whereupon I rolled the letter up in a ball and flung it in his face.

'There is my answer,' I said; 'take it to your master.'

Without losing any time I dressed, and went in a sedan-chair to the church at Aranjuez, where a Franciscan friar heard my confession; the next day I went to Communion. My confessor was good enough to give me a certificate stating that in spite of my extreme weakness I had been to confession and Communion like a good Catholic, and was perfectly in accord with the rules of the Church. Armed with this document, I wrote to the priest in Madrid, and ordered him to instantly efface my name from the list of dishonour.

As for Mengs, I shall have occasion to speak of him two or three years hence, when I met him in Rome.

He takes a house in Madrid.

The population, or rather the colonisation, of Sierra-Morena took up much of my time. I drew up several schemes which pleased and flattered Mocenigo. He thought that if I succeeded in being named governor, his embassy would share in some of the glory. My work did not prevent me amusing myself, and frequenting good society; especially men about the court, who were likely to influence the royal family in my favour. However, no definite proposal was made to me while I was at Aranjuez, and I returned to Madrid three days before the minister left. I had written to Don Diego requesting him to take a lodging for me in a respectable house, and he had answered that he had found what I required, and had engaged a Biscayenne servant who could cook for me if I wished. I found my new apartment very pretty and sunny. Before going to fetch my things from Mengs, I turned my steps towards Doña Ignazia's house, as I wanted to thank her father for his trouble.

The house was empty. He had removed. I asked Philip, my new manservant, the cobbler's new address.

'A long way off, sir; I will take you there to-morrow.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Don Diego is his landlord.

When supper-time came, I found a small table spread with a cleanliness and refinement rarely met with in Spain. After supper, Philip told me that my landlord would like to speak to me. What was my surprise when Don Diego appeared, followed by his charming daughter. He had taken this house on purpose to let part of it to me. The cobbler-gentleman feared, perhaps, that in calling himself *noble* he had made himself ridiculous in my eyes, but knowing that he was so, in the acceptation which he accorded to the word, he wished to convince me also. His action towards me when in prison had already revealed the fine qualities of his soul to me, but this was not enough for him. I had charged him with a commission which any man might have executed, but he wanted to prove to me that he served me as a friend, not as a hireling. After thanking him for his pains, I made him promise that he would dine and sup every day at my table; he did so on condition that I would allow him the right to send his daughter in his stead, whenever he should be too busy to dress himself properly. My readers may imagine that I accorded this with pleasure.

A bull-fight.

Ignazia asked me to take her and her cousin to the bull-fight on Sunday, and I the more readily agreed as I had never seen one. We took three places in a box, the only ones by the bye which were to be had in the theatre; the two girls sat in front, and I behind on a bench which was raised about a foot and a half above the first one. There were two ladies sitting by the girls, one of whom was the famous Duchess of Villadonas. She was in such a position that her head was almost between my knees. When she recognised me, she laughingly said that she must thank chance which made us meet, always either in church or in the theatre. She then spoke in French, praising the beauty of my companion, and asking me if she was my mistress. I replied no, that I sighed in vain. She smiled, and said that on certain points she was very incredulous; then turning to Ignazia she began to talk to her. She made several reflections on Love, evidently imagining that her listener

Digitized by Microsoft®

was as deeply versed in that art as she was. Finally, without even asking her name, she said that I had made a most charming choice, and that she hoped we would both go and dine with her in the country. I accepted, of course, but was careful not to fix a day. She forced me, however, to promise I would pay her a visit the next day at four o'clock, but she frightened me when she added that she should be alone. She was pretty, but too celebrated ; my visit would have given rise to too much talk. Fortunately for me, the bull-fight began, and every one was quiet. So much has been written and said about these performances that I willingly give my opinion of them : that their barbarity must have a bad effect on the moral tone of the nation. The arena is flooded with the blood of the bulls, disembowelled horses, and sometimes with that of the unfortunate *picadores* and *toreros*, who excite the furious animals, and who have nothing to defend themselves with but little red flags.

Doña Ignazia has scruples.

At supper that evening, Doña Ignazia, who had become very pensive, suddenly asked me if I intended to visit the duchess.

'Certainly,' I said. 'I should be wanting in the most ordinary politeness if I did not, and we will dine with her one day at her country house.'

'You must not expect me to come too.'

'And why not?'

'Because she is mad. She whispered things in my ear which would have offended me deeply, had I not remembered that she thought she was doing me an honour in treating me as an equal.'

After supper we went on to the balcony to wait for Don Diego, and to enjoy a little fresh breeze which had sprung up, after the excessive heat of the day. Seated side by side in the soft twilight, which protected us from all inquisitive glances, I read in Ignazia's eyes that her indifference to me of late had been only assumed. I took her in my arms and kissed her.

'Shall you go and see the duchess?' she whispered.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No, my angel, if you in return will promise not to go and see your confessor to-morrow.'

'I am not thinking of my confessor at this moment, but if you put it into my head I shall begin to do so.'

'And supposing you do go to confession, will you love me afterwards?'

She confesses them.

'No, for I hope God will give me the grace not to offend Him again.'

'As I am sure that you will do everything in your power to merit that grace, I foresee that on Sunday evening you will be unkind to me.'

'Alas! dear friend, what you say is true; but why think of it now?'

'Because I cannot bear to feel that to-morrow will not be like to-day. Promise me you will not go to confession all the time I am in Madrid; or let me leave you now, though to do so would make me the most miserable of men. I cannot be happy now, if I am not to be happy to-morrow.'

He dispels them.

'You are cruel, and you make me very unhappy. I cannot make you such a promise.'

I put her gently from me, and at that moment we heard her father's step.

She did not dine with us next day, on the pretext that she was suffering from headache. I went to her room, and for three hours sat by her bed, talking to her, as a lover, such as I was, talks to the woman whom he wishes to win. She kept her eyes shut, and said never a word. When I left her, I said that if she did not come down to supper, I should assume that all was over between us. This threat produced the desired effect. She appeared at table, pale and weary-looking, ate little, and said never a word. From time to time her eyes filled with tears. I saw she was suffering, and I was much moved. Before returning to her room, she asked me if I had been to see the duchess, and brightened up a little when I answered No.

'But you will go some other time?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No, my dearest, for I see it would distress you.'

She gave a sigh of satisfaction. I embraced her gently, and she went away, leaving me almost as sad as she was. I knew that what I was asking was too much for her, but I also knew that she would give way, for she was deeply in love. It was not her God I was fighting, but her confessor. If she had not been a Catholic I should have succeeded the very first day. She was very upright, and filled with the exalted sentiments peculiar to Spaniards. She could not deceive her confessor, or reconcile her love with her religion. She was right. I could not but admire her, and I pitied her when I thought of the struggle which was going on in her heart, and I began to be sorry that I had not contented myself with the regard she had given me willingly, without insisting on more, for I feared that I might now lose all.

Ignazia goes to confession.

I rose early on Sunday, and followed her to the church of La Soledad. I took a place behind the sacristy door, where I could see everything and not be seen. By and by she appeared with her cousin. After kneeling some time in prayer, she went into the confessional. I waited a long, long time. 'What is she saying?' I thought to myself, and was just on the point of going, when she rose and came and knelt by me. I thought she would rise to go and take the Sacrament; but no, when Mass was over she joined her cousin, and in a few minutes both girls left the church. I was ashamed. 'She has confessed all,' I said, 'and he has refused her absolution!' I did not see her again till dinner-time, when I noticed that she looked calm and happy. She wore a black velvet bodice with knots of ribbon on the shoulders and seams. There is no prettier costume in all Europe. As we were leaving the table, she asked me if I still loved her.

'More than ever. I adore you.'

'Then take me to the bull-fight.'

I ran up to my room, and having sent for the barber, made a most careful toilette. I put on a fine suit of *drap de soie*, bordered with Lyons velvet, which I had never worn before,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and we started on foot. This time I had the luck to find two seats in a large box, so that we could sit side by side.

In the evening the gentleman-cobbler dined with us, and amused us with a hundred little stories and gallant anecdotes. Before leaving, he made me a little speech, the words of which I can transcribe here, but I cannot do justice to the Spanish gravity with which they were delivered.

'Amigo, Senhor don Jaime, I leave you here to enjoy the freshness of the evening with my daughter on the balcony. I feel that you love her, and I am delighted that it should be so. I can assure you that it rests with you to become my son-in-law, provided, that is, that you can convince me that you are of noble birth.'

I asked Ignazia to explain to me her change of front.

Ignazia yields.

'So please you,' she said, 'you owe it all to the tyranny of my confessor. He tried to make me promise never to be alone with you again, and as I could not, he refused to give me absolution. It is the first time in my life that such a thing has happened to me, but I can bear it better than I should have imagined possible. I have put myself in God's hands, saying, "Thy will, O Lord, be done." I have made up my mind, so long as you are here to do all you wish. When to my sorrow you leave Spain, I shall find another confessor. My fancy for you is, after all, only a passing madness.'

A new matter.

If ever these Memoirs, which I am writing principally to palliate the deadly dulness which is killing me in this dull Bohemia,—if ever these Memoirs, I say, see daylight, it will be when my eyes are closed to it, when I shall laugh (as for the matter of that I do now) at the opinion of the world. Nevertheless, as the said world is divided into two parties, one—and by far the greater—composed of ignorant and superficial men, and the other of learned deep thinkers, it is to the latter alone that I address myself, and I trust that they will understand me, and will, at any rate, appreciate the veracity with which I write about my doings and misdoings. Up to now,

Digitized by Microsoft®

I have spoken the truth, without pausing to consider whether that truth was favourable or no to my reputation. The story of my life is not a dogmatic recital. If ever I am read, I shall not pervert any one's mind; to do so, at least, is far from being my object; but my experience, my vices, my virtues, my principles, may be of use to some who know, like the bee, to extract honey from all sorts of flowers. After this digression, I will say candidly that none of the things I have confided to these papers have cost me, in the telling, one tithe of what I now have to confess will cost me, and yet it is nothing but an indiscretion, but an indiscretion so inconceivable that I have never forgiven myself for it, and even now, after so many years and such vicissitudes, it saddens me to think of it.

The one crime of his life.

My evil genius brought to Madrid a certain Baron de Fraiture. He came from Liége, where he was master of the royal hunt. He was a *roué*, a gambler, and a cheat, as are all those who to-day dare to say the contrary. I had known him at Spa. When I had told him I was going to Portugal, he had come with the intention of joining me, and counted on me to introduce him into good society, where he could fill his pockets with his dupes' losses. There was never anything in my conduct which could lead such adventurers to imagine I belonged to their infernal clique, yet they have always persisted in considering me one of them. When he came to see me in Madrid, I gave him a tolerable welcome. It seemed to me that a little politeness shown him, and a few acquaintances presented to him, would not seriously compromise me. He had a companion with him, a big, stout, ignorant and lazy Frenchman, but still a Frenchman, and consequently amiable. He was a cavalry officer, and seemed to be one of those fortunate beings who get an eternal leave of absence.

Four or five days after their arrival, Fraiture told me they had spent all their money, and asked me to lend them some, which I flatly refused to do. He then addressed himself to Manucci, to whom I had been foolish enough to introduce him.

Digitized by Microsoft®

His treatment of Manucci.

Manucci was too sharp to lend him money, but he found some one who consented to do so at high interest; and with this money Fraiture and his companion started playing, and won some considerable sums. I was not in any way mixed up with them, as I was too busy with the colonial scheme. I went daily to see the ministers, and was preparing to make a journey to Sierra-Morena. Manucci was to accompany me, merely for his own pleasure. From this my readers can judge the fortuitous state of my affairs. Signor de Mocenigo had been replaced, and the new ambassador, Signor de Querini, was even more favourable towards me than his predecessor had been.

The Venetian ambassador's departure.

But one morning Manucci came to see me. He looked worried, and his manner was strange.

'What is the matter, my friend?' I asked.

'I don't exactly know: Baron de Fraiture has written to me saying if I do not lend him a hundred pistoles to-day, he will blow out his brains, and I am afraid he will do so if I refuse.'

'He said the same thing to me three days ago. I answered him that I would bet two hundred pistoles he would do no such thing. He was very angry, and challenged me to fight him, to which I replied that as he cared nothing for life, he had too big an advantage over me. Answer him in the same strain, or don't answer him at all.'

'No; I can't feel as you do about it. Here—here are a hundred pistoles; give them to him, and try and get a receipt for them.'

I admired his generosity, and undertook the commission. I found the baron very busy. He received the money without expressing any surprise, or showing either pleasure or gratitude. He gave me the receipt, and told me he was leaving for Barcelona next day with his friend. I took the paper to Manucci, and remained to dinner with him and the ambassador. It was for the last time. Three days later, when I presented myself at the house, the porter told me he had orders not to admit me. I was thunderstruck. I wrote to Manucci asking

Digitized by Microsoft®

him the reason of this affront, but Philip brought me back my letter unopened. I could not guess what had happened, but determined to have an explanation at no matter what price. As I was about to take my siesta, however, Manucci's servant brought me a letter, in which was enclosed another one. I read the second first. It was from Fraiture; in it he asked Manucci to lend him a hundred pistoles, in return for which he would show him how the man whom he thought his best friend, and the most devoted to his person and his interests, was in reality his enemy.

Manucci's righteous anger.

Manucci, in his letter, called me traitor and ingrate, and then went on to say that, curious to know the name of this enemy, he had given Fraiture the money and had learned from him that the enemy was none other than myself. I had, it seemed, told Fraiture that the title he bore was false, and that he had no right to the rank he assumed. He mentioned several other details about his private life which Fraiture could only have heard from me, and wound up by advising me to leave Madrid as soon as possible, within a week at latest.

I cannot describe the dejection into which this letter cast me. For the first time in my life I was forced to own myself guilty of monstrous indiscretion, of reasonless babbling, of frightful ingratitude. Miserable, ashamed, and confused, I recognised the enormity of my offence. I felt that I did not deserve forgiveness, and should not even ask it. I could not conceive what had led me to betray a man from whom I had received the greatest kindness, for I had actually been so indiscreet and base as to tell Fraiture all I knew of Manucci's antecedents—his humble origin, the occupation of his parents, and his relations with Mocenigo.

But although I acknowledged his vexation to be just, I could not but think he was wrong in advising me to leave Madrid. He must have known himself that it was not likely I should obey him in this matter; he was not powerful enough for me to receive his order as a command; having had the misfortune

Digitized by Microsoft®

to commit one unworthy action, I could not lower myself still further.

After thinking the matter well over, I wrote to the friend whom I had so grievously offended the sincerest of confessions, in the most submissive of terms. I ended my letter by saying, that if he was as generous as I believed him my repentance would satisfy him, but if it did not, I was ready to do anything he asked, except the one thing which would lay me open to a charge of cowardice. 'You are at perfect liberty to assassinate me if you wish,' I said, 'but I cannot leave Madrid until it suits my convenience to do so.'

I put an ordinary seal on the letter, and made Philip direct it. I then sent it by the royal post, so that Manucci, not knowing who it was from, would be certain to open it.

It remained unanswered.

Three days later I went to pay a visit to Prince de la Catolica. Directly my carriage stopped at the door, the porter came out and told me politely that his excellency had certain reasons for begging me not to present myself at his house again.

Spanish society avenges Manucci.

At the Abbé Bigliardi's, a lackey, after taking my name, returned to say his master was out. The next day the Marquis de Grimaldi refused me an audience. The Duke of Lossada received me, but warned me that he had been advised not to do so again. Wherever I went it was the same story. Manucci was showing off his power and influence. I wondered if he had forgotten Don Emmanuel de Ricla and the Count de las Moras. No. There remained the Count d'Aranda. He made an appointment with me. I was cold with fear. I found him alone, very calm and quiet. It gave me heart. He told me to sit down.

'What have you done to your minister?' he said.

'My lord, nothing except indirectly, but by a most inconceivable indiscretion, I have injured his friend Manucci, the man with whom he is all-powerful and who is all-powerful here, who has set him on to me!'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You have acted wrongly, but done is done. Now, I have no power to send you out of the kingdom, since you have infringed none of its laws, and so I told your minister. But I have promised, in your name, that you will hold your tongue about him in speaking to any Venetian subjects of your acquaintance now in Madrid. This, it seems to me, I can fairly ask you to promise to do.'

The Count d'Aranda explains.

I promised.

'Then you can stay in Madrid. Mocenigo goes next week!'

I remained five or six weeks longer in Madrid, paying court to no one, but amusing myself with my dear Ignazia, and the one or two people who remained faithful to me. I had given up the idea of going to Portugal, for I no longer received letters from Pauline, and I made up my mind to go to Marseilles, and thence to Constantinople, where I thought I might make my fortune without taking the turban. Had I followed out this plan, I should no doubt have been again disappointed, for I had reached the age when Fortune forsakes a man, though I had no right to complain, for she had bestowed plenty of favours on me, and I had abused them all. My servant, Philip, who was a good fellow, and superior to his station, corresponded with me for over a year after I left. He it was who told me that Ignazia married a rich shoemaker, whose wealth was sufficient to induce Don Diego to overlook his lack of birth.

On my way to visit a certain Doña Peliccia in Valencia, I saw the ruins of ancient Saguntum.[1] 'I want to go up there,' said I, pointing to the eminence they crown. A priest who was travelling with me, and the driver, both objected. The former wanted to get to Valencia before sundown, and the latter thought more of his mules than of all the antiquities in the world. After arguing in vain for ten minutes, I produced a gold coin, which instantly converted the driver.

[1] Saguntum, the centre of a fertile district, was once a rich trading-place. The Romans restored the city after its destruction by Hannibal. The modern Saguntum, or Murviedro, is about three miles from the sea.

Digitized by Microsoft®

He discourses on antiquity.

'May God be my aid, he is a man of means.'

This is the greatest praise which one can desire from a subject of his Most Catholic Majesty.

The walls of Saguntum were, to a large extent, intact, the battlements clearly defined. Nevertheless, the city dates from the Second Punic War. I noticed several inscriptions on two gates still standing. This monument of a people who preferred to perish in the flames rather than break their faith with the Romans and surrender to Hannibal, excited in me an admiration which my ignorant companions thought laughable; he would not have said a Mass to become master of the whole place with all its great memories, and of which time has destroyed even the name.

'It has always been called Murviedro,' maintained the priest.

'That is not possible; it stands to reason that a place would not be called *old* in the beginning, when it must have been new.'

'Well, Old Castile must be more ancient than New Castile.'

'You may think so, but you are wrong; it is called New Castile because it was the last place taken from the Moors, but, as a matter of fact, it is more ancient than Old Castile.'

The poor priest said no more, but contented himself with shaking his head at my folly.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LIV

MONSIEUR AND MADAME CAGLIOSTRO

His new amour.

Just as my visit to Valencia was drawing to a close, and I was preparing to leave for Barcelona, my evil genius took me to a bull-fight. There I was struck by the appearance of a woman, who was not merely handsome, but singularly impressive. I asked a gentleman of Alcantara who was sitting beside me who she was.

'She is the famous Nina.'

'Why famous?'

'If you do not know the story, it is too long a one to tell here.'

About two minutes later a well-dressed, though somewhat villainous-looking, man left the side of the imperious beauty, and approaching my neighbour, whispered something in his ear. My neighbour then politely told me that the lady whose name I had asked wished to be informed of mine. Stupidly allowing myself to be flattered by this request, I told the messenger that if the lady would allow me, I would tell her in person after the spectacle.

'I imagine, from your accent, that you are an Italian,' he said.

'Yes, a Venetian.'

'So is the lady.'

It clashes with that of the captain-general of Barcelona.

When he had returned to his companion, my neighbour becoming less laconic informed me that Nina was a dancer, and belonged to the Count de Ricla, captain-general of the principality of Barcelona. She had been living at Valencia for

Digitized by Microsoft®

some weeks, as the bishop would not allow her to remain in Barcelona on account of the scandal; the count, he said, was madly in love with her, and allowed her fifty doubloons a day.

'Which she doesn't spend, I hope,' I said.

'She can't, but she commits a thousand follies every day, for which she has to pay dearly.'

As soon as the bull-fight was over, I accosted the dancer. She received me as she was stepping into her fine carriage, drawn by six mules, and invited me to breakfast with her on the morrow. I replied that nothing would delight me more. She lived in a very large house about a hundred steps from the city gates, surrounded by immense gardens; the furniture was costly, and in good taste. The first thing that struck me was the crowd of servants in brilliant liveries, and the waiting-maids and serving-women, all elegantly dressed, who were coming and going in every direction. I heard an imperious voice scolding loudly in the room to which I was being conducted; the voice belonged to Nina, who was rating a scared-looking individual, who was standing near a table spread with his wares.

'You must excuse my being furious,' said Nina, 'but this Spanish fool wants to persuade me that these are good laces.'

They really were, but as I did not want to contradict her on my first visit, I said I was no judge.

'Madame,' said the merchant, at last becoming impatient, 'if you do not want the lace, leave it; do you want the other materials?'

'Yes; and as for your lace, to show you that it is not from stinginess that I won't take it——' She caught up a pair of scissors and hacked it into bits.

'It is a great pity,' said the man who had brought me her message the evening before. 'People will say you are mad.'

'Hold your tongue, you——' she answered, giving him a sound box on the ear, to which he replied by calling her a well-deserved name. This seemed to amuse her, and, bursting out laughing, she turned to the merchant, telling him to make

Digitized by Microsoft®

out his bill. She took it from him, signed it without even looking at it. 'Take it to Don Diego in Valencia. He will pay you at once,' she said.

The chocolate being now served, she sent a maid to find the man she had chastised, and bid him come and join us.

'You must not be surprised,' she said, 'at the way I treat him. He is a wretch of no importance, whom Ricla puts here to spy on me. I beat him as you see on purpose that he should write it all again to his master.'

Everything she said and did was so extraordinary, I was dumb with amazement. I could not believe that such a woman could exist. The miserable spy came back and drank his chocolate without a word. He was a musician from Bologna named Molinari. We spent an hour talking of Spain, Italy, and Portugal. She begged me to return to supper with her, and I did.

His infatuation for Nina.

It was now the beginning of October, but in Valencia the thermometer marked thirty degrees Réaumur in the shade. I found her walking about in the garden with her *jocrisse*, both of them very lightly clad. She had nothing on but a chemise and a thin petticoat. As soon as she saw me she came forward and invited me to make myself at home too. During supper she told lascivious stories, of which she was invariably the heroine. The supper was exceedingly delicate and profuse, and the wines of the best. She amused herself by making the brute drink until he fell senseless on the floor.

She invited me to return the following evening, adding that we should be alone, as the spy would be ill in bed. When I presented myself at seven o'clock, she met me with assumed melancholy.

'Alas!' she said, 'Molinari is ill.'

'You said he would be. Have you poisoned him?'

'I could; but God forbid that I should.'

'But you have given him something?'

'Nothing but what he likes. Come, don't let us talk any

Digitized by Microsoft®

more about him. Let us enjoy ourselves to-night, and to-morrow evening we will begin over again.'

'I fear not, for I leave Valencia to-morrow.'

A venal angel.

'Oh no, you don't, and your coachman will raise no objections even if you have engaged him. He is paid as though he had made the journey. Here is his bill receipted.'

All this was said in an affectionately despotic manner which flattered me. I laughingly assured her I was not worth the present she had made me.

'It surprises me,' I said, 'that, living in such a magnificent house, you do not receive more company.'

'People are afraid to come,' she said. 'They fear Ricla, who is jealous, and to whom that sick animal there writes letters telling him all I do and say. I am glad he does so, and am only sorry that up to now I have given him nothing worth writing about.'

'He will write that we have supped together *tête-à-tête*.'

'So much the better. Are you afraid?'

'No; but you ought to tell me if there is reason for my being so.'

'No reason at all. The blame will fall on me.'

'But I should be sorry to be the cause of a break between you and your lover.'

'The more I tease him, the more he adores me, and the making up will cost him dear.'

'Then you do not love him?'

'Yes, but only to ruin him, though he is so rich I shall never succeed.'

The woman was as lovely as sin, and as corrupt as the angel of darkness; venal by nature, and fated to punish terribly whosoever should have the misfortune to love her. I had known others of the same calibre, but her equal never. I got into the habit of supping with her. At night we played cards, and I was generally the winner, which in the then depleted state of my pocket was a consideration with me. The spy had recovered, and made a third at our parties, but

Digitized by Microsoft®

his presence was not the slightest check upon us. Nina would, after lavishing caresses on me, tell him to go and inform Count Ricla. He must have done so, for the poor count wrote to her, asking her to return to Barcelona, and assuring her that the bishop had received orders not to interfere with her. She persuaded me to go to Barcelona, too, telling me that I could see her every night after ten, and that if I was in need of money she would lend me all I wanted. She made me leave Valencia one day before she did, so as to meet her at Tarragona. She went in the morning, and I followed after sunset. I went to the hotel the singular creature had recommended to me, which was kept by a Swiss, who told me confidentially that he had orders to see that I wanted for nothing. We shall see by and by what all this led to!

He follows her to Barcelona.

Although my landlord seemed an honest sort of fellow, Nina's recommendation struck me as imprudent. The captain-general, however broad-minded, was nevertheless a Spaniard, and not likely to admit of trifling. She had herself told me he was passionate, suspicious, and jealous.

'I am surprised,' I said to the landlord, 'that La Nina should have ordered all this, for she has no idea as to my means, and cannot tell what my expenses should be.'

She provides for him there.

'Everything is paid for, sir.'

'Paid for! but I cannot allow this.'

'You must arrange it with her, then.'

I foresaw that trouble would come of it, but as I have never cared to look on the black side of things, I put aside all disagreeable thoughts, and went out to present my letters of introduction.

Ricla received me, but remained standing all the time, and did not offer me a chair. Although he spoke Italian perfectly, he addressed me all the time in Spanish. He asked me if I intended to remain long in Barcelona, and I replied that with his permission I intended to remain as long as I pleased.

I was a week at Barcelona before receiving any news of

Digitized by Microsoft®

Nina; then came a note asking me to go and see her, but on foot, without a servant, and after ten o'clock at night. I was a fool to go, more especially as I was not in love with her; but as my readers know, prudence was never one of my distinguishing qualities. At the appointed hour I presented myself at her house, alone, and with no weapon but my sword. I found her sister with her; a woman of about thirty-six, who was married to an Italian dancer called Schizza, because he was as flat-nosed as a Kalmuck. The sister never left us, and when I withdrew at midnight, I had not had one moment's conversation alone with Nina. But next day, as I was strolling in the town, an officer of the Walloon guards accosted me. He begged me to forgive the liberty he was taking, as he was a perfect stranger to me, but he wished to speak to me on a matter which, though it in no way concerned him, yet interested him greatly.

He is advised to discontinue his visits to Nina.

'Speak, sir,' I said, 'I shall take anything you may say in good part.'

'Well, sir, you are a foreigner, and you do not understand the manners or the ways of the Spaniards. You do not know what a risk you run in going to visit La Nina every night.'

'What risk can I run? I am sure the count is aware of my visits, and does not object to them.'

'No doubt he is aware of them, but though he may pretend not to object, sooner or later he will punish you. Take my advice, sir, and discontinue your nightly excursions.'

'I thank you sincerely for your goodwill,' I answered, 'but I shall only leave off going when Nina herself asks me to do so, or when the count requests me.'

I did not tell Nina of this episode, and continued to see her every night. Had I been in love with her, my conduct would have been excusable. On the 14th of November, when I entered her room, I observed a strange man engaged in showing her some miniatures. On looking at him more closely, I recognised my enemy, the infamous Parsano or Pogomos,

Digitized by Microsoft®

who had already betrayed me to Madame d'Urfé, but failed to injure me in the eyes of my dear old friend.

Parsano comes into his life again.

The blood rushed to my head. Taking Nina by the hand, I led her into an adjoining room, and told her she must instantly dismiss the scoundrel, or I would leave her house never to re-enter it.

'He is a painter.'

'I know. I know him; I will tell you everything by and by, but send him away now, or I must go.'

She called her sister, and told her to tell the Genoese to leave at once and never to come back. It was all done in a moment. When the sister returned, she said Parsano's last words were, 'He will be sorry for this.'

He is set upon by an ambush.

The following night I went to Nina's again. The door of the house opened on to an arcade, which ran the whole length of the street. It was very dark; I had only gone about twenty-five steps when I was attacked by two men. I stepped back, drew my sword, and called 'murder' loudly, at the same time plunging my blade into the body of the nearest ruffian. I broke out into the street and ran off at the top of my speed, fortunately just missing the bullet which the second assassin fired after me. In my flight I stumbled and fell, losing my hat, but I did not pick it up. I rushed on till I reached my hotel. I was too breathless to speak, and could only fling my bloody sword down before my astonished host. My riding-coat was pierced in two places below my armpit.

'I am going to bed,' I said to the honest Swiss. 'I will leave you my sword and coat. To-morrow, I shall ask you to go with me before a magistrate, for some one has been killed this night, and you must bear witness that it was in self-defence.'

'You would do better to leave the town at once.'

'What! you do not believe my story?'

'I believe every word of it; but go, I guess who struck the blow, and God alone knows what will come of it.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No harm will come of it, and if I left as you advise, I should be writing myself down guilty. Take care of my sword; murder has been attempted, let the would-be murderers tremble.'

He is arrested.

Before seven in the morning there came a loud knocking at my door. It was my host, accompanied by an officer, who ordered me to give him all my papers and passports, to dress myself quickly and follow him, adding that if I resisted he would employ force.

'I have no intention of resisting,' said I, 'but tell me by whose orders, and by what right you demand my papers?'

'By the governor's orders. Your papers will be returned to you if there is nothing to suspect there.'

I put some linen and clothes into a bag, and handed my papers over, receiving in return a detailed receipt for them. I then left the hotel with the officer, and his men followed us at a respectful distance till we came to the citadel. I was conducted to a room on the first floor, which was clean, though bare; the windows looked on to a little square, and were not barred. Here I was left alone, and remembering what had happened to me at Madrid, I congratulated myself on being so humanely treated. I had not been there ten minutes, when the guard came in bearing my bag and a bed. I flung myself on the latter, and gave myself up to reflection. Ought I to write to Nina? Should I be allowed to do so? In the midst of my ponderings I heard a sound outside, and looking from the window, saw the scoundrel Parsano being taken to prison by a corporal and two soldiers. The wretch looked up, and on seeing me, burst out laughing.

'Ha! ha!' thought I, 'here is the key to the enigma. He has invented some atrocious calumny about me, and to be sure of his upholding it, they are going to put him under lock and key.'

And cast into the Donjon of Barcelona.

At midday they brought me an excellent dinner, and in return for a gold piece a soldier procured me pen and ink and candles. I gave him part of my meal, and he assured

Digitized by Microsoft®

me he would speak to the comrade who would relieve him, and who would serve me as well as he had done. I passed my time making geometrical calculations. On the morning of the fourth day, the officer who had arrested me appeared, and told me politely that he was the bearer of bad news: he had orders to take me to the dungeon in the tower. It was a kind of round cellar, paved with large stones; there were five or six slits in the thick walls, each about two inches in width. I was told I could order what I wanted for dinner, but that the gaoler would only visit me once a day, and that I could be furnished with a lamp if I wanted one. When they brought me my food, the officer who accompanied them cut up the fowl and stuck his fork into all the dishes so as to be sure they contained no letters or papers. My food and wine were excellent, and there was always enough for six people, so I shared it with my sentinels, who had never in their lives been so well fed. The poor devils would have done anything in the world for me. I was curious to know who saw to my supplies, but there was no means of finding out.

I passed forty-two days in this hole, and it was there that I wrote in pencil, and with no help but my memory, a complete refutation of Amelot de la Houssaye's *History of the Government of Venice.*

He writes a book.

On the 28th of December, six weeks after my arrest, the officer on guard came and told me to dress and follow him.

'Where are we going?'

'I am to hand you over to the officer of the captain-general, who is expecting you.'

When we got to the guard-room, he consigned me to the same civil officer who had arrested me; he in his turn conducted me to the palace, where a clerk gave me a trunk containing my papers, which were all intact, and included my three passports; the latter, he assured me, were perfectly genuine.

'I know that, and have always known it,' I answered.

'Probably, but we had strong reasons to believe the contrary, and I must now make known to you the order that you

Digitized by Microsoft®

He is enjoined to leave Barcelona.

are to leave Barcelona in three days, and Catalonia in a week.'

'I shall obey, though the order is an unjust one.'

'You are at liberty to appeal against it at Madrid, if you choose.'

'I shall complain, but in Paris, not in Madrid; I have had enough of Spain. Be so good as to give me the order you have just communicated to me in writing.'

Accompanied by the civilian officer and a servant, I returned to my inn. The good Swiss was delighted to see me, and assured me no one had entered my room since I left it. He gave me my sword, my riding-coat, and, what astonished me most, my hat, which I had lost when flying from my would-be murderers. There were several letters awaiting me at the post, from Paris, Venice, Warsaw, and Madrid, and I do not think that any of them had been tampered with. I mention this as a proof of what an exceptionally orderly government that of Spain is. When I asked my landlord for my bill, he answered that I did not owe him a penny. He had received orders, he said, to furnish me with everything I needed as long as I remained in prison, and, indeed, as long as I remained in Barcelona.

'Who is it that has paid everything for me?'

'You know as well as I do.'

'Have you a note or letter for me?'

'Nothing.'

'What do they say in town of this affair?'

'All sorts of odd things. Some say you shot the gun off yourself, and bloodied your sword, for, strange to say, no wounded man was discovered. The hat was brought to me three days after you were imprisoned. The reason which was publicly alleged for your arrest was that your passports were forged, but every one knew that the real reason was because you passed your nights with La Nina.'

'You know I always returned at midnight.'

'So I told every one. However, you went to see her, that

Digitized by Microsoft®

was enough for a certain gentleman; and now, my good sir, promise me you will not go near her again.'

'Have no fear, my good man; my mind is quite made up on that point.'

Just as I was sitting down to dinner, a banker's clerk brought me a letter which agreeably surprised me. It contained the bills of exchange which I had drawn at Genoa on Signor Augustino Grimaldi, and ran as follows: 'Parsano is begging me to send this enclosed letter to Barcelona, so as to have you arrested for forgery. I am sending it, but to you, to do as you like with, and to convince you that it is not my way to add to the troubles of men already persecuted by fortune.'

He was the fourth Genoese who had behaved towards me in a truly noble manner. For the sake of the four good men, I ought perhaps to forgive their infamous compatriot Parsano, who, I learned some years after, returned to his native city and died there in abject poverty.

I spent three days writing letters to all my acquaintances, as I was superstitious enough to wish to leave Spain on the last day of the miserable year I had spent there. I took a servant with me, who occupied the back seat of my carriage. My coachman was from Piedmont, and seemed a decent fellow. On the second day of our journey he asked me if I had reason to believe that we were being followed, 'because,' he said, 'there are three ill-looking scoundrels, whom I noticed yesterday at Barcelona, here now. It seems they slept in the stable with the mules; they have nearly finished their dinner, and will get three-quarters of an hour's start of us. I must say I don't like their looks.'

'What do you advise me to do?'

'Start late, and stop at an inn which I know of, and which is about a league this side of the one they expect you to stop at; if they retrace their steps and join us, there will be no further doubt as to their intentions.'

Acting on his suggestion, we started late, and reached the

Digitized by Microsoft®

inn about five. Our three scoundrels were not there, but about eight in the evening, as I was at supper, my servant came in to say that they were in the stable drinking with my coachman. My hair stood on end with fear; but my good Piedmontese was not easily discouraged, he had worked out a little scheme by which we could escape them. We started before daybreak, and dined at the ordinary coaching station. After having given the scoundrels half an hour's start, we followed for a mile or two, then brusquely turning round we galloped back to the inn, and taking a peasant with us as guide, we struck across country. We kept the mules going at such a pace that in seven hours we had done eleven leagues, and at ten that night we arrived at a good inn, in a big village in dear France, where we had nothing to fear. I gave our guide a gold piece, and stretched myself out delightedly to sleep soundly in a good French bed. Long live France for her good beds and her delicious wine!

Back in France.

I got to Aix, in Provence, in time for the Carnival. I took lodgings at the Three Dolphins. The town was full of people, balls, suppers, and pretty Provençal women helped me to spend the time agreeably until mid-Lent, when, coming back one evening from dining in the country, I caught a violent cold. I went to bed, suffering from a sharp pain in my side, and awoke to find myself seriously ill with pleurisy. An old doctor whom the landlord summoned refused to bleed me; I began to cough, and in two days to spit blood; in a week I was in so desperate a state that a priest was sent for, who heard my confession and administered the Sacraments. But on the tenth day, after sixty hours' unconsciousness, the doctor declared there was hope for me, and then began a long convalescence, which to me was more tiresome than my illness had been. During all this time I had been nursed night and day by an unknown woman. Her solicitude and care never flagged; she slept in my room, and waited on me with the greatest attention; though she was not old, she did not inspire me with any tender feelings. When I was well enough to go

His illness.

Digitized by Microsoft®

out, I recompensed her as well as I could, and thanked her gratefully for all she had done for me. When I asked her who had sent her to me, she said, the doctor; but when some days later I told him what a good nurse he had provided me with, he looked much astonished, and assured me he had never seen her before. The landlord and landlady told the same tale—in fact no one knew anything about this woman, who she was, or where she came from. She disappeared as mysteriously as she came.

The mysterious nurse at Aix.

Among the letters waiting for me at the post, was one from my brother in Paris, in reply to one I had written him from Perpignan. He said how thankful he had been to hear from me, as he had been told that I had been assassinated on the borders of Catalonia. 'It was one of your best friends, Count Manucci, who is attached to the Venetian embassy here, who told me the frightful news,' wrote François; 'he said he was absolutely certain of the fact of your death.'

This was a ray of light, showing me that 'one of my best friends' had pushed his desire for vengeance to the point of hiring three assassins to murder me. Up to then Manucci had been excusable in all he had done against me, but from that moment he became unpardonable. He must have felt very sure of his facts, and never doubted but what his ruffians had safely despatched me, but it would have been less compromising for him had he waited a little before announcing my death. When I met him two years later at Rome, I reproached him with his treachery, but he indignantly denied everything, and swore he had been told at Barcelona that I was dead.

One day, when I was dining at *table d'hôte*, with a numerous and distinguished company, some one spoke of the pilgrims who had just arrived; they were Italians, it appeared, and had come on foot from the shrine of Saint James of Compostella in Galicia; they were evidently of high birth, for on arriving at Aix they had distributed very generous alms to the poor. The woman, they said, was charming; she was about eighteen,

Digitized by Microsoft®

Cagliostro.

and so tired that she had gone straight to bed. We were all curious to see the new-comers, and in my quality of Italian and fellow-countryman I took the lead, and we started in a band to visit them. They must be either fanatics or swindlers, we said. We found the woman sitting in an arm-chair; she was beautiful and young and interesting. She held a long crucifix of yellow metal in her hand. The man was fastening cockle-shells on his black oil-cloth cloak. He seemed about twenty-five years old, was short but well built, and looked bold and cynical. His wife's expression was that of good breeding, naïveté, gentleness and modesty. They neither of them spoke French, and were relieved when I addressed them in Italian. He was a Neapolitan, and she a Roman, as her pretty accent told me at once: on his passport he was called Balsamo,[1] and she Sérafina Feliciani. We shall meet him ten years hence under the name of Cagliostro.

'We are on our way back to Rome,' she said; 'having paid our devotions to Saint James of Compostello, and Our Lady

[1] Joseph Balsamo was born at Palermo in 1743. He was therefore little more than a boy when Casanova met him; nevertheless he was well on in his career of adventure and crime. He was educated at the monastery of Castagirone, and employed to read aloud to the monks during dinner. For the lives of saints, however, he substituted those of the most notoriously profligate women. After his expulsion from the monastery, he started a system of forgery, beginning with theatre tickets, and ending with a will. He robbed his uncle, and committed a cold-blooded murder, for which he was tried, but escaped through a flaw in the evidence. He married, in Rome, a beautiful but unprincipled woman, Lorenza Feliciani, whose false naïveté and delicacy were of great assistance to him in his schemes. Madame Cagliostro was Grand Mistress of the Isis Lodge, which numbered among its members Mesdames de Brienne, de Choiseul, and de Polignac. Cagliostro, strong in his sense of the importance of having the women on his side, always maintained his intention of introducing the Egyptian rite, which admitted women into the highest grades in Freemasonry, and was never able to come to an understanding with the Freemasons. Though implicated in the affair of the Diamond Necklace, he was imprisoned in the Bastille on another count. After his liberation he went to England, whence he predicted the fall of the French state-prison. He incurred the rigours of the Fleet Prison in our country. In Rome he was condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted, and he died in San Leo in 1795.

Digitized by Microsoft®

of Pilar. We have travelled entirely on foot, and have lived only on charity, the better to obtain the mercy of God, whom we have so often offended. I never asked for more than a sol, but have always been given silver, and even gold pieces, so that in each town we have had money to give to the poor. My husband, who is very strong, has not suffered much, but it has been very hard for me to walk so far, and to sleep on straw, when I have not dared to take my clothes off, for fear of catching some disease. I am so tired that we shall stay here and rest for three days, before going on to Turin, where we shall stop to adore the Holy Napkin.'

The wife of Cagliostro.

'You know of course that there are several of those in Europe?'

'I have heard so, but am assured that the real one is at Turin, the one with which Saint Veronica wiped our Saviour's face, and on which His divine Image is imprinted.'

We were all taken with the pretty pilgrim, but did not believe in her devotion. There was not one amongst us but would gladly have invited her to supper. Next day the husband came, and asked me to go and breakfast with them, unless, he said, I would rather they came and breakfasted with me. It would not have been polite to say, 'Neither one nor the other,' so I told him to come to my room.

He told me he was by profession an etcher, but that his talent lay in copying; he could reproduce an engraving so perfectly with his pen that no one could tell it from the original; in spite of his skill, however, he said he could barely make enough to live on. He showed me some fans he had made; it would be difficult to imagine anything more beautiful than the pen-and-ink drawings decorating them. I offered him twenty francs for one, but he begged me to accept it gratis, and in return make a collection for him at table, which I did, and succeeded in raising two hundred francs. I also gave them two letters to friends at Avignon, one of which she returned to me in the evening, saying that

Digitized by Microsoft®

her husband did not think it necessary. As I was about to tear it up, she asked me to look at it, so as to be sure it was the same one I had written for her. 'Certainly,' I said, 'it is my letter.' She then laughingly drew mine from her pocket; the one in my hand was only a copy.

'Your talent is very admirable,' said I to her husband, 'and it is more difficult to imitate handwriting than an engraving; clever as you are you may go far and succeed well, but, on the other hand, if you are not careful your ability may cost you your life.'

They went away next day. I shall tell my readers by and by how I met them ten years afterwards; the man then called himself Count Pellegrini, and the good Serafina, his wife and his *âme damnée*, was still with him. At the moment I write these lines he is in prison, and will probably never come out again; his wife is in a convent.

One of my greatest pleasures at Aix was the company of the Marquis d'Argens; I spent hours *tête-à-tête* with this good and learned old man. He told me a quantity of anecdotes about the private life of Frederick the Great, such characteristic anecdotes that my readers I am sure would thank me to repeat them, the more so that the greater part of them are not generally known, and will be lost to history; but somehow I am strangely indolent. Perhaps at some other time, when the palace of Dux is less smothered in mist, when some few rays of sunshine come to cheer me, I will commit them to paper; at this moment I have not the courage to write them down.

The Marquis d'Argens made me a present of his works. When I asked him if I could flatter myself I possessed them all, he answered yes, with the exception of the history of part of his life, which he wrote when he was young, and which he regretted now.

'And why?' I asked.

'Because, in my intense desire to write the truth, I have made myself ridiculous. If ever you feel the same temptation,

Digitized by Microsoft®

The opinions of the Marquis d'Argens on memoir writing.

cast it from you, or, I can assure you, you will regret it; as an honest man and a truthful historian, you will be obliged to conceal nothing, you must have no cowardly complaisances for your own faults, you must castigate them mercilessly; on the other hand, you must yourself point out the good you have done. You must praise and blame yourself on each page, and whereas all the ill that you say of yourself will be taken as gospel, all the good that you say will be put down to pride and vanity. Furthermore, in writing your memoirs, you will make enemies of all those of whom you speak ill. Believe me, my friend, if it is not permissible for an honest man to speak about himself, it is still less permissible for him to write about himself. I hope you will never fall into the same mistake as Rousseau, a mistake which I should not have thought possible in such a superior man.'

I promised him I would never commit such a folly, in spite of which, for the last seven years I have done nothing else, and I have sworn to myself I will go on to the end. But I write in the firm conviction that my history will never see the light of publicity; for one thing, the infamous Censor, the snuffer-out of intelligence, will never allow it to be printed, and for another thing, I shall be wise perhaps in my last illness and burn all my papers. If neither of these comes to pass, I can only beg my readers to be indulgent, and to remember that writing has been the only thing which has kept me from going mad, or dying of grief in the midst of the discomfort and pettifogging annoyances daily caused me by the envious wretches who live with me, in this castle of Dux, belonging to the Count Waldstein, or Wallenstein. By writing ten or twelve hours a day, I have prevented black sorrow from eating up my poor heart and destroying my reason. We will talk of all this later, if I do not die in the meantime.

While I was at Aix, I thought incessantly of my dear Henriette. I knew her real name, and she had sent me a message through Marcolina to look for her at Aix. I thought

Digitized by Microsoft®

The third appearance of Henriette.

I should come across her at some assembly or gathering. I often heard her name mentioned, but never asked questions about her, as I wanted no one to guess that I knew her. I thought she must be at her country-house, and was only waiting till I had recovered my health to pay her a visit. I left Aix, with a letter to her in my pocket, intending to send it in by the postillion and to wait at the door until she made known her pleasure to me. Her house was a league and a half beyond the Golden Cross; it was eleven in the morning when we arrived. I gave my letter to a manservant, who said he would be sure to forward it to madame.

'What! is she not here then?'

'No, sir, she is at Aix.'

'How long has she been there?'

'For the last six months.'

'Where does she live?'

'In her own house; she only comes here for about three weeks in the summer.'

'Will you allow me to add a few words to my letter?'

'With pleasure. Come in, sir. I will open madame's room for you, where you will find all you require.'

I followed him in. Imagine my surprise when I found myself face to face with the woman who had nursed me recently.

'You! do you live here?'

'Yes, sir, for the last ten years.'

'And how was it you came to take care of me?'

'Madame sent for me in all haste, and told me to go to your house, and install myself by your bedside, and tend you. She said if you questioned me I was to say it was the doctor sent me.'

'The doctor said he did not know you.'

'I think he was probably acting under madame's orders; but I am not sure. I am surprised you never saw madame while you were at Aix.'

'She cannot see much company, for I went everywhere.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'She does not receive at home, but she goes everywhere.'

'It is extraordinary that I did not meet her, it cannot be that I did, and failed to recognise her. You say you have been with her for ten years. Has she changed much? Has she had any illness which has altered her features? Has she grown older?'

'No, she is a little stouter, but she looks like a woman of not more than thirty.'

'I must have been blind; no, it is not possible that I can have met her!'

I could not make up my mind what to do. 'Ought I to return to Aix?' I asked myself. 'She is alone, she receives no one; what prevented her from speaking to me, from giving me some sign? Suppose she will not receive me; but no—she still loves me, she would not have had me so tenderly nursed had she been indifferent to me. She is vexed perhaps at my not recognising her? She must know that I have left Aix; she must guess that I have come here! Shall I go to her? Shall I write?'

It was the latter course which I decided to pursue, and in my letter I told her I would wait at Marseilles for her reply. This is what I received:—

A letter from Henriette.

'Nothing, my dear old friend, can be more romantic than the story of our meeting at my country-house six years ago, and now again twenty-two years after our parting at Geneva. We have both of us grown old, 'tis the law of nature. But will you believe that though I still love you, I am glad that you did not recognise me? It is not that I have become ugly, but I have grown stout, and that has entirely changed me. I am a widow, happy, and well enough off to assure you that if you are in want of money you have but to draw on Henriette. Do not come to Aix to see me, for your return would only give rise to gossip, though if you revisit the town some time hence we can meet, but not as old friends. I am glad to think I may have contributed to the

Digitized by Microsoft®

prolongation of your days by placing near you a woman on whose fidelity I could rely. If you would like us to write to each other I will do my best to make the correspondence agreeable. I am very curious to know all that you have done since your escape from 'The Leads,' and now that you have given me such a proof of your discretion, I promise to tell you my history, the cause of our meeting at Cesena, and my return to my native country. The first is an absolute secret, M. d'Antoine alone knows the facts. I am grateful to you for not having inquired about me; Marcolina no doubt gave you all my messages. Tell me what has become of that charming creature? Adieu.'

I wrote back, relating to her in brief the vicissitudes of my life, and accepting gladly her offer of correspondence. She in her turn told me her story, and wrote me in all about forty letters. If she dies before I do, I shall add these letters to my Memoirs; but to-day she is still living, and, though old, she is happy.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LV

A PLEA FOR PARDON

My *Refutation of the History of the Government of Venice*[1] by Amelot de la Houssaye was now complete. My readers will remember that I wrote it during my imprisonment in Spain, from memory, and on my return to France I revised and corrected it, and determined to publish it in Switzerland. As soon as I made known to my friends my intention of so doing, they came generously forward with subscriptions to the expense. The Count de la Pérouse gave me two hundred and fifty francs for fifty copies. I knew that at Lugano there was a good press and no censor, and that the master of the printing-house was a man of letters. I took lodging in the best inn in Lugano, and the day after my arrival went to see Dr. Agnelli, who was at once a printer, a priest, a theologian, and an honest man. I agreed to pay him weekly for the work done, and he reserved to himself the right of censorship, but hoped that so far as that was concerned we should be in accord. I gave him the preface and the introduction, which would take a week to print, chose the paper which pleased me, and the form of the book, which was to be large octavo. When I returned to my inn, the landlord told me the *bargello*, or chief of the police, had been to see me; although Lugano belongs to the Swiss Confederation, the police is managed in

He publishes his *Refutation*.

[1] He is supposed to have written his *Refutation* principally to curry favour with the Venetian government, from whom he had already determined to ask pardon.

Digitized by Microsoft®

the Italian fashion. I was curious to know what this person could want with me, and I ordered him to be admitted. After making me a profound bow, he informed me that he had come to offer me his services, and to assure me that although I was a foreigner, I should enjoy every possible advantage in Lugano, and had no cause to fear for my person or my liberty, even though I might be in difficulties with the Venetian government.

'Thank you, sir,' I replied, 'I am quite sure that what you say is true, as we are in free Switzerland.'

'I will make so bold as to add, sir,' he said, 'that it is customary for strangers who come here, and who wish to enjoy an inviolable asylum, to pay a trifling sum, by the week, month, or year, but in advance.'

'And supposing they do not choose to pay?'

'Then they are not so safe.'

'Money then does everything?'

'Well, sir——'

'I understand; but I might as well tell you at once that as I have nothing to fear I do not intend to pay.'

'Nevertheless I know, if you will excuse my saying so, that you are in trouble with your government.'

'You are mistaken, my friend.'

'Oh no, I am not mistaken.'

'If you are so certain, find some one who will back your opinion for two hundred sequins that I have anything to fear from Venice, and I will lay down an equal sum.'

The *bargello* looked discomfited, and the landlord, who was present at our interview, told him he must have been ill informed. He bowed and withdrew. The landlord advised me to go and see the captain or governor, who had absolute authority in the city. 'He is a most amiable Swiss gentleman,' he said, 'and has a wife as intelligent as she is beautiful.' I went next day about noon, and was admitted at once. Imagine my surprise when I found myself in the presence of

Digitized by Microsoft®

M. de R—— and his charming spouse, the Amazon of the Inn of the Sword, as I called her, who held on her knee a pretty little boy five or six years old.

We were all three mute with surprise and pleasure. M. de R—— was the first to break the silence and to embrace me cordially, and insist on my taking pot luck with them. He was delighted when I told him I should remain three or four months till my book was printed, and quite distressed when I said I could only accept his hospitality once a week, on account of my arduous work.

It was nine years since I had seen Madame de R—— at Soleure. She told me Lebel had established himself at Besançon, where he lives happily with his charming wife. From something she let fall during our conversation, I gathered that she found me altered, and that I did not look as young as I did nine years ago. This determined me not to attempt to renew our intrigue. 'So much the better,' thought I, 'as I cannot be her lover, I will be her friend and her husband's.'

The nostalgia of country grows strong in him.

I spent a whole month in my room, working assiduously, only going out to Mass on Sundays, or to dine with M. de R——. At the end of this time the first volume was finished and bound; towards the end of October the whole work, complete in three volumes, was finished, and in less than a year I sold the entire edition. My object in writing this book was not so much to make money as to obtain favour in the eyes of the Venetian inquisitors, for after having wandered all over Europe, the desire to revisit my country was growing so strong in me that I felt I could not live an exile any longer. For the last seventy years the world had accepted and relied on Houssaye's *History*, which was a clever satire, containing much truth and many calumnies. No one had taken the trouble to refute the latter, and, indeed, it would not have been possible for a Venetian living in the republic to do so, for the government allows no one, on principle, to write about it, either in praise or blame. I believe that this work was

Digitized by Microsoft®

reserved for me, on account of my exceptional situation. My cause of complaint would put me above all suspicion of partiality, and the evidence with which I could back up my contradictions of his lies and blunders made me hope for a tardy act of justice. Permission to return to my country was surely due to me, after fourteen years' exile, and I thought the inquisitors would gladly seize this opportunity to repair their harshness. I was right, though they made me wait five years for a favour which they might have granted me at once. M. de Bragadin was dead; I had only my two old friends, Dandolo and Barbaro, left: it was, thanks to them, that fifty people in Venice subscribed to my book secretly.

From Lugano I went to Turin, where I intended to spend the winter; the English minister there was a friend of mine, and I had other agreeable acquaintances. We were a little society composed of Epicureans: there was the old Chevalier Raiberti, the Count de la Pérouse, the charming Abbé de Roubieu, the voluptuous Count de Riva, and the already-mentioned Englishman. We all loved literature and good cheer, and gave delightful supper-parties. It was during my stay there that a pretty milliner, the mistress of la Pérouse, being at the point of death, swallowed her lover's portrait instead of the Eucharist. I wrote two sonnets on this incident, and am as pleased with them to-day as I was then.

The Russian squadron was at this time at Leghorn, under the command of Count Orloff. The squadron threatened to bombard Constantinople, and might perhaps have done so had it been commanded by an Englishman. As I had known Orloff in Petersburg, it occurred to me that I might be useful to him, and make my fortune at the same time. I went to Leghorn full of chimerical ideas; I imagined that Orloff could never pass the Dardanelles without me. At Bologna I saw the humpback Dubois, director of the mint. I had known him twenty-two years before, in the days

Digitized by Microsoft®

when I was in love with Henriette. He received me with joy. When I told him my intentions, he said that Orloff must be on the point of starting, as he had had letters to that effect from Leghorn. I answered mysteriously that he would not leave without me, at which the malicious humpback bowed admiringly. He wanted to talk about this expedition with which all Europe was ringing, but my reserved tone compelled him to change the topic of conversation.

News of Henriette.

During dinner he spoke frequently of my Henriette, and boasted that he had found out all about her, but I was careful not to let him get anything out of me. He complained bitterly of all the sovereigns of Europe, except the King of Prussia, who had made him a baron, although he did not know him, and had never had any dealings directly or indirectly with him. After listening complacently to his jeremiads, I asked him to give me the name of some banker who would advance me fifty sequins; he replied that it was useless to trouble a banker for such a small matter, and that he would lend them me himself. I accepted, and promised I would repay him as soon as possible; unfortunately I have never been able to do so, and I fear I shall die without acquitting myself of this debt, for even should I live to be as old as Methuselah, I grow daily poorer and poorer.

At Pisa, where I stayed a few hours, I saw the pretender to the throne of Great Britain at the public baths. Hurrying on to Leghorn I found Orloff, who had been delayed by contrary winds; and the English consul presented me to him. The Russian admiral declared he would be delighted to have me on board, and told me to have my luggage embarked at once, as he intended to set sail at the first good wind. When we were alone the English consul asked me in what capacity I was going.

'That is just what I want to know, before I put my things aboard,' I answered.

The following morning I presented myself at Orloff's house,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and sent up a note asking him for an interview. I was told he was in bed writing despatches, but would see me soon. After waiting some time, da Loglio, the King of Poland's agent at Venice, came in.

'What are you doing here, my dear Casanova?'

'Waiting to see the admiral.'

'He is very busy'; and so saying, he passed by me into the inner room. This was impertinence, for it implied that Orloff was too busy to see me, but not too busy to see him. A few minutes after the Marchese Marucci appeared; he too went into the admiral's room, and several other gentlemen were admitted. I was getting angry, and my project did not smile on me as much as it had done. After I had waited five hours Orloff appeared, followed by a number of people, he said affably that he would talk things over at table, or after dinner. During dinner I never spoke, and Orloff read his letters the whole time. When the coffee was served, he jumped up suddenly as though he had just recollected something, and drawing me into the embrasure of a window, told me to be sure and send my things on board that day, as he hoped to leave on the morrow.

'Will you allow me to ask you in what capacity I go, and what my occupation will be?'

'I have no occupation to give you, though something may turn up: you will go as my friend.'

Orloff's diplomacy.

'A most estimable qualification, to gain which I would risk my life, but which will not count for anything after the expedition, or during the expedition either, as you are the only person who will show me confidence and esteem. I shall be considered as an idle man, good for nothing in particular, and I may kill some fool who shows me disrespect. You must give me some definite function which will allow me to wear your uniform. I know the country you are going to, I speak the language, I am in perfect health, and not lacking in courage. I do not desire your friendship gratis; I would rather have the honour of meriting it.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'All very well, my dear friend, but I have no occupation to give you.'

'Then, sir, I wish you good luck and a safe voyage; I am off to Rome. I hope you will not repent leaving me behind, but I can tell you that without me you will never pass the Dardanelles.'

'Is that a prophecy?'

'It is the declaration of the oracle.'

'We shall see, my dear Calchas.'

Such was the short dialogue I had with this brave man, who did *not* pass the Dardanelles! Would he have done so if I had been aboard? No one can say. The squadron left next morning, and I went on to Pisa and Siena.

The day before my departure thence my coachman asked me if I would share my *calèche* with another traveller, by doing which I should save three sequins.

'I don't want a companion,' I answered.

'You are wrong, for it is a pretty young lady who has just arrived.'

Miss Betty.

'Alone?'

'No, she is with a gentleman on horseback, who is also going to Rome.'

'And how did she come here?'

'On horseback; but she cannot go on like that; she is overcome with fatigue. The gentleman has offered me four sequins to take her to Rome, and as I am a poor devil, you might let me have a chance of making a little money.'

'I suppose the gentleman will follow the carriage?'

'He won't be in your way, or mine either.'

'What is he like?'

'Handsome, and speaks very little Italian.'

'Tell him to come and speak to me.'

A moment after, a good-looking young fellow in a fantastic uniform appeared, when I addressed him in French.

'God be praised!' he said, 'you speak my language. My wife is an Englishwoman,' he continued, 'and will not be

Digitized by Microsoft®

in your way in the least, if you will be so obliging as to give her a seat in your carriage.'

'With pleasure, but I do not want to postpone my departure. Can she be ready in five hours' time?'

The following day, at the appointed moment, I found her sitting in the carriage. I complimented her on her punctuality, and we started.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LVI

MISS BETTY

This was the fourth adventure of the kind which had happened to me. There is nothing very extraordinary about it when one happens to be travelling with a carriage to oneself; nevertheless, this last seemed to me more romantic than its predecessor.

I had two hundred sequins and was forty-five years old. I still worshipped the fair sex, but not with the same ardour as before. I had more experience and less courage, and looked more like a father than a son; I was less arrogant than I used to be, and had small faith in my powers of conquest. The young person seated by my side seemed gentle; she was pretty and simply dressed, but very neat and clean, after the manner of her countrywomen. She was fair and rather small; her pretty white throat was just visible under a muslin kerchief; she looked well bred and modest; and her innocent, virginal airs inspired me with both interest and respect.

'I hope you speak French, madame?'

'Yes, and a little Italian, sir.'

'I consider myself very lucky in having to take you to Rome.'

'Perhaps I am even luckier than you!'

'I am told you came on horseback?'

'Yes; but I shall not be so silly another time.'

'Your husband ought to have sold your horse and bought a carriage.'

'It does not belong to him; he only hired it, and has to give it up in Rome, from whence we are going to Naples.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'You are fond of travelling?'

'Very, but I like to travel in comfort.' So saying, her face of alabaster, so white that not a drop of blood seemed to course in her veins, became crimson, and I, to spare her, looked out of the window and pretended to admire the beauties of nature. It was easy for me to guess that there was something equivocal in my young companion's position. I determined to watch and wait patiently.

At Bon Couvent we were to dine, and her husband was to meet us there. As drivers in Italy go very slowly, we expected to find him waiting for us, but we were told that, after breakfasting and baiting his horse, he had gone on, leaving word that he would meet us in the evening and have supper ready for us. I thought this strange, but said nothing. The poor English girl complained somewhat of his behaviour, and begged me to excuse his thoughtlessness.

'I consider it a mark of confidence, madame. I have no cause to be offended.'

The landlord came in just then to ask me if he was to present his bill to me or to the coachman, and she asked him if her husband had ordered the driver to pay for her? On his answering no, she said very quietly that she would not take any dinner at all.

'Madame,' I said, when we were alone, 'I beg you to consider me as an old friend. I suppose you have no money about you, and think it necessary to fast, but I beg you not to do so. Your husband can repay me if he likes. You must understand that when you tell the landlord only to prepare dinner for me, you are casting a dishonourable reflection on your husband, yourself, and more particularly on me.'

'I quite understand that, sir. Dinner must be served for two, but I shall not eat any. I do not feel well, and I shall go and lie down.'

'In which case, madame, I will leave you alone. Dinner will not be ready for two hours, and will be laid in the next room. I hope by then you will feel better.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

The name her husband, or rather her betrayer—for I felt certain they were not married—had given me, was the Comte *de l'Etoile.* This alone was enough to raise suspicion. I was concerned, I was now sure, with an elopement or an abduction; it was Miss Betty's good angel, I told myself, who had brought me across her path, to save her from what I did not exactly know—perhaps from infamy and beggary. I flung myself on my bed, building castles in the air.

When dinner was announced, I went softly to the English girl's room; she was still sleeping.

'I cannot eat anything, madame, unless you do me the pleasure of dining with me. You have slept for five hours, and I hope you feel better.'

'As you wish, sir; I will come down.'

She eat little, but she was agreeably surprised to find *beef-steak* and a *plum-pudding* which I had ordered, and the composition of which I had superintended myself. When the landlady came, she asked if the cook was an Englishman, and when she heard that these, her national dishes, were of my ordering, she showed herself most grateful, and becoming a little more lively, congratulated me on my good appetite. I made her drink some delicious Montefiascone wine, and she took her share bravely but moderately, so that she remained quite calm, while I grew rather excited. She told me she was born in London, and had learned to speak French at a boarding-school. I nearly died of joy when, on asking her if she knew la Cornelys, she told me she had been at school with her daughter.

He orders beefsteak and plum-pudding for the English miss.

'Tell me, has Sophie grown?'

'No; she is short, but extremely pretty and clever.'

News of his daughter.

'She must be seventeen now.'

'Yes, we are the same age'; saying this, she blushed and cast down her eyes.

'What is troubling you?' I asked.

'I want to say, but I hardly dare, that Sophie resembles you closely.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Why should you be afraid to say it? I have often heard it before. How long is it since you saw her?'

'About eighteen months; she was going home to be married, but I forget to whom.'

'You have given me most interesting news,' I said.

When the landlord brought me the bill, I saw three paoli put down for what de l'Etoile had had for himself and his horse.

'The gentleman said you would pay,' said mine host.

The poor girl flushed crimson, and I paid without a word, glad to see these marks of her confusion, for they proved to me that she was not an accomplice in the proceedings of her supposed husband.

I was longing to ask why and how she had left London, and how she came to be associated with this Frenchman, but I did not like. We continued to talk about Sophie, and I asked her if she also knew a Miss Nancy Stein, who had dined with me and my daughter. At the name of Nancy she sighed, and said that Nancy had left the school six or seven months before she did.

'Is she as pretty as she was?'

'Prettier; but beauty is often a fatal gift. Nancy was my most intimate friend; perhaps the reason why we felt such sympathy for one another was because the same fate awaited us both—we were both destined to fall into the snares spread for us. Nancy is perhaps more miserable to-day than I am.'

'More miserable! What do you mean? How can you be miserable, gifted as you are?'

'Alas, sir!—but let us speak, I beg you, of other things.'

'Will you tell me why you think Nancy is unhappy?'

'She ran away with a young man whom she loved, and whom her parents would not allow her to marry. Nothing has been heard of her since, so you see I am justified in fearing she is unhappy.'

'I would do anything in my power to help her. She dined with me and Sophie, and I also knew her father.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Ah! now I know who you are! How often Sophie has spoken to me of you. I heard that you had gone to Russia and fought a duel with a Polish general—is it true? How I wish I could tell all this to Sophie, but I fear I shall never see her again.'

'Why should you fear that, and why should you not write to any one you choose? If you will confide your communications to me, I promise you they shall reach their destination.'

'I am much obliged to you,' and so saying she sank back in the carriage and became silent.

Count L'Etoile.

At seven o'clock we reached San-Quirico, when the *soi-disant* count came out to welcome us, and taking her out of the carriage covered her with kisses, which she returned, looking as happy as possible. We supped excellently. L'Etoile was gay, amusing, and witty. His sallies, some of which were in doubtful taste, made his wife laugh heartily, and I was obliged to join in spite of myself. I watched him carefully, for I could not quite decide in what category to place him. He was, perhaps, a giddy young officer, a man of condition, spending his fortune thoughtlessly, and treating everything and everybody in the same airy fashion. I had met many men like that; light, frivolous, dangerous fellows, keeping their honour in their pockets, and ready to risk it on a card or at the sword's point. I was not over well pleased, for it seemed to me he was treating me rather cavalierly. If the girl was his wife, he was behaving as though I was of no consequence, and I was disagreeably conscious of playing second fiddle. There were two beds in the room where we supped, but when the chambermaid came with the sheets I ordered her to prepare another room for me. But the count politely insisted on my sharing their room, though I felt but small inclination to remain at such close quarters with them. As my new companions had only a small trunk, which was fastened on to my carriage, I supposed they had sent the rest of their baggage on by another route.

When I was dressing in the morning, I heard a violent dis-

Digitized by Microsoft®

pute in the courtyard, and on looking out of window, saw that the Frenchman and the driver had come to blows. The latter was holding a horse by the bridle, which the former was trying to pull out of his hands. I guessed the reason of the contest, and was prepared to take some steps, when l'Etoile, catching sight of me, called out: 'This scoundrel does not understand me, nor I him. As, perhaps, he is in the right, be so good as to give him two sequins, which I will repay you in Rome. I happen to be without money for the moment, but he has nothing to fear, for he has my trunk on his carriage. Do me this service, sir; you will learn in Rome who I am.'

The count deserts Miss Betty.

Without waiting for a reply, he ran downstairs, leaving the driver, who had followed him, in my room. I put my head out of the window, and, incredible as it seems, I saw him jump on the horse, dressed as he was in silk stockings and morning coat, and gallop off as hard as he could. His wife stood speechless with surprise beside me, and the poor driver was thunderstruck. I sat down on my bed, rubbing my hands and laughing immoderately, the whole scene was so comic.

'Laugh, madame, laugh, I beg of you, for, sentiment apart, your doleful expression is quite out of place. Laugh, I tell you, or I won't move from this place.'

'It is funny, I own, but I have not the heart to laugh,' she said sadly.

I drew two sequins from my purse and gave them to the driver, telling him we would start in a quarter of an hour when we had had our coffee.

'I can understand,' said I to the girl, 'your being distressed, and justly so, but I beg you to cheer up, at least while we are travelling; I will pay for everything, and will only ask you one question. Tell me, on the honour of an Englishwoman, is that singular individual your husband, or only your lover?'

'I will tell you the truth: he is not my husband, but we are to be married in Rome.'

'I breathe again. You will never be married, and so much

Digitized by Microsoft®

the better for you; you are in love with him just now, but you will soon get over it.'

'Impossible, unless he is deceiving me.'

'He is deceiving you. I am sure he has told you that he is rich, a man of position, that he will make you happy, and so forth, all of which is false.'

'How do you know?'

'As I know many other things, my dear miss, by experience. Your lover is mad, disorderly, and brazen-faced; he will marry you, perhaps, but only to become your master; then he will traffic in your beauty, and live by it.'

'I know he loves me.'

'Certainly he loves you, but not with an honourable and worthy love. He does not know me, he sees me for the first time, does not even ask my name, and delivers you over to my mercy; do you think an honourable man would do that?'

'He is not jealous; Frenchmen are never jealous.'

'A Frenchman's honour is the same as an Englishman's, or an Italian's; an honest man is an honest man all the world over. If he loved you, would he leave you here without a penny, and at the mercy of a stranger? Now what would you do if I behaved like a regular brute? Speak, you needn't be afraid.'

'Defend myself.'

Beauty in distress; Casanova to the fore.

'Good. Then I should leave you here, and what would you do then? But be assured, no harm will come to you; I am the very man you need in your trouble, and it seems to be almost a miracle that I am here. The man whom you love is a monster. I am sorry to make you weep, dear miss, but I must be cruel to be kind. I will go so far as to tell you that you interest and please me very much, and I will not abandon you even when we reach Rome, but be sure I will not ask you for so much as one kiss, though long before we get to our journey's end I shall convince you that the so-called count does not care for you, and that, furthermore, he is a scoundrel.'

I then paid the bill without so much as looking at the

Digitized by Microsoft®

poor lost lamb, and after a couple of cups of coffee, we set off side by side, and in perfect silence travelled till we reached the inn at La Scala where we were to dine. After dinner we walked about a little, and I felt myself becoming more and more attracted to my companion, whose name was Betty. She spoke Italian, with many faults of pronunciation and construction, but in a silvery, English voice, most charming to the ear. Was it devotion which made me so attentive to her; so anxious to spare her annoyance? She excited my pity certainly. But why should I try to dress myself in peacock plumes of virtue? Better say frankly that had she been ugly and disagreeable I should have abandoned her to her fate!

It was the fête-day of some local saint, and all the church bells were ringing gaily. Betty told me she had never assisted at a Catholic function, so I was glad to give her this innocent pleasure. She behaved perfectly, doing what she saw the people around her doing, and so naturally, that no one would have taken her for a Protestant. After service she told me she thought the Catholic faith more suited for poetic souls, and more calculated to make people love their religion than the reformed faith.

At Radicofani the postmaster presented me with a bill for three paoli, saying that the French gentleman who was riding ahead had told him I would pay, which I did, but it seemed there was more to follow.

'The gentleman,' said the landlord, 'beat three of my postillions with the flat of his sword; one of them, whom he wounded in the face, has gone after him, and it will cost him dear, I promise you. He beat them because they tried to prevent him from leaving without paying.'

Poor Miss Betty was in despair, but I tried to cheer her up with frivolous conversation and excellent Muscat wine, of which the landlord served us an immense flagon. Our driver wanted to persuade us to remain at Radicofani until the cool of the evening, but I replied that madame's husband might have

Digitized by Microsoft ®

need of assistance, pursued as he was by a furious and wounded postillion, and incapable of speaking enough Italian to explain matters. For this I was rewarded with a look of gratitude which went straight to my heart. I sent for one of the other postillions, and made him tell the whole story; he owned to having been struck with the sword, but boasted that he had flung a stone at the count, and had more than revenged himself. I gave him a paolo, and promised him a crown if he would go to Centino and witness against his comrade, which he instantly agreed to do; and then and there he began to speak in defence of l'Etoile, in a manner which made us both laugh heartily, and to console us, he assured us the Frenchman had only been hit with half a dozen stones. I foresaw that the affair would end in nothing. At Centino we learned that l'Etoile had gone on to Acquapendente, and to please Miss Betty I consented to follow him, leaving a good inn and a good supper behind us. It only took us an hour, however, to reach the last-named place, and there we found the young madman in the highest spirits. He clasped his Dulcinea in his arms, and she seemed wild with joy at finding him safe and sound. He declared he had thoroughly thrashed the postillions, and only received a few slight blows in return. After supper he showed us the bruises on his legs and sides. The scamp was really handsome enough to turn the head of any young girl; nevertheless, her adoring airs were beginning to irritate me.

Next day he announced his intention of riding on to Viterbo, and asked me to lend him a sequin to pay for his dinner; at the same time he showed me carelessly a letter of credit for three thousand crowns on a banker at Rome. I would not even look at it, and gave him the money he asked for, fully convinced that I should never see him again. When he had gone, Betty said—

'You see, sir, that it is only from thoughtlessness that he is without money, for he has a letter of credit.

'I am afraid it is forged.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Casanova tests the count's affection.

'Oh, now you are spiteful!'

'No, I am only judging from his general behaviour. I should be delighted to find I was mistaken. Twenty years ago I should have believed as you do, that the letter is genuine, but to-day I see things differently. If it is all right, how is it he could not change it at Siena or Florence?'

'You persist in your idea that he does not love me!'

'I persist in my idea that he loves you, in a way which should make you detest him.'

'What do you mean?'

'Would you not hate a man who only loved you because you were a source of profit to him? I can convince you that that is the nature of his affection for you, if you will allow me.'

'Do so, then, for should it be as you say, you will be doing me an inestimable service.'

'No later than this evening, then. But tell me, how long have you known him?'

'A month; but we have only been together five days.'

'Did he take you from your father?—brother?—lover?'

'From my lover. We were at Leghorn, and he had to go to London on business, leaving me in the care of a confidential servant. He will return to Italy in a week or ten days.'

'My poor Betty! Tell me if the Englishman you were with was good enough for you?'

'I never cared for any one but him until, happily or unhappily for me, I met this Frenchman, who persuaded me to be unfaithful to a man who adored me, and who will be in despair when he returns and finds I have gone.'

'Is he rich?'

'In easy circumstances; he is in trade, and is about your age; he is kind, honest, and good, and is only waiting for his wife to die to marry me. She is in a consumption. But I see now, that God did not mean me to be his wife, for M. de l'Etoile has completely subjugated me.'

'Tell me how it is you have no baggage with you?'

'I ran away on horseback, but my trunk containing my

Digitized by Microsoft®

linen and all my belongings will be in Rome when we get there. I had it taken away from my lodgings the day I left; the count sent a man for it.'

'Farewell, for ever, to your baggage, my poor Betty!'

'O my friend, you foresee nothing but misfortunes!'

We reached Viterbo about seven o'clock, and, as usual, found the count in the highest spirits. As I now had but one idea in my head, to prove his unworthiness to Betty, I began to put my plan into execution at once, by praising Betty in most extravagant terms, declaring how glad I was to have met her, and how much I envied him the possession of such a treasure. He fell into the trap at once, saying, that so far from feeling jealous, he was pleased that the woman he loved should attract others besides himself. I assiduously plied him with wine during supper, with the result that he treated us to a dissertation on the complaisance which two lovers should show towards one another.

'For instance,' he said, 'I adore Betty, and if I have a passing caprice for Fanny, or Molly, or whoever it is, she should do her best to help me to gratify it; while I, in my turn, if I saw she had a fancy for any one, should not oppose her whim.'

Betty listened, open-mouthed, to her idols' strange theories.

'I own,' said I, 'dear count, that your system is sublime, but you will allow me to say that I do not think it practicable. However great your courage may be theoretically, I am sure you could not suffer another man to approach your mistress. I bet you twenty-five sequins you would not leave me alone with her.'

'And I bet you fifty that I would. Betty, dear Betty, punish this unbeliever, I beg you.'

'You are joking.'

'No. I am only anxious to show my absolute confidence in you. I shall love you all the more dearly.'

'You must be mad.'

The count took her in his arms, and caressing her tenderly,

Digitized by Microsoft®

The count fails.

besought her not to make him look foolish. At first she repulsed him gently, but finally she became indignant, and told him she would rather he killed her, than forced her to commit such an infamy. At this he became furious, and assailed her with the vilest epithets, declaring that her resistance was only hypocritical, and that he was convinced she had already given me every mark of affection. Unable to bear with him any longer, and seeing poor Betty trembling and pale as death, I drew my sword, and would surely have passed it through his body, had he not rushed out of the room and taken refuge in the neighbouring chamber, into which he securely bolted himself. Betty was in an alarming condition. Her eyes were standing out of her head, she could hardly breathe, her teeth were clenched; I could do nothing but soothe her with tender words. After an hour she fell asleep, worn out physically and mentally, and I remained by her side, ready to console her on awakening. L'Etoile left the inn at break of day, and I was glad to have him go.

Betty is left on his hands.

When Betty opened her eyes, she asked me to get her some tea. As few people in Italy know how to prepare this drink, so simple and so dear to the English heart, I went downstairs and made it myself. After several cups her face recovered its freshness, and showed little sign of what she had gone through. I found on the floor the famous letter of credit, which was drawn on a merchant at Bordeaux, established at Paris, and was altogether a most strange production. Betty begged me to take care of it for her. 'For pity's sake,' she said, in heartrending tones, 'do not abandon a miserable girl, who is more to be pitied than blamed. Be a father to me; do not advise me what to do, command me, and I will obey you gladly. You cannot imagine what hatred and loathing I now feel for the wretch who, but for you, would have dragged me down to the lowest depths of infamy.'

'Do you think your Englishman will forgive you?'

'I think so.'

'Then shall we go back to Leghorn? Is this good

Digitized by Microsoft®

advice? Do you feel yourself capable of following it? I warn you, that if you take it, you must do so at once. Young, pretty, and innocent as you are, you do not imagine that I will leave you alone, or in company with people of whom I know nothing. I love you, and I think I am worthy of your esteem. I will treat you as a daughter, and prove to you that there are men in this world as upright and honourable as your seducer is vile and contemptible.'

Betty sat silent for a good quarter of an hour, with her elbows on the table, and her head propped on her hands, staring at me fixedly. She looked neither sad nor surprised, only pensive. At last she said: 'Do not imagine, dear friend, that my silence is a sign of distrust or irresolution. I have sense enough to appreciate the wisdom of your counsel, and to recognise the generosity which prompts you. I thank Providence for putting me into your hands, and I beg you to do by me as you would by your daughter. Let us go back to Leghorn, and at once. I was only hesitating as to the best way to induce Sir B. M. to forgive me. That he will do so I feel sure, but we must set about it carefully, for I must tell you that his temper is very violent, and he is very strict on all points of honour. He might kill me perhaps in a fit of anger.'

'You can think all this over as we go along.'

They compose a letter to Sir B. M.

'He is very intelligent, and it would be impossible to deceive him with a trumped-up story. I think I had better write him a full confession, and hide nothing from him, for the slightest deception would only irritate him. If it is you who write to him, you must be careful not to tell him that I merit forgiveness, let him find that out for himself; if he once says he will forgive me, all will be well, for he is a slave to his word, and he will live the rest of his life with me, without reproaching me once for my misdoings. Oh! how I regret ever having been untrue to him!'

'Do not be offended if I ask you if this is the first time?'

'The first and only, and last.'

'What manner of life has Sir B. M. led?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'His first wife made him very unhappy. He has been in the army, and has twice fought in the Antilles. He married a second time, and for certain reasons lives apart from his wife. I met him two years ago, when he came to our school with Nancy's father. I had just then lost my own father, and was on the point of leaving the school, as I could not afford to remain there. Sir B. M. undertook to finish my education for me. He made me a small allowance, sufficient for my wants, and when I heard he was about to leave England, I implored him to take me with him. He told me, honestly, that he cared for me too deeply to contemplate living with me as my guardian merely. 'No matter in what way you love me,' said I, 'so as you love me, and will let me be with you and try to make you happy.' He then, and of his own accord, gave me a written paper promising to marry me as soon as he legally could. I have never had the smallest cause to complain of him since we have been together.'

'Wipe your eyes, dear Miss Betty, and let us start at once. I will not leave you till you are again under the protection of Sir B. M., whom I feel, already, I love as a friend. If the gentleman remains inexorable, I will keep you with me, and take you back to England if you like.'

Before starting we opened the little trunk, which had constituted the baggage of Betty and her count. Besides her few belongings we found some ragged shirts, two or three much-mended pairs of stockings, a bag of powder, a pot of rouge, and about twenty pamphlets, all plays and comedies; furthermore, a packet of letters addressed to Monsieur A. M. l'Etoile, comedian, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Bayonne, and so forth.

Betty duped by a comedian.

Poor Betty! she had been the dupe of a miserable strolling player; her shame and grief threw her into hysterics!

As we had now to retrace our steps, I told the coachman that I had left a valuable pocket-book somewhere on the road. He grumbled at having to turn back, but a couple of piastres restored his good-humour, and that same evening we reached

Digitized by Microsoft®

Viterbo. After supper, Betty begged me to leave her, while she changed her dress, and I offered to hire another room, although the one we were occupying contained two beds.

'No, generous friend, why should I increase the burden you have so nobly taken on yourself; besides, I cannot bear to be parted from you now.'

At Acquapendente we found a heavy waggon laden with boxes and cases, among which Betty recognised her own trunk. We tried to obtain possession of it, but the driver assured us he could not give it up without the receipt, which was in the possession of l'Etoile; the only thing he could do was to promise to retain it for one month at Rome, so as to give Betty time to prove her right to it. As he was only acting in accordance with the law, we were obliged to submit, and to congratulate ourselves that at least the fine clothes and jewels it contained would not fall into that scoundrel's hands.

I wrote a long letter to Sir B. M., explaining the circumstances under which I had met his erring sweetheart, and Betty wrote him a touching epistle in which the sincerity of her repentance showed through every line. We stopped at Radicofani for dinner, and after re-reading our productions, decided to add a postscriptum to each. We were at the same table, Betty at the one side, and I on the other. I was against the door, and seated in such a manner, that any one coming into the room would not see me without turning round. As it was exceedingly hot, I had taken off my coat. But in Italy one can show oneself in shirt-sleeves. I could have appeared before the most strait-laced lady in the land.

Hurried entrance of Sir B. M.

I heard some one coming hurriedly along the corridor, and the next moment the door was flung violently open, and a man rushed in, and seeing Betty, exclaimed: 'Ah! here you are!'

I did not give him time to see me, but springing on him, seized him by the shoulders. If he had turned round, he would have shot me with the pistol he had in his hand. Jumping on him I had banged the door to, and while he cried, 'Let me go, traitor!' Betty flung herself at his feet, crying,

Digitized by Microsoft®

'No, no, you are mistaken, this is my saviour!' But Sir B. M., blind with fury, continued to ejaculate, 'Let me go, villain!' which, considering the weapon he held, was the last thing I intended to do. In our struggles he fell heavily to the ground; fortunately I was on top of him. The noise of our wrestling brought up landlord and servants, but as we were wedged in between the table and the door, their efforts to open it were useless. Betty, with much presence of mind, wrenched the pistol out of his hand, and as soon as I saw he was powerless to injure me, I let go of him, saying, 'You are mistaken, sir, I am not the man you suppose me.'

Betty again flung herself on her knees, and I entreated him to be calm, repeating that I was her saviour.

'What do you mean by your saviour?' he asked.

'Read this,' she said, handing him her letter. Without even rising from the ground the Englishman read my letter, and during his perusal of it, I opened the door and ordered the landlord to bring dinner for three; our little difference was amicably settled, I said, and he could order his servants to withdraw.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LVII

SOCIETY IN ROME AND NAPLES

In my struggle with the Englishman, I had struck my hand against a nail, and the blood was pouring from it as though a vein had been cut through; Betty helped me to tie it up with a handkerchief, while Sir B. M., still sitting on the ground, read my letter through attentively. I judged from Betty's action and her quiet demeanour that she felt sure of the forgiveness of her hot-tempered lover, and taking my coat over my arm, I withdrew into an adjoining room. I had been there about half an hour, when I heard a knock at the door, and the Englishman entered. He looked distressed and ashamed of himself. He offered me his hand, at the same time saying that he was convinced I had not only saved his Betty from a most terrible situation, but that I had cured her of the folly of loving the scoundrel who had deceived her.

'You must forgive me,' he said, 'if I did not at once guess that the man whom I found with my friend was her deliverer. I bless the chance which made you attack me from behind, otherwise I should certainly have killed both of you, and should be by now the most miserable of men. Forgive me, sir, and let us be friends.'

I grasped his hand cordially, assuring him that his conduct was natural, and that in his place I should have behaved as he did. My hand was still bleeding, and I was obliged to send for a surgeon, and after he had bound up the wound, I repaired to my friend's room. As poor Miss Betty was still weeping bitterly I took the liberty of saying to Sir B. M. that I thought he ought to forgive her.

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What!' he said, 'do you think I have not already done so? I should be a brute otherwise! She is crying because she is sorry she let herself be led astray. You do not know her as well as I do. I am certain she will never do wrong again.'

Sadness is catching. Sir B. M., who was deeply moved, could not prevent his tears from falling, and I, casting aside all restraint, wept with him. When we had exhausted ourselves with sobbing, we grew calmer; worn-out nature insisted on repose. Sir B. M. began to caress his Betty, and by and by we sat down to talk with good appetites and brighter faces, and some excellent Muscat wine to drink completed the cure. Sir B. M. told me how he had traced the fugitives, by means of a watch which l'Etoile had left as a pledge, with the post-master from whom he had hired his horse. We agreed all three to leave for Rome the following day, where we hoped to be able to punish the wretched comedian. I made him promise that he would do nothing without first consulting me; though he could have killed l'Etoile somewhere along the road, without fear of punishment, in Rome it would be a different matter.

A cheerful party of three.

After dinner, Sir B. M., who was worn out with fatigue, retired to bed, and Betty and I spent the remainder of the day together. She told me we must forget what had taken place between us, and for the future be only friends, not a hint of passion was to mar the purity of our love. I consented to this fact, and I must own, without too much difficulty.

On arriving at Rome, I went to the custom-house, and obtained possession of Miss Betty's trunk, after which I visited the *bargello*, a most important personage, and one who usually acts quickly, if the affair submitted to him is not too complicated, and if the solicitors are not afraid of expense. The *bargello* is generally rich, and lives in luxury, and has easy access to the cardinal vicar, his governor, and even the Holy Father himself. Having obtained a private interview, I told him the whole story. We only wanted the rogue to be imprisoned for a short time, and then driven out of Rome. I

Digitized by Microsoft®

laid down fifty crowns for *current expenses*, and handed him over the forged letter of credit, and the little trunk containing his papers and belongings.

Family news.

I had many things to do in Rome; first and foremost among them was to see the Cardinal de Bernis, but I put off everything until this affair was settled. I went to engage a carriage for Sir B. M., and was surprised to recognise in the livery stable keeper a near connection of mine, Roland, whose daughter, Teresa, had married my brother John in 1762; from him I learned that my brother was in Rome with Prince Beloselski, the Russian minister to the Court of Dresden.

'I thought,' said I, 'that my brother could not come to Rome?'[1]

'He is here with a safe-conduct from the Dowager Electress of Saxony. He wants his unfortunate case to be tried over again; and he is wrong, for if he should be rejudged a hundred times, it would only be to be recondemned. No one will have anything to do with him. Every one keeps out of his way; even Mengs will not see him.'

'What! Is Mengs here? I thought he was in Madrid.'

'He has a year's leave of absence, but his family has remained in Spain.'

This was rather disagreeable news, as I did not wish to meet either my brother or Mengs. Roland also told me that he had given up his inns to his daughter. On my asking if she had many foreigners staying with her, he answered that for the moment there was only one, a Frenchman, the Count de l'Etoile, who had a fine horse which he wished to sell.

'I should advise you,' said I, 'to wait till to-morrow, if

[1] Casanova perhaps refers here to the trouble arising from his brother's quarrel with Winckelmann, whose blind admiration for all things antique he did not share. He sent the *savant* two pictures painted by himself, but supposed to have been discovered in Jerusalem. Winckelmann was completely deceived, and published engravings of them in his *History of Ancient Art*, prefacing them with a pompous dissertation. When the fraud was discovered, he was naturally furious, and refused to believe that Jean Casanova had only intended to hoax him.

Digitized by Microsoft®

you are thinking of buying it, and, above all, not to say where you got this advice. I cannot say more for the present, but you will do well to be warned by me.'

In the afternoon, we heard from the *bargello* that our bird was caged, and that we could, if we chose, have him condemned to the galleys. We decided, however, that before taking any definite step, we would see him. The *bargello* had got me an advocate, who had drawn up a paper, in which he asked the prisoner for payment of our travelling expenses, and his arrest, and damages to be paid to the person he had deceived, unless he could, in six weeks, prove his right to the title of count, which right must be certified by the French ambassador. We found l'Etoile with this paper in his hand. It was being translated to him. As soon as he saw me he burst out laughing, and declared I owed him twenty-five sequins, as I had lost my bet to him. The Englishman, when this was explained to him, called him a liar, adding, however, that he knew all that had passed between him and Betty.

'Are you her lover?' asked l'Etoile.

'Yes, and if I had met you with her I would have blown your brains out, for you have doubly deceived her. You are no count, only a vagabond actor.'

'I have three thousand crowns.'

'I will go bail for six thousand that your letter of credit is false. You will remain here till we find out, and if it proves a forgery, you will have time to repent at the galleys.'

In this, however, the scoundrel was too sharp for us, for though he consented to give up his letter of credit so that it might be verified, he would only do so on condition that Sir B. M. allowed him a crown a day to live on while in prison.

The departure of Miss Betty and Sir B. M.

The Englishman had started for Rome with nothing but a small bag, so we had to buy him everything he required during his sojourn there. I accompanied them wherever they went, for I had conceived a strong liking for the good fellow; he at first only meant to remain a couple of weeks in the

Digitized by Microsoft®

eternal city, but his friend, Lord Baltimore, persuaded him to stay longer, and then go on to Naples for a time. Lord Baltimore, who was travelling with a couple of servants, and a very pretty French mistress, undertook the entire management of the expedition to Naples, and insisted that I should be of the party. I was delighted, and lodgings were taken for us all at the 'Crocielles,' at Chiaggia, or Chiaga, as the Neapolitans say. The day after our arrival, I was unpleasantly surprised to see the Chevalier Goudar walk in. He had come to pay a visit to my lord. My readers will remember that he had been associated with me in London at the time of my unfortunate infatuation for the wretched Charpillon. It transpired that the chevalier had a house at Posilipe, where he lived with his wife, who proved to be none other than the beautiful Irish girl, Sarah, once a servant in a tavern in London, and whom our readers have not, perhaps, forgotten.[1] As Goudar knew that I had been acquainted with Sarah, he explained matters to me before inviting us all to dine with him.

Sarah received me without the slightest embarrassment,

[1] Goudar's beautiful wife is almost as interesting a personage, in her way, as Casanova himself. An ignorant Irish girl, unable to read or write, servant in a low London tavern, in a few years she became an elegant and accomplished lady, a royal favourite; not only holding her own in the most aristocratic society, but maintaining a correspondence with Lord Pembroke and others, in which she dealt with art, literature, music, and politics with much literary skill and technical knowledge. In the time which elapsed between Casanova's meetings with her in London and Naples, she had married, become a widow, and re-married the astute Goudar, himself a man of considerable parts. He saw that the beautiful Sarah would be a more fruitful source of income to him than even his writings, and after some years spent in educating her, set himself, with a fine sense of altruism, to profit by her attractions. To counterbalance the ascendency which Caroline, wife of Ferdinand of Naples, exercised over her husband, the courtiers determined to make use of Sarah: they contrived to throw her constantly in the king's way. Sarah managed to cross his path whenever he went hunting. If he went to the theatre, Sarah occupied a box in front of his. Finally he succumbed to her attractions. Then began for the Goudars a period of great prosperity, a palace in the city, a villa in the country, till Caroline, outraged beyond endurance, rose in her wrath and gave the pair twenty-four hours to leave Naples. They continued their adventurous

Digitized by Microsoft®

but I was astounded. She was beautifully dressed, and her manners were perfect. She did the honours of the house in a way which was at once both easy and well-bred. She spoke Italian fluently, and conversed intelligently on every topic;[1] added to this, her beauty, always striking, had become perfection. I was dumb with amazement, and could hardly believe my eyes.

A quarter of an hour after our arrival, five or six ladies of the highest society came in, followed by dukes, princes, marquesses, and titled foreigners of every nationality. More than thirty of us sat down to table. After dinner, Madame Goudar took her place at the harpsichord, and played her own accompaniment to several songs, which she sang like a siren, with a training and assurance which won praises from all. Goudar alone had worked this miracle. He had been carefully educating her for the last six or seven years. He had married her so as to have an incontestable right over her, and had taken her to Paris, Vienna, Florence, and Rome. As he had not found the fortune he sought in any of these places he had settled in Naples, where, the better to bring his wife into notice, he made her abjure the Anglican heresy,

career with more or less success for many years, living in Italy, Holland, Paris, and England. Goudar deserted his wife, and eventually died in misery in London. Sarah, whose *Remarks on the Anecdotes of Madame du Barry* (London, 1777), and *Collected Works* (Amsterdam, 1779) met with tolerable success, existed in comparative comfort for some time. She was probably employed as a spy by the French Government, and died in Paris in abject poverty in 1800.

[1] Sarah was outspoken enough. Some of her witticisms perhaps led to her banishment from Lucca. She said in one of her letters that the republic was so small that one had to take a microscope to see it! But when the archduke took possession of the government of Milan, Lucca sent its congratulations by the colossus, Monte Catena, and Sarah remarked that 'the smallest state in the world had sent the biggest ambassador!' She excuses herself in a letter to Orloff from going to Russia: 'I don't like a country where the beasts have to be flayed to keep the men warm!' Although Casanova gives himself out for such a great friend of hers, she only alludes to him once in her Memoirs, and then contemptuously. She is reading a translation of Homer, by 'Signor Casanova, a Venetian,' and stigmatises it as 'something below mediocrity.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

and be received into the Church under the auspices of the queen. The most amusing part of this comedy was, that Sarah being Irish, was born a Catholic, and had never ceased to be one. Another thing which was very absurd, was that all the nobility, even the court, frequented her house, but she went nowhere, and was not invited to a single entertainment. This proves what parasites the nobility are in every country! Goudar confided to me that he had no other means of livelihood than the gaming-table; faro and biribi supplied the funds for his establishment, and as everything was on a most magnificent scale, they must have brought him in plenty of money. He invited me to share in his profits, and I accepted gladly, for my purse was becoming attenuated, and I had no other means of replenishing it; but first I returned to Rome with Betty and Sir B. M., who insisted on repaying me all I had spent for her. I heard afterwards that l'Etoile remained two months in prison, and was then liberated, thanks to the protection of Cardinal de Bernis. The following year, I was told that Sir B. M. had gone back to England, where he doubtless married his Betty as soon as possible.

Miss Chudleigh.

Many foreigners[1] came to Naples while I was there; among others the famous Miss Chudleigh, who had become Duchess of Kingston. She was accompanied by a numerous retinue, and recognised me the first time we met. She received my homage most graciously. While I was talking to her, Mr.

[1] Madame Goudar is very severe in her strictures on the travelling English of her day, from whom nevertheless her own and her husband's fortunes were largely gathered. 'One cannot put one's foot down (on the Continent) without treading upon an Englishman,' she says. 'They will have it that they are travelling for the sake of economy, but is living so cheap anywhere as in Yorkshire or in Wales? They always travel with a following of horses, dogs, servants, lackeys, and couriers, and, moreover, a two-footed animal called a tutor, who generally winds up the procession. Once these tutors were lively Frenchmen, who taught their pupils little drinking-songs, and the style of the *beau monde*, but the British father, finding this style of education too frivolous, has taken to selecting a native of any one of the Thirteen Cantons. A Swiss, an it please you! The English nation consequently grows heavier and more stolid than ever, for even in point of actual weight one Swiss outweighs three Frenchmen, and after four years' touring with a Bernese, our Briton is as solemn as a Burgomaster.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

Hamilton appeared, and I was delighted to make his acquaintance. He was a clever man, but ended by marrying a young woman who was clever enough to bewitch him. Such a fate often overtakes a man of intelligence when he grows old. It is always a mistake to marry, but when a man's physical and mental forces are declining, it is a calamity. Seven years ago, I nearly fell into a trap of this kind. Thank God I just managed to evade it![1]

The Duchess of Kingston invited me to dine with her, after which we all went to the play. Madame Goudar was in the box next to ours, and Hamilton told the duchess the pretty Irishwoman's story. After supper we played cards, but the stakes were small, and I took no part in the game. The following day, we dined with the Prince de Francavilla. In the evening he took us to a bath which he had had made by the seashore, and there we assisted at the most extraordinary spectacle. A priest flung himself into the water, and without making the slightest effort to maintain himself, floated like a plank. There was no trick in this, and it was undoubtedly due to some peculiarity in his organism. After this, the prince called up his pages, all handsome boys from fifteen to seventeen years of age, and made them dive for our amusement, after which they swam about, and played a thousand pretty tricks. The Englishmen present asked the prince if it would not be possible to substitute Hebes for these Ganymedes, and he asked them to meet him at a superb house he had near Portici, and where he had had a great bath of marble built in the middle of the garden. This prince was a rich epicurean, whose motto was *Fovet et furet.* According to his promise, he met us the next day, and showed us ten or twelve pretty girls swimming about. Miss Chudleigh and her friends found this performance dull.

[1] A theory, which has some show of validity to recommend it, is that Casanova's priestly vows were of a more serious nature than he leads us to suppose, and forbade him to marry. If it were not so, would he not have surmounted his unconquerable prejudice against marriage in favour of the widow d'Urfé, or the rich and beautiful Esther Hope?

Digitized by Microsoft®

One day we went for a picnic to Sorrento; there were fifteen of us, and we left Naples at four o'clock in the morning in a felucca with twelve rowers. We reached Sorrento at nine, and went to the gardens of the Duke de Serra Capriola. He happened to be there at the time with the duchess, who was as beautiful as a star and much in love with her husband. The duke had been banished to his estate for a couple of months for having violated the sumptuary laws, by driving about in a too magnificent equipage. The land of this exile was a perfect paradise, but paradise would not be perfect if one were condemned to live there. I was obliged to take the bank in the evening, and to put on a brave face, though my poor purse only contained the four hundred ounces I emptied on the table. I lost all the time, until I only had about forty ounces left. Everybody had won except a certain Englishman named Rosbury, who, as he had no gold about him, punted with English bank-notes, which I stuffed in my pocket without counting. Great was my surprise when on reaching my room I found I had four hundred and fifty pounds sterling, more than double what I had lost.

A visit from Master Cornelys.

This was a time of unforeseen encounters. One fine morning who should walk into my room but Joseph, the son of Madame Cornelys, and the brother of my dear Sophie.

'What brings you to Naples? And who are you with?'

'I am all alone. I wanted to see Italy, and my mother said I might. I have seen Turin, Milan, Florence, Venice, Rome, and am going on into Switzerland and Germany, after which I shall go to Holland, to return from there to London.'

'And when you get back to London do you think you will remember all the interesting things you have seen?'

'I hope to be able to convince my mother that her money has been well spent.'

'How much will your travels cost you?'

'Five hundred guineas which she gave me, and not a penny over.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'What! Do you mean you can make this grand tour and live for six months on five hundred guineas? Impossible!'

'Perfectly possible, and it can be done for less.'

'You are not afraid of falling in with bad company.'

'I keep myself to myself. When I am spoken to I answer in monosyllables, and I arrange the price before dining or sleeping anywhere. As I only travel in public carriages I run no risk of being overcharged.'

'Very good. In the meantime you can save while you are here, for I will pay your expenses and give you an excellent guide, who will cost you nothing.'

'You must forgive me if I decline, but I promised my mother I would accept nothing from anybody.'

'It seems to me I might be an exception.'

'No. I have relations at Venice, but in accordance with the vow I made to my mother I would not even dine with them. When I have made a promise I keep it.'

The fate of Madam Cornelys.

As I knew what a fanatic he was, I did not insist. He was then twenty-three years old, but as he was very small and very pretty, he might easily have passed for a girl in disguise. I learned from him that Madam Cornelys was eaten up with debts, that her creditors locked her up five or six times a year, and that she only recovered her liberty by getting her friends to go bail for her, or by making arrangements with her creditors to let her out to give her entertainments, which were the only means she had of making some money to pay them with. My daughter was seventeen, very pretty, and patronised by the highest ladies in the land. She gave concerts, and was distressed by the goings on of her mother. When I asked if it was true that she was engaged to be married, her brother replied that he had heard nothing about it.

As I was on intimate terms with all the English at Naples, Goudar thought it well to be civil to me, and even asked me to invite him and his wife to dine at my house to meet some of the rich insulars.

'It would be worse than murder,' he said, 'not to make

Digitized by Microsoft®

those people play; they are made expressly to lose money to honest folk like you and I.'

The dinner was delicate and gay; the beautiful Irishwoman surpassed herself. She had every quality calculated to enslave men, beauty, grace, wit, youth, talents, a lively disposition, and, above all, a distinguished yet easy manner which made her irresistible. This tavern servant could have worthily occupied a throne, but Fate is blind.

The King of Sicily's amusements.

The king, Ferdinand, was only nineteen at this time, and full of boyish fun and nonsense. One day when we were at Portici we assisted at a curious sight; he was amusing himself with the queen and the court in an immense hall, when suddenly the idea occurred to him that he would like to be tossed in a blanket. A king tossed in a blanket! transforming himself into a Sancho Panza; this was a strange fancy to enter a crowned head! A king's desires are soon executed, and in a few minutes his Sicilian majesty was tossed to his heart's content, after which the young monarch wanted to divert himself at the expense of his courtiers. He began by proposing the game to the queen, who laughed and refused; the king did not insist. The old courtiers, who felt uneasy, discreetly disappeared, to my great regret, for I should have loved to have seen them flying all fours in the air, especially Prince Paul Nicandre, who had brought the king up very badly. They tossed three or four young fellows who showed more or less courage, while the queen and her ladies held their sides and laughed the frank Neapolitan laugh, which is neither the stifled cackle of Madrid nor the heartless grin of Versailles, nor the half-yawn of the northern courts of Europe. When the king was looking round for fresh victims, his eyes fell on two young Florentine noblemen, newly arrived at Naples with their tutor. The unfortunate youths had been cast in the most ungracious mould; they were small, humpbacked, and ugly. At his majesty's proposition their faces grew long and their eyes troubled, but there was nothing for it; they had to take off their coats, and at their strange appearance the

Digitized by Microsoft®

laughter broke out afresh. The king, assuring them there was no danger, politely took one of them by the hand and led him up to the blanket, which, however, did not prevent the sorry gentleman from shedding abundant tears. After having danced a jig up in the air three or four times, and exposed his thin legs to the admiration of all, he retired into a corner to arrange his toilette, and his brother took his place, with a much better grace, which won him a certain amount of applause. The tutor, fearing lest his majesty should bestow a like attention on him, had slipped away.

The scoundrel Medini, whom, as my readers will remember, I had already quarrelled and fought with, turned up in Naples while I was there, and became an assiduous frequenter of Goudar's house. For some time we maintained an outward appearance of friendship, till one night when he was taking his coffee on the balcony I accosted him and told him in a low voice that I was not inclined to stand his temper any longer, for he had several times shown himself most uncivil to me.

'You would find me still ruder,' he said, 'if we were *tête-à-tête*, and without witnesses.'

'*Tête-à-tête*,' said I, 'it would be easy to correct you.'

'I am curious to know how you would proceed.'

'Follow me, and you will see.'

An informal duel.

He walked after me till we came to a secluded part of the beach, and rushed at me furiously, his hat in his left hand, his drawn sword in his right. Seeing that I was in danger of being killed I drew my sword and made a lunge at him; instead of parrying he thrust at me, the result of our double manœuvre being to entangle our blades in each other's sleeves, with this difference, however, that while he had only pierced my coat I had run him through the arm. He fell back, and seeing that his parade was weak, I told him I would give him quarter if his wound prevented him from defending himself; as he did not answer, I pressed on him vigorously; he fell, and I put my foot on his chest.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Foaming with rage, he stuttered out that I had the better of him this time, but that he hoped I would give him his revenge.

'Most willingly,' I said, 'when I am in Rome, and I hope my third lesson will be more complete than the two you have already received.'

As he was losing a quantity of blood, I advised him to go to Goudar's house and get his wound dressed. Then wiping my sword, I returned to Crocielles as though nothing had happened. The following morning at eight o'clock I went away in a postchaise without saying good-bye to any one.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LVIII

THE UNFINISHED EPISODE

As I had determined to pass six months in Rome I took lodgings opposite the palace of the Spanish Ambassador, Monseigneur d'Aspura. Strangely enough, it was the same apartment which my master of languages had occupied, when, twenty-seven years before, I went to him for lessons, while I was living with Cardinal Acquaviva. Signor Dandolo, who was always my faithful friend, sent me two letters of introduction, one to Signor Erizzo, the Venetian ambassador, and one to the Duchess of Fiano. I saw that I had a good chance of getting into the best houses in Rome, and it was a pleasure to me to think that when I presented myself to de Bernis I should already have a good standing in the city.

My first visit was to the Duchess of Fiano. She was an ugly woman, whose *cavaliere servente* was the Prince de Santa Croce. Cardinal de Bernis, on the other hand, was the devoted admirer of the princess, who was young and pretty, but so anxious to keep the cardinal that she allowed no one to hope to usurp his place. I went to see my old friend de Bernis, who was extremely pleased to see me.

'Your eminence has grown a little stouter,' I said; 'but for the rest I find you fresh-looking and unchanged.'

'You are quite mistaken, my friend, I am altogether changed. To begin with, I am fifty-five years old, whereas when you knew me I was only thirty-six, and I am obliged now to eat nothing but vegetables.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'Do you do that in order to mortify the flesh and so cheat the devil!'

'I should like people to believe that.'

He was delighted to hear I had a letter to the Venetian ambassador, though I had not yet presented it, and assured me he would speak for me. He congratulated me on my being well provided with money, and determined to live simply and soberly.

'I will tell all this to M. M.,' he said, 'for I keep up a correspondence with our beautiful friend, and I am sure she will be glad to hear of you. You can ask the Prince de Santa Croce to present you to the princess, and we may pass many agreeable hours together, but not in the way we passed the time at Venice, for the princess is not in the least like M. M.'

'All the same your eminence delights in her.'

'Yes, but in a different way, as you will see.'

The next day he told me that the ambassador Signor Erizzo had expressed a wish to make my acquaintance, and on my presenting myself to his excellency I was very well received.

The new flame of the Cardinal de Bernis.

The Prince de Santa Croce told me I might pay my respects to his wife any day at eleven, or two in the afternoon. I went at the latter hour and found her in bed, but being a man of no importance I was admitted; in a quarter of an hour I knew all about her. She was young, pretty, gay, curious, always laughing and always talking, asking questions without waiting for a reply. She was a toy made to amuse a man like the cardinal, who had grave affairs to occupy him, and who wanted in his leisure moments to be amused and distracted. He went to see her regularly three times a day, the morning, the afternoon, and the evening, when he played piquet with her so cleverly as to always lose six sequins, no more and no less. This made her the richest young woman in Rome. Her husband, though somewhat jealous, was too reasonable to quarrel with an arrangement which gave his wife eighteen hundred francs a month, without the slightest cause for

Digitized by Microsoft®

reproach or the slightest cause for scandal. Furthermore, the presence of the cardinal was a protection against other gallants, amongst whom was the Constable Colonna, who was over head and ears in love with the princess, and whom the prince once caught *tête-à-tête* with her in her room. He ordered her to leave Rome and follow him to the country; and only the intervention of the cardinal prevented him from carrying out this sinister design.

In less than a month I became the shadow of the three principal personages of this comedy, and was as necessary to them as a billiard-marker is to the players. I did not mix myself in any way with their disputes, and when they were dull I amused them with stories and anecdotes. I became very fond of the princess, but never hoped for any return. I should have wounded the pride of the cardinal, whom age and the purple had sadly changed. He was not the same man who had shared the beautiful M. M. with me. I remembered what he had said about loving the princess as a father, by which he meant me to understand that he would take it in bad part if I attempted to be more than the chief among her humble servitors.

He meets Mengs.

One day when I went to the Capitol to assist at a distribution of prizes to the young pupils of painting and drawing I saw Mengs; he was a judge. As I had not forgotten his behaviour to me at Madrid, I pretended not to see him, but he came up to me with his hand extended.

'My dear Casanova,' he said, 'in Rome we may forget everything which happened in Madrid; we are in a free country here, and can speak frankly.'

'I have no objection, so long as we keep off the subject of our disagreement, for on that subject I feel I could not maintain my calm.'

'Had you known Madrid well, you would have understood how careful I had to be not to give rise to talk, and you would not have obliged me to act as I did. I was strongly suspected of being a Protestant, and if I had shown myself

Digitized by Microsoft®

indifferent to your behaviour I might have been seriously compromised. Come, let us dine together to-morrow, and we will try and drown our resentment.'

I accepted the invitation as simply as it was given.

One day when I was engaged to dine with the Venetian ambassador, his excellency told me I should meet the Count di Manucci, who had just come from Paris, and who had expressed great delight on hearing I was in Rome.

'I suppose,' said the minister, 'that you know him intimately; will you tell me exactly who this count is, for I am to present him to-morrow to the Holy Father?'

'I met him at Madrid, at Signor Mocenigo's; he is a modest, polite, and good-looking fellow, that is all I know about him.'

'Was he received at the Spanish court?'

'I believe so, but I cannot say for certain.'

'Well, I don't think so; however, I see you will not tell all you know. However, I shall not run much risk in presenting him to the Pope. He says he is a descendant of Manucci, the famous explorer of the thirteenth century, and of the printers who did so much for literature.'

I was much surprised that a man who had tried to have me assassinated should speak of me as an intimate friend, but when he appeared, and advanced towards me with every mark of affection, I did not show any astonishment. He talked a great deal, and told lies about what I had done in Madrid, evidently with the intention of disarming me, and forcing me to speak highly of him in my turn.

I was perfectly happy; every evening I spent with the Duchess of Fiano, and every afternoon with the Princess of Santa Croce; the rest of the time I amused myself at home with my landlady's daughter, Marguerite, and a young man named Menicuccio, who lodged in the same house, and for whom I had formed a strong attachment. He was in love, and by continually talking of the object of his affections he inspired me with a desire to make the lady's acquaintance.

Digitized by Microsoft®

She was in a convent, where she had been placed at the age of ten, and which she could only leave to marry, and by the permission of the cardinal, who presided over the establishment. Every girl had the right to a dowry of two hundred Roman crowns. Menicuccio's sister was in the same institution, and he went to visit her every Sunday. It was there that he had seen the object of his passion, and the unfortunate fellow had only been able to speak to her five or six times in as many months. The women who directed the institution were not, properly speaking, nuns, as they had taken no vows, and wore no monastic habit, but they were seldom tempted to leave their prison, for once outside they might find themselves reduced to begging their bread. As for the young girls, they could only escape, as I have said, by marrying, or by running away, and both expedients were difficult. It was a great ill-built house, just outside one of the gates of the city. There was a double grating in the parlour, so close that a child's hand could not pass through the bars; this made it extremely difficult to distinguish the features of the persons speaking from either side.

The sister of Menicuccio.

'How,' said I to Menicuccio, 'did you manage to see enough of your sweetheart to fall in love with her?'

'The first time the governess left, by accident, a candle burning, at other times she has come with my sister as her friend, but without a light.'

'And to-day?'

'To-day, she will probably come without a light, as the portress will have informed the superior of your presence.' As a matter of fact, three female forms appeared while we were talking, but it was impossible to see them in the almost total obscurity. Menicuccio's sister had a delightful voice, which made me understand how blind men can fall in love. The governess was young, not quite thirty, and it was to her I addressed most of my conversation. She told me that when the recluses attained the age of twenty-five they became the governesses of the younger girls, and at thirty-five they

Digitized by Microsoft®

could leave if they chose, but most of them preferred to remain.

A Roman nunnery.

'Then, you have many old women among you?'

'We are over a hundred, and our number only diminishes by death or marriage, but I have been here twenty years, and have only known four who left to be married, and they never saw their husband till they met him at the altar. Any one who asks the cardinal protector to give him one of us as a wife must be either mad or desperately in need of the two hundred crowns. Nevertheless, the cardinal does not give his permission till he is sure that the suitor can provide for his wife.'

'And how does he make a choice?'

'He mentions the age and the attributes he prefers, and the cardinal leaves it to the superior to decide.'

'I suppose you at least are well-fed and well-housed?'

'Neither the one nor the other. The revenue is only three thousand crowns a year, and that is not sufficient for a hundred persons; those who earn something by their work are the best off.'

'And what sort of people are they who put their children into such a prison?'

'Very poor, or very bigoted people, who fear that their daughters will fall a prey to vice; it is for this reason that we only have pretty girls here.'

'And who is judge?'

'The parents, a priest, a monk, or the cardinal himself. If the girl is not considered good-looking enough, she is rejected without pity, for they say ugly girls are in no danger of being seduced by the world. So you may imagine that, miserable as we are, we curse the fate which made us attractive.'

'Whoever founded this house ought to be in hell.'

'So we hope he is; and I can assure you we don't pray for his deliverance.'

I could not conceive how such a monstrous establishment could be tolerated, for under the existing rules it was almost

Digitized by Microsoft®

impossible for the poor creatures to find husbands. As the founder had assigned two hundred crowns to each one, I imagined that he must have counted on two marriages a year, and that some one appropriated these sums to his own profit. I spoke of it to de Bernis in the presence of the princess, who said we must present a petition to the Pope, asking that the inmates of the establishment might receive visitors in the parlour, with the same rules and restrictions as in other convents. The cardinal asked me to draw up the petition, and to take it to the superior that she might get it signed by the community; after which the princess collected a number of signatures, and Cardinal Orsini promised to present it to the Holy Father. After a very brief delay the necessary permission was granted. Pope Ganganelli,[1] who was a most estimable man, did more than this; he ordered that an inquiry should be made in the accounts; that the number of girls should be reduced from a hundred to fifty, and that the amount of the dowries should be doubled; that each girl who reached the age of twenty-five without finding a husband should be dismissed with her dowry; that twelve matrons should be appointed to look after the girls, and twelve servants employed to do the rough work of the house.

All these innovations took six months to accomplish. The first day that visitors were admitted I went with Menicuccio. The object of his affection was a very pretty girl, but his sister was ravishing; she was nearly sixteen, tall, and well formed. I have never seen such a white skin, or such black hair and eyes. Her governess, who was ten or twelve years her senior, was interesting on account of her languid pallor, which seemed to come from an inward and consuming fire.

[1] Giovanni Ganganelli, Pope Clement XIV., was elected in 1769; he was originally a Franciscan monk. He signed the decree for the suppression of the Jesuits in 1773. He died in 1774. No pope has better merited the title of a virtuous man, or has given a more perfect example of integrity, unselfishness, and aversion to nepotism. He was a statesman, a scholar, and an accomplished man of the world.

Digitized by Microsoft®

She told me all about the confusion which the new régime had caused.

'The superior is pleased,' she said, 'and all my young companions, but the old ones are horrified, and cry scandal.'

Emilia and Armellina.

This first visit lasted two hours. I returned home, my mind full of Armellina, Menicuccio's sister, and of Emilia, her melancholy friend, but, above all, of the former. It seemed to me that my passion for her was the strongest I had ever experienced, but I took care to tell her brother that I was a married man, at the same time begging him not to mention the fact. This precaution I considered necessary, in the first place, to protect myself against any foolish impulses of my own, and, in the second, to prevent Armellina from nursing false hopes.

Menicuccio went to see his friend every Sunday and fête-day, but I, madly in love as I was, managed to see his sister every day at nine o'clock. I took my chocolate with her and Emilia, and remained until eleven. On New Year's Day 1771, I sent them each a warm winter's dress, and presented the superior with a quantity of chocolate, sugar, and coffee. Sometimes one, sometimes the other, would come to the grating alone, and for a quarter of an hour or so I could enjoy a *tête-à-tête.* I kissed their pretty little hands, which until that time had never even felt the touch of a man's lips. On one occasion I begged Armellina to kiss me; she blushed, and casting down her eyes, did not even answer me; I complained, but in vain. I used to amuse the princess and de Bernis by telling them about my unhappy love-affair, and one day the cardinal suggested that we should all visit the convent together, so that after having made Armellina's acquaintance, the princess could obtain permission for her to come out occasionally. This was a delightful project. I guessed that in making it the cardinal was gratifying his own curiosity, but I was not alarmed.

New Year's Day 1771.

The news of our approaching visit threw the whole community into a state of the wildest excitement, for, since its

Digitized by Microsoft®

foundation, no one, excepting an occasional priest or doctor, had ever been inside. The Duchess of Fiano insisted on being one of the party, and we all arrived about three one afternoon. When we had visited the dormitories and refectory, the inmates were summoned to the parlour to be presented to us. The cardinal noticed Armellina at once, and indeed she was the prettiest in that crowd of pretty girls. The princess was charming; she caressed Armellina, and taking Emilia's hand said, 'I know that you are sad, and I guess the reason, but never mind, you are pretty and good, and I will find you a husband who will know how to brighten you up.'

At these words the superior smiled approvingly, but a dozen superannuated old bigots looked grim.

A few days later the princess asked Cardinal Orsini to grant her leave to fetch some of the girls occasionally to spend the day, or go to the theatre with her. The cardinal granted this, on condition that she would always send her carriage for them, with servants wearing her livery. The first time, the princess herself went for them and took them to her palace at the Campo di Fiore, when I was visiting with the cardinal, the prince, and the Duchess of Fiano. Every one spoke kindly to them, petted and encouraged them to speak freely, and say what was passing in their minds. It was all of no avail; finding themselves for the first time in their lives in a splendid apartment, surrounded by brilliant personages, they became dumb with confusion, and dared not open their mouths for fear of saying something silly. We conducted them to the theatre *di Torre di Nona*, where they were playing farces, at which they were obliged to laugh, and after the play we supped at a tavern, where, thanks to the good cheer and wine, they became a little less reserved. Naturally it fell to me to escort them home, and I had counted on this moment; but I had counted without my host, for when I tried to snatch a kiss I was repulsed, and the little hand I sought was snatched away. When I complained, I was told I was behaving badly; when I grew angry I was allowed to rave, and when I threatened

Digitized by Microsoft®

not to go near them again, they did not believe me. Not being of an age or disposition to enjoy these manœuvres, I decided to abandon the enterprise.

Eight days went by without my seeing the charming but ferociously virtuous recluses, and then I received a note from the superior begging me to go and see her. She went straight to the point, and asked me why I had discontinued my visits?

'Because I am in love with Armellina.'

He tells the superior of his love for Armellina.

'I pity you; but from my point of view that is not a reason for abandoning her. Do you not see to what slanders you are exposing the poor child; people will say that your love for her was merely a caprice, and that having satisfied it, you deserted her.'

'Very good, madame. Then I will come to breakfast to-morrow, and after that, if you will allow me, I will take the two girls to the opera, and I beg you will tell Armellina that I have only decided to see her again in consideration of what you have said.'

Emilia came down alone when I presented myself the following day, and reproached me for what she called my cruel conduct; she said that no man who really cared for a girl would have behaved as I had done; she also said I was wrong to tell the superior that I loved Armellina. 'The poor child has been miserable ever since she met you.'

'And why, if you please?'

'Because she feels certain that you only want to persuade her to be faithless to her duty.'

That is precisely why I stayed away. Do you think it cost me nothing? My peace of mind depends on my not seeing her.'

'Then she will be convinced you do not care for her.'

'She must think what she likes. I know that if she cared for me we should get on quite well.'

'We have duties which you do not believe in.'

'Be faithful to them, then, and do not misjudge an

Digitized by Microsoft®

honourable man who respects them by keeping away from you.'

When Armellina appeared I thought her looking changed.

'Why are you so pale,' I asked, 'and why do you not smile?'

'You have grieved me terribly.'

'Well, set your mind at ease, but let me try and cure myself as I best may. I will always be your friend, and will come and see you once every week as long as I remain in Rome.'

'Once a week! You used to come every day!'

'I want to see you as little as possible, so that I may grow patient.'

'It seems hard that you cannot love me as I love you.'

'That is to say, without passion.'

'I don't say that; but I can control myself when indulgence is inconsistent with my principles.'

'That is a science which at my age I cannot hope to learn, and which, to be frank, I do not care to learn. Would you mind telling me if your self-control is painful to you?'

'I should be sorry to stifle the emotions you cause in me. I should like you to become Pope. I should like you to be my father. I should like you to be changed into a girl, like myself, so that we could be together every hour of the day.'

These naïve and charming aspirations, so natural and so odd, made me laugh. After the opera we repaired to the tavern for supper. The waiter asked if I should like some oysters, and as I saw my companions were curious to know what oysters were like, I asked the price.

'They are from the Arsenal at Venice,' he said, 'and we cannot give them for less than fifty paoli a hundred.'

I ordered a hundred, and when Armellina heard that they were to cost me five Roman crowns, she wanted me to countermand them, but held her peace when I answered that I considered nothing too good nor too dear for her. After she

Digitized by Microsoft®

had swallowed half a dozen, she said to her companion that it must be a sin to eat such delicate morsels.

'Yes, but not because they are so nice, but because each one we put in our mouths costs half a paolo,' said Emilia.

'Half a paolo! and our Holy Father the Pope does not forbid them! If that is not a sin of gluttony I do not know what is. I have eaten them, but I shall certainly accuse myself of gluttony when I go to confession.'

We drank two bottles of champagne at supper, and afterwards I had some rum and lemons brought up, which I made into punch with a third bottle of champagne. The two girls grew very lively, and laughed loudly when they found they could not walk straight across the floor.

Marriage of Emilia.

At the beginning of Lent a suitor, a merchant of Civita Vecchia, presented himself for Emilia, but he had only four hundred crowns, whereas the convent demanded that he should have six hundred. Seeing, however, that Emilia's happiness depended on her making a good marriage, and as the man was in every other way desirable, I succeeded in procuring the needful money. In eight days everything was arranged for the wedding. The day that she left the convent she went to Civita Vecchia with her husband, and the same week Menicuccio married his sweetheart and established himself comfortably in Rome.

Scolastica, a new nun.

The good superior gave Armellina a new governess, a young girl, only three or four years older than my little friend, and very good looking; she did not interest me much, however. Her name was Scolastica, and she was sought in marriage by a man in a very good position, but who, being the son of her cousin, came within the prohibited degrees. It would not have been difficult to get a dispensation for a small sum of money, but I promised to try and obtain one gratis. Scolastica had never been to the theatre, but Armellina begged me to take them to a ball instead; this was rather more difficult. I asked the two friends if they would mind dressing as men if I procured everything needful for the disguise; they consented

Digitized by Microsoft®

gladly. I hired the clothes necessary to transform them into two handsome boys, and had them sent to the tavern. There was a good fire in the room, and I told them that if they wished to be alone I would go into the next apartment in spite of the cold.

'I am sure,' said Scolastica, 'that I am in your way. It is easy to see that you two love each other. I am not a child, why do you treat me as such?'

'You are right, Scolastica; I love Armellina, but she does not love me, and is always looking out for pretexts to make me unhappy.' So saying, I left the room. A quarter of an hour after Armellina tapped at the door; they could not manage without me, she said. The shoes were too small, and they could not fit them on. I looked very sulky, but she threw her arms round my neck, and smothering me with kisses soon restored my good humour. Scolastica burst out laughing.

'I was sure I was in the way,' she said; 'and if you do not show more confidence in me, I warn you I will not go to the Opera with you to-morrow.'

'Well then, kiss my friend,' said Armellina.

This generosity on her part was rather displeasing to me; I had rather she had shown a little jealousy, but I embraced Scolastica cordially, thinking that by doing so I might perhaps punish Armellina, but on the contrary she was delighted. Our new friend was quite as pretty as Armellina, and I was beginning to think I had better perhaps cultivate a liking for her, as she seemed more accessible, when the shoemaker arrived with a fresh provision of shoes. In a few minutes my girls were transformed into two boys.

There was small fear of my being recognised at the ball, as it was given by a society of small trades-people; but luck was against me, for the first person I saw was the Marquis d'Août, with his wife and a friend. I must have turned all colours, but it was too late to go back, for they had seen me, and coming forward complimented me on my companions;

Digitized by Microsoft®

A ball: Armellina makes a new friend.

the poor creatures, being utterly unused to the ways of the world, stood speechless. But I was still more annoyed when a tall young lady, who had just finished a minuet, came up and invited Armellina to dance. I guessed this person to be none other than a young Florentine, who had once brought a letter to my box at the theatre, and had markedly shown his admiration for Armellina; in his feminine disguise he was remarkably handsome. Armellina, not wishing to show she was taken in, said she thought she had seen him before.

'You are mistaken,' he answered, 'but I have a brother who is exactly like me, and you must have a sister who is your living portrait, and whom my brother had the happiness to speak to once for a few minutes at the Capronica theatre.'

This repartee made us all laugh. Armellina excused herself from dancing, and we sat down; it was of course my duty to devote myself to the marquise, and not even to notice that the Florentine was talking to my sweetheart.

But I was by nature as jealous as a tiger, and raged inwardly. To my further discomfort Scolastica rose, and going towards a middle-aged man at the other side of the room, began to talk to him; after a few minutes they retired into a corner and remained in earnest conversation. I approached them, when Scolastica, rising and taking me by the hand, said timidly that this was the man she had spoken to me about, and who desired to marry her. I spoke as civilly to him as possible, and he thanked me for the interest I had shown in them both, and I left the two together, for my uneasiness would not permit me to be long away from Armellina. To my surprise, I saw she was dancing a country dance with the obtrusive stranger, and by carefully following his instruction was acquitting herself very passably. The Marquise d'Août, who was evidently much amused at our strangely assorted party, told me in an easy tone, but at the same time with the imperious accent of a grand dame, who admits no denial, that she expected me and my companions to supper.

'I fear I cannot have that honour, madame,' I said, 'and

Digitized by Microsoft®

my friends know why.' Then turning to Armellina, I said, laughingly, and as with an affectation of gentleness, 'You know that you must be home at half-past twelve at the very latest.'

'It is true,' she replied, 'but still you are the master.'

'I am not master enough to break my vow,' said I somewhat sadly, 'though you can force me to do so if you choose.'

The marquise, her husband, the Florentine, even Armellina herself, entreated me to give way, and at last I said if Scolastica consented, I would consent. I went to her, and in the presence of his friend begged her not to oblige me to compromise myself. I had no need to ask her, she said, she was determined to leave the ball at midnight, and not to sup with any one, so after a few minutes we made our farewells and departed.

We arrived at the hotel, without my having said a word to either of them, but Scolastica avenged me by speaking most severely to her companion, and scolded her for having forced me to appear impolite and jealous, or to break my word. The poor girl's cheeks were seamed with tears. I could not bear to see her so unhappy, and forced myself to console her; the supper was excellent. Scolastica did the honours, but Armellina, contrary to her custom, ate little; she listened sadly to her friend's account of how she had met her *fiancée.* Great as my personal vanity was, I could not hide from myself the fact that she was attracted by the Florentine, that she too wanted to be married, and that he was the husband she fancied.

I took them back to their convent, promising I would fetch them next day for the Opera, and went to bed, very undecided as to whether I had lost or won in the part I had played. It was only on awakening that I was able to pronounce definitely. . . . . . .

. . . .

NOTE.—Here there are two chapters missing in the Brockhaus manuscript. It is the one lacuna in the whole of the Memoirs. The episode of Armellina

Digitized by Microsoft®

remains unfinished, but the reader's experience will doubtless tell him what transpired. When next we take up the tale, Casanova is in Florence. One would like to know why he left Rome and the life of pleasure he was leading there. Did he go of his own free will? Did he get into some difficulty which obliged him to fly? Did the Pope bid him go? And what became of Armellina and the young Florentine?

But it was probably the author himself who detached those chapters, to re-write them, or alter the text. Illness and death possibly carried him off before he had replaced them, for in 1798 Casanova was still correcting and re-writing his Memoirs, which were never finished.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

CHAPTER LIX

HIS VIEWS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

In Florence. WITHOUT going into lengthy explanations, I simply asked the young grand duke to afford me an asylum in his states for as long as I chose, and, to forestall his questions, told him the reasons of my exile from my country.

'As for the means of existence,' I said, 'I beg your royal highness to believe that I have no need of assistance from any one. I have funds, and I hope to devote all my time to study.'

'So long as your conduct is satisfactory,' answered the prince, 'my country's laws will protect you. Nevertheless, I am glad you came to me first. What friends have you in Florence?'

'Ten years ago, your highness, I knew all the most distinguished people here, but as I mean to live quietly, I shall not seek to renew my acquaintance with them.'

After this conversation with the young monarch, I considered myself safe from molestation. My adventure ten years ago in Tuscany seemed forgotten, or almost so, and the new government had nothing in common with the old one. I took two rooms in the house of an honest tradesman, whose wife was ugly, and who had neither daughter nor niece to distract me. There I lived for three weeks, as discreetly and quietly as the rat in the fable.

Then Count Stratico arrived in Florence with his pupil, the Chevalier Morosini, who was about eighteen years old. Stratico had recently broken his leg, and could not go out. He begged me to accompany Morosini, and if necessary

Digitized by Microsoft®

become the companion of his pleasures, otherwise, he might get into bad company, and run serious risks.

This interrupted my studies, and changed the plan of life I had marked out for myself, but as a matter of kindness I was forced to become the comrade of a dissipated youth. Morosini was a libertine, who cared neither for literature, good company, nor sensible men. He liked to ride wildly about the roughest country, not caring if he killed his horses and endangered his own life; he drank deeply, and was never satisfied till he was drunk; he was brutally licentious with women of the lowest class, whom he often ill-used: such were his pleasures and his daily amusements.

In the two months he spent in Florence I saved his life twenty times. I loathed his society, but I thought it my duty not to abandon him. As far as expense was concerned, I did not have to put my hand in my pocket, for he was prodigally liberal, yet this often caused disputes between us, because, as he paid, he would insist on my eating and drinking as much as he, and imitating him in his other debaucheries; on these points, however, I seldom yielded. Another friend of mine was Zanowitch, a handsome young man of graceful and easy bearing, and most infectious gaiety. I recognised in this young man the makings of a successful adventurer, who with due circumspection might go far. He was very much what I was fifteen years before, but the extravagance of his dress and equipage made me fear he would fall into the same errors which had been fatal to me. At Zanowitch's house, again, I met Alois Zen, the son of the captain in command of the fortress of Saint-André when I was imprisoned there as a boy. I did not become intimate with either of these men, and only met them at places of public resort, yet it was owing to them that the events I am about to recount happened.

Zanowitch and Zen.

Lord Lincoln, a young man not yet twenty, and, I believe, the only son of the Duke of Newcastle, was in Florence at this time, and madly in love with a Venetian dancer named Lamberti. Every day, after the opera, the Englishman paid

Digitized by Microsoft®

her a visit in her box, and people wondered that he was not bold enough to accompany her home. He would have been well received, firstly, because he was an Englishman, which is as much as to say a rich man, and secondly, because he was remarkably handsome.

Zanowitch made a note of the state of the affairs, managed to become intimate with La Lamberti, and then took Lincoln to her house. Lamberti, who, of course, was in the plot, showed herself most gracious to the young lord, who after that supped at her house constantly, and played faro afterwards, with Zanowitch and Zen. The rogues took care that he should win some hundreds of sequins to begin with; the poor boy was a mere apprentice in their hands. He found the hook so nicely baited with love and money, most alluring, and swallowed it eagerly. According to the noble custom of his countrymen, he regularly got so drunk after supper as not to be able to tell his right hand from his left, which made him all the easier prey. By and by the pillage began; they were, in gambling terms, preparing him for the grand cleaning out. Zanowitch won large sums from Lincoln, which Zen lent the young lord, who had promised his tutor never to play on credit. In this way the unfortunate dupe's debt went on increasing, until he owed Zen the enormous sum of twelve thousand guineas. He paid three thousand guineas down, and signed three bills for the same amount, and drawn on his banker in London. It was Lord Lincoln himself who told me all this, when I met him some time afterwards at Bologna.

He is requested to leave Florence.

The day after the famous sitting, every one in Florence was talking about it. Tasso Tassi, the banker, had paid Zanowitch six thousand sequins on my lord's order. Imagine my surprise when three days later an individual came into my room, and after having demanded my name, ordered me, on the grand duke's authority, to leave Florence within three days, and Tuscany in a week!

This was the 28th of December. On the same day three years before I had received orders to leave Barcelona. I

Digitized by Microsoft®

dressed hastily, and went round to the auditor, to know what was the motive of this order, which to me seemed inexplicable. I was not reassured, when I recognised in him the same man who had banished me from Florence eleven years previously, on account of the Russian's forged letter of credit. When I asked him why he had sent word to me to leave the city, he replied coldly, that it was his royal highness's pleasure.

'But his royal highness must have some reason to give, and I have a right to demand it.'

'I do not contest your right; go and ask the prince himself what his motives are; he is at Pisa, where you are at liberty to join him if you like.'

'If I go, will he pay my travelling expenses?'

'I doubt it.'

'I shall not go to Pisa, then, but I will write to his highness, if you will see that he gets the letter.'

'Certainly, it is my duty to do so.'

'Very well, sir; before break of day, to-morrow, I shall be on the Pope's territory.'

On leaving the auditor I met my old enemy, Medini, with whom, by the way, I had established a kind of armed neutrality. We had met many times, lately, in comparative amity.

'What!' said I, laughing, 'have you too received orders to leave?'

'Yes.'

'What have you been doing?'

'Nothing; and you?'

'Nothing; let us go to Pisa to-morrow.'

'You can, if you like, but I am off out of this city to-night.'

I went back to my inn, and having ordered my carriage and four horses to be ready at sundown, I wrote the following letter to the grand duke:—

A letter to the duke.

Monseigneur,—Jupiter placed the lightning in your hand for the punishment of guilty people only; you have disobeyed him, and launched it at my head. Seven months ago you

Digitized by Microsoft®

promised me that I should live in perfect peace in your dominions, so long as I did not disobey the law. I have scrupulously kept this condition, and consequently it is your royal highness who breaks faith. I am only writing to you, monseigneur, to let you know that I forgive you. The consequence of this forgiveness will be that I shall complain to no one. I shall not accuse you of injustice by voice or by letter, in any of the houses of Bologna where I am going. I wish I could forget this insult to my honour, which comes from your arbitrary will alone, but I must remember it, so as never by inadvertence to return to the country of which God has made you master. The auditor, the chief of your police, told me I could go to Pisa to speak to you, personally, but I fear that such a proceeding would appear over bold to a prince who, according to public law, may not speak to men after having condemned them, only before.—I remain, etc., etc.

I was just sitting down to table, when in came Medini. He was in a boiling rage with Zanowitch and Zen, who he declared were the cause of our common misfortune; it was because of the twelve thousand guineas they had won from the Englishman that we were obliged to leave Florence, and yet, he protested, they refused to lend him the hundred sequins he needed for his immediate use. Of course, he asked me to lend him the money, and, of course, I refused.

My departure from Florence cured me of a very unfortunate love-affair, which might otherwise have had disastrous results for me. I have spared my readers this story, because I cannot recall it without sorrow; the widow whom I loved, and to whom I was weak enough to declare my passion, only attached me to her chariot the better to humiliate me. She disdained me, and convinced me of her disdain with all the pride of a young and beautiful woman. I had not yet become accustomed to the fact that I was growing old, and that old age, especially when it is poor, cannot touch a young heart. This is a fatal and inevitable experience which every man must make, unless he is wise in time.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I reached Bologna on the last day of the year 1772, and on New Year's day I presented myself to Cardinal Brancaforte, the papal legate, whom I had known in Paris twenty years before, when he was sent by Benedict III. to take the blessed swaddling-clothes to the newly-born Duke of Burgundy. We had been together to the Freemason's lodges (for the members of the Sacred College, though they fulminate against the masons, know that their anathemas only frighten the weak members); we had also assisted at many a supper with pretty sinners, and had been sinners with them. The cardinal was a *bon vivant* and a man of much wit.

Bologna, 1772.

'Oh, here you are!' he cried, 'I expected you.'

'How could you expect me, monseigneur! Nothing obliged me to select Bologna as a place of refuge!'

'For two reasons. Firstly, Bologna is better than any other city; and secondly, I flattered myself you would think of me. But I beg you *not* to talk here about the life we led when we were young.'

All the other exiles arrived four days after me. La Lamberti only passed through on her way to Florence, Zenowitch and Zen spent a week there, but apart, as they had quarrelled over the division of the plunder; they went on to Milan, but the government ordered them to leave Lombardy, and I never heard what became of them, though I was told that Lord Lincoln paid the bills on presentation. Medini, after a stay of nearly a month, went to Germany, where he found a generous patron in the elector palatine, under whose auspices he brought out his *Henriade*; then after wandering about Europe for a dozen years, he died miserably in prison in London. I had warned him to avoid England. I was certain that he would get into trouble there, and that once behind English bars, he would never get out; but he despised my advice. Medini was well born, and clever, but poor and extravagant, he tried to indulge his expensive tastes on money made by gambling, and when Fortune frowned on him, attempted to correct her. He was always in debt, and always flying from

Digitized by Microsoft®

imprisonment; in this way he lived seventy years, and might be living still, had he listened to me. The same prophetic spirit moved me to tell Cagliostro, when I met him in Venice twenty years ago, and where he was calling himself Count Pellegrini, that he must never set his foot in Rome; had he believed me he would not have died a prisoner in the fortress of San Leo.

I must not forget that I also was warned by a wise man to beware of Spain, but I went in spite of him, and the reader knows with what results.

A call on Albergati.

Among the people most talked of in Bologna at this time was the Marquis Albergati Capacelli. I wanted to know him, so I wrote to Signor Dandolo for a letter of introduction, and a week after received through my good old friend a letter written by Signor di Zaguri, a Venetian nobleman and intimate friend of Albergati's. The marquis was at his country house, where he usually spent the spring, so I drove out there one day. As no one came in answer to my summons, I went up the stairs and entered a room where a gentleman and a very pretty woman were just sitting down to table. After bowing politely, I asked if I had the honour to address the marquis, and on his replying yes, presented him with the letter; he put it in his pocket without even looking at the address, thanked me for the trouble I had taken, and assured me he would read it.

'It was no trouble,' I said, 'and I beg you will read it now; it is from Signor di Zaguri, from whom I obtained it as I wished to have the pleasure of making your acquaintance.'

He answered laughingly that he never read letters at table, but that he would read it after dinner and be sure to execute his friend's orders. We were both standing throughout this little dialogue; as I considered him most impolite, I left the room without saluting him. Just as I was getting into my carriage, a servant came running up to say his excellency begged I would go back.

Digitized by Microsoft®

I contented myself with handing my card to the servant and drove off.

I wrote the same day to Signor di Zaguri, and told him exactly what had taken place, at the same time begging him to inform the marquis that, as I considered myself offended, I should expect him to accord me the usual satisfaction.

The following day Albergati called on me. I was out, but he gave his card in person to my landlady, with his title 'The General Marquis Albergati,' so I was forced to accept this as apology.

'What right has he to the rank of general?' I asked Severini, who answered that three years ago the King of Poland had conferred the order of St. Stanislas, and the title of Chamberlain, on him.

'I see,' I cried, 'in Poland a chamberlain ranks as an adjutant-general, so Albergati calls himself general, but general of what?'

Delighted at being able to avenge myself by turning the good man into ridicule, I wrote a burlesque dialogue, which I had printed, and which the bookseller sold for a '*baiocco*' apiece; in a few days the entire edition was exhausted. The marquis had the sense not to notice this dialogue, and there the matter ended.

Signor di Zaguri, who since the Albergati affair had kept up a regular correspondence with me, had conceived a project for obtaining my pardon, and permission for me to re-enter my native country. We had worked in concert with Dandolo, my ever-devoted friend, who desired nothing so much as to see me reinstated. He wrote to me that I ought to live nearer the Venetian States, as near to them as possible, so that the inquisitors could have me watched, and assure themselves of my good conduct. Signor Zuliani, the brother of the Duchess of Fiano, promised to use all his influence in my favour.

To Trieste, his last station before his pardon.

I decided on Trieste, where Signor di Zaguri had an intimate friend to whom, he said, he would recommend me. I found several letters awaiting me there: one from

Digitized by Microsoft®

Negotiations with Venice.

Signor Dandolo, enclosing one from his friend, the patrician Marco Dona, addressed to the Baron Pittoni, chief of police. It was left open so that I could read how warmly I was recommended to this magistrate. I hastened to deliver it, and Pittoni assured me I could count on his protection. I spent the first ten days of my sojourn at Trieste in compiling the Memoirs I had collected at Warsaw, concerning all that had happened in Poland since the death of Elizabeth Petrovna, and I undertook to write a history of the troubles of the unhappy country up to its dismemberment, which was going on at that very time.

I had foreseen this event, when the diet of Poland recognised the Czarina (who has just died) as Empress of all the Russias, and the Elector of Brandenbourg as King of Prussia. I never published more than three volumes of my history, owing to the knavery of the printer, who did not abide by our conditions. The four last manuscript volumes will be found among my papers at my death, and whoever takes possession of my papers can publish them if he thinks fit. This thing has become indifferent to me.

Views on the French Revolution.

It was revenge, ambition, and folly, which lost Poland. It was folly, daughter of shame and indolence, which caused the downfall of France. Every dethroned king must have been a fool; every fool of a king deserves to be dethroned. Louis perished in consequence of his folly. If he had had the prudence and the wit which a king should have who seeks to govern a wise and witty people, he would still be on the throne, and he would have spared France the horrors into which she has been plunged by a gang of scoundrels, by the cowardice and perversity of her aristocracy, and the avarice of a despotic, fanatic, and too powerful priesthood. The sickness now raging in France could be easily cured elsewhere, but I fear the French are incurable. Posterity will know, as for me, I am too old. The French emigrants may inspire pity in those kinds of people who are always ready to pity anybody and anything, but they only inspire me with contempt, for I believe if they

Digitized by Microsoft®

had rallied firmly round the throne, they might have opposed force to force, and have crushed, no matter how, the common herd, without giving it time to assassinate the nation. Finally, I repeat that their duty, their interest, and their honour demanded that they should save their king, or bury themselves under the ruins of the throne. Instead of this they have gone to parade their pride and their disgrace in foreign lands, doing no good to themselves, and much harm to those who are forced to feed them. What will become of France? I cannot say, but I know this, that a headless body cannot last long, for it is in the head that reason lodges.

It was the fault of the emigrant nobles.

On the 1st of December, Baron Pittoni sent me a message begging me to go to his house, where I should meet some one who had come from Venice on purpose to see me. I dressed hurriedly, and in a state of extreme curiosity; the baron presented me to a handsome man about five-and-thirty or forty, who looked at me with evident interest.

'My heart tells me,' said I, 'that you are Signor di Zaguri.'

'You are right, my dear Casanova. When I heard from Dandolo that you were here, I determined to come and congratulate you on your approaching return to your country, which will take place, if not this year, at least next.'

A fine old man, who was in the room, joined in these congratulations, and begged Pittoni to bring me with him to dine at his house, although, he added, he had not the pleasure of my acquaintance.

'What!' exclaimed Zaguri, 'Casanova has been in this little town for ten days, and the Venetian consul is not acquainted with him?'

I hastened to say, 'It is my own fault; I thought it better not to pay the consul a visit, as he might consider me contraband merchandise.'

The consul replied wittily, that from that moment he would consider me as transitory merchandise, in quarantine for the time being, and that in consequence his house would always be open to me. The friendship of this good old man, which

Digitized by Microsoft®

I was fortunate enough to win, was of the greatest use to me during the two years I spent at Trieste, and I have always thought that he contributed largely to obtaining my pardon, which was at that time the only thing I lived for, for I was suffering from nostalgia, what the Swiss and Germans call *Heimweh*, and the French *mal du pays*.

Heimweh, a mortal disease.

Heimweh is a mortal disease; for I verily believe I should have died of homesickness had I not at last been enabled to return, and spend nine years in the bosom of the country which had always proved such a cruel step-mother to me. When Zaguri returned to Venice, I accompanied him to the very borders of the state, and then went back to Trieste.

I lived quietly at Trieste, for I had only fifteen sequins a month certain income, and was obliged to practise economy. I never gambled, and I dined every day at some friend's house—the Venetian consul's, the French consul's, or Baron Pittoni's. I was able to render some service to my beloved country, through the medium of the consul. These services consisted in the arrangement of certain old treaties of commerce, and the launching of new ones, by both of which the Venetian States profited considerably, in return for which I received several gratifications of a hundred ducats at a time, and a pension of ten sequins a month. These sums sufficed to put me at my ease, and to enable me to spend a little money on my pleasures. I was not displeased, either, to find myself in the pay of the very tribunal which had deprived me of my liberty, and whose power I had braved. It was to me a great triumph, and honour demanded that I should serve it as well and faithfully as I could. About this time the Venetian general, Palmanova, a patrician of the Prota family, came to Trieste on a visit to the governor. He was accompanied by the procurator, Erizzo. I met them both at the French consul's house, and the general asked me if I amused myself as well at Trieste as I had done in Paris, sixteen years before. I answered that the sixteen years more, and the hundred thousand francs less, obliged me to lead a very different life. Just then the consul came in,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and said the felucca was waiting. It seemed there was a Venetian man of war anchored outside the port, and the whole party was going to visit it. Madame de Lantieri, the consul's daughter, asked me to join them, and her father added his invitation to hers, and the three Venetian nobles joined in. I answered, laughingly, that a duty laid upon me many years before forced me to deprive myself of the pleasure of accompanying them—it was forbidden me to set my foot on Venetian territory.

He declines to visit a Venetian ship.

At this every one cried out: 'You have nothing to fear. You will be with us. We are not traitors. Your doubts are offensive.'

'All this is very well, ladies and gentlemen, and I will give in willingly if one of their excellencies here can assure me that the State Inquisitors will not be informed (and perhaps no later than to-morrow) that I had the temerity to share in this expedition without my sentence of banishment being raised.'

At these words every one was mute, no one dared to hazard such an assertion. The captain of the ship, who was present, and whom I did not know, spoke for some time with the consul, in a low voice, and finally the party went without me. The next day I heard that the captain declared I had acted wisely, for if any one had told him my name and the charges against me while on his ship, he should have felt it his duty to retain me. The procurator, Erizzo, while congratulating me on my prudence, assured me that the tribunal should be acquainted of my respect for its decisions.

The tribunal informed of his respect for its decisions.

Digitized by Microsoft®

CHAPTER LX

WAITING FOR A PARDON

The ladies of Trieste being all seized with a strong desire to act French comedies, chose me as stage manager and general director. I had not only to choose the pieces, but to distribute the parts. I found my duties brought me a great deal of trouble, and none of the pleasure I had anticipated.

Views on conventual education.

All my actresses were novices; I had to teach them everything, and run about all day long from one to the other, trying to make them learn their speeches by heart. As soon as they knew one page they forgot the preceding one. Every one knows that if a revolution of any kind is necessary in Italy, it is in education—especially feminine education. The best families are content with sending their daughters to a convent for a few years, whence they pass into the arms of a husband, whom they have often never seen till the day before the wedding, and to whom they often remain indifferent all the days of their life. Both sides then correct the chances of matrimony by *sigisbéeisme*; and one may safely say that in good society in Italy lineal descent is merely a matter of convention. Few and far between are the noble lords who can say, 'I bear the same name as my father.'

Now, in convents, and above all Italian convents, what can a young girl learn? Certain exercises of piety, mere mummeries, a little religion, a great deal of intrigue and dissimulation, perverse habits, often a good deal of libertinage and coquetry, a little reading and writing, a thousand kinds of fancy work, all perfectly useless, and a certain amount of

Digitized by Microsoft®

music and drawing; no history, no geography, no mythology, hardly any arithmetic, and nothing at all of the duties of a good wife and mother. As for foreign languages, they are unheard of.

I have allowed myself to write these truths to ease my conscience, and in spite of my national vanity, I know that if ever I am read by any of my pretty compatriots, they will, figuratively speaking, fling stones at me, but their anger will not hurt me. I shall not be there to feel it, for when these pages see the light, I shall have closed my eyes to it for ever.

As I despaired of ever getting their parts into their heads, I turned prompter, and I learned by bitter experience all that is meant by that word. The work of a prompter is that of a galley slave; the actors never own to their obligations to him, and always accuse him of being the cause of all that goes wrong. A Spanish doctor is in about as happy a condition as a prompter. If his patient gets well, it is thanks to the intervention of some saint; if he dies, it is because of the remedies prescribed for him.

A visit to Gorice.

Among the people of quality who came to Gorice for the French plays was a certain Count Torriani, who persuaded me to spend the autumn with him at a country house he possessed about six miles from Gorice.

He was not yet thirty, and unmarried. His pasty face expressed cruelty, disloyalty, treason, pride, brutality, sensuality, hatred, and jealousy, but his invitation was proffered so graciously that I could not but hope I misjudged him. Every one spoke well of him. The only thing against him was that he was too fond of the fair sex, and was ferocious in avenging an affront. Neither of these qualities seemed unworthy of a gentleman, so I promised him I would meet him at Gorice the first day of September, and that we would go together to Spersa, his country seat.

When I arrived at his home at Gorice I was told he was out; but when I said I was his guest, my baggage was taken in from the carriage. I went off to see my friend Count Torres,

Digitized by Microsoft®

and remained with him till supper-time, when I returned to my host. I then heard that he had gone to the country, and would not be back till next day, but a room had been taken for me, and supper ordered at the inn. I went to the inn, where I was badly lodged, and badly fed—no matter. I concluded he had no room for me in his house, though he ought to have told me so. Early next morning he appeared, thanked me for my punctuality, spoke of the pleasure he should have in my society, but regretted that he could not leave for Spersa for two days as on the morrow he had to attend the court, where judgment was to be pronounced in a case which he had against a farmer, who, he said, did not only owe him money which he refused to pay, but made claims on him as well.

'Well,' said I, 'I will go with you and hear the case; it will amuse me.'

A moment after he went off without even asking me when I was going to dine, or excusing himself for having been obliged to send me to the inn. I was at a loss to understand, but unwilling to believe that he was purposely rude.

'Come, Casanova,' said I to myself, 'you must have made a mistake. The knowledge of man is a bottomless pit, which you think you have explored, but there are depths beyond your experience. Let us go over it again. The count invited you to his country house; well then, being still in town, the good man does not owe you any hospitality. Patience, all will come right. You ought perhaps to have excused yourself for arriving inopportunely, though I can hardly see how that might be; well, as I said before, patience.'

A case in the courts.

I was one of the first in the audience-hall next day, where I saw assembled the judges, the contending parties, and their respective advocates. The peasant's lawyer was an honest-looking, middle-aged man; the count's had all the appearance of a scoundrel; his client stood by him, a disdainful smile on his face. Count Torres, who was with me, said he was acquainted with the whole affair; the peasant had twice lost

Digitized by Microsoft®

his cause, but had twice appealed to a higher court, and had paid his expenses. Torriano would win, again, he said, unless the peasant could prove that the receipts in his possession were really signed by the count, which the latter denied. If the peasant lost, said Torres, he would be not only ruined, but condemned to the galleys; whereas if he wins, he added, it is Torriano and his advocate who will deserve to be sent there. The peasant was surrounded by his wife and two daughters, who were pretty enough to win all the cases in the world. Their mien was modest, but calm and assured. They were poorly dressed, and one could tell by their humble look and downcast eyes that they were the victims of oppression. Each advocate had the right to speak for two hours. The peasant's defender only spoke for thirty minutes; he laid before the judge the book of receipts, all endorsed with the count's signature, until the day on which he gave him notice because, like a worthy man, he refused to allow his daughters to go alone to the count's house. He then produced the other book by means of which the count tried to prove that these receipts were all forged. He pointed out their absurdities, and finished by saying that if the case were carried to a court of criminal jurisprudence his client could make known to justice the two forgers who had been paid by the count to hatch these infamous documents, and ruin an honest family. He demanded that all expenses should be paid by the count, as well as damages for his client's loss of time and reputation.

The case between count and peasant.

The count's barrister spoke for two hours, and then the judge had to silence him. There were no insults which he did not shower on his opponent, the experts, and the peasant, whom he assured he would visit when in the galleys. After this violent harangue we retired into another hall to await the sentence. The peasant and his family stood in a distant corner; they had no flattering friends or covert enemies to talk to, while round Count Torriano were at least a dozen persons, all crying out that he was sure to win his cause, but that if such an extravagant thing as his losing it were to

Digitized by Microsoft®

happen, he must compel the peasant to prove the forgeries by taking it into a higher court.

I whispered to Torres that the count ought to lose if only on account of the infamous speech of his advocate, who ought to have his ears slit, and be placed in the pillory for six months.

'And his client with him?' said Torres in a loud voice.

After an hour the magistrate's clerk appeared with two papers in his hand, one of which he gave to Torriano, the other to the peasant; the count burst out laughing, and read his out in a loud voice.

The court condemned him to recognise the receipts given to the peasant, and to pay him one year's wages as damages, reserving to the latter the right to attack him again in virtue of other grievances which he might have against him.

Torriani's advocate seemed downcast, but his employer gave him six sequins, and we all went away. Left alone with the condemned man, I asked him if he would appeal in Vienna.

'My appeal will be of another kind,' he said grimly. I did not ask him for an explanation.

We left Gorice next morning, and got to Spersa in less than two hours. The house was a large one on a hill. Torriani showed me over it, and then led me to my apartment, a single room on the ground floor, badly furnished, with very little air or light.

'This,' said he, 'was a favourite room of my father's; like you, he delighted in study. You will enjoy complete liberty here, no one will come near you.'

We dined very late, and had no supper. The food was passable, so was the wine, and the society of a priest who acted bailiff for him; but one thing which shocked me was, that my host, who ate very rapidly, had the impertinence to tell me, laughingly, it is true, that I ate too slowly. After dinner, he said we should meet next day, and I went to my room to put my affairs in order; I was then at work on the second volume of my Polish history. When night closed in I

Digitized by Microsoft®

went out to ask for a light; a servant brought me one tallow candle. I thought this abominable; I should have had wax candles, or a lamp. When I asked if there was any particular servant charged with attending on me, I was told that the count had given no orders on that head, 'but,' added the man, 'we are at your service when you call.'

The count's hospitality.

As there was no bell in my room, I saw I should have to hunt all over the house for them when I wanted a service.

'And who will do my room?'

'One of the maids.'

'Has she a private key?'

'She has no need of one, sir, there is no lock on your door; you can fasten it at night with the bolt.'

I was half inclined to laugh, but not so when a little later I put the candle out by accident in snuffing it. As I could not run about a strange house in the dark, I undressed and got into bed as best I could. Next day I rose and, in my dressing-gown and nightcap, went to wish my host good morning. I found him in the hands of his valet. When I said I had come to breakfast with him, he replied that he never breakfasted, and begged me not to derange myself in the morning, as he was always busy with his peasants, who, he said, were all thieves. Then he added that if I was in the habit of taking breakfast, I had only to order the cook to prepare me some coffee.

'Would you be good enough to tell your servant to dress my hair, when you have finished with him?'

'I am surprised you did not bring a servant with you.'

'Had I known that the slight amount of valeting I require would have inconvenienced you, I would have done so.'

'It won't inconvenience me, but you, for you will have to wait.'

'I will wait. And one thing more I must have, and that is a key to the door of my room. I have important papers lying about.'

'Everything is safe in my house.'

Digitized by Microsoft®

'I am sure of it, but a letter is easily mislaid.'

He waited five minutes, then told the servant to see that a lock was fitted to the door of my room.

There was a book at his bedside, and I asked him if I might see what he read to send himself to sleep. He answered politely, that he begged I would not look at it. I stepped back from it promptly, saying with a smile that I was sure it was a prayer-book, but that I would promise not to tell any one.

'You guessed rightly,' he said laughing.

Humble details.

I was much piqued. I had always been treated with the greatest consideration. I returned to my room, and thought it seriously over. My first idea was to leave at once, particularly when I thought of the wax candle I had seen on his table, and the miserable tallow one which graced my own, and though I only possessed fifty ducats in the world, I was as proud as when I was rich. I rejected the idea of leaving, however, as I did not want to put myself in the wrong.

Next morning the servant brought me a cup of coffee, ready poured out, and sweetened to his taste, or the taste of the cook. I could not touch it, and told him with a laugh—I had either to laugh or throw it in his face—that that was not the way to serve it.

While he was dressing my hair, I asked him why he gave me a tallow candle, instead of two wax ones.

'Sir,' he replied, 'I could only give you what was given to me. I was given one wax candle for my master, one tallow one for you.'

When I saw the priest-bailiff, I begged him to sell me a pound of wax candles at the price he paid for them, as it was he who was charged with the purchase of stores for the house; he agreed to do so, but at the same time said he should be obliged to acquaint his master of the fact. I had been told that dinner was at one o'clock, and I went to the dining-room punctually at half-past twelve, and was surprised to hear that the count had been at table some time! I restrained

Digitized by Microsoft®

myself, and simply said the abbé had told me dinner would be at one.

'So it is, ordinarily,' said the count, 'but as I have some visits to pay, I ordered it for twelve to-day.' He then told the servants to bring back the dishes which had already been presented, but I refused, contenting myself with what was on the table. I went with him to visit the family del Mestre, who live in the neighbourhood, and we finished the day agreeably with them. Next day the priest returned me the money for the candles, saying his master had said I was to be treated in every way as he was himself; and the servant brought my coffee on a tray, with the sugar and cream separate; the valet came to dress my hair; there was a padlock on the door; all was changed.

A lesson to the count.

'I have taught him a lesson,' I thought; 'all will go well now'; but I counted without my host. Before a week had passed, he went off, without a word of warning, to Gorice, where he remained ten days. On his return, I told him I had gone to Spersa to keep him company, but that as my presence did not seem to be appreciated, I would return to Trieste, as I had no desire to die of *ennui* in his dull house. He made the most ample apologies, assured me such a thing would never happen again, and succeeded in persuading me to stay.

His whole wealth consisted of vineyards, which yielded an excellent white wine, and brought him in about a thousand sequins a year; but yet he was on the high-road to ruin. Convinced that the peasants robbed him, he was always hanging about their huts. He would go in, and if he found any bunches of grapes, would distribute the most vigorous blows with his cane to the unlucky creatures. They might go down on their knees to him, but nothing averted his anger. I was often the unwilling witness of these arbitrary and cruel executions, and was much rejoiced one day when two vigorous peasants set on him with a broomstick, and gave him a good thrashing. He ran away with his tail between his legs, and only recovered his courage to quarrel with me for having

Digitized by Microsoft®

witnessed his humiliation. Soon the whole village was aware of his misadventure, and every one laughed, for he was feared by every one, and loved by none. The two peasants had to seek refuge in flight; and the count gave out that in future he would pay his domiciliary visits armed with a pistol. At this the whole community took alarm, and two deputies were chosen to inform him that unless he solemnly promised to give up molesting them in their modest dwellings, they would leave the village *en masse* within a week. There was to my way of thinking something sublime in the simple eloquence of these sturdy labourers.

'We have the right to eat a bunch of grapes from a vine which produces them, because we water it with the sweat of our brow; so your cook has the right to taste the dishes he prepares for you, before he serves them.'

This threat of desertion, coming as it did just before the vintage, brought him to reason, and he promised what they required of him.

The following incident ended my connection with him:—

I led a wearisome life at Spersa, with no sort of distraction. I became interested in a poor young widow, who was pretty and amiable. I made her a few little presents, and obtained her good graces. I persuaded her to visit me at night, so that no one should see her, and I let her in and out by a little door which opened on to the street. One morning after shutting the door behind her, I heard her cry out. I rushed forth, and saw the brutal Torriani holding her by her skirts, and beating her with a stick. I sprang on him, and we both fell to the ground, while the poor woman made off. I was at a disadvantage, as I had only my dressing-gown on, but I held the stick with one hand, and with the other tried my best to strangle him. I squeezed so hard that his tongue lolled out, and he was forced to let go of my hair, which he had grasped, for fear of choking. I then gave him one good blow on the head, before re-entering my room. As soon as I was dressed I went out and found a peasant

Digitized by Microsoft®

with a cart, who promised to take me to Gorice in time for dinner.

I was packing up my things, when one of the servants came to say the count begged I would speak to him a moment. I wrote in French, that after what had happened we must not meet, except away from his house. A moment later he appeared in person.

'As you will not come to me, I have come to you,' he said.

'What do you wish to say to me?'

'That in leaving my house in this manner you are disgracing me, and that I will not allow you to go.'

'Really! I should like to know how you will prevent me?'

'I can, at least, prevent you going alone, for honour demands that we leave together.'

'Ah! now I understand you; go and get your sword or your pistols, and you will find that there is room in my cart for two.'

'No, you must leave with me in my carriage, and after having dined with me.'

'I should be considered mad if I eat with you. Our fight is known to the whole village, now, and an ugly story it is!'

'Then I will dine here with you; people can say what they like. Send away your cart, and at least try to prevent any further scandal.'

I was obliged to give way to him, and he remained with me till noon, trying to persuade me that I was in the wrong, and that it was no business of mine if he chose to beat a peasant on the highway; she did not belong to me.'

'What,' said I, 'do you suppose I would allow you to ill-treat a woman—a feeble and amiable creature, who had only that moment left my arms! I should have been as cowardly and as monstrous as you had I not interfered. Could you in my place have remained indifferent to such a barbarous scene, even if her assailant had been a great prince?'

Digitized by Microsoft®

He had no reply, and after remaining silent a short time, declared that anyhow the duel would do no credit to the survivor, and he meant to fight to the death.'

'As far as that goes,' I said, laughing, 'you are at liberty not to expose yourself if you like. I am quite satisfied with the lesson I have already given you. As to the duel *à outrance*, I hope to leave you among the living, in spite of your fury, and shall content myself with laying you up for a long time, so as to keep you quiet and give you a chance to reflect on your past and your future. If, on the other hand, you are the better man, you can deal with me as you think fit.'

'We will go alone into a wood,' said he, 'and I will give my coachman orders to take you wheresoever you tell him, should you return to the carriage alone.'

'Very good. Now is it to be swords or pistols.'

'Swords.'

We left after an excellent dinner, during which I was very lively. I heard him tell the coachman to follow the Gorice road, and waited, expecting him to point out a spot in the woods where we could settle our differences. But we reached Gorice without his saying a word, and then he told the man to drive to the inn. I burst out laughing, for I saw now the famous duel would end in smoke.

'You are right,' he said, 'we must remain good friends. Promise me not to speak of this affair, or to treat it lightly if any one speaks of it to you.'

He bids the count adieu.

I promised, we shook hands, and there the matter ended. The following day I took a quiet lodging at Gorice, and set to work to finish the second volume of my book. I went backwards and forwards between Trieste and Gorice, for I could render no service to the State Inquisitors in the latter place, and naturally they did not pay me to remain idle. My quarrel with Torriani was talked of by everybody, but I treated it as a bagatelle, and he made a point of showing me most exaggerated marks of friendship whenever we met. Still, as I knew him to be a dangerous man, I made a point of declining

Digitized by Microsoft®

all his invitations to dinner or supper. During carnival he married a young lady of good family, and made her unhappy as long as he lived. Fortunately for her, he died after thirteen or fourteen years of matrimony, mad and miserable as he had lived.

Waiting for his pardon.

I left Gorice the last day of the year 1773, and took up my quarters at the large inn on the public square at Trieste. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

Digitized by Microsoft®

LETTERS WRITTEN TO MASTER FAULKIRCHER BY HIS BEST FRIEND JACQUES CASANOVA DE SEINGALT, 10th January 1792.[1]

Est hoc pro certo, quoties cum stercore certo vinco seu vincor, semper ego maculor.

(You cannot touch pitch without being defiled.—English Proverb.)

FIRST LETTER.

In the ordinary course of events there could be nothing in common between you and me, Mr. Faulkircher, excepting our joint presence in this Château of Dux, where I am employed as librarian and you as house steward, but in these days it is not the ordinary that happens, but the extraordinary. You stand accused of three crimes committed against my honour, and I want you to be tried according to judicial form. I must inform the public of the nature and circumstances of these crimes, and the public is an impartial judge whom you cannot bribe; there is not enough wine in all the cellars of Count Waldstein for that. The public shall decide whether you are or not a worthless man and a coward, and whether you know or not what honour and the laws of honour mean.

Pluck up courage, Faulkircher, and answer these letters, but be honest enough to send the replies in French, Latin, Italian, or if needs be Spanish. I have been at the pains to address you in German. I have had to pay a translator, you must do the same; let us not be ashamed to publish our ignorance, you, of all the languages of Europe, and I, of German. Another charge I bring

[1] There is no evidence to show that these letters were ever sent to Faulkircher, and there is no hint in Casanova's papers of his having received a reply. They were written, probably, to relieve the bitterness and acrimony of the author's heart, and show, more than anything else, how age, and the humiliation of his subordinate position, had weakened his mind.

Digitized by Microsoft®

against you, is of having exposed me in effigy, in the most vulgar and insulting manner, and for this I appeal to the laws of decency to punish, I do not exactly know how.

In the meantime I remain yours to command, with all the ceremonious phrases one puts at the end of letters, and which mean nothing at all.

Second Letter.

Although we have never been able to reason together, because you can only jabber in bad German, we might nevertheless have been on very good terms, if you had any education, either from books or good company, in which latter a man may at least learn morality and the laws of honour. You were obliged to become a soldier, at the age when I was learning to read, and you cannot be expected to have learned refinement of expression or sentiment in the guard-room, or barracks. You have not gained polish by the frequentation of educated people, or been able to enlarge your mind by reading instructive books, as I, poor and humble by birth as I am, have done. For this I should pity you, as sincerely as I congratulate myself. For the rest you have followed your military career so faithfully, and have known so well how to employ your talents, that in less than fifty years you have reached the high rank of sub-lieutenant! Having attained this noble grade, you had the courage to check your ambition, to repose on your laurels, and to simply ask for your discharge and a pension, both of which you obtained. You asked for your discharge on the score of infirmity, but laziness is the proper name for your disease. Fortunately for you this was not known, or you would have been deprived of your pension of the hundred florins, and the right to wear a uniform; this latter right puts you on a footing with other gallant sons of Mars, who do not live in the private domestic service of a *grand superior*. It is true that you are very generous with your master's wine, and distribute it freely, not only to the officers quartered at Dux, but to all who come, either on business or pleasure. You may be sure these officers know you have no business to be so lavish, but they consider that it is not for them to teach you honesty. If your proceedings reached the ears of Jupiter, or his councillors, you would be sent packing, without your uniform, and without your pension. Count Waldstein would, I am sure, give you a pension of four hundred ducats as compensation, but you would no longer be called lieutenant, and this little matter gratifies your vanity.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Third Letter.

When you first came to Dux, Master Faulkircher, and saw me and learned what my position and employment were, you began to rack your brains in vain to understand what need Count Waldstein had of a librarian, at a salary of a thousand florins a year.

In your zeal for his interests you advised him to get rid of me, and as you could not persuade him to do this, you formed the project of plaguing me to such an extent, and of making things so disagreeable to me that I should of my own accord throw up my situation. During the first two years it was not easy for you to succeed—the Count was not at Dux, I took my meals alone in my room, and paid for them myself, so I had nothing to do with you; but since then I have had the misfortune to be cheated by the bookseller Hilscher, at Leipsic, through whom I lost four thousand florins, to make up which I have to lay aside half my salary, and this has obliged me to accept the Count's offer to eat in the servants' hall, when he is absent. It is an advantage, but a fatal one, for it obliges me to sit opposite a creature like you. This circumstance has put it in your power to inflict on me all the petty miseries your fine mind delights in, either directly or indirectly, for, ass that you are, you like to put on a lion's skin. Unfortunately for you the ears always stick out, the mask falls, and you are shown in your natural ugliness. Though I always knew just what you were, false, ignorant and pretentious, I made an effort to treat you with an appearance of consideration, and you imagined that I had some esteem for you. Pray undeceive yourself. If we had been in a country where duels were permitted, and I had provoked you to fight, either with sword or pistol, I am sure fear would have rendered you paralytic, and you would probably have got your friend Viderol to assassinate me. The things which you have done, since the month of September 1790, confirm me in my knowledge and judgment of your character.

Fourth Letter.

The Count had hardly left Dux when you managed to put the inspector at my heels, and he, at your instigation, insulted me deeply. I will write the story down.

One day the worthy inspector, Stelzl, told me, no doubt with the best intentions in the world, that if I had not published my

Digitized by Microsoft®

Icosameron, I should not now be in want of money, and that if in future I wished to live at my ease I ought never to touch a pen again, the more so as I had enough to live on without writing. I repeated this to Count Waldstein, and made fun of the counsel, but not of the counsellors, for Stelzl does not understand that the only thing which makes life bearable to me is the liberty to write, and publish my writings. I know that literary work may appear hard labour to Monsieur Stelzl, who, though very clever in his trade, only exercises it as a means of livelihood, and not to express his own ideas; writing must be to him what chopping wood is to a woodcutter. He was right in his way, and I was right in mine, when I made fun of his point of view to the Count, who, laughing himself, repeated what I had said to you, and you in turn had nothing better to do than to hurry off and tell the inspector, whose vanity, of course, was hurt, and who reproached me for the way in which I spoke of his intelligence, declaring he would give me no more advice. I tried to justify myself as well as I could, but he would not listen to my excuses. He remained angry with me, and the following day when he met me did not return my salutation. The day after it was still worse, for when I went to his wife's reception she did not admit me into the circle, or offer me a seat. You were there, Faulkircher, by the side of your friend Viderol, and you laughed. I swallowed the affront as well as I could, and for four months I have not left my room, except to dine with you in the servants' hall. You hated to see me go to the inspector's house, for when I was there I spoke Latin with him, or French with his wife, and you could not put in any of your stupid observations, as you did not understand us.

On New Year's day 1791, I took upon myself to go and wish him the compliments of the season; the inspector offered me a chair, which I did not accept. An hour afterwards he returned my visit, and did not accept the seat I offered him. I showed you the same mark of politeness, but as you know nothing of the ways of polite society you did not come to see me. So much the worse for you!

Fifth Letter.

There is, at the Château at Dux, an oratory, where only the Count, his family, his principal officers, and the officers of the garrison are allowed to attend divine service. I go there to hear Mass, because the Count told me it was my right place, and you go for the same reason. Viderol took to attending the services there; I spoke to the Count about it, and he was forbidden to do

Digitized by Microsoft®

so. In spite of this, he reappeared about ten months ago, in company with your Caroline, who, when she takes the trouble to think of such things, says she is a Lutheran. When I saw this pretty couple, I turned on my heel and went to make my devotions in the parish church, in the midst of my brethren, the honest Catholic peasants. Viderol continued to parade about near the altar with a missal in his hand, to make people think he could read. As a reward, you applauded him more loudly than ever, when he indulged in his usual sarcasm at my expense. I suppose you hoped that, teased beyond endurance, I should fling my plate at his head, and that he would fling his back at mine, while you preserved a dignified neutrality, sure that in the end he would batter me senseless. My patience knew how to resist, however, so you consulted with him as to a new insult, and one which it would be impossible for me to support. You, the house steward of the Count of Waldstein, you ordered him to do, what as a soldier I am sure you would have refused to do, had one of your officers commanded you—you ordered your vile satellite to put my portrait in an unmentionable place—and to write across it an epithet which you taught him. When I complained, you laughed, and said it was not a criminal affair; when I begged you at least to have my meals sent to my room, you refused, and by this I knew that you were the instigator of the plot.

Sixth Letter.

I resolved to punish your infamous flunky, so I consulted a lawyer, and wrote a complaint in German; but when you heard of this you came and begged me not to mention your name, as it might do you harm with the military authorities if they learned you were in the Count's service, as they supposed you only stayed with him as a friend. I tore up the first complaint, and wrote a second in Latin, and sent it to a magistrate at Dux. In it I simply asked to be guaranteed against further insult till the return of the Count. Monsieur Luser, the town magistrate of Dux, summoned Viderol before him, and made him swear, on pain of punishment, to cease his ill conduct to me. On leaving the magistrate, Viderol went straight to you, and you immediately intimated to the magistrate that the law had no jurisdiction in the Count's house, and during his absence. At the same time, you put Viderol up to stealing another of my portraits, out of one of my books, and exposing it for the second time, and in a still more infamous manner. I informed the magistrate of how his orders were obeyed. Viderol was summoned a second time, and

Digitized by Microsoft®

denied everything. I should have addressed myself to a higher tribunal had not the Dowager Countess advised me to wait till her son returned. You know that I told the whole story to every one who came to the Château, and I even conducted several people to the door of the place, where for six weeks your *chef-d'œuvre* was exposed. Every one said that as you did not order this abomination to be removed, it was because it pleased you to see it there, and that consequently you deserved the same punishment as your delightful favourite.

Seventh Letter.

Six weeks went by; Prince d'Anhalt-Koethen was coming to pass two days at the Château, and you knew that my first care would be to show the picture to this worthy personage, so you had it removed the very day of his arrival. This did not prevent me telling him the whole story, and explaining to his highness why I refused the dish your infamous menial offered me at table. The prince was indignant at your having allowed the scoundrel to wait upon him, and said that had he known his conduct, and yours, he would not have allowed him to stand behind his chair; he added that full justice would be done me when the Count returned. I was less surprised, however, when you made the wretched scoundrel wait on the Princesse de Clary and the Princess Jablonowska, when these illustrious ladies came some time after, for they knew your history, and you were too much ashamed to show yourself. You were warned of the arrival of the ladies, and I think that you, master of the magnificent Waldstein cellars, might have treated them better, and not served them such a miserable repast; you should surely have given them Tokay, and not the poor miserable wine of the country.

Eighth Letter.

Your character is written on your face with such distinctness, that any one can read it at a glance. In the network of wrinkles which cover your old physiognomy can be seen spite, meanness, malice, and ambitious ignorance. You only care about the society of your inferiors, so as to be made much off. When by chance you find yourself among your superiors, you look like a spy, and behave like one. Your jokes, which make people laugh because you laugh at them first, are always satirical and calumnious, the fruit of your hateful mind. It is on this account that fools say you are witty, and that all the inmates of the Château are afraid of you, except the oldest of all, the porter, Frederick, who

Digitized by Microsoft®

is surly and ill-mannered, but faithful; a miserly peasant, but an honest one; he does his duty, and despises you openly. I saw him in my own room throw a volume of Bayle's dictionary at your head; since then you have managed to make him die of grief. Your Caroline thought the old man had committed an unheard-of crime; naturally, for she cringes to you like a slave, and interlards her every sentence with *Monsieur le lieutenant*, therefore you are very good to her. You have given her an apartment where she can receive any friends she chooses, and they do say your unworthy behaviour has made the Château of Dux a scandal to the neighbourhood, and respectable people avoid it, for one is robbed and assassinated with impunity in the Château and the adjacent streets. You have brought shame on the noble dwelling of your master, and have changed a table which, though only a servants' table, was decent and supportable, into one of bad repute. It ought not to be so, for Caroline observes the decorum of an honest woman, and the cook and his wife are decent creatures, and you, if you behaved differently, could take the head of it with dignity. I should have been well enough satisfied if you had known how to maintain order, and should not have considered that Count Waldstein had conferred a doubtful benefit on me. As it is, I am like a noble horse whose misfortunes oblige him to herd with asses; he is forced to suffer their kicks and hustlings, as he feeds at the same rack with them. If I had been young, instead of old, I should have laid about me with a stick, for I own the old porter's courage made me blush for my own cowardice. The brave fellow never thought of his eighty years when he threw the book at your head, or of how you, being the stronger, might crush him. I am jealous of his bravery, but it is sword in hand that I should like to send you into another world, and you, old soldier as you are, dare not stand up at twelve paces from me!

Then I have to reproach you for saying that I was wrong in accusing Viderol of having written that if I succeeded in having him punished he would kill me. Who else could have written this anonymous letter but he? Do you suppose I invented it to make him appear worse? Monster that you are, do you think I need invent grievances against you when you both deserve the gallows?

NINTH LETTER.

Poor old Frederick is dead of grief and sorrow. He told me twenty times that since you accused him of stealing the wine by means of false keys, he had not had a moment's rest. O

Digitized by Microsoft®

heartless, soulless man, you ought to pine away with remorse for having distressed the good old fellow! What if he did take a few bottles, do you suppose the Count would grudge them to him at his age? You hastened the end of an honest man, who after fifty years' faithful service deserved better treatment. After his death I put a padlock on the library door, and you dared to take it off, saying I had no right to put it there. Rest assured, if so much as one book is missing I shall accuse you of having abstracted it, during the few hours in which the padlock was removed, for in spite of your almighty power it was put back. Every one is scandalised at your behaviour, and if it came to the ears of the authorities, you would lose the two hundred florins pension which the Emperor allows you in your quality of disabled soldier, but——.

Tenth Letter.

Well, Master Faulkircher, you did a master stroke when you ordered your favourite to attack me and beat me in the streets of Dux, at ten o'clock of a Sunday morning, the 11th of December 1791. Nothing indeed could be easier. I am old, I was unarmed, I had not even my cane, I could offer no resistance, and I had to take refuge in the magistrate's house; he, by the bye, was away from home.

After this noble deed, the executioner of it informed the magistrate that he only laid hands on me in obedience to your orders, and the magistrate, to whom I complained, assures me that in future the rogue will leave me in peace.

'And you will not imprison him?' I said.

'You see he is in the Count's service,' he answered.

And you think that you can behave thus, you vile and cowardly souls, under laws sanctioned by Leopold II.

It is you, Faulkircher, who have caused the ruin of the poor magistrate, who, more stupid even than you are, allowed himself to be influenced by you. I ought to denounce him, but I am sorry for his family.

You have conquered, Faulkircher, you have done everything in your power to oblige me to leave Dux,[1] and you have succeeded; but your triumph is a small one, and I shall obtain justice elsewhere. A magistrate such as Luser is only to be found at Dux. I shall find one who will resist your seductions, and prefers honours to all the riches of the earth.

[1] As he did not leave Dux, this was probably one of his many threatened departures of which the Prince de Ligne speaks.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Eleventh Letter.

Young Luser, the magistrate at Dux, who you have been clever enough to bribe, writes to me all the impertinence which you dictate to him in bad Latin. He says you say you only know two facts about me: one is that in 1767 I was driven out of Paris (which is a lie); the other is an infamous anecdote which you read in a libel which was printed about me at Töplitz in 1790. But if you quote an infamous libel you become infamous yourself, according to the code of Justinian, which you probably never heard of, and which Luser probably never read.

As for my being expelled from Paris, I deny it formally, though I will own that I had the honour to receive from the King of France a letter signed by his own hand, a letter which I still possess, and which I show to my friends. In it his majesty orders me, for reasons known to himself, to leave his kingdom. The bearer of the letter was a chevalier of the Order of Saint Louis, who told me I could leave at my own convenience, only it must be understood that I was not to go to the Hôtel d'Elbœuf, where I had had the foolhardiness to challenge the Marquis de Lille, who was not then twenty years old. I obeyed, and after having diverted myself for a year and a half in Spain, I returned to Paris, where I supped with the same Marquis de Lille at Monsieur d'Aiguebelle's. In 1783 I spent another three months in Paris, and what is more, a week at Fontainebleau, where I went with my brother, and provided with a passport from Monsieur de Vergennes. If you do not believe me you have only to go to Vienna, and ask my brother, whom you will find every day at the Prince de Kaunitz's table. You will perhaps sit next to him, for of course you will not be sent to the servants' hall. Such ways are peculiar to Dux. I can assure you I consider that a *lettre de cachet* does me more honour than your brevet of sub-lieutenant from His Imperial, Royal, and Apostolic Majesty.

A major-general who knows you by reputation tells me, and I believe him, that you are an officer; it is true, but not in the same way that the others are!

Twelfth Letter.

As the good man Luser says you only know two things about me, I will tell you a few facts, by which you may know me in future.

Digitized by Microsoft®

But as I wish to avoid the accusation of fatuity, I will confine myself to negative indications, as theologians do when they wish to make some one understand what the devil is like.

1. I was not brought up in barracks.
2. I have never been beaten with a stick, till by your orders at Dux.
3. I have never held a military position by virtue of which I had to go from Peter to Paul at my superior's orders.
4. I have never been a drunkard.
5. I have never been seen in low company, or eating with such, until you obliged me to do so at Dux.
6. I never forged certificates to keep a pension which otherwise I should have lost.
7. I never allowed any one to be wanting in respect to a man with whom I was at table.
8. I have never refused to fight a duel with any one who demanded satisfaction from me.
9. I have never in my life forgiven a deliberate insult until I had the rogue who propounded it under my heel.
10. I have never calumniated any one.
11. I have never believed a defamatory libel.
12. I have never been wanting in the respect due to old age. I have never forgotten that due to a man who, without being born a gentleman, has made himself one by study and literature.
13. I have never been an habitual adulterer.
14. I have never made, or caused to be made, an effigy of any one.
15. I have never allowed any of my companions to kiss my hand before leaving the table.
16. I have never been driven to pass my time in low company in pot-houses for want of employment, my love of literature having always preserved me from this.
17. I have never broken open doors or locks, of which I was not the master, so as to cast suspicion on the probity of others.
18. I have never ordered a defenceless old man to be assassinated in the street.
19. I have never intercepted letters.
20. Finally, I have never exhausted myself by trying to find means of injuring and wounding my neighbours.

These twenty negative qualities may assist you in deducing some positive ones by which you will know me, but it may be impossible for you to do so, as to deduce one fact from another,

Digitized by Microsoft®

one principle from another, implies a certain amount of reason, method, judgment, and study in all of which you are wanting. How can I make you understand me? Poor sub-lieutenant! You must ask Viderol; *he is witty*, he has a *prodigious talent*. This is what you said yourself one day, when you stupidly and spitefully allowed him to take off your master and his, the Count von Waldstein, at table. For shame! you should blush, Faulkircher, and hide yourself from every eye!

Digitized by Microsoft®

INDEX

AAR, the, i. 372.
A. B., count, ii. 38-44, 51-85.
A. B., countess, ii. (the Spanish countess), 38-56, 66-85.
Abbeville, ii. 133.
Abel, ii. 143 *n*.
Aberdeen, ii. 273 *n*.
Academy (French), the, i. 273.
—— the Russian, ii. 289 *n*.
Acquapendente, ii. 413, 419.
Acquaviva, cardinal, i. 39-42, 45, 51, 55, ii. 434.
Adam, i. 404.
Addison, i. 407.
Adriatic, the, i. 149.
Advertizer, The Daily, ii. 176, 223.
Affri, M. d', i. 330.
Agata, Michel, i. 350.
Agatha, ii. 31, 32, 34-38.
Agnelli, Dr., ii. 397.
Agreda, i. 221.
—— Sister Mary of, i. 219-221, ii. 342.
Aigle, L', i. 20.
Aix la Chapelle, i. 348, ii. 388, 389, 392-395.
—— in Savoy, i. 409, 411, 414, 425, 463, 468, 470, ii. 19, 21, 23.
Al——, comte d', ii. 185, 190, 196, 198, 245.
Albani, cardinal, i. 101, 106.
Albans, St., ii. 203, 204, 258, 259.
Albemarle, earl of, i. 104, 134, 332.
Albin, monseigneur de St., i. 452, 455.
Albion, ii. 137.
Alcala Gate, the, ii. 343.
Alcantara, ii. 377.
Alcestis (opera), ii. 319 *n*.
Alembert, d', i. 100, 135, 272.
Alexis III., ii. 16 *n*.
Alfani, the abbé, i. 450.
Alfonso, king of Castile, i. 7.
Algardi, Dr., ii. 6.
Algarotti, count, i. 96, 99, 397, ii. 263.
Ali, Yousouf, i. 59-62, 428.
Aloysia, i. 180.
Alzire, i. 394.
Amadis (name of a carriage), ii. 128 *n*.
Amazon, the, of Soleure. *See* Madame de R.
Ambassadeurs, les, ii. 247.
Ambrose, countess. *See* Countess B.
America, i. 432, ii. 197 *n*, 340.
Amiens, ii. 134.
Amstel, i. 333.
Amsterdam, i. 134, 289-292, 295, 296, 332, 333, 457, ii. 271.
Anaël, i. 472.
Ancilla, i. 85, 201.
Ancona, i. 29-31, 45, 48.
Andalusia, ii. 362.
André, Fort St., i. 26, 27, 76, ii. 451
—— des Arts, Rue St., i. 300.
Andrea, ii. 342.
Andremont, d', i. 109.
Angelo, San (country house), ii. 51, 57, 66, 67, 69, 82, 84.
—— Fort San, i. 451.
—— square of St., i. 78.
—— Theatre of St., ii. 201, 202.
Angoulême, ii. 340.
Anhalt, princess von, i. 281.
Anna, empress of Russia, i. 346, ii. 285 and *n*, 286.
Anne. *See* Mlle. de Roman-Couppier.
Annecy, i. 416.
—— duc d', i. 128.
Anspach, margrave of, i. 286 *n*.
Anspergher, Madame, ii. 212, 213-216, 220-222, 225, 231-234, 239, ii. 208, 209, 216.
—— Mademoiselle. *See* Charpillon.
Anthony, St., i. 231.
Antibes, les, i. 95, 98-100.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Antilles, the, ii. 418.
Antoine, Faubourg St., ii. 132, 335.
—— M. d', i. 115-118.
—— Rue St., ii. 15.
—— Porte St., i. 313.
Antoinette, Marie, ii. 7.
Août, marquis d', ii. 446-448.
—— marquise d', ii. 446-448.
Apennines, the, i. 454, 459.
Apollonia, St., i. 249.
Arabic, i. 286 *n*.
Aranda, count d', ambassador, ii. 344-346, 348, 353, 355, 360, 374, 375.
—— little D'. *See* Joseph Cornelys.
Arci, Anne de. *See* Henriette.
Ardêche, i. 191.
Ardennes, the, ii. 23 *n*, 334.
Aremberg, princess of, ii. 314-316.
Aretino, i. 214.
Argens, marquis d', ii. 392, 393.
—— marquise d', ii. 279.
Argenson, d', i. 139 *n*.
Ariosto, i. 244, 252, 339, ii. 79.
Aristide, La Fille d', i. 319.
Armanvilliers, Forest of, ii. 17 *n*.
Armellina, ii. 440-449.
Arno, the, i. 435.
Artois, comte d', i. 297.
Arts, rue St. André des, i. 300.
Aspuras, M. d', ii. 334.
Asquini, count Andrea of Udine, i. 237, 239, 247, 250, 260.
Assisi, château of St. F. d', i. 241, ii. 193 *n*.
Astrea, The, i. 283 *n*, ii. 111.
Atkins, Miss Penelope, ii. 228 *n*.
—— Mr., ii. 228 *n*.
—— Sir Henry, ii. 228 *n*.
Atonguia, count of, ii. 178 *n*.
Aubagne, ii. 99.
Audibert, Madame, ii. 100, 102, 113.
Augsburg, i. 264, 265, 463, 466, 467, ii. 3, 4, 6, 8, 15, 324, 325, 328.
Auguste, Pierre, i. 146.
Augustine, St., i. 232.
Augustinian convent, i. 305.
Austria, i. 147, 192 *n*, ii. 266 *n*.
—— crown prince of, i. 148, 149.
—— empress of, i. 10.
—— Francis, emperor of, i. 148.
—— house of, i. 202.
Auvergne, ii. 13 *n*.
—— comte de la Tour d', i. 280-283.
—— prince de la Tour d', 23 *n*.
Aveiro, duke of, ii. 178 *n*.
Aveiro, duchess of, ii. 178 *n*.
Aventuros, name given to Casanova in Prince de Ligne's *Memoirs*, i. 479.
Avicenna, ii. 294.
Avignon, i. 435, ii. 116, 391.

B——, COUNT, ii. 27.
B——, count Ambrose, ii. 66-85.
B——, countess Ambrose, ii. 68-85. *See* Eleonora.
Babet, i. 280.
—— Belle (nickname of M. de Bernis), i. 173.
Babylone, Princesse de, i. 403.
Bac, rue du, ii. 13, 334, and *n*.
Bach, ii. 143 *n*.
Baden, i. 336.
Bajac, Madame Castel-, ii. 206-208, 316-318.
—— M. Castel-, i. 325, 326, ii. 205-208, 316, 318.
Balances, Hôtel des (Geneva), i. 118, 396.
Balbi, Father Marin, i. 236-243, 248, 258.
Bâle, i. 389.
Baletti, Gianetta Rosa Benozzi (stage name Silvia), i. 123-126, 278, 279, 299, 301, 326, 327-329.
—— Joseph (actor), i. 122, 124, 278.
—— Louis, son of Silvia, i. 123, 138, 278, 327, 349, 354, 357, 399.
—— Manon, daughter of Silvia, i. 279, 280, 299, 301, 321, 326-329, 337, 475.
—— Silvia. *See* Baletti.
Balsamo, Joseph. *See* Cagliostro.
Baltimore, lord, ii. 217, 253, 425.
Bar (in Podolia), ii. 298 *n*.
—— conspiracy of, ii. 298 *n*.
Barbarina, la, ii. 278.
Barbarini, family, i. 81 *n*.
—— Francesco, i. 81 *n*, 149.
Barbaro, ii. 44, 45, 49, 56, 400.
Barcelona, ii. 91, 372, 377, 381, 384, 386-389, 452.
—— captain-general of. *See* Ricla.
—— donjon of, ii. 384.
Baret, M., i. 328.
—— Madame, i. 328, 476.
Barnaby, Father St., i. 452, 455.
Barnes, ii. 258.
Barrière Blanche, the, i. 280.
Barry, Madame du, ii. 424, 426 *n*.
Bartholomew, St., i. 401 *n*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Baschet, Armand, i. 224 *n.*
Bassi (comedian), ii. 8-11.
—— signora, ii. 8.
Bastille, i. 270 *n*, 322, 324, 325, 328 *n*, ii. 390.
Bath, ii. 164, 193 *n*, 233 *n*.
Bauchamont, i. 134.
Baume, Hôtel St., ii. 104.
Bavaria, elector of, i. 342, 343, ii. 75, 264.
Bavarian minister, ii. 176.
Bavois, baron, i. 120-122.
Bayle's Dictionary, ii. 480.
Bayonne, ii. 341.
Bayreuth, i. 290, 303.
—— margrave of, i. 290, ii. 19, 75.
Beaufort, duke of, ii. 155.
Beaufranchet d'Ayot, Vincent de, i. 139 *n.*
—— madame de, i. 139.
Beauharnais, M. de, i. 100,
Beaumont street, ii. 247 *n*.
Beauvoisin, Pont de, ii. 128.
Beckw—, English general, ii. 205.
Bedford, duke of, i. 135, ii. 136.
Belcour, Place, ii. 118.
Bellino, the false. *See* Teresa.
Beloselski, prince, Russian ambassador, ii. 423.
Benedict XIV., pope, i. 40, 360, ii. 456.
Benoit, rue St., i. 283 *n*.
Benozzi, Silvia. *See* Baletti.
Bergamo, ii. 93.
—— Bartolomeo, i. 175, ii. 93.
Berg op Zoom, i. 132 *n*.
Berlin, i. 63, ii. 29, 267, 272, 273 and *n*, 278, 280, 281, 318.
Bernardis, Bernard of (bishop of Martorano), i. 38-40.
Berne, i. 389, 390, 417, 443, ii. 28, 122, 248, 251.
Bernis, cardinal de, i. 167, 168, 171, 180, 183, 190, 203, 208, 268, 272, 278, 289, 298, 316, 317, 468, ii. 423, 427, 434-436, 440, 441.
Besançon, ii. 399.
Bettina, i. 14.
Betting club, ii. 202, 207.
Betty, Miss, ii. 403, 405-422, 424, 427.
Bezkoi, ii. 294, 295.
Binetti, La, i. 349, 353-357, ii. 165, 167, 300-302, 311, 313.
Bininski, ii. 307, 308.
Biron, prince, i. 346, ii. 284.
Biron or Birlen, ii. 208.
Black Eagle, Order of the, ii. 205, 208.
Blaise, St., i. 151.
Blasin, countess of. *See* Madame de Castel-Bajac, *alias* Mlle. Blasin.
Blessed Sacrament, priest of the Confraternity of the, i. 16.
Blondel, Madame. *See* Manon Baletti.
Boaz, M. (banker), i. 289.
Boccaccio, ii. 140.
Bodisson, baron, ii. 280.
Boerhave, i. 309, 401.
Bohemia, ii. 370.
Böhmer, ii. 7.
Bolingbroke, lord, ii. 155.
Bologna, i. 46-50, 53, 54, 166, 400, 403, 405, 407-461, 465-476, ii. 14, 19, 21, 132, 379, 400, 452, 454, 456.
Bolomé, ii. 212.
Bolzan, M., i. 264.
Bon Couvent, ii. 406
Bonn, i. 340-342, 347, 349, 353.
Bonneval, comte de, i. 43, 58, 59, 62.
Bono (banker), ii. 119-121.
Bontems, ii. 54.
Bordeaux, ii. 241, 339, 343, 416, 418.
Borgo, i. 260, 261.
Borieff, abbé de, i. 468 *n*.
Borromeo, count, ii. 38.
Bosanquet, M., ii. 200, 262, 263.
Bosè, Matteo, ii. 116, 123-126.
Bosnia, ii. 131 *n*.
Botta, marshal, i. 441.
Bottarelli, ii. 245.
Boucher, i. 139 *n*.
Boufflers, i. 128.
Bouillon, ii. 23 and *n*.
—— duc de, ii. 23.
—— Godfrey of, ii. 23 *n*.
—— Hôtel de, i. 283.
Boulogne, Bois de, i. 472.
—— M. de, i. 269-271, 296, 301, 302, 330.
Bourbeux (Bourbon), i. 100.
Bourbon, duc de, i. 266 *n*.
——. *See* son of Mlle. Roman-Couppier.
—— Hôtel de, i. 266.
Bourg-la-Reine, ii. 339.
Bourguignon (painter), i. 479.
Bourse, the, i. 289, 292, 331.
Bragadin, M. de, i. 81-84, 95-103, 120, 121, 149, 150, 155, 158, 189, 190, 212, 228, 235, 238, 242, 263, 264, 268, 435, ii. 92, 124, 234, 261, 280, 337, 400.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Bragadin Palace, i. 181, 189, 210, 212.
Bragelogne, Marie Françoise Michelle de, ii. 111 *n.*
Brancaforte, cardinal, ii. 455.
Branecki, John Clement, ii. 298 *n*, 301.
—— Xavier, ii. 300-330.
Bras d'Or, Hôtel, ii. 135, 265.
Braun, marshal, ii. 286.
Brazil, princess of, ii. 181, 182.
Brenta canal, i. 10.
Brescia, i. 265.
Breslau, ii. 313.
Bretagne, Hôtel de la, i. 300, 313.
Brézé, chevalier de, i. 465.
Brienne, Madame, ii. 390 *n.*
Brignolles, Madame, ii. 390 *n.*
Britain, Great, ii. 401.
—— —— king of, ii. 242.
British Museum, ii. 156.
Brockhaus MS., ii. 448.
Brosses, abbé des, i. 143.
Brougnole (servant), ii. 19, 101, 108.
Brühl, i. 343, 344.
—— comte de, i. 146.
Brunswick, ii. 271, 272.
—— duke of, ii. 271.
—— duchess of, ii. 278.
—— prince of, ii. 240.
Brussels, i. 129, 276 *n*, 330, 339, ii. 19, 332, 334.
Bruyère, la, ii. 177.
Bucentaur, the, i. 151.
Buen Retiro, ii. 356, 357.
Buhot, M., ii. 338.
Burgundy, duke of, ii. 132, 339, 455.
Businello, M. Pietro, i. 223.
Bussola, Sale, i. 215.
Butter, king of, i. 303.
Byzantium, ii. 16 *n.*

C. C., Mlle., i. 147-162, 164, 165, 174, 180, 184, 186-190, 193-197, 204, 209, 269, 300.
Cadiz, ii. 262.
Cagliostro, comte de, ii. 197, 389, 390, 393, 456.
—— Madame, ii. 389-391.
Caïaphas, i. 353.
Calabria, i. 23.
Calsabigi, M. de, i. 271, 272, ii. 140.
—— M. de, ii. 272, 278, 318.
—— Ranieri, ii. 319 *n.*
Calvados, i. 139.
Camargo family, i. 127, 129.
—— La, i. 129.
Cambon, M., ii. 131 *n.*
Cambray, i. 452, 453.
Cambresis, Câteau-, ii. 23 *n.*
Cambridge, i. 401 *n.*
Camille (actress), i. 111, 130, 280, 282, 476.
Camoëns, ii. 177, 189.
Campan, Madame, i. 467 *n.*
Campioni, Dr., i. 85, ii. 318, 319 *n.*
Camus, M. le, ii. 334 *n.*
Canada, i. 134.
Canal, the Grand, i. 215.
Canano, ii. 60, 61, 64.
Canonica (Venice), the, i. 252.
Canterbury, ii. 132.
Cantons, Hotel of the Thirteen, ii. 100, 101, 110.
Capacelli, Albergati, i. 403, ii. 456, 457.
Capello, Andrea, ii. 340, 341.
Capitol, the, ii. 436.
Cappi, Marie Anne. *See* La Camargo.
Capriola, duke of, ii. 429.
—— duchess of, ii. 429.
Capronica, Theatre, ii. 447.
Capsucefalo, i. 205-208.
Capuchin, the, ii. 52-54, 56.
Caraccioli, marchese, ii. 237, 253, 257.
Caramania, Osman, Pacha of. *See* Comte de Bonneval.
Caravita, Father, i. 219.
Carli, M., ii. 4, 11, 12.
Carlisle, lord, i. 400, ii. 138.
—— house, ii. 138.
—— street, ii. 138, 209 *n.*
Carlo, San, i. 54.
Caroline, ii. 314, 478, 480. *See* d'Aremberg.
—— queen of Naples, ii. 425 *n.*
Carpegna, mount, i. 83.
Carrajo, i. 435.
Casacci (actress), ii. 302.
Casanova, called the Abbé, Casanova's fourth brother, i. 8, 92-95, ii. 129, 130-133.
—— François, i. 8-10, 76-78, 131, 145, 273, 479, 480, ii. 129, 130, 389.
—— Joseph Jacques Gaëtan, i. 7.
—— Mark Antony, i. 7.
—— Don Jacopo, i. 7.
—— Jacques, i. 7.
—— Don Juan, i. 7.
—— Jean, i. 8, 445, 446, ii. 337.
Casopo (island), i. 68-74.
Castagiroñe, ii. 390 and *n.*
Castel-Bajac. *See* Bajac.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Castile, Alfonso, king of, i. 7, 8.
—— council of, ii. 344 and *n*.
—— New, ii. 376.
—— Old, i. 221, ii. 376.
Castries, M. de, i. 347.
Castropignano, duke of, i. 54, 440.
Catai, la, ii. 324.
Catalonica, ii. 286, 289.
Catena, Monte, ii. 426 *n*.
Caterinhof, ii. 290.
Catherine II., empress of Russia, ii. 288, 289, 290, 294, 295, 296, 314.
Catina, wife of Pocchini, ii. 319.
Catolica, prince de la, i. 272, ii. 337.
Caudagna, i. 111.
Caumont, ii. 231.
Cavanac, Madame de, i. 468.
—— marquis de, i. 467 *n*.
Cécile, i. 46.
Celsi (a nun), i. 165.
Centino, ii. 413.
Cephalonia, i. 68, 208.
Cerfs, Parc aux, i. 140, 141, 302, 467 and *n*.
Cerigo, i. 90, 225.
Césarino, i. 440, ii. 50, 51.
Cesario. *See* Cesarino.
Cesena, i. 52, 103, ii. 396.
Chaban, M., i. 315.
Chaillot, St. Pierre de, i. 467 *n*.
Chambéry, i. 409, 413, 414, 417, 418, 425, 427, 431, 459, 467, 470.
—— bishop of, i. 415, ii. 30.
—— nun of. *See* second M. M.
Chambord, i. 302, 331.
Champoly, ii. 13 *n*.
Champs, rue Neuve des Petits, i. 475.
Chandieu, M. de Villars, i. 396.
Chanteloup, i. 270.
Chapelain, M., i. 404, 405.
Charche, marquis de la Tour du Pin de la, i. 96-98.
Charing Cross Road, i. 138 *n*.
Charles V., ii. 23 *n*.
—— XII., ii. 208.
—— prince. *See* Courland.
—— husband of Cristina, i. 96-98.
Charlotte. *See* Marchesa della Croce.
Charlottenburg, ii. 278.
Charon, councillor of the High Court, i. 286.
Charpillon, Miss, ii. 123, 208-222, 224-239, 235, 247.
Chartreux, Le Portier des, i. 180, 214.
Châteauroux, duchesse de, ii. 2 *n*.
Châtelet, le, ii. 336.
—— Madame du, i. 286, ii. 197 and *n*.
—— marquis du, ii. 197 *n*.
Chateleraux, Dubois, M. *See* Dubois.
Chauvelin, M. de, i. 397, ii. 147.
—— Madame, de, i. 381, ii. 32.
Chavigny, M. de, i. 369-374, 378, 379, 381, 382, 388, 389.
Chelsea, ii. 225.
Chemistry, Meyer's *History of*, ii. 327.
Chiaggia or Chiaga, ii. 425.
Chiari, the Abbé, i. 201, 210.
Chimay, prince de, i. 454.
Chinese Spy, ii. 217.
Chiozza, i. 29.
Choiseul, duc de, i. 269-271, 289, 298, 301, 330, 367, 368, 473, ii. 339.
—— Madame de, ii. 390.
Choisy, ii. 5.
—— le Roi, ii. 2 *n*.
Christianpol, ii. 311.
Christ, the Portuguese Order of, ii. 74.
Chronicle, St. James's, ii. 168 and *n*, 246.
Chudleigh, colonel Thomas, ii. 192 *n*.
—— the Hon. Miss, ii. 138, 192 and *n*, 193, 427, 428 *n*. *See* Duchess of Kingston.
Cirillo, Palesi, i. 292, 437. *See* Teresa.
Civita Vecchia, i. 107.
Clairmont, Casanova's valet, ii. 39, 40, 44, 52, 69, 70, 72, 73, 87, 92, 95, 100, 108, 114, 115, 128, 133, 135, 139, 147, 172, 174, 220, 245.
Clark, sir Alured, ii. 163 *n*.
Clary, count d'Aldringhen, ii. 313.
—— princesse d'Aldringhen, ii. 479.
Clement XIII., pope, i. 192.
Clementina, ii. 67, 69, 71-91.
Clerkenwell, ii. 243 *n*.
Cobentzel, comte de, ii. 266.
Coblenz, i. 349.
Cocci, Merlin, i. 404.
Coche (valet), i. 452 *n*.
Cochois, la, ii. 279.
Cockspur street, ii. 141 *n*.
Cœli, duke of Medina, ii. 350, 351.
Coire, i. 265.
Cologne, i. 339-341, 343, 349, 350, ii. 212 *n*, 329.
—— elector of, i. 360, 453, ii. 75.
—— *Gazette*, ii. 329, 330.
Colonna, the Constable, ii. 436.
Colorno, i. 114, 115.
Comedie, Française, i. 319.
Comedy, Italian, ii. 129.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Commerce, the Inspector-General of, ii. 212 *n.*
Compostella, St. James of, i. 231, ii. 389, 390.
Compton street, ii. 140 *n.*
Comte, rue Salle du, i. 325 *n.*
Condé, prince de, i. 131, 132.
Condulmer, M., i. 202.
Confederation, the Swiss, ii. 397.
Congreve, ii. 196.
Constantinople, i. 43, 50, 51, 54-57, 62, 201, 225 *n*, 479, ii. 16 *n*, 340, 375, 400.
Conti, prince de, i. 133 *n*, 142, 310-320, ii. 332, 333, 476.
Convention, the National, i. 333.
Conway, ii. 152 *n*, 193 *n.*
Coraline, i. 130, 476.
Cordeliers, convent of the, i. 226.
Corfu, i. 55, 57, 62, 63, 65, 70, 72-76, 255.
Corilla, i. 435.
Cornaris, i. 80.
Cornelys, Madam, i. 16, 290-294, 296, 333, ii. 137-139, 142-146, 149-151, 153, 160-162, 174-176, 203, 207, 240, 269, 429, 430. *See* Thérèse Imer and Trenti.
—— Joseph, 291-294, 298, 299, 303, 319-320, 471, ii. 18, 19, 118, 129, 133, 135, 139, 145, 149, 150, 172, 429, 430. *See* Little D'Aranda.
—— Sophie, i. 290-295, ii. 139, 142, 145, 149, 150, 161, 162, 174, 175, 203, 207, 407-409.
Corneman, M. (banker), i. 289, 451.
Corsica, Frederick, son of King Theodore of, ii. 167, 259.
Coronini, countess, i. 165, 264.
Corso, the, i. 451, 456.
Corticelli, La, i. 439, 441, 458-460, ii. 14-17, 19-23, 26-31, 33, 35, 39, 119, 129, 131, 132. *See* Lascaris.
Cosenza, i. 38, ii. 33, 35, 39.
—— suffragan bishop of, i. 23.
Cosse, M. Rousse de, ii. 113.
Costa (secretary), i. 445, 447, 450, 451, 458, 462, 469, ii. 3, 5-7.
Coudert, M. de, i. 413-415.
Coulouge, dame de Meilly-. *See* Roman-Couppier.
Council of the Five Hundred, i. 566.
Couppier, J. J. Roman, i. 467 *n.*
—— Mlle. Roman, i. 427, 430-434, 441, 467, 473, 475.
Courland, duchess of, ii. 280-282.
Courland, duke of, i. 282, 283.
——, prince Charles Ernest, i. 324-326, 328 and *n*, ii. 293, 324 and *n*, 328, and *n.*
Courtag (concert), i. 295.
Covent Garden Theatre, ii. 148.
Coventry, lady, ii. 154 and *n*, 155 and *n.*
—— lord, ii. 154 and *n.*
Cramers, the, i. 402.
Crébillon, i. 126-128, 405.
Cristina, i. 85, 87-99.
Croce, the marchese don Antonio di (M. de St. Croix), ii. 85-87, 331-335 *n*, 336.
—— the marchesa, ii. 329, 332-335, 337, 339.
—— prince of Santa, ii. 434, 435.
—— princess of, ii. 437.
Crocielles, les, ii. 425, 433.
Croisen, Mlle., ii. 80-82, 85-87, 94-100, 102, 113.
Cromwell, Oliver, i. 127.
Cross and Blackwell, ii. 144 *n.*
—— the Rose, i. 372, ii. 14.
Crusaders, the, ii. 16 *n.*
Curtz (musician), i. 351.
Cyprien, seminary of St., ii. 8.
Czartoryski, prince Adam, ii. 296 and *n*, 298, 307, 309, 312, 324.
—— princess, ii. 298.
—— Constance, ii. 298.
—— family, ii. 300.
—— Michael, ii. 298 *n.*
Czernitscheff, M. de, ii. 286.

DALACQUA, BARBARA, i. 41, 42.
Damiens, i. 267, 271, 274, 275.
Dancourt, Mimi, i. 144.
Dandolo family, i. 81.
—— signor, i. 96, 149, 165, ii. 263, 337, 345, 361, 400, 434, 456, 459.
Dangenancour, la, ii. 2.
Daniel, count, i. 20.
Dante, ii. 78, 244, 359.
Dantzig, ii. 281.
Daschkoff, princess, ii. 289 *n*, 294 *n.*
Daturi, ii. 264-268.
Dauphiné, ii. 13 *n.*
Dauphiness, the, of France, i. 125.
Délices, Les (Voltaire's house), i. 403, ii. 28.
Demidoff, count, ii. 293.
Democritus, ii. 294.
Denis, Madame, i. 403.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Denis, rue du Faubourg St., i. 272, 273, 327.
Denmark street, Soho, ii. 138, 209.
Desaix, ii. 131 *n.*
Désarmoises, Marquis, i. 410, 411, 416, 418, 463, ii. 3-7.
Destouches, i. 135.
Deux Ponts, prince de, i. 343, 344.
Devonshire street, ii. 247 *n.*
Diderot, i. 286.
Diedo, signor André, i. 227, 238.
Diego, don (the cobbler), ii. 349-353, 359, 365-367, 375, 379.
Dietrici (painter), i. 131.
Doge, the, i. 149, 204, 251, ii. 252.
Dolfin, M., i. 63, 273.
Dolgorouki, princess, ii. 288.
Dono, Marco, ii. 458.
Douval, J. B., ii. 336.
Dresden, i. 131, 145-147, ii. 4, 193 *n*, 313, 317, 318, 329, 479.
—— Academy of Painting, i. 8.
Drummond, lady Mary, i. 63.
—— Louis Hector, lord Melfort, i. 130.
Drury Lane Theatre, ii. 148, 156 *n.*
Dubois, Madame, 373-377, 379, 380, 385, 386-389, 390-396, ii. 29.
—— Chateleraux, M., director of the Mint, i. 113-116, ii. 400, 401.
Duc, le, Casanova's valet, i. 328, 329, 353, 354, 356, 358, 363-366, 372, 374-377, 385-388, 409, 411, 420, 425, 426, 428-430, 458, 467, 469, ii. 3, 7, 15.
Dumont, Louis Philippe, i. 139.
Dunkirk, i. 274-279, ii. 265.
Duprès, i. 129, ii. 30 and *n*, 32, 36.
—— Madame, ii. 31.
Dutillon, M., i. 114.
Duverney, Joseph, i. 270 *n.*
—— M. Pâris, i. 270 and *n*, 271.
Dux, château of, i. 200, ii. 392, 393, 474-478, 480-483.

Eagle, Order of the Red, ii. 74.
—— Order of the White, ii. 306.
Ecole Militaire, ii. 272.
Ecossaise, l', i. 400.
Edgar, ii. 235-240, 247.
Edinburgh, i. 63.
Egeria (Madame d'Urfé, the Regent's name for), i. 382, 383, ii. 110 *n.*
Egmont, count, i. 128.
Egremont, lord, ii. 147.
Eigreville, comte d', i. 280.
Einsiedeln, abbot of, i. 359, 365.
—— Our Lady of, i. 360, 363.
Elbœuf, Hôtel d', ii. 482.
Elector, the, i. 342, 345, 349. *See* Cologne.
—— Palatine of Germany, ii. 455.
Eleonora. *See* Countess Ambrose B.
Elizabeth, empress of Russia, i. 133, ii. 285 *n.*
—— queen, i. 132.
—— Romanofna, ii. 289 *n.*
Elliot's Light Horse, ii. 163 *n.*
Elysées, Champs, i. 281.
Emilia, ii. 441, 443, 445.
Emily, Miss (daughter of Malingan), ii. 229, 230.
Emperor Francis, i. 148, ii. 131 *n.*
Empire, Holy Roman, i. 360.
England, i. 180 *n*, 192 *n*, 258, 334, 367, 374, 401, ii. 36, 37, 135, 137, 145, 149, 153, 157, 159, 162, 174, 176, 184, 185, 212, 241, 242, 247, 249, 252, 264, 317, 390 *n*, 418, 427, 455.
—— king of, ii. 313 *n.* *See* Zanetta Farusi.
English cabinet, i. 374.
—— court, i. 208.
Eno, M.,
Enoff, family of, ii. 298.
Eon, chevalier d', i. 130.
Erizzo, signor, i. 269, 298, ii. 434, 435, 437, 460, 461.
Erouville, comte d', i. 335.
—— comtesse d', i. 334.
Esprit, de l' (by Helvetius), i. 330.
—— Hôtel du Saint, i. 470.
Este family, i. 400.
Esther. *See* d'O.
Estrées, maréchale d', i. 139.
Etoile, comte de l', ii. 407-410, 412-416, 418, 419, 422-424, 427.
Eudoxia, ii. 16 *n.* *See* Lascaris.
Eugène, prince, i. 43, 443, 444.
Euripides, i. 365.
Europe, i. 202, 287, 427, ii. 145, 147, 212 *n*, 243, 289 and *n*, 298 *n*, 299 *n*, 332, 340-343, 369, 391, 399, 401, 431, 455, 474, 480.
Evangels, the, ii. 265 *n.*
Evêque, Fort l', i. 327.
Exchange, the London, ii. 246.

F., Madame, i. 75.
—— Madame M., ii. 248-251.

Digitized by Microsoft®

F., Monsieur M., ii. 248-249.
—— Mlle. M., ii. 248-251. *See* Sara.
—— marchesa, ii. 46, 49, 56-60.
Fabris, count de, i. 100, 101.
Fanny (his maidservant), ii. 168.
Farnese, i. 7, 113.
Farsetti, M., i. 314, 315, 330.
Farusi, Jerome, i. 7, 9.
—— Marzia, Casanova's grandmother, i. 7-9, 12, 14, 15.
—— Zanetta, Casanova's mother, i. 7, 13, 145 and *n*, ii. 313 *n*.
Father, the Holy, i. 443. *See* Pope.
Fatherby, Thomas, ii. 204.
Faulkircher, Master, ii. 474-484.
Favart, Madame, i. 276.
Fel, Mlle. le, i. 128.
Feliciani, Lorenza. *See* Madame Cagliostro.
Feltre, i. 265.
Fénelon, i. 453.
Fermor, sir Frederick, ii. 139, 146.
Ferney, ii. 28.
Ferrers, lady, ii. 157 *n*.
—— lord, ii. 157 and *n*, 158.
Ferrol, ii. 185.
Ferronnerie, rue de la, i. 307.
Feuillade, duc de la, ii. 131 *n*.
Fiano, duchess of, ii. 434, 435, 437, 442, 457.
Fielding, Mr. Henry, ii. 242, 243 *n*.
—— sir John, ii. 144 *n*, 243 *n*.
Figaro, i. 477.
Finland, i. 132 *n*.
Fiore, Campo di, ii. 442.
Firmian, count, ii. 70.
Fisher, Kitty, ii. 223, 223 *n*, 228.
Fitzpatrick, Mr., ii. 156 *n*.
Fitzroy, lady Caroline, ii. 152 *n*.
Fitzwilliam, lord, i. 400, ii. 163 *n*.
—— —— Mary, daughter of, ii. 163 *n*.
Fl—— comte de, ii. 179, 180, 182-184.
Flanders, i. 276.
Flavacour, M. de, i. 339.
Fleece, Order of the Golden, ii. 205.
Fleet Prison, ii. 138, 390 *n*.
Fleury, cardinal de, i. 191, 270 *n*.
Florence, i. 115, 340, 435, 436, 441, 442, 457-460, ii. 15, 28, 40-42, 131, 224, 426, 429, 450, 451, 453-455.
—— La, actress, i. 452 *n*.
—— grand duke of, i. 442.
Folard, M. de, ii. 5.
Fontainebleau, i. 123, 131, 132, ii. 17 *n*, 29, 129, 480.
Fontenelle, M. de, i. 135, 271, 398.
Fontenoy, i. 132 *n*.
Foréz, Bailli de, ii. 111 *n*.
—— Guy, comte de, ii. 13 *n*.
—— district of le, ii. 13 *n*, 111 *n*.
Foscari, M., i. 72, 74.
Fouquet, M. de, ii. 15.
Foundling Hospital, the, ii. 336.
Fragoletta, i. 7.
Fraiture, baron de, ii. 371-373.
Française, Comédie, ii. 1.
Francavilla, prince de, ii. 428.
France, i. 7, 63, 122-124, 131, 134-136, 192 *n*, 226, 235, 267, 279, 282 *n*, 287-289, 301, 330, 332, 333, 349, 401, 432, 453, 468 *n*, 473, ii. 13, 19, 23, 36, 75, 82, 108, 110, 148 *n*, 159, 193 *n*, 207, 224, 226 *n*, 312 *n*, 317, 318 *n*, 339-341, 348, 388, 389, 397.
—— house of, i. 202.
—— king of, i. 172, 334, 434, 467 *n*.
—— queen of, i. 131, 132, 141, 468.
—— regent of, i. 452, 453.
—— Madame de, i. 110.
Francis I., i. 148, ii. 314.
—— St., i. 249, 251.
Francisco, don. *See* De Ramos.
François. *See* Casanova.
Frankfort, i. 145, 354, ii. 15, 16.
Frederick III. of Denmark, i. 131.
Frederick Augustus II., elector of Saxony and king of Poland, ii. 298.
—— the Great, i. 63, 392, 403; ii. 205, 273-281, 294, 295, 318, 340, 392, 401.
—— son of King Theodore of Corsica, ii. 167, 260.
—— (the porter at Dux), ii. 479, 480.
Freemasons' Lodge, ii. 455.
—— society of, i. 123.
Freire, Father, ii. 180.
Fréjus, ii. 99.
Friuli, i. 295, ii. 49.
Furioso, Orlando, i. 224.
Fürstenberg, i. 357.
Fusina, i. 257.

GABRIELLE, ii. 258. *See* Hanoverians.
Gaëtan, Joseph Jacques. *See* Casanova.
Gages, general de, ii. 341.
Galicia, ii. 311, 389.
Galilee, ii. 265 *n*.
Galtinarde, cabalistic name, ii. 108, 110, 111, 129. *See* Casanova.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Gama, the abbé, i. 439, 441, 463, 467, ii. 5.
Gamache, marquis de, i. 280.
Garde, la (singer), i. 310.
Gardella, La (dancer), i. 349-351.
Garden, the Summer, ii. 294.
Garnier, M., i. 327-329.
Garrick, ii. 156 and *n.*
Gaussen, Mlle., i. 134.
Geneva, i. 115, 117, 118, 212, 389, 392, 395, 396, 401 *n*, 425, 469, ii. 27, 29, 199, 212, 395.
Genoa, i. 367 *n*, 435, ii. 296, 387.
Genoese lottery, ii. 277.
Geoffrin, Madame, ii. 311 and *n.*
George II., king, i. 367 *n*, ii. 193 *n.*
—— III., king, i. 134, ii. 152 *n*, 163.
Georgi, Father, i. 39.
Gergy, Madame, i. 286.
Germain, comte de St., i. 105, 286 *n*, 302, 330-332, 334, 335, 471-473.
Germaine, lady Betty, ii. 76.
Germany, i. 338, 347, 348, 467, ii. 14, 76, 265 *n*, 455.
Gesvres, duc de, i. 279.
Ghost, Hotel of the Holy, ii. 3.
Gil Blas, i. 447.
Giles, Madame de Saint, ii. 32, 33.
Gillenspetz, M., i. 158.
Giorgio, San, island of, i. 79.
Goldoni, the abbé, i. 403.
Gontaut, Louise de, i. 282 *n.*
Gonzaga, St. Louis of, ii. 71.
Gorice, ii. 463-466, 469, 472, 473.
Gothemberg-India Company, i. 289.
Goudar, chevalier Angelo, ii. 167, 212, and *n*, 216, 220, 222, 223, 226, 228, 239, 244, 246, 252, 253, 255, 425-427, 430, 433.
—— Madame (Sarah), i. 425, ii. 212 *n*, 224, 428 *n.*
Gozzi, Bettina, i. 12, 14.
—— Dr., i. 11, 12, 77.
Graffigny, Madame de, i. 135, 319.
Grafton, duke of, ii. 152 *n.*
—— lady, ii. 240.
Grammont, duc de, i. 303.
—— duchesse de, i. 372.
Grand, Messer (the chief inquisitor), i. 214, 231, ii. 48.
Gravino, M., Metastasio's tutor, i. 147.
Greek Street, Soho, ii. 143 *n.*
Grenada, ii. 265 *n.*
Grenoble, i. 414, 427, 434, 441, 467-470, 472, 473, ii. 362.
Greppi, M., ii. 41, 42, 44, 85.
Grève, Place de la, i. 275.
Grimaldi, signor, ii. 88, 90, 91, 120, 344 *n*, 345.
Grimani, the abbé, i. 10, 12, 15, 22, 23, 25, 26, 29, 55, 77, 242, 258.
—— Mark Antony, i. 262.
Grimm, baron, ii. 265 *n.*
Grizellini, i. 25.
Grossetête, the abbé, i. 149.
Grosvenor, lord, ii. 217, 239, 247.
Gualdo, Frédéric. *See* Parsano.
Guerchy, comte de (French ambassador), i. 133, ii. 147, 148, 150, 212.
Gunning, Miss, ii. 154 and *n.*

HACKNEY, ii. 207.
Halifax, lord, i. 473, ii. 5.
Haller, M., i. 392, 398, 408.
Hamburg, i. 131.
Hannibal, ii. 375, 376.
Hanover, i. 367, ii. 252, 260.
Hanoverians, The, ii. 252-261.
Hapsburg, house of, i. 192, 203.
Hardegg, count, i. 462.
Harlequin, i. 477.
Harrington, lady, ii. 123, 152-154, 160-162, 165, 169, 207, 240.
Harwich, ii. 207, 214.
Havana, ii. 159.
Haye, la (the Hague), i. 289, 291, 292, 298, 330, ii. 174.
—— Valentin de la (Henriette's tutor), i. 113, 119-122.
Haymarket Theatre, ii. 165.
Hedge Lane, ii. 140 *n.*
Helène et Paris (opera), ii. 319 *n.*
Helvetius, i. 330.
Hemiton Manor, ii. 223 *n.*
Henri II., ii. 23 *n.*
—— IV., i. 126, ii. 307 *n.*
Henriade, La, ii. 455.
Henriette, i. 100-119, 396; ii. 114-118, 199, 393-395, 401.
Heraclius, ii. 294.
Herbert, Henry, 10th earl of Pembroke, ii. 163 *n.*
Hercules, i. 477.
Hermit, the, i. 33.
Hermits, Street of the Two, ii. 336.
Herod, ii. 265 *n.*
Herrenschwand, Dr., i. 372.
Hervey, lord Augustus, ii. 157-159, 192, 193 *n.*
Hesse, i. 286 *n.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

Hesse the landgrave Charles of, ii. 265 *n.*
Hilscher (bookseller), ii. 476.
Hippolyte, ii. 257. *See* Hanoverians.
Hobbes, i. 407.
Hofmann (banker), ii. 314.
Hogarth, ii. 247 *n.*
Holbach, d', i. 280 *n.*
Holland, i. 289, 290, 294, 296, 298-300, 326, 327, 329, 330, 332, 334, 338, 401 *n*, 437, ii. 138, 429.
Holstein, Gottorp, duke of (afterwards Peter III.), ii. 285 *n*, 314.
Homer, ii. 189, 426 *n.*
Honoré, rue St., i. 307.
Hope (banker). *See* d'O.
—— Esther. *See* d'O.
Hôpital, M. de l', i. 379.
Horace, i. 214, 240, 398, 406, 477.
Horeb, Mount, i. 311.
Horosmadis, i. 472.
Hours, essay on the Planetary, i. 214.
Houssaye, M. Arsène, i. 468 *n.*
Hugo, Victor, i. 215.
Huguenot, i. 401 *n.*
Humane Society, ii. 157 *n.*
Hungary, i. 151.
Hunter, Charles Ormsby, ii. 163 *n.*
—— Miss, ii. 163 *n.*
Hyde Park, ii. 154 *n*, 193, 252.

Ignazia, doña, ii. 349-355, 359, 361, 365-370, 375.
Igny, lady Marguerite, i. 139.
Iliad, the, ii. 271.
Imer, the actor, ii. 138.
—— Thérèse. *See* Madam Cornelys.
Impératrice, Hôtel de l', i. 330.
India, ii. 1.
—— Company, i. 300.
Innocente. *See* False M. M.
Innocents, Charnier des, i. 307 *n.*
Inquisition, the, i. 177, 242, 252, 259, 471, ii. 342, 346, 348.
Inquisitor, the Grand, i. 215.
Inquisitors, the State, i. 243, 249.
Invalides, Hôtel des, i. 131 *n.*
Iphigenia, ii. 192 *n.*
Ireland, ii. 163 *n.*
Isis Lodge, i. 390 *n.*
Isolabella, signora, ii. 87, 89, 90.
Italienne, Comedie, i. 280.
Italy, i. 110, 202, 375, 424, 431, ii. 27, 39, 111 *n*, 278, 312, 348, 379, 406, 414, 416, 419, 429, 462.
Ivan VI. emperor of Russia, i. 285, 286.
Ivanovitch, ii. 228. *See* Ivan VI.
Ivanoff, i. 441.

Jablonowski, prince, ii. 307.
—— princess, ii. 479.
Jacquet, editor of *Cologne Gazette*, ii. 229, 230.
—— street, i. 231.
Jarbe (negro servant), ii. 149, 168, 199, 203, 241, 246, 264.
Jesuits, the, ii. 244.
Job, quay of St., i. 87.
Johnson, John, ii. 157 *n.*
Joselle, the curé, i. 15, 25, 26.
Joseph I., of Portugal, ii. 178 *n.*
—— II., the emperor, i. 100, 149.
Jousouf. *See* Ali.
Justice, convent of Ste., i. 165, 264.
Justinian, code of, ii. 482 *n.*

Kaiserling, herr von, ii. 281, 282.
Kaunitz, prince, i. 202, ii. 321-324, 482.
Kefalides, M., ii. 6.
Keith family, ii. 273 *n.*
—— field-marshal Francis lord, i. 63, 193-195, ii. 267, 273 *n.*
—— George, 10th earl, governor of Neufchâtel, ii. 273 *n*-277, 280.
—— lady Mary. *See* Drummond.
—— Hall, ii. 273 *n.*
King George II., ii. 163 *n.*
—— —— III., ii. 143, 162, 163.
—— of France. *See* Louis Quinze.
—— of Prussia. *See* Frederick.
—— of Spain, ii. 179, 181, 358, 376.
King's Bench Prison, ii. 172.
—— Square Court, ii. 138.
Kings, The Three, Hotel, ii. 49, 64.
Kingston, duchess of. *See* Miss Chudleigh.
—— duke of, ii. 192 and *n*, 193.
—— House, ii. 192.
Küov, bishop of, ii. 299.
'Kitty's Stream' (satire), ii. 223 *n.*
Kleber, ii. 131 *n*, 138.
Koethen, prince von Anhalt, ii. 149.

Lafayette, ii. 197 *n.*
Lais. *See* Magdalene, a nun.
Lamarre, Madame, ii. 335, 336.
Lambert (servant), ii. 280, 282, 283.
Lamberti, la (dancer), ii. 451, 452, 455.
Lambertini, la, 274-275.
Langeac, marquis de, ii. 111 *n.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

Langlade, M. de, i. 476.
Lanti, Cæsar Philip. *See* Césarino.
Lantieri, M. de, ii. 459, 461.
Larochefoucauld family, ii. 111 *n*.
Lascaris family, ii. 17, 18 *n*.
—— La. *See* Corticelli.
Lastic, comte de, i. 339, 340.
—— family, ii. 15 *n*.
—— Harold de, ii. 15 and *n*.
Laura, signora, i. 460, ii. 19, 26, 27.
—— a nun portress, i. 160-163, 185, 203-209.
Lauraguais, duchesse de, i. 472.
Laurence (gaoler), i. 216, 218, 219, 221-224, 227-230, 232, 234-239, 241-243, 246.
Laurent, church of St., ii. 336.
Lausanne, i. 374, 375, 392-394, ii. 28, 29.
Law, John, i. 270 *n*, 271.
Lazare, Gare St., i. 303 *n*.
'Leads,' the, i. 202, 214-250, 259, 261, 262, 265, 274, 296, 300, 328, 332, 342, 355, 374-376, 388-391, 393-396, 407, 444, 461, 480, ii. 44, 48, 293, 323, 342, 345, 396.
League, the, ii. 111 *n*.
Lebel, M., i. 374, 389-391, 393-396; ii. 29, 339.
—— Madame. *See* Dubois.
Lebrun, i. 479.
Lefort, baron, ii. 288.
Leghorn, ii. 28, 400, 401, 414, 416, 417.
Leicester Square, ii. 140 *n*.
Leigh, Mr., ii. 262, 263.
Leipzig, ii. 314, 316, 476.
Leo, San, ii. 390 *n*, 456.
—— x., i. 400.
Leopol, ii. 311.
Leopold II., i. 388.
Leyden, i. 332.
Lia (the Jewess), i. 462-464.
Liancourt, abbé de, i. 65.
—— Charles, duc de, i. 65.
—— Jeanne Charlotte du Plessis, i. 65.
Lido, the, i. 233.
Liége, ii. 19, 23, 229, 334, 371.
—— prince bishop of, ii. 23 *n*.
Ligne, prince de, i. 43, 145, 477-479 *n*, ii. 481.
—— princesse de, i. 477.
Lille, marquis de, ii. 337 and *n*, 482.
Limoges, bishop of (d'Urfé), ii. 111 *n*.
Lincoln, lord, ii. 451, 452, 455.
Lintz, ii. 324.
Lisbon, i. 471, ii. 186, 189, 190, 196, 197, 220, 262, 263.
Lismore, lord, i. 452-457, ii. 1, 5.
Lithuania, grand chancellor of, ii. 298 and *n*.
Livonia, ii. 286.
L. L., i. 200, *n*.
Lloyd, Mr., ii. 143.
Locke, i. 379.
Lodi, ii. 68, 77.
Lodomeria, ii. 311.
Loglio, da, ii. 402.
Lolotte (Mlle. Gaussin), i. 134, 333.
Lombardy, ii. 455.
London, i. 85, 133, 134, 215, 223, 260, 290 *n*, 296, 299, 458, ii. 75, 84, 122, 125, 129, 134-269, 273, 287, 289 *n*, 313 *n*, 316, 319, 340, 407, 408, 414, 425 and *n*, 426 *n*, 429, 452.
—— Tower of, ii. 234.
Lieutenant, the, ii. 256.
Life, the balm of, ii. 222.
Lopolo, Demetrio Papane, ii. 282.
Loredano, signor, ii. 345.
Lorenzi, Miss, ii. 217.
Loretto, i. 360.
Lorraine, i. 410, ii. 280.
Lossada, duc de, ii. 337, 345.
Louis, Don, the Infant of Spain, i. 115.
—— IX. of France, i. 307 *n*.
—— XI., i. 297.
—— XII., i. 126.
—— XIV., i. 131, 139 *n*, 145 *n*, 146, ii. 2 *n*, 131 *n*.
—— XV., i. 127, 128, 134, 192, 286, 300-303, 428, 467 and *n*, ii. 147, 159, 265 *n*, 318, 338.
—— XVI., i. 268 *n*, 270 *n*, 271.
—— Order of St., ii. 482.
Louvre, i. 130, 131, 145, 175, 273.
—— picture gallery, i. 131.
Lubomirska, princess, ii. 237, 244, 298, 330, 337, 343.
—— prince, ii. 300, 308.
Luc, ii. 99.
Lucca, ii. 31, 426.
Lugano, ii. 397, 398.
Luser, M., ii. 481, 482.
Luxembourg, i. 128.
—— the, ii. 197 *n*, 478.
Luz, St. Jean de, ii. 341.
Lyon, comte de. *See* De Bernis.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Lyons, i. 123, 320, 374, 467, 469, 470, ii. 19, 30, 104, 106, 112, 114, 118-121, 130.

Macaronicon, i. 404.
Macerata, i. 32.
—— Barrière de la, i. 303.
Mademoiselle, la grande, ii. 2 *n*.
Madrid, i. 113, 184, 221, ii. 179, 189, 220, 290, 337, 341, 343, 344, 346-348, 357, 363-365, 368, 371, 373, 375, 384, 386, 431, 436, 437 *n*.
Maffei, i. 236.
Magali (musician), i. 310.
Magdalen College, Oxford, ii. 346 *n*.
Magdalene (a nun), ii. 70, 71.
Maggiorini, i. 223.
Magloire, St., i. 468 *n*.
Mail, rue du, i. 327.
Maintenon, Madame de, i. 127, 432, 433.
Maisonneuve, M. de, ii. 244.
Maisonrouge, M. de, i. 128.
Maisons, Les Petites (Bedlam of Paris), ii. 197.
Malingan, M., ii. 167, 210, 229.
Malipiero, senator, i. 15, 16, 290, 350, ii. 138.
Malta, i. 476.
—— Order of, ii. 298.
M. M. (Matilda), i. 161, 200, 203, 209, 214, 269, 413, 431, ii. 435.
—— (the False), Innocente, i. 206, 207.
—— (the Second), i. 412-426, 431, 468, 469, 470. *See* Nun of Chambéry.
Mandane, i. 436.
Mannheim, i. 349.
Mann, sir Horace, i. 299, 441, 458, ii. 152 and *n*, 163.
Manon. *See* Baletti.
Mansard, ii. 131.
Mantalonia, duke of, i. 440.
Mantello, i. 260.
Manteuffel, Mlle. de, ii. 282.
Manucci, John, ii. 271-273, 345, 358, 359, 361, 389, 437.
Manzoni, Madame, i. 86, 211, 274.
Marais, the, i. 306, 307, 320.
Marazzani, ii. 357, 358.
Marcel (dancing-master), i. 142.
Marche, marquise de la, 476.
Marck, la (family), ii. 23.
—— seigneur de la, ii. 23 *n*.
Marcolina, ii. 94, 95, 100-104, 106-110, 112-116, 118, 122, 123, 126, 127, 130, 132, 393, 395, 396, 399.
Marghera, canal of, i. 90.
Margrave, the. *See* Cornelys.
Maria or Mariuccia, i. 446-449, 451, 452, 455, 456.
—— I., queen of Spain, i. 178 *n*.
—— Theresa, the empress, ii. 272, 312, 322, 323 *n*.
Marie Antoinette, ii. 312 *n*.
—— queen of France, i. 131, 132, 141.
—— Sainte, guardhouse at Rimini, i. 51.
Marigny, M. de, i. 145.
Marina, St., ii. 354.
Marino, San, i. 81.
Mark's, St., i. 202, 231, 252, 257.
Marlborough, duke of, i. 63.
Marmousets, rue des, ii. 336 and *n*.
Marq, Madame de la, i. 312.
Marseilles, i. 115, 435, ii. 22, 29, 64, 82, 83, 86, 91, 100, 102, 105-107, 112, 113, 130, 207, 275, 395, 418.
Martelli, Pierre Jacques, i. 405.
Marti, Dr., i. 458.
Martial, i. 106.
Martin, lieut.-general Anthony, ii. 223 *n*.
—— Mr., ii. 21.
—— St., i. 325.
Martinelli, ii. 140, 141, 156, 160, 165, 169, 176, 196, 201, 206, 207.
Martorano, Bernard Bernardis, bishop of, i. 17, 23, 33-35, 38-39.
Marucci, marchese, i. 402.
Marylebone Church, ii. 247 *n*.
—— Gardens, ii. 247 *n*.
—— Theatre, ii. 247.
Matalonia, duke of, i. 450, 451.
Matteo. *See* Bosé.
Mathilde. *See* M. M.
Matuschkin, M., ii. 289.
Maty, Dr., ii. 156, 247.
Maubert, Place, i. 313, ii. 3.
Maurice, dean of St., i. 264, 265.
Mayence, i. 145, ii. 329.
M. E. *See* Nun.
Mecklembourg, princess of, ii. 19.
Medea, i. 292.
Medicis family, i. 400.
—— Marie de, i. 67.
Medina Coeli, duke of, ii. 350, 351.
Medini, count, i. 85, 86, ii. 432, 453-455.
Meilly-Coulonge, Demoiselle de. *See* Roman-Coupplier.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Melanchthon, i. 100.
Melfort, count de, i. 130, 141, 143.
Melissino, Peter, ii. 293.
Memmo, M., i. 300, ii. 122.
—— Madame, i. 210.
Menafoglio, marchesa, ii. 46, 47.
Mendès, Catulle, ii. 319 *n.*
Mendex, i. 158.
Mengs, Antony Raphael (painter), i. 184, 446, 449, ii. 346-363.
Menicuccio, ii. 437, 438-441.
Mennius, i. 180.
Mentone, ii. 96, 97.
Mercer, Mrs., ii. 265.
Mercury, i. 247.
Merlin. *See* Cocci.
Messa, the Alcalde, ii. 360, 361.
Mestre, i. 87, 258, 259.
—— del (family), ii. 169.
Metastasio, the abbé, i. 100, 147.
Metz, i. 145, ii. 15, 16.
Meure, Mlle. de la, i. 274-279, 289, ii. 265. *See* Madame de P.
Meyer, Ernst von, ii. 327.
Michael, Order of St., i. 453, ii. 75.
—— fête of St., i. 240.
Middlesex, ii. 240 *n.*
Midel, Anna (cook), ii. 7.
Milan, i. 103, 117, 224, ii. 37, 38, 40, 41, 44-50, 56, 57, 64, 66, 68, 72, 79, 80, 85, 86, 93, 103, 117, 224, 332, 426 *n*, 429, 455.
Militaire, Ecole, i. 270 *n*, 329.
Milliona, the, ii. 287.
Milton, ii. 177.
Mimi, the burgomaster's wife, i. 339-358, ii. 329-330.
Minerva, ii. 270, 292.
Minolto, adjutant, i. 71.
Mirabeau, ii. 328.
Mirovick, lieutenant, ii. 285 *n.*
Mitau, i. 281, 285, ii. 287, 328.
Mocenigo, M. de, i. 173, 193, ii. 345, 346, 357, 363, 372, 373, 375, 437.
Modena, i. 120, 459-461.
—— duke of, i. 461, ii. 82.
Moïse, San, i. 177.
Molière, i. 403.
Molinari, ii. 379.
Momolo, the family, i. 444-448, 450, 451.
Monaco, prince of, i. 130, 141, ii. 96-99.
—— princess of, i. 96.
Montagu, lady, i. 374, 376.
Montagu, Mrs., ii. 192 *n.*
Montbrison family, ii. 13 *n.* *See* d'Urfé.
Monte Cavallo, i. 40.
Montefiascone, ii. 40.
Montgomery, earl of, ii. 163 *n.*
Monti, church of Trinità dei, i. 444, 447.
Monti Magnanopoli, i. 34.
Montigny, Mlle. (actress), i. 306, 307.
Montmartre, rue, i. 272.
Montmorency, Hôtel de, ii. 131, 139.
—— Mathieu de, ii. 334 *n.*
Montpellier, ii. 212, 318.
Montpensier, duc de, i. 143.
Montpernis, M. de, ii. 174.
Montréal, chevalier de, i. 476.
—— comte de, i. 17.
—— comtesse de, i. 18.
Montrose. See L'Ecossaise.
Montrouge, bishop of, i. 312.
Moody, ii. 156 *n.*
Moors Inn, the Three, ii. 4, 224.
Morand, Dianne de Château, i. 283 *n.*
Moras, marquis de, ii. 345.
Morena, Sierra, ii. 462.
Morin, Madame, i. 430-432, 434, 467-469.
—— M., i. 432.
Morocco, i. 402.
Morosini, Venetian ambassador, ii. 122, 123, 147, 209, 211, 217, 450, 451.
Morphi or Boisfailly, M. Daniel, i. 139 *n.*
—— Hélène O', i. 139-141 *n.*
—— Louise O', i. 139 *n.*
Mort, la (tailor), i. 54.
Moscow, ii. 289 *n*, 292 *n.*
Moses, i. 464.
Moszczinski, count, ii. 308, 311, 313.
Motte, Madame la Générale la, ii. 272.
Munich, i. 264, 265, 342, ii. 5.
Murano, i. 156, 159-162, 165-167, 174, 182, 189, ii. 58.
Murcia, prince palatine of, ii. 45.
Murray, Mr., English minister, i. 201, 204-209.
—— lady, i. 208.
Murviedro, ii. 375, 376.
Museum, the British, i. 458, ii. 156, 247.
Music, Royal Academy of, i. 128.

N., Marquis de, husband of Clementina, ii. 85.
Nancy, ii. 16, 17, 418.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Naples, i. 34, 36, 37, 39, 54, 103, 291, 438, 440, 449, 450, ii. 15, 224, 257, 260, 405, 425 and *n*, 426, 427, 429, 430, 432.
—— queen of, i. 22, ii. 425 and *n*.
Napoleon I., ii. 131 and *n*.
Narbonne, comte de, i. 137, 138.
Nationales, Place des Victoires, ii. 131 *n*.
Navarre, king of, i. 7.
Necker, M., i. 322.
Negroni, Villa, i. 43.
Nelly, ii. 229.
Neufchâtel, i. 63, ii. 273 *n*.
—— George, 10th Earl Keith, governor of, ii. 273 *n*.
Neuhof, Theodore von, king of Corsica, ii. 167.
Neuilly, i. 126.
Newgate, ii. 208, 241, 243, 244.
Newski, Order of St. Alexander, ii. 284.
Newton, i. 397.
Nicander, prince Paul, i. 431.
Nice, i. 435, ii. 99.
Nicholas, St., ii. 291, 292.
Nicolas, the archer, i. 238.
Nina, La (dancer), ii. 377-379, 381-384, 386.
Nivernois, duc de, i. 133, 379.
Noël, king of Prussia's cook, ii. 340.
Nona, Torre di (a theatre), ii. 442.
Normand, M. le, i. 139 *n*.
Normandy, ii. 7.
Norris, John, ii. 223 *n*.
Northumberland, ii. 33.
—— duchess of, ii. 32, 37, 38, 154, 160.
Novero, ballet-master, i. 350.
Novgorod, ii. 289 *n*.
Nun, the, of Chambéry. *See* the Second M. M.

O., Esther d', i. 294, 334-338, ii. 428 *n*. *See* Hope.
O., Monsieur d', i. 292, 294, 296, 334, 335, 338. *See* Hope.
Odyssey, the, ii. 271.
Œyras, Sebastian Joseph of Carvalho et Mélo, count d', marquis of Pombal, ii. 178 and *n*, 181, 182, 185, 186, 197, 198.
Office, the Holy, i. 269.
Olavidès, don Pablo, ii. 363.
Orange Coffee-House, ii. 140, 141.
Orange, prince of, i. 330.
Orange street, ii. 140 *n*.
Orangery, the, ii. 337.
Orgueilleux, Mont, i. 297.
Oriago, i. 150.
Orléans, ii. 339.
—— duchess of, i. 130.
—— duke of, ii. 1 *n*.
—— Philip of, i. 452.
Orloff, count Gregory, ii. 285, 288 and *n*, 294.
—— family, ii. 285, 293, 294, 400-402, 426.
Oromasis, ii. 107, 109.
Orphée aux Enfers, ii. 319 *n*.
Orsera, i. 30, 56.
Orsini, cardinal, ii. 442.
Osorio, i. 446.
Osric, ii. 97.
Ostend, ii. 229.
Ours, rue aux, i. 325 *n*.
Oxendon Street, ii. 140.
Oxford, All Souls College, ii. 346 *n*.

P., Madame de. *See* Mlle. de la Meure.
Pacienza, Madame, ii. 30.
Padua, i. 10, 13-15, 18, 86, 94, 118, 119, 149, 159, 179, 231, 310, 397, 443, 456.
—— Angelo, tyrant of, i. 215.
—— St. Anthony of, ii. 71.
Palafox, donna Anna, i. 7, 21.
Palais-Royal, i. 125, 142, 325, ii. 208.
Palazzo, Rio di, i. 215.
Palermo, ii. 390 *n*.
Palesi, Cirillo, i. 436, 439, 440.
—— Teresa. *See* Teresa Lanti.
Pall Mall, ii. 141, 147, 201.
Palmanova (Venetian general), ii. 460.
Pampeluna, i. 221, ii. 341.
Panin, count, ii. 225, 285, 289, 290, 294 and *n*, 295, 296.
Papa, the (priest of Casopo), i. 67-71.
Paracelsus, i. 288, 309, 310.
Paradisi, marquis, i. 403.
Paralis, i. 154, ii. 101, 109, 119.
Paralisus-Galtinarde, ii. 105.
Paris, i. 60, 122, 125-146, 168, 173, 192-194, 215, 223, 265-268, 273, 274, 276, 277, 280, 286 *n*, 289, 292-298, 467, 470, 472, 475, 476, ii. 2 and *n*, 3, 6, 7, 13, 15, 17 *n*, 29, 33, 54, 95, 96, 104, 119, 128, 130-133, 145, 166, 189, 197 and *n*, 203, 208, 209, 212, 222, 247 and *n*, 272, 277,

Digitized by Microsoft ®

311 *n*, 312 and *n*, 316, 319 *n*, 322-339, 343, 344 *n*, 386, 388, 389, 416, 426 and *n*, 455, 460.
Paris, archbishop of, i. 468 *n*.
Pâris. *See* Duverney.
Park, the, ii. 201.
—— the Green, ii. 228.
—— St. James's, ii. 157.
Parma, i. 101, 105-113, 116, 198, 400-402, 459, 461, 462.
—— infant duke of, i. 113, 114.
—— —— duchess, i. 114.
Parrocel (painter of battle pieces), i. 131.
Parrot Market, the, ii. 246.
Parsano, Giacomo (*alias* Pogomas, *alias* Frédéric Gualdo), ii. 28, 30, 87, 90, 91, 95, 96, 99, 100, 102-106, 119-122, 130, 133, 248, 382-384, 387.
Pas Perdus, Salle des, i. 303.
Pascal, Blaise, i. 330, 339.
Paséan, Lucy of, i. 15, 18-20, 137, 295, 296, 333, 334.
Passionei, cardinal, i. 442, 443, 447.
Passy, i. 467 and *n*, 472.
Paul, the emperor, ii. 289 *n*, 294 *n*.
Pauline, ii. 169-199, 210.
Pegu, M. (tailor), ii. 244, 257.
Pekin, *L'Envoyé secret de la cour de*, ii. 212 *n*.
Pélagie, Sainte, i. 139 *n*.
Peliccia, donna, ii. 375.
—— marchese, ii. 259, 260.
Pellegrini, count, ii. 390, 456. *See* Cagliostro.
Pembroke family, ii. 204.
—— lord, ii. 154 *n*, 163 and *n*, 166, 167, 169, 175, 203-207, 209, 211, 253, 316, 425.
Pepinière, rue de la, i. 303.
Pera, i. 57.
Percy, earl, ii. 32-38, 153.
Pernon, Madame, ii. 30, 122.
Pérouse, comte de la, ii. 397, 400.
Perpignan, ii. 389.
Perth, earl of, i. 63.
Péruvienne, *Lettres d'une*, i. 135.
Pesaro, i. 50, 51, 53, 55, 435.
Petau, i. 236.
Peter the Great, i. 480, ii. 265, 285 *n*, 288, 289 *n*, 294 *n*, 314.
Petersburg, St., i. 13, 71, 346, 480, ii. 265 *n*, 280, 282, 283, 285-289 and *n*, 291-294, 296, 298 *n*, 340, 400.
Petersham, lady Caroline, ii. 152 *n*.
Petina, marchese, ii. 257.
Petrarch, i. 214.
Petrillo, i. 27, 28.
Petronicus, i. 48.
Petrovna, Elizabeth, empress of Russia, i. 379, ii. 285.
Philip, Casanova's servant, ii. 365, 373, 375.
Philip, don (infant of Spain), i. 110.
—— V., king of Spain, ii. 357.
Philosopher, *the Military*, i. 214.
Phœnix, *The* (poem by Casanova), i. 305.
Phryne, ii. 228.
Pic (the dancer), ii. 300.
Piccolomini, count, i. 331.
Pichona, La, ii. 348, 350, 351.
Pico, Sanzio, i. 45.
Piedmont, ii. 387.
Pietro, marchese Grimaldi, ii. 87.
Pignatelli, marchese Mora, ii. 337.
Pilar, Our Lady of, ii. 391.
Pilate, Pontius, i. 353, ii. 265.
Pipers, Dr., ii. 267, 268.
Pisa, i. 435, 458, ii. 401, 403, 453, 454.
Pistoia, i. 441, 442.
Pitt, Mr., ii. 229.
Pittoni, baron, ii. 458-460.
Plaisance, house of Duverney, i. 271.
Plautius, i. 106.
Plessis, Gabrielle du, i. 65.
Plymouth, ii. 186.
Poggiani family, i. 223.
Poinsinet (poet), i. 453, 454, ii. 1.
Poland, king of, i. 132.
—— Little, Casanova's house, i. 303, 310, 326, 327.
Polignac, Madame de, i. 142.
Pol, St., i. 30.
Polo, Gennaro, i. 39, 40.
Pompadour, Madame de, i. 133, 139 *n*, 145, 173, 192, 202, 269-272, 286, 302, 303.
Pompéati (dancer), i. 290, ii. 138. *See* Madam Cornelys.
Poniatowski (father of Stanislas), ii. 298 and *n*, 299, 300.
—— Stanislas Augustus, king of Poland, ii. 311 *n*.
Pont au Change, i. 307.
Pont-Carré, ii. 17 and *n*, 18.
—— M. de, brother of Madame d'Urfé, ii. 110.
—— Nicolas Pierre Camus, Sieur de, ii. 111 *n*.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Pont-Carré, Mlle. Jeanne Camus de. *See* Madame d'Urfé.
Pope, the, ii. 45, 72, 271, 437, 440, 445, 449, 453.
—— Martin III., i. 7, 265, 443-559.
—— nephew of the, i. 274.
Porte, the Sublime, i. 201.
Portici, i. 34, 37.
Portsmouth, ii. 163 *n*.
Portugal, i. 467, 471, ii. 189, 195 *n*, 265, 312, 318, 371, 375, 379.
—— king of, i. 471, ii. 178 *n*.
Portuguese ambassador, ii. 198, 217.
—— court, i. 466.
—— the fair. *See* Pauline.
Posilipo, ii. 425.
Poste, Hôtel de la, i. 462.
Potsdam, i. 63, ii. 269, 272, 278, 280.
Pouhorn, mineral spring at Spa, ii. 331 *n*.
Pozzobonelli, cardinal, ii. 70.
Prague, i. 388, ii. 4, 14, 16, 22, 114.
Pretender, the, i. 453.
Price, Mr. Uvedale, i. 400.
Prié, marquis de, i. 410, 411.
Prince of Wales, ii. 162.
Priuli, i. 238.
Prota family, the, ii. 460.
Prouvaires, rue de, i. 470.
Provence, i. 115, 116, 401.
—— parliament of, i. 415.
Prussia. *See* Frederick the Great.
—— prince royal of, ii. 267-271, 278.
Pularia, ii. 311, 331.
Puy de Dôme, ii. 13 *n*.
Pyrenees, ii. 341.

Q., MARCHESA, ii. 46, 49, 56-60.
Quatres, Les (prisons), i. 225-227.
Queen, the (Charlotte of England), ii. 148 *n*, 150, 163 *n*.
Quérilinte, i. 471, ii. 22, 101, 102, 105.
Querini, signora di, i. 132.
—— signor di (Venetian ambassador to London), ii. 116, 122, 125.
Quinault, Mlle. (actress), i. 276.
Quixote, don, ii. 362.

R., M. DE, i. 369-371, 380-383, ii. 399.
—— Madame de (Paris milliner), i. 465.
—— Madame de, i. 363-373, 378-389, 419, ii. 399. *See* the Amazon of Soleure.
Racine, i. 146.
Radicofani, ii. 412, 419.
Radziwill, prince, ii. 193 *n*.
Raiberti, chevalier, i. 466, ii. 400.
Ramos, don Francisco de, ii. 352, 355.
Ramponneau, M., i. 303.
Rancour, Madame, i. 466.
Ranelagh, ii. 144 *n*, 164, 165, 167, 237.
Raton, ii. 15.
Ravaillac, i. 307 *n*.
Razzetta, the sheriff, i. 24, 26.
Rebellion of 1715, ii. 273 *n*.
Redegonde, i. 439, ii. 34.
Redinha, count, ii. 178 *n*.
Regency, the, i. 401.
Regent, the, i. 192, 282 *n*, 401. *See* Orléans.
Reggiana, ii. 110 *n*, 278.
Reggio, i. 109, 122.
Remo, San, ii. 100.
Rénaud, la (dancer), i. 4-7, ii. 29.
Renée of Savoy, i. 16 *n*.
Renieri, signor Polo, ii. 321, 323.
Repnier, ii. 299 *n*.
Republic of Venice, i. 260.
Revolution, the, ii. 325 *n*, 450-461.
Reynolds, sir J., ii. 223 *n*.
Rezzonico, i. 319.
Rhadamiste, i. 405.
Rhine, the, i. 34, ii. 3.
Rhone, the, i. 401, ii. 107, 109, 112.
Richard, i. 309.
Richelieu, duc de, i. 132, 139, 144.
—— rue de, i. 453.
Richmond, ii. 229, 254, 258.
Rickmansworth, ii. 204 *n*.
Ricla, don Emmanuel de, ii. 361, 377-381.
Riga, ii. 283, 284, 286, 326.
Rigerboos, Cornelius, i. 333, ii. 138. *See* Madam Cornelys.
Righellini, Dr., i. 204-206.
Rimini, i. 47-49, 51-53, 435, 440.
Riva, count de, ii. 400.
—— Madame de, i. 197.
Rivière, Madame de, i. 261.
Robespierre, i. 333.
Roche, i. 392, 408.
Rochebaron, M. de, i. 123, 467.
Rochefort, lady, ii. 160.
Rochefoucauld, marquis de Langeac, ii. 110 *n*.
Rochers, rue des, i. 303.
Rochester, ii. 137, 201, 264.
Rohan, cardinal de, ii. 7.
—— princesse de, i. 191.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Roland, ii. 423.
—— Song of, i. 400.
Romain (barcarol), i. 349.
Roman, Mlle. de. *See* Mlle. Roman-Couppier.
Romanofna, Catherine, ii. 289 and *n.*
—— Elizabeth, ii. 289 *n.*
Romans, the, ii. 375, 376, 403, 405, 413, 415.
Rome, i. 7, 29, 31, 33, 34, 39-43, 46, 48, 51, 53, 65, 96, 104, 106-108, 112, 148, 195, 203, 221, 265, 269 *n*, 400, 412, 424, 425, 339, 440, 442, 443, 448, 449, 451, 458, 468 *n*, ii. 41, 130-132, 346 and *n*, 365, 389, 390 *n*, 403, 405, 410, 411, 413, 415, 419, 422-424, 426, 427, 429, 433, 437, 438, 444.
Ronceray, Mlle. de (Madame Favart), i. 276.
Rond, le. *See* d'Alembert.
—— St. Jean le, i. 135 *n.*
Roniker, general, ii. 330.
Rosbury, Mr., ii. 429.
Roscius, ii. 157.
Rose, i. 428-430.
Rosebery (Rosburi, duke of), i. 374, 392, 394, 425.
—— Neil, i. 374 *n.*
Rosenberg, count de, i. 135.
Rosicrucians, the, ii. 21, 29, 30.
Rostaing, ii. 231, 244, 245.
Rotterdam, i. 291, 296.
Rotunda, the, ii. 237.
Roubieu, ii. 400.
Rouen, ii. 111 *n.*
Roule, St. Philippe du, i. 468 *n.*
Rousseau, J. J., i. 63, 197, 198, 318, 319, ii. 5, 273 *n*, 293.
Rubens, i. 206.
Rufé (Rufec), duchesse de, i. 130, ii. 96.
Rumain, Madame de, i. 311-314, 324, 325, 327, 328, ii. 197, 269, 335, 339.
Russia, i. 480, ii. 265 *n*, 280, 281, 289, 295-298 *n*, 318 *n*, 409, 426 *n.*
—— Academy of, ii. 289 *n.*
—— Hôtel de, i. 275.
Russian squadron, ii. 400.
Rzewuski, crown notary, ii. 324.

S. *See* M. de P., the husband of Mlle. de la Meure.
Saa, M. de (Portuguese minister), ii. 185, 198, 217, 245.
S., countess, i. 163, 166, 168.
Sacrament, Church of the Blessed, i. 16, 17.
—— president of the Confraternity of the, i. 16, 17.
Sagredo, Madame, i. 66, 67.
Saguntum, ii. 375 and *n*, 376.
Salamanders, king of the, ii. 109.
Salerno, i. 36, 37.
Salimberi (musician), i. 47-49.
Salle des Pas Perdus, i. 303.
Salmor, countess de, ii. 323.
—— general, ii. 268.
Salvador, M., ii. 263.
Samuel, St., curé of, i. 33.
—— —— Theatre of, i. 7, 77, 351.
Sancho Panza, ii. 431.
Sancio Pico, i. 45, 46.
Sanguska, prince, ii. 307.
Sanskrit, i. 286.
Santis, ii. 2, 3.
Sans Souci, ii. 274.
Saone, ii. 112.
Sappho, ii. 294.
Sara, 248, 251. *See* Mlle. M. F.
Sarah. *See* Madame Goudar.
Sardini, M., ii. 76.
Sartines, M. de, i. 322-324, ii. 339.
Sassi, signor Sasso-, i. 442.
Satirical Tracts, ii. 223 *n.*
Sauci, M. de, ii. 130.
Sauveno, St., ii. 130.
Saville, Mr., ii. 223 *n.*
Savoie, Renée de, i. 283 *n*, ii. 13, 16, 111 *n.*
Savoy, ii. 13 *n.*
Saxe, Madame, ii. 23-25.
—— Maurice de, i. 132, 276 *n.*
Saxony, elector of, ii. 246 *n*, 298 and *n.*
—— dowager-electress of, ii. 6, 423.
Scala, la, ii. 412.
Schalon, Gabriel (the Jew), i. 230.
Schizzi (dancer), ii. 382.
Schleswig, ii. 265 *n*, 267.
Scholastica, ii. 445-448.
Schrotembach, count von (master of the stables), ii. 320-322, 324.
Schwerin, baron, i. 206, ii. 316-318.
Science, Academy of, ii. 290.
—— —— president of the Academy of, ii. 290.
Scotland, ii. 273 *n.*
Seine, ii. 132.
—— rue de, ii. 132.
—— et Marne, department of, ii. 17 *n.*

Digitized by Microsoft®

Selenis (cabalistic name), ii. 21, 22, 107.
Semiramis (cabalistic name), ii. 101, 105, 107-110. *See* Madame d'Urfé.
Senneterre, Hôtel, ii. 13 *n*.
Séraphina. *See* Madame Cagliostro.
Serenus (cabalistic name). *See* de Bragadin.
Severini, ii. 457.
Shirley, Laurence, 4th Earl Ferrers, ii. 157 *n*.
Siberia, ii. 282, 299.
Sicily, i. 132.
—— Ferdinand, king of, ii. 431.
—— queen of, ii. 431.
Siena, ii. 403, 414.
Sierra Morena, ii. 372.
Sighs, Bridge of, i. 215, 223.
Signy, abbé de, i. 468.
Silvia. *See* Baletti.
Simon, marquis de St., i. 132, 280.
Simonette, i. 76.
Sister, the lay, i. 419-421. *See* Chambéry.
Smith, Mr., i. 425.
Socrates, ii. 201.
Soho square, ii. 137, 138 and *n*, 142, 143 *n*.
—— street, St. Patrick's Catholic church, ii. 142 *n*.
Soledad, church of the, ii. 348, 369.
Soleure, i. 366-371, 373, 378, 381, 385, 387, 390, 393, ii. 15, 29, 399.
Solomon, king, i. 82.
—— sign of, i. 282.
Soma, i. 34.
Sommerive, comte de, ii. 111 *n*.
Sophie. *See* Miss Cornelys.
Soradaci, i. 241-251.
Sorceress, the, employed by Countess A. B., ii. 54-56.
Sorrento, i. 440, ii. 429.
Spa, i. 331 and *n*, 334, ii. 324, 331-334, 371.
Spada, general, i. 104, 106.
Spain, i. 63, 221, 332, 468 *n*, ii. 38, 85, 159, 237, 341, 346 *n*, 361, 370, 379, 386, 387, 397, 456, 482.
—— king of, ii. 343, 344, 346, 364.
—— Maria I., queen of, ii. 178 *n*.
Spandau, ii. 318.
Spanish countess, the. *See* Countess A. B.
Spencer, lord, ii. 141.
Spersa, ii. 463, 464, 466, 470.
Spring Gardens, ii. 141 *n*.
Spur, Order of the Golden, i. 449, ii. 45, 74.
Spy, the Chinese. *See* Goudar.
Squillace, M., minister of finance, ii. 344 and *n*.
Stadtholder (mother of the), i. 289.
Stanislas, Augustus, king of Poland, ii. 457.
—— Order of St., ii. 457.
Star Tavern, ii. 163, 166.
State, minister of (Würtemberg), i. 353.
Stein, Miss Nancy, ii. 408.
Stelzl (inspector), ii. 476, 477.
Stenau, baron, ii. 261-263.
Stephano, Brother, i. 30-34, 56.
Stock Exchange, the, ii. 148, 188.
Stormont, lord, i. 467, ii. 5.
Strand, the, ii. 187.
Strasburg, i. 276 *n*, ii. 3, 10.
Stratagem, The Belle's, ii. 223 *n*.
Stratico, count, ii. 450.
Stuttgart, i. 349, 350, 357, ii. 15, 165.
Suabia, ii. 13 *n*.
Succi, professor, i. 100.
Sulkowsky, prince Augustus, ii. 312.
Sulpice, Seminary of St., i. 191.
Sulzbach, ii. 23.
Summer Garden, ii. 294.
Sutton street, ii. 138 and *n*, 143 *n*.
Svian, Gabriel de, i. 467 *n*.
Sweeper, the Holy. *See* Momolo.
Switzerland, i. 265, 357, 367 and *n*, 389, 406, ii. 249, 250, 362, 397, 398, 429.
Sword, the Inn of the, ii. 399.

TACITUS, ii. 343.
Tagus, ii. 185.
Tailor, the (husband of Zenobia), ii. 40, 50, 65.
Talon, lord, i. 452, 453.
Tancrède, i. 403, 405.
Taranne, rue de la, i. 280.
—— Simon de, i. 280 *n*.
Tasso, i. 12, 399.
Tassi, Tasso, ii. 452.
Tassoni, i. 402.
Tavora, dona Joanna of, ii. 178 *n*.
—— marquis of, ii. 178 *n*.
—— marchioness of, ii. 178 *n*.
—— Nuno Gaspar of, ii. 178 *n*.
Tecla, i. 450. *See* Momolo.
Temple, the, i. 320.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Temple, boulevard du, i. 325.
—— rue du, i. 329.
Ten, Council of, i. 223.
Tencin, Madame du, i. 135 and *n.*
Terence, i. 106.
Teresa, i. 45-54, 435-441, 458, ii. 40, 41, 43, 51, 66.
Thérèse. *See* Madam Cornelys.
Tiberius, the emperor, ii. 265 *n.*
Tiretta, chevalier de, i. 274, 275, ii. 265.
Todd, Sweeny, ii. 336 *n.*
Tognolo. *See* Fabris.
Toledo, ii. 253.
Tolentano, Sigea, i. 180.
Tomasi Balbi, i. 258.
Tomatis, M., ii. 301, 308, 324, 330.
—— Madame, ii. 330.
Tommy, ii. 200.
Tonine, i. 203-205, 208, 209.
Töplitz, ii. 482.
Torres, count, ii. 463-470.
Torriani, count, ii. 463, 465, 466, 470-473.
Tortona, ii. 86, 87.
Toscani, la, i. 349, 352.
Toulongon, comte de, i. 367 *n.*
Toulouse, i. 124.
Tournhem, le Normand de, i. 145 *n.*
Trapassa. *See* Metastasio.
Treidel, baron von, ii. 280.
Trent, Council of, i. 302.
Trenti, ii. 135. *See* Joseph Cornelys.
—— Madame. *See* Madam Cornelys.
Tressan or Tréan, comte de, i. 139.
Treves, M., ii. 263.
Treviso, i. 86, 91, 96, 258, 259.
—— bishop of, i. 102, 104.
Trianon, i. 267, 302.
Triasis, i. 472.
Trieste, i. 149, ii. 457, 460, 462, 469, 472, 473.
Triulzi, marchese, ii. 39, 40, 42-44, 46-48, 61, 85, 86, 87.
Tronchin, Dr., i. 117, 401, 402.
Trusler, Miss. *See* Marylebone, ii. 247 *n.*
Tübingen, i. 357.
Tuileries, the, i. 191, 271, 311, 321, 322, 328, ii. 2.
Turenne, prince de, i. 283.
Turin, i. 394, 417, 459, 463-467, ii. 3, 5, 27-30 and *n*, 32, 131, 257, 340, 391, 429.
Turk, the grand, ii. 134.
Turkey, i. 43, ii. 342.
Tuscany, i. 442, ii. 450, 452.
—— the grand duke of, ii. 450, 453, 454.
Tyburn, ii. 157 *n.*
Tyrol, i. 48.

UCCELLI, ii. 313.
Udine, i. 237.
Uhlans, ii. 308.
Ulphi. *See* d'Urfé, ii. 113 *n.*
Urban (Mussulman), i. 58.
Urfé, Anne d', i. 283.
—— Claude Lascaris d', ii. 111 *n.*
—— family, ii. 110 *n.*
—— Honoré d', i. 283.
—— Jacques d', i. 283.
—— Joseph Marie Lascaris d', i. 282 *n.*
—— marquise d', i. 282 *n*, 289, 292, 294, 298-304, 309, 318-321, 327-329, 339, 354, 366, 372, 381, 427, 428, 467, 470-472, ii. 3, 6, 7, 13-19, 21, 25, 27-29, 36, 39, 91, 92, 101-106, 110-114, 118-120, 129, 132, 133, 197 and *n*, 265, 266, 326, 327 and *n*, 334 and *n*, 338, 383, 428.
—— marquis du Chastellet de la Rochefoucauld-Lascaris-d', ii. 197 *n.*
—— marquise du Chastellet, ii. 197 *n.*
Utrecht, i. 339.

VAL, DINDE EN, i. 303.
Valengard, M., i. 427-429, 431-433, 441, 468.
Valencia, ii. 375, 377, 379-381.
Valentine, cabalistic name of de La Haye, i. 122.
Valentinois, duc de, i. 130.
—— Madame de, i. 139, 141.
Valeur, la (valet), i. 65, 66, 73.
Valle, Prato della, i. 158.
Vallière, duc de la, i. 312, ii. 2 *n.*
Valsugano, Borgo di, i. 260, 264.
Vanloo (painter), i. 286 *n.*
—— Madame, i. 475.
Varnier, i. 333.
—— Madame, i. 433, 468, 473.
Varoles, M., ii. 133.
Vatican, ii. 346 *n.*
—— library, i. 444, 447.
Vaud, Pays de, ii. 75.
Vauhel, M., ii. 263.
Vauxhall, ii. 167, 211, 216.
Vecchia, Civita, ii. 445.
Veneranda, dame, ii. 127, 128.

Digitized by Microsoft®

Venetian government, i. 63, ii. 397 and *n*.
—— republic, i. 223, 225.
—— States, i. 265, 457, ii. 460.
Venice, i. 7, 15-18, 22, 23, 26-29, 34, 43, 49, 55, 64, 66, 75-99, 103, 120-122, 135, 149, 155, 156, 158, 159, 161-168, 175, 176, 178, 179, 183, 185, 188, 191, 193, 195, 201-205, 207, 208, 215, 224, 231, 232, 260, 263-266, 286, 292, 295, 300, 326, 332, 342, 349, 351, 367 *n*, 368, 403, 407, 408, 410, 440, 443, 456, 469, 470, 480, ii. 9, 82, 93-95, 100, 110, 113-115, 123, 125-127, 138, 202, 224, 228, 261, 263, 276, 287, 295, 296, 312 and *n*, 325, 340, 361, 386, 398, 400, 429, 430, 435, 444, 456, 459, 460.
Venus, i. 424.
Verdun, ii. 50.
Vere, dean, ii. 144 *n*.
Vergennes, marquis de, ii. 482.
Verità, count, i. 341, 342, 344, 349.
Verona, ii. 93, 333.
Veronica, St., ii. 391.
Versailles, i. 115, 125, 126, 137, 140, 183, 266, 267, 270, 298, 301, 311, 381, 467, 468 and *n*, 473, ii. 275, 339.
Vésian, Mlle., i. 136-138.
Vestris, Gaëtan, i. 129.
—— Madame, i. 349.
Vesuvius, i. 450.
Vetturi, M., i. 261.
Viar, M. de, i. 299, 303, 319.
Vicenza, i. 223.
Victoires, Place des, ii. 131 and *n*.
Victoria, ii. 260.
Viderol, ii. 476-478, 480, 483.
Vienna, i. 147, 149, 168, 197, 269 *n*, 367 *n*, 437, 461, ii. 70, 71, 312 *n*, 318-320, 322, 324, 426, 466.
Viennese minister, i. 353, 358.
Villadonas, duchess of, ii. 366-368.
Villars, duc de, i. 400, 401, ii. 28.
Ville, abbé de la, i. 278.
Villette, la, i. 276.
Vincennes, i. 271.
Vintimille, count de, ii. 16 *n*.
Virgil, i. 244, 392.
Virgins, convent of the, i. 204.
Viterbo, i. 413, ii. 415, 419.
Vitzthum, count von (ambassador of Saxony), ii. 322-324.
Voisenon, the abbé, i. 276, 311, 319.
Volhynia, ii. 311.
Voltaire, M. de, i. 40, 100, 128, 191, 298, 369, 370, 372, 393, 396-399, 400-411, ii. 28.
Vulgate, the, i. 239.

WALDECK, PRINCE OF, i. 25.
Waldstein, château of, ii. 303, 474-481, 484.
—— dowager countess of, ii. 479.
Wales, prince of, ii. 162 and *n*.
Walls, Mrs., ii. 227 *n*, 228.
Walpole, Horace, i. 40, 134, ii. 137, 152 *n*, 155 *n*, 163 *n*, 193 *n*.
—— sir James, i. 331, 332.
War, the Second Punic, ii. 376.
—— the Seven Years, i. 192, 267.
Warsaw, i. 333, 449, ii. 296, 298, 299 *n*, 300, 302, 304, 307, 311 and *n*, 313, 321, 329, 330, 332, 333, 340, 346, 386.
Wesel, ii. 267.
Westminster, ii. 156, 253.
—— bridge, ii. 235, 238.
Whitehall, ii. 164.
Whitehead, ii. 193 *n*.
Widow, the Malicious, i. 363, 366, 368-370, 372, 377, 378, 380, 383-389. *See* Soleure.
Wilton House, ii. 163 *n*.
Winckelmann, i. 444, ii. 423.
Windsor, i. 374.
Winne, sir Thomas, i. 134.
Woldemar, Ulric Frederick, count of, i. 131.
Wolfenbüttel, ii. 271.
—— library of, ii. 271.
Worcester, ii. 154 *n*.
Worlds, plurality of, i. 398.
Wulfe, the Valiant, ii. 13 *n*. *See* d'Urfé.
Würtemberg, ii. 324.
—— duchess of, ii. 19.
—— duke of, i. 349-352, 355, 356, 366, ii. 324, 328 *n*.

XAVIER, a Portuguese, ii. 2, 3.
X., comte de, i. 223.
X—mo, comte de, ii. 178 and *n*, 179.
—— marquise de, ii. 179.
X. V. C., Mdlle., i. 298-317, 322, 323, 325, 326, 330.

YORKSHIRE, ii. 427 *n*.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

ZAGURI, SIGNOR DI, ii. 456, 457, 459, 460.
Zaira, ii. 290, 293, 296.
Zaluski, Joseph, bishop of Küov, ii. 299 and *n*.
Zamoiski, count, ii. 311.
Zane, captain, i. 55.
Zanetta. *See* Farusi.
Zanowitch, ii. 451, 452, 454, 455.
Zante, i. 35, 334.
Zapatta, i. 417, 428.
Zaraski. *See* comte de St. Germain.
Zecor-ben, i. 214.
Zelmi, i. 59, 60.
Zen, Alois, ii. 451, 452, 454, 455.
Zenobia, ii. 40, 47, 49, 57-59, 63, 65, 79-81.
Zenowich, ii. 455.
Zerbst, prince of Anhalt, ii. 326.
—— princess of Anhalt, ii. 326.
Zero, i. 100.
Zeroli, Madame, i. 409, 410, 411, 420.
—— chevalier de, i. 410.
Zimand, Madeleine, i. 467 *n*.
Zinovieff, ii. 290, 293.
Zinzendorf, count von, ii. 316.
Zorzi, Anthony, i. 201, 202.
Zuccato, Venetian envoy, ii. 147-149, ii. 138, 150, 234.
Zuliani, signor (brother of the duchess de Fiano), ii. 457.
Zurich, i. 358, 359, 365, 368-370, 379.

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Printed by T. and A. CONSTABLE, (late) Printers to Her Majesty
at the Edinburgh University Press

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

Digitized by Microsoft ®

MAR 10 1980

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

D 285 .8 C32 1902 v.2

Casanova de Seingalt, Giacomo Girolamo
The memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt

21

Digitized by Microsoft®

Digitized by Microsoft®