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EDITED
BY
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CARLO
GOLDONI



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AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIRS

OF

CARLO GOLDONI.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH,
BY JOHN BLACK.

WITH AN ESSAY

By WILLIAM D. HOWELLS.

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CARLO GOLDONI.



AFTER Oliver Goldsmith, I do not know any figure in the history of literature that should take the gentle reader's liking more than the Italian comic dramatist, Carlo Goldoni. These two charming writers are not unlike in certain particulars of their lives. They were both children of that easy-going eighteenth century, of the period before its griefs began with the French Revolution, and as Irishman and Venetian they might very naturally have been allied in temperament; the American traveller is nowhere more vividly reminded of a certain class of adoptive fellow-citizens than in Venice. Moreover, they had both the vagabondizing instinct, and were æsthetic wanderers, Goldsmith all over Europe, and Goldoni up and down Italy, to die after many years of self-exile in France. They were alike in their half education for the medical profession, and alike in abandoning that respectable science for the groves of Academe, not to say Bohemia; Goldoni, indeed, left the law and several other useful and grave employments for those shades, which are not haunts of flowery ease, after all. But these authors are even

more alike in certain engaging qualities of mind than in their external circumstances. If the English essayist was vastly higher in the theory than in the conduct of life, poor Goldoni had his moral ideas, too, and tried to teach in his comedies purity, good faith, and other virtues which were foolishness to most of the world by whose favor he must live. He resembled Goldsmith in the amiability of his satire, the exquisite naturalness of his characterization, the simplicity of his literary motive; but he was no poet, though a genius, and he falls below Goldsmith in this rather than in respect of the morality he taught.

Perhaps Dr. Goldsmith would have been but little pleased to be compared with the Venetian dramatist, if the comparison had been made in his lifetime, for if he ever heard of Goldoni at all, it must have been in scurful terms from that Joseph Barretti who dwelt in London and consorted with Doctor Johnson, and had wielded upon his Italian brethren a *Frusta Letteraria*, or Literary Lash (as he called his ferocious critical papers), that drew blood: Barretti despised Goldoni for a *farceur* of low degree, not being able to see the truth and power of his comedies, and used to speak of him as "one Charles Goldoni." Nevertheless, if the Venetian could have brought himself to leave the delights of Paris long enough to pay that visit to London which the Italian operatic company once desired of him, he might have met Goldsmith; and then I am sure that the founder and master of the natural school of English fiction would have liked the inventor of realistic Italian comedy. At any rate Goldoni would have liked Goldsmith. The Spectator was the fashion at Venice as well as at London in Goldoni's day; it had formed the taste for the kind of writing in which

Goldsmith excelled, and *The Citizen of the World* would have found an intelligent admirer in a man who helplessly knew as much of the world as himself.

I wish with all my heart that these amiable authors were alike in having both written their memoirs. What a treasure would not the autobiography of Goldsmith be, written with the fulness and frankness of Goldoni's! What would we not give for such a picture of London life as Goldoni paints of Venetian life in the first half of the last century! I fancy the history of Goldsmith written by himself with the same gentleness and forgiving mildness and humorous self-satire as Goldoni's; more of these qualities it could not have; and I doubt if in the whole range of autobiography one can find anything of a cheerfuller sweetness. I have personally to be glad that his memoirs was one of the first books which fell into my hands when I went to live in Venice, and that I read it together with his comedies, so that the romantic city became early humanized to me through the life and labors of the kindly dramatist. The "large and beautiful house" in which Goldoni says he was born, between the bridges of the Knuckle-bone and the *Honest Woman* (the Venetian street nomenclature is much of it deliciously quaint), is still shown to strangers; and I have no doubt but at Chiozza, where much of his boyhood was passed, they could find you, for a very small sum, many palaces in which he lived. At any rate, when you visit that smaller and forlorn Venice, twenty-five miles away in the lagoons, you cannot have a pleasanter association with it than the dramatist's memory. Goldoni will tell you that he was always returning to Chiozza from whatever misadventure he met with elsewhere, until he finally fled the lagoons to escape marriage

with a young lady of that city to whom he had inadvertently betrothed himself. It was here that his mother remained, while his father tried to establish himself, at this city and that, in his profession of physician, and vainly placed his son at one school and another, and was always on the point of making his fortune. They were of a gay, improvident Modenese race, and from the time when Goldoni's grandfather came to Venice and outshone all the patricians in the wasteful splendor of his villa on the Brenta, to the very last year of the dramatist's life amid the early days of the French Revolution, his career seems to have been providentially enriched by every strange experience that could fit into the hand of a comic author. What better fortune for a man destined to write comedy than that he should run away from school at Rimini, and come back by sea with a company of strolling players in their bark to Chiozza; or that from the college of Pavia, where his father afterwards placed him, he should be expelled for writing a lampoon on the principal families of the city? He tells us how he was instantly smitten with shame and remorse, and sixty years later, when he writes his memoirs, he is still on his knees to such of the good people as have so long survived the wrong he did them. But in the mean time there was that Dominican friar who accompanied him home, — that friar who confessed him and took all his little money from him in penance, and then fell asleep amidst the tale of his remaining sins; a friar forever precious to the imagination! And there was the picturesque and melodramatic family dismay when he reached home: his father's wrath, his mother's tears! It is all like a chapter of Gil Blas.

Goldoni was still very young, and he had a very

good heart; he had been cajoled into his satire by some malicious fellow-students, and the lesson that humanity is above literature came to him mercifully early. He was thereafter the founder of a school that ennobled satire by dispersonalizing it. As regarded his dramatic career, his expulsion from college was an advantage. It made him the companion of his father in his medical practice at Chiozza, where he saw a strange and instructive side of life; and later he was his father's fellow-traveller on a journey into Germany and a long sojourn in the Friuli, where he constantly enriched himself with curious experiences, whatever were his father's gains.

There must have been large numbers of Italians in the eighteenth century who did not enjoy themselves, but wherever you find them in memoirs they seem to be having the best of times: eating, drinking, singing, gaming, masking, making love right and left; there is apparently no end to their pleasures. This is the impression of Italian life that remains in one's mind from Goldoni's recollections of his light-hearted youth. They have theatricals in all the houses where he visits; and he who began manager in his childhood with a puppet-show is naturally turned to dramatic account in those cheerful palaces. Wherever he goes, now with his father, or later, when he passes from one city to another on his own changing occasions, he has nothing to do but to amuse and to be amused. If it is in the Venetian dependencies, he calls upon the patrician governor, and stays at least two weeks with him; if it is in distant countries like Milan or Modena or Parma, he is the guest of the Serenest Republic's envoy, — an envoy with no more to do than an American minister, except to be gay, to be profuse, to be

elegant, to ornament society, and to patronize the bowing and obsequious arts. What a charming epoch! Life is everywhere a party of pleasure. There is a certain journey of Goldoni's (in one of his college vacations), down the Po and over the lagoon to Chiozza, which strikes one even at this distance of time and space with intolerable envy: ten young gentlemen and their servants, in a luxuriously appointed barge, drifting idly down the current, and nowise concerned about arriving anywhere. They all, save Goldoni, play upon some instrument, and he, who cannot play, can rhyme the incidents of the voyage. The peasants forsake their fields and flocks as the happy voyagers pass, and crowd the banks of the stream; when the enchanted barge halts at night near some town the citizens throng it with invitations to every sort of gayety; the nobles from their villas send hospitably to arrest the wanderers; it is a long progress of delight, under skies forever blue, among shores forever green. Ah, to have been young and rich and well-born in that day! Or to have been a Venetian office-holder in times when the government was the affair of the rich and amiable patrician families who had the taste to choose such friends as young Goldoni, and to make their work agreeable to them! The reader must go to his autobiography for the account of the prolonged picnic of young gentlemen and ladies who followed the chancellor's coadjutor Goldoni into the woods of Feltre to stay the depredations upon the government timber. The expedition proved almost fatal to Goldoni's peace; for he tells you how he fell in love with one of the young ladies, and how "curiously" he reasoned himself out of the imprudence of making her his wife by considering, Italian-like, that if the fatigues of the

journey had so great effect upon her, she would fade and age early, and so leave him to despair!

It is hard to realize that all this junketing goes on amidst pretty continual fighting. Spaniards and Austrians and Frenchmen are always down there in Italy cutting one another's throats, and every now and then interrupting with a siege or a battle the Italian party of pleasure. The Italians take the interruption as philosophically as they can, and as soon as the dead are buried and the fires put out go on with their amusements as before. Of course a man predestined to write comedy must often be taken at a disadvantage by these wars, and Goldoni's memoirs owe some of their most entertaining chapters to his misadventures among combatants with whom personally and nationally he was at peace. The republic of Venice had long maintained her neutrality (though her territory was violated at will by the belligerents) amidst the ever-renewed hostilities of the barbarians who fought out their quarrels on Italian ground, and she did not meddle with that brief war which the Cardinal Fleury and the Emperor Charles VI. set going between them about the Pragmatic Sanction and the election of the Polish king in 1729. It all resulted in the succession of Maria Theresa to the Imperial throne, in the establishment of the Spanish Bourbons in Naples, and the house of Lorraine in Tuscany; but in the mean time Goldoni, being a Venetian, had not even the tempered interest in the war of those Italians whom its event was to give this master or that. One fine morning, being now attached to the Venetian embassy in Milan, he is roused by his servant with the news that the city is in the hands of the Sardinians, who have joined the French and Spanish side. This is annoying to a gen-

tleman who has already so far entered upon a literary career as to have written an unsuccessful opera (there is nothing more Gil-Blas-like than his account of how the singers laugh it to scorn), but Goldoni is above everything cheerful, and he retires uncomplainingly with the embassy to Crema, to be out of the way of the bombardment of the Milanese citadel; and from Crema he shortly afterwards goes to Parma, where, standing on the city wall, he witnesses the once famous battle of that name. The next day he sees the dead, twenty thousand men, stripped naked over night, and strewn in infinite shapes of mutilation and horror over the field; and, having by this time resigned his office under the Venetian envoy, he gladly quits Parma for the territories of the republic.

Never were misfortunes more blithely narrated than those which beset him on this journey. He is first of all things an author, and you shall read in his memoirs how, amidst these scenes of violence and carnage, he has been industriously contriving a play: his Belisarius, which he carries with him in his pocket, and which he reads aloud to his travelling companion, a young abbé of literary taste, as they drive along in their carriage through a country infested by camp followers, deserters from either host, and desperadoes of every sort. Suddenly brigands appear, and stop at once the carriage and the reading of Belisarius; the literary gentlemen are glad to escape with their lives. Towards nightfall Goldoni encounters some kindly peasants at work in the field; they take pity on him, give him to eat and drink, and bring him to their good curé in the village. The curé is a man of culture; Goldoni mentions his play, the curé makes him a little dinner, and he reads his blessed Belisarius (which has

remained safe from the rapacity of the brigands) to his host and two other applausive abbés! What is adversity after all, then? A matter of individual temperament, of race?

Goldoni repairs to Venice, and he does not again quit that soft and safe retreat for ten years, during which he establishes his fame. But at the end of that time, his destiny takes him into the fighting once more; his old friends, the Frenchmen, the Sardinians, the Spaniards, the Austrians, are all at it as usual. They are all civil to the pleasant dramatist, however, and treat him handsomely when he gets into trouble, and he duly turns his adventures to account in comedy, with unflinching enjoyment of their absurdity.

Goldoni, indeed, would not have been the cunning worker in human nature that he was, if he had not seen his own errors and their consequences with an impartial eye. Somewhere in his comedies you will find every one of them used, with more or less disguise, — usually less. He knew quite well that he was himself an amusing character, but for all that he recognized his serious obligations to the race, and he kept a much livelier conscience, literary and moral, than most people of his world. Certain things, as gaming and intriguing, he was forced practically to blink in himself as well as others, such being the fashion of his age; but he wrote comedies in which the career of the gambler was painted in its true colors, and he helped ridicule the *cavalier sergente* out of existence. He seems to have been tenderly attached to his wife, who returned his love with interest; in a society devoured by debts he abhorred debt, and amidst envies, backbitings, and jealousies of every kind he kept a heart uncorroded by hatred and full of generous friendship.

He was curiously limited in his satirical scope. In Venice he could not paint a dissolute or wicked noble, or indeed put upon the stage a Venetian noble of any sort; his nobles, therefore, were ostensibly of the inferior, titled sort from the mainland. He might not so much as name a convent in comedy; any young lady immured in a nunnery must be mentioned as being "at the house of an aunt," and of course the vices and follies of the clergy were sacred from his touch. He drew his characters from the citizen class chiefly, but often with great effect from the lowest of the people. Within the bounds set him he painted the Venice of his time so gracefully, so vividly, so truly, with so much more of the local human nature than of the mere manners of the age, that his plays mirror in wonderful degree the Venice of our own day.

No author ever wrote more purposely and directly for the theatre than Goldoni; in this, at least, he was Shakespearian. He may be said to have always known the stage; his acquaintance with players began when he ran away from school with the strollers from Rimini, and it continued all his life. When he began seriously to write comedy it was for a company of which he actually formed a part, and he studied his actors and kept them as constantly in view as the persons of his drama. His observation was from the world at large; when he had discovered or imagined a character he trained his players to his own conception of it. Often he wrote a part especially for some comedian; sometimes he portrayed the characters of his actors in the play, and he knew how to avenge himself for their obstinacies, caprices, and jealousies by good-natured satire of their recognizable qualities.

His material lay in himself and everywhere about

him in the Venice which he knew so well. There his genius seemed to prosper most; although he wrote brilliant plays elsewhere, and lived to give the French stage a comedy that had a prompt and (as those things go) enduring success, Venice was the scene of his greatest triumphs. There for many years he continued to produce one play after another with almost uninterrupted good fortune, while elsewhere his inspiration was fitful and uncertain. The best of his hundred and fifty comedies are those in the soft speech of the lagoons; the next best are those Italian plays of which the scene is laid in Venice.

They are simple affairs as to plot, but their movement is very spirited. The dialogue is always brisk, with a droll, natural, sarcastic humor in it that smacks of the popular life; it is rarely witty, — perhaps there is not a memorably witty passage in all his plays; there is no eloquence, and not often anything like pathos, though now and then amidst the prevailing good spirits of his comedy there are touches of real tenderness. His art is extremely good; the plays are well contrived. There are few long speeches; the soliloquies and the asides are few; there are seldom explanations or narrative statements; the sympathetic spectator is briefly possessed of the situation by the dialogue; the rest is left to his patience, which is never heavily taxed, and to his curiosity, which is duly piqued. I find the same sort of pleasure in reading Goldoni's comedies as in seeing them played; though in reading, the baldness of the morality is, of course, more apparent. One ought not to smile at this morality, however, without remembering the age, the religion, and the race to which it was addressed: to these some very elementary principles might have seemed novel.

I do not know how often Molière is still played in France, but in Italy, and especially in Venice, Goldoni has his regular seasons, and holds his place upon the stage as firmly as Shakespeare, with whom he is not otherwise comparable; he was, as I have said, no poet. All his countrymen are agreed as to the vast, the unique value of his theatre in their literature. "To say Goldoni is to say Italian comedy," writes Torelli in a paper on the dramatist in his *Passaggi e Profili*. "The severe critic who, in speaking of the gifts of this famous man, would hold him to strict account for his many defects cannot dispute the common voice which has pronounced the Venetian humorist the father and the restorer of comedy. Goldoni, like all illustrious authors, has had his impassioned detractors, his impassioned apologists: they have fought over his fame, for and against; they have discussed the marvellous subtlety of his dialogue and the poverty of his diction. But the true judges of Goldoni were not the detractors, nor the apologists, nor the commentators, nor the libellers; his true judges were the people in the pit, the spectators surprised by the truth of the characters which he had studied from life, and struck by the aptness of the sallies and replies, which they had felt stirring in their own minds before the persons of the play had uttered them. The worth of Goldoni consists in the material truth, so to speak, of his action, apparently expressed as it comes to hand, but really sought out with study and artifice." The praise of Emiliani-Giudici is as cordial and as just, if not so subtle: "No one painted better than he the life that served him for a model, taught morality with urbaner satire, invented dramatic situations with greater art, showed greater fertility. Cesarotti, a fervent admirer of French literature, compares him to Molière,

and declares that if Goldoni had had more leisure for study, and could have meditated and finished his productions with more affectionate care, he might have boasted a greater number of masterpieces, and have been the first comic dramatist of the world. . . . Goldoni himself laments the fate that forced him to work at such a breakneck rate. In one year he promised and composed sixteen comedies. Nearly all his productions, therefore, lack that final touch by which a writer frees his work from the inevitable redundancies of the first sketch, gives the material greater significance, balances the larger and the lesser parts, and achieves for it beauty and symmetry as a whole." I am bound to say that I have not myself felt in Goldoni that want of finish here deplored, except a certain tendency to tameness and coldness in the conclusion of some of his plays. Neither should I agree with Cantù in much of the censure which he mingles with his praise: "Full of that spirit of observation and imitation which seizes and portrays life, he reveals character, not in phrases and reflections, but in situations and in contrasts; and not character strained and exaggerated, but mixed and average as we see it in society. He obeys his own knowledge of life rather than the requirements of art, but his observation was limited to the lower classes, whence he drew trivial persons. . . . Gondoliers, servants, dancers, parasites, adventurers, *cicisbei*, usurers, misers, husbands and wives of the populace, he depicts with marvellous fidelity, . . . but not the patricians in their refined corruption, nothing that ennobles sentiment or elevates the mind. He neglected his diction, and when he did not use his native dialect he fell into an incorrect, common, and pleading-lawyer's Italian; he sins in useless scenes,

prolix discourses, scurrilous allusions ; yet no one surpasses him in the management of dialogue, in the naturalness of his characters, in the simplicity of his style."

One can hardly blame Goldoni for not embroiling himself with the government by attacking the Venetian nobles, and if he preferred to paint the common life about him he was right to do so ; in matters of art one must do what one likes if one would do well. As for the style, it is so much better to be graphic and simple than to be irreproachable that even the Italian world, which really suffers from an inelegance of speech, easily forgives Goldoni's negligent diction ; the foreigner does not feel it. To elevate the mind or ennoble the sentiments is not quite the comic dramatist's business ; on the other hand, Goldoni never pandered to a vicious taste, in morals or æsthetics. His comedies are pure in surprising degree when one thinks of the contemporary English stage and romances ; they may be read, for the most part, with as little offence as so many novels of Dickens. Now and then he girds himself up to attack some social abuse, like the *cicisbeo* system, by which every fashionable wife had her conventional adorer, recognized in that quality by the world and tolerated by the husband. It was a silly usage, but not so often wicked as might be thought. Parini's satire lashed the poor *cicisbei* in Lombardy, while Goldoni laughed at them in Venice ; but it must have cost the dramatist more to be virtuous against them, for he was a social creature, liking best to please every one, and fond of the gay and fine world. He gently complains of the enmities his ridicule of the *cicisbei* excited against him.

The reader of his memoirs will be interested and

perhaps amused to find Goldoni defending the Protestants from the insult offered them in a dramatic lampoon upon himself, and actually procuring its suppression on the ground of its offensiveness to the ambassadors of many friendly powers resident in Venice, where indeed foreign Protestantism had enjoyed perfect immunity ever since the times of Luther. But it is really not fair to judge this sweet and kindly spirit as a moralist or a reformer of any sort except in his own proper world of comedy. Here he was bold, strenuous, and untiring, and he succeeded in firmly establishing the Italian comic drama against the popular taste and the power of the vested interests.

Of course there were Italians who wrote true comedy before Goldoni: there were Ariosto and Machiavelli, to name no others, but their plays were not played, and there was no body of national comedy at all answering to that of the French or English. There were imitators of the French and imitators of the Spanish school of comedy, and there was a sort of comic spectacle, full of supernatural prodigies and fanciful extravagances, which was in high favor. But the national spirit found expression chiefly in the so-called comedy of art, which had the strongest hold upon the popular affection; and Goldoni supplanted this by the sort of conquest which seems to compromise and even to concede; with the French and Spanish schools, with the spectacular drama, he never pretended to make terms.

The comedy of art was simply the outline of an action supplied to the players. The characters in every plot were drawn from the same stock: Pantalone, Arlecchino, Brighella, Truffaldino, Il Dottore, Colombina, Corallina, and other inferior masks, and the dialogue was the inspiration of the actors; it was

very good or very bad according to their ability, and it could not have been possible to a race with less genius for improvisation than the Italians. Some of these masks were of vast antiquity, like Pantaloon and Harlequin; the others dated back three or four centuries. Arlecchino, Brighella, Truffaldino, Corallina, and Colombina are always servants or people of low degree; they have severally their conventional traits of slyness and stupidity, as immutable as the dresses or masks in which they appear. Arlecchino and Brighella are by immemorial attribution natives of Bergamo, and speak the quaint dialect of their city; they are both rogues, but the former is usually the prey of the latter. Colombina and Corallina are equally wicked jades, and are almost convertible characters. They "know the defects of women in general, and of their mistress in particular. Colombina or Corallina, whichever it is, is from eighteen to twenty-five years of age. She is pretty just short of wounding the vanity of her mistress; she knows by heart the swoons, vapors, caprices, tastes, of the lady whom she has the advantage to serve. When she comes into her chamber in the morning and hears the call, 'My dear Colombina!' she instantly foresees a day of convulsive attacks, emotional prostration, of tears, and of confidences. If the lady is old, Corallina makes fun of her behind her back, and flatters her to her face; tells the whole neighborhood of her artificial pretences, her unspeakable follies. If she is young, she aids her with embassies, with advice; or else—and then the case is terrible—she opposes her in everything, and makes her really unhappy."

Pantalone dei Bisognosi is always a Venetian merchant; he wears the dress and the long beard of his

class and city in the Middle Ages. He is true, just, punctiliously honest; a wise head and a soft heart; usually his son is a reprobate, and costs him much anxiety and money before he turns from his evil ways at the end of the comedy.

Il Dottore Bacchettone is of the learned city of Bergamo; he is dressed in black, and has a great wine stain on his face. Generally it is his business in the Goldonian comedy to be the friend and correspondent of Pantalone, and the father of the lover or heroine of the play.

Goldoni wrote some hundred and fifty comedies, and in quite half of them, I think, these standard characters appear. Every company had actors and actresses identified with the parts, and it was the dramatist's difficult task to preserve enough of the traditional to keep them recognizably the same, while constantly inflecting and varying them to give novelty to the action and meet the exigency of the plot. He was obliged to adopt the masks while supplying a complete play instead of the outline of the comedy of art, which he was seeking to supplant in the popular affections. His success was slow and fitful. From time to time he was forced to give his players outlines; even so late as his sojourn in Paris, we find him supplying these skeleton dramas to the Italian company with which he was connected. But without doubt it was Goldoni who extinguished the comedy of art, and created for the Italians not only a real comedy, but the taste to enjoy it, though the impulse in that direction had been given from time to time long before his day, and once by the good San Carlo Borromeo, — a saint who scarcely needed canonization. "One Flaminio Scala," writes Torelli, "head of a company of play-

ers, following the example of the ancient art, began to give his pieces unity and form; he began to write out notes and take them into the theatre, showing the plot of the action, and explaining what each actor should do upon the scene, the idea by which he should be guided in improvising, and of what nature the buffooneries of Harlequin should be. Scala was praised to the skies, and proclaimed *illustrious* by all Milan. The times were rather shameless: this brave company, seeing themselves every day higher in favor with the Milanese, loosed the rein of modesty, and let their tongues wag at will. San Carlo Borromeo called them before him, and, having thoroughly rebuked them all, especially Harlequin, forbade them to play anything more without first submitting the action to the censorship. 'But if we should happen to *improvise* something!' cried Scala, meekly. 'Write out the play first, and you will avoid that,' replied the archbishop. And perhaps from this point began the abolition of the comedy of art, and the regular comedy had more studious followers."

Nevertheless, the honor is Goldoni's of having created the regular comedy without losing the charm of the old, for there is a very great charm in the constant recurrence of the familiar faces of Pantalone, Arlecchino, Brighella, Truffaldino, Colombina, and Corallina in the perpetually varied action and circumstance of his plays. When once you have entered into their spirit, it is delightful to find that the lover is always Florindo, and that his mistress is always Rosaura; it is like meeting those people whom some novelists have the fancy of making reappear through all their fictions, and there is a sort of convenience in it for the lazy imagination. I do not mean to say that all of

Goldoni's comedies are restricted in their range of character to these personages; great numbers of them entirely depart from the tradition which these keep in view; but I own that I like best those which follow the old comedy of art in respect to their *dramatis personæ*, though I must own also that I do not quite know why.

Goethe, writing from Venice in 1786, describes the performance of one of the best of the Goldonian comedies dealing with the popular life, — a comedy which is still sure to be played at least once every winter in Venice: —

“Yesterday, at the theatre of St. Luke, was performed *Le Baruffe-Chiozotte*, which I should interpret the Frays and Feuds of Chiozza. The *dramatis personæ* are principally seafaring people, inhabitants of Chiozza, with their wives, sisters, and daughters. The usual noisy demonstrations of such sort of people in their good or ill luck, — their dealings one with another, their vehemence, but goodness of heart, commonplace remarks and unaffected manners, their naïve wit and humor, — all this was excellently imitated. The piece, moreover, is Goldoni's, and as I had been only the day before in the place itself, and as the tones and manners of the sailors and people of the seaport still echoed in my ears and floated before my eyes, it delighted me very much, and although I did not understand a single allusion, I was nevertheless, on the whole, able to follow it pretty well. I will now give you the plan of the piece: it opens with the females of Chiozza sitting, as usual, on the strand before their cabins, spinning, mending nets, sewing, or making lace; a youth passes by, and notices one of them with a more friendly greeting than the rest. Immediately

the joking begins, and observes no bounds; becoming tarter and tarter, and growing ill-tempered, it soon bursts out into reproaches; abuse vies with abuse; in the midst of all, one dame, more vehement than the rest, bounces out with the truth; and now an endless din of scolding, railing, and screaming; there is no lack of more decided outrage, and at last the peace officers are compelled to interfere.

“The second act opens with the Court of Justice. In the absence of the *podestà* (who as a noble could not lawfully be brought upon the stage) the *actuarius* presides. He orders the women to be brought before him one by one. This gives rise to an interesting scene. It happens that this official personage is himself enamored of the first of the combatants who is brought before him. Only too happy to have an opportunity of speaking with her alone, instead of hearing what she has to say on the matter in question, he makes her a declaration of love. In the midst of it a second woman, who is herself in love with the actuary, in a fit of jealousy rushes in, and with her the suspicious lover of the first damsel, who is followed by all the rest; and now the same demon of confusion riots in the court as a little before had set at loggerheads the people of the harbor. In the third act the fun gets more and more boisterous, and the whole ends with a hasty and poor *dénoûment*. The happiest thought, however, of the whole piece is a character who is thus drawn: an old sailor, who, from the hardships he has been exposed to from his childhood, trembles and falters in all his limbs, and even in his very organs of speech, is brought on the scene to serve as a foil to this restless, screaming, and jabbering crew. Before he can utter a word, he has to make a long preparation by a slow twitching of

his lips, and an assistant motion of his hands and arms ; at last he blurts out what his thoughts are on the matter in dispute. But as he can only manage to do this in very short sentences, he acquires thereby a sort of laconic gravity, so that all he utters sounds like an adage or maxim ; and in this way a happy contrast is afforded to the wild and passionate exclamations of the other personages.

“ But even as it was, I never witnessed anything like the noisy delight the people evinced at seeing themselves and their mates represented with such truth of nature. It was one continued laugh and tumultuous shout of exultation from beginning to end. . . . Great praise is due to the author, who out of nothing has here created the most amusing *divertissement*. However, he never could have done it with any other people than his own merry and light-hearted countrymen.”

There could be no better analysis of a Goldonian play than this, nor more satisfactory testimony to the favor the dramatist enjoyed among his own people. Yet it is said that Goldoni was at last glad to quit Venice because of the displeasures he suffered from the success of a rival dramatist, Carlo Gozzi. This writer carried to the last excess the principle of the spectacular drama, which Goldoni abhorred, and his popularity must have been sorely vexatious ; but our author, who is commonly very frank about his motives, does not hint at any such reason for his expatriation. Those were the grand and courtly times when a prince, having a fancy for this or that artist, could send through his ambassador and “ demand ” him of his native government. From time to time members of Goldoni’s company were demanded by foreign powers ; at last he was himself demanded of the republic by the King of France.

Quite the same, of course, he was master to stay at home if he liked, but he preferred to accede to the demand and to go for two years to the great city, then as now the centre of artistic aspiration, whither his fame had preceded him. He lived in Paris the rest of his days. He often thought of returning to Venice, but as often was helpless to tear himself from the delights of Paris, — the charms of Parisian society, the quick and constant succession of novelties in science, literature, and art, the exquisite playing at the theatres, — all, in a word, that could allure a man of fine taste and light temperament. Of light temperament Goldoni undoubtedly was, and as such he was a true son of his century. It is amusing, in his memoirs, to observe how unconscious he is of any brooding change which was to involve the destinies of the agreeable great folk with whom his lot was cast: the princesses whom he taught Italian, the king whom he was brought to Paris to amuse, the elegant court of which he modestly formed a part. He laments the death of the cold-hearted debauchee Louis XV. as if he had been really the well beloved of his people; he devoutly rejoices over the nuptials of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette and the birth of their children as if the kingship were to go on forever; and he makes no sign, amidst his comments on French society, of any knowledge of an impending and very imminent French revolution. It must be owned that republicans have always taken very kindly to foreign monarchs: the Swiss have been the stay of several tottering despots; the Americans were the most loathsome admirers and flatterers of the Second Emperor. Poor Goldoni was in raptures — that is the truth — with French royalty and all that belonged to it, and probably no man in France was

more astonished when the Revolution swept everything of that sort away. He had a pension of four thousand francs from the king, which went with the other pensions when the civil list was abolished, and so Goldoni fell into extreme poverty, and sickness followed upon his deprivations. Then the poet Chénier rose one day in the convention, and making these facts known asked the restitution of Goldoni's pension, which was voted by a great majority; and an annuity of twelve hundred francs was continued to his widow after his death, which took place five years later, when he was eighty-six years old.

No kindlier creature seems ever to have lived, and he had traits of genuine modesty that made him truly lovable. He never would suffer himself to be compared with Molière; he meekly bowed down before French geniuses whom the world has ceased, if not to adore, at least to hear of: when the great Count Alfieri calls upon him he is almost overpowered by the honor the noble tragic author does a greater man. Nothing can be sweeter than the courage with which he goes to Diderot (who, having plagiarized one of Goldoni's comedies, spoke ill of his talent) and compels his detractor to be his personal friend. He seems to have kept his temper throughout his trials and vexations in Venice with actors, managers, patrons, and spectators; if ever he retaliates it is by some satire which they join him in enjoying. A very curious chapter of these troubles is that relating to the printing of his plays, a right which the manager, Medebac, pretended to forbid him, and which he was forced to assert by smuggling into Venice an edition printed in Florence. But all that part of his autobiography relating to his life in Italy is full of the quaintest and most varied experience, and it makes a

whole dead world live again: a world of small ducal and princely courts; of alien camps in the midst of a patient and peaceful country; of strange little local jealousies and ambitions; of fantastic and conventional culture fostered by a thousand and one academies or literary societies (Goldoni was himself a shepherd of that famous Arcadia which was the first of these); of a restricted and frivolous intellectual life wasting itself in idle disputations and trivial brilliancy; of a social morality amusingly perverted, and yet not so bad as it would seem to a wiser condition of things, though foolishly bad, without doubt. In this world the philosophies and heresies of transalpine Europe seem to have no root; it is as devout as it is gay; the church directs its culture as well as its conscience, — one might almost say its vices as well as its pleasures, so much are the clergy and the whole religious profession in and of that world.

When Goldoni gets to France his autobiography is no longer so charming. His delightful spirit indeed remains unchanged, but it does not deal with such delightful material. He sets down much concerning Paris that does not interest, and, as I have hinted, he omits almost everything that touches the grand social and intellectual movement of the time. Perhaps as a foreigner attached to the court he could not see this; but he felt too deeply the greatness and fascination of the French world ever to leave it for his native land. He was full of wonder at its variety, its mental liveliness, and its eagerness for every sort of novelty, and the closing chapters of his memoirs are hardly more than a chronicle of such marvels as ballooning, walking on water, and other semi-scientific inventions. He has much to say of the journals of Paris, but not much of value,

and he does not seem to have considered their great number and activity as the prophecy of another age and another order of things. For Goldoni, apparently, the eighteenth century was to last forever.

It is mainly in this part of his autobiography that I have freely condensed his material. Elsewhere I have struck out certain passages, but these contained little that was necessary to a complete picture of the man and his times. In the course of his memoirs he gives tedious outlines of the plots of his comedies. These I have nearly always omitted.





AUTHOR'S PREFACE.



HE life of every author, good or bad, is at the head of his works or in the memoirs of the time.

The life of a man, it is true, ought not to appear till after his death; but do these posterior portraits bear any resemblance to the originals? If they proceed from a friend, the language of praise is not always the language of truth; if from an enemy, satire is too often substituted for criticism. *

My life is not interesting; but it may happen that some time hereafter a collection of my works may be found in the corner of some old library. This will perhaps excite a curiosity to know something of the singular man who undertook the reformation of the theatre of his country, who gave to the stage and the press one hundred and fifty comedies of character and intrigue, in prose and in verse, and who saw eighteen editions of his theatre published during his own lifetime. It will be undoubtedly said, "This man must have been very rich; why did he quit his country?" Alas! posterity must be informed that Goldoni found repose, tranquillity, and comfort only in France, and that he finished

his career by a French comedy which had the good fortune to succeed on the theatre of that nation.

I thought that the author alone could give a certain and satisfactory idea of his character, his anecdotes, and his writings; and I imagined also, that by publishing the memoirs of his life in his own lifetime, if their accuracy was not challenged by his contemporaries, his veracity might be relied on by posterity.

In consequence of this idea, when I saw in 1760, that after my first Florence edition, my theatre was the subject of universal pillage, that fifteen editions had been published without my avowal, without my knowledge, and what is still worse, in a very incorrect state, I conceived the project of printing a second edition at my own expense, and inserting in each volume, instead of a preface, a part of my life, imagining, at that time, that at the end of the work the history of my person and my theatre might be completed.

I was mistaken. When I began the octavo edition of Pasquali, with plates, at Venice, I could not have any idea that my destiny would lead me to cross the Alps.

On being called to France, in 1761, I continued to furnish the changes and corrections which I had projected for the Venice edition; but the vortex of Paris, my new occupations, and the distance between the two places, have diminished my activity and retarded the execution of the press to such a degree, that a work which was to extend to thirty volumes, and to be completed in eight years, is only at the expiration of twenty, at the seventeenth volume, and will never be finished in my lifetime.

What at present agitates and urges me is the account of my life. I repeat, it is not interesting; but what I

have hitherto given in the seventeen first volumes has been so well received, that I am induced to continue it, especially as what I have hitherto written has only a reference to my person, and what remains for me to say relates to my theatre in particular, that of the Italians in general, and in part of that of the French which I have narrowly examined. The comparison of the manners and tastes of the two nations, and whatever I have seen and observed, may perhaps, be found agreeable and even instructive to amateurs.

I am resolved therefore to labor as long as I can; and I do so with inexpressible pleasure, that I may the sooner have to speak of my dear Paris, which gave me so kind a reception, which has afforded me so much amusement, and where I have been so usefully occupied.

I begin by throwing together into French the contents of the historical prefaces of my seventeen volumes of *Pasquali*. This is an abridgment of my life from my birth to the commencement of what in Italy is called the reformation of the Italian theatre. The public will see in what manner the comic genius, which has always controlled me, was announced, how it was developed, the useless efforts made to turn me from the cultivation of it, and the sacrifice made by me to the imperious idol which carried me along. This will form the first part of my memoirs.

The second part will comprehend the history of all my pieces, an account of the circumstances which supplied me with the subject of them, the success or failure of my comedies, the rivalry excited by my success, the cabals which I treated with contempt, and the criticisms which I respected, the satires which I bore in silence, and the cavils of the actors which I surmounted. It will be seen that humanity is everywhere the same,

that jealousy employs itself everywhere, and that everywhere a man of a cool and tranquil disposition, in the end, acquires the love of the public, and wearies out the perfidy of his enemies.

The third part of these Memoirs will contain my emigration into France. I am so enchanted with having an opportunity of speaking my mind freely on this subject, that I am almost tempted to begin my work with that period. But in everything there ought to be method. I should have been perhaps obliged to retouch the two preceding parts, and I am not fond of going over what I have already done.

This is all that I had to say to my readers. I request them to read me, and to be so good as to yield me their belief; truth has always been my favorite virtue. I have always found my account in it; it has saved me from the necessity of studying falsehood, and the mortification of blushing.





MEMOIRS
OF
CARLO GOLDONI.



PART THE FIRST.

I.



WAS born at Venice, in the year 1707, in a large and beautiful house between the bridges of Nomboli and Donna Onesta, at the corner of the street Cà cent' anni, in the parish of St. Thomas. Julius Goldoni, my father, was born in the same city; but all his family were of Modena. My grandfather, Charles Goldoni, went through his studies in the famous college of Parma. There he formed an acquaintance with two noble Venetians, which soon ripened into the most intimate friendship. They prevailed on him to follow them to Venice. His father being dead, he obtained permission from his uncle, who was a colonel and governor of Finale, to settle in the country of his friends, where he obtained a very honorable and lucrative appointment in the office of the Five Commercial Sages, and where he married a Miss Barili of Modena, the daughter of one

counsellor of state of the Duke of Parma, and the sister of another. This was my paternal grandmother.

On her death my grandfather became acquainted with a respectable widow who had two daughters: he married the mother, and the eldest daughter was wedded to his son. They were of the Salvioni family, and, though not rich, were in easy circumstances. My mother was a pretty brunette, and though a little lame, was still very attractive. All their property came into the hands of my grandfather.

He was a worthy man, but by no means an economist. Fond of pleasure, the gay mode of life of the Venetians was well suited to his disposition. He took an elegant country-house, belonging to the Duke of Massa-Carrara, in the Marca Trevigiana, six leagues from Venice, where he lived in great splendor. The grandees of the neighborhood could not brook the idea of Goldoni drawing all the villagers and strangers about him; and one of his neighbors made an attempt to deprive him of his house; but my grandfather went to Carrara, and took a lease of all the duke's property in the Venetian territories. He returned quite proud of his victory, and lived more extravagantly than ever. He gave plays and operas, and had the best and most celebrated actors and musicians at his command; and we had visitors from all quarters. Amidst this riot and luxury did I enter the world. Could I possibly contemn theatrical amusements, or not be a lover of gayety?

My mother brought me into the world with little pain, and this increased her love for me; my first appearance was not, as usual, announced by cries, and this gentleness seemed then an indication of the pacific character which from that day forward I have ever

preserved. I was the idol of the house: my nurse maintained that I was clever; my mother took the charge of my education, and my father of my amusement. He ordered a puppet-show to be constructed for me, which he contrived to manage himself, with the assistance of three or four of his friends; and at the age of four this was a high entertainment for me.

My grandfather died in 1712, of a defluxion in the chest, occasioned by his exertions in a party of pleasure, which in six days brought him to his grave. My grandmother soon followed him. This caused a terrible change in our family, which, from the most fortunate state of affluence, was all at once plunged into the most embarrassing mediocrity. My father's education was not what it ought to have been; he was by no means destitute of abilities, but they had never been properly cultivated. He could not retain his father's situation, which a crafty Greek contrived to get possession of. The free property of Modena was sold, and the entailed mortgaged; and all that remained was the property of Venice, the fortunes of my mother and aunt. To add to our misfortune, my mother gave birth to a second son, John Goldoni, my brother. My father found himself very much embarrassed; but as he was not over fond of indulging in melancholy reflections, he resolved on a journey to Rome to dispel his uneasiness. I shall relate in the following chapter what he did there, and what became of him. I must return to myself, for I am the hero of my own tale.

My mother was left alone at the head of the house, with her sister and her two children. She put the youngest out to board; and, bestowing her whole attention on me, she determined on bringing me up under her own eye. I was mild, tranquil, and obedient: at

the age of four, I could read and write, I knew my catechism by heart, and a tutor was procured for me. I was very fond of books, and I learned with great facility my grammar, and the principles of geography and arithmetic; but my favorite reading was comedies. The small library of my father contained a tolerable number, and I employed almost all my leisure moments in reading them. I even copied the passages with which I was most delighted. My mother gave herself no concern about the choice of my reading; it was enough that my time was not taken up with the usual playthings of children. Among the comic authors whom I frequently read and reread, Cicognini had the preference. This Florentine author, very little known in the republic of letters, was the author of several comedies of intrigue, full of whining pathos and commonplace drollery; still, however, they were exceedingly interesting, for he possessed the art of keeping up a state of suspense, and he was successful in winding up his plots. I was infinitely attached to him, studied him with great attention, and, at the age of eight, I had the presumption to compose a comedy.

The first person to whom I communicated this circumstance was my nurse, who thought it quite charming. My aunt laughed at me; my mother scolded and caressed me by turns; my tutor maintained that there was more wit and common-sense in it than belonged to my age; but what was most singular, my godfather, a lawyer, richer in gold than in knowledge, could not be prevailed on to believe that it was my composition. He insisted that it had been revised and corrected by my tutor, who was quite shocked at the insinuation. The dispute was growing warm, when, luckily, a third person made his appearance, and instantly restored

tranquillity. This was M. Vallé, afterwards the Abbé Vallé of Bergamo. This friend of the family had seen me busied at my comedy, and had witnessed my puerilities and my little sallies. I had entreated him to speak to nobody on the subject : he had kept my secret ; and on this occasion he put my incredulous godfather to silence, and rendered justice to my good qualities.

In the first volume of my edition of Pasquali, I cited the Abbé Vallé, who was living in 1770, in confirmation of the truth of this anecdote, suspecting that there might be other godfathers not disposed to give me credit. If the reader ask what was the title of my play, I cannot satisfy him, for this is a trifle I did not think of when composing it : it would be easy for me to invent one now ; but I prefer giving a true statement of things to the embellishing them. This comedy, in short, or rather this piece of infantine folly, was circulated amongst all my mother's acquaintance. A copy was sent off to my father ; and this leads me again to speak of him.

My father was only to have remained a few months in Rome, but he stayed four years. In this great capital of the Christian world there was an intimate friend of his, M. Alexander Bonicelli, a Venetian, who had lately married a Roman lady of great wealth, and who lived in great splendor. M. Bonicelli gave his friend Goldoni a very warm reception : he received him into his house, introduced him into all societies and to all his acquaintance, and recommended him powerfully to M. Lancisi, the first physician and secret *camériere* of Pope Clement XI. This celebrated doctor, by whom the republic of letters and the faculty have been enriched with excellent works, conceived a strong attachment for my father, who possessed talents, and who

was looking out for employment. Lancisi advised him to apply himself to medicine, and he promised him his favor, assistance, and protection. My father consented: he studied in the college della Sapienzia, and served his apprenticeship in the hospital del Santo Spirito. At the end of four years he was created doctor, and his Mæcenas sent him to make his first experiments at Perugia.

My father's débût was exceedingly fortunate: he contrived to avoid those diseases with which he was unacquainted; he cured his patients; and the "Venetian doctor" was quite in vogue in that country. My father, who was perhaps a good physician, was also very agreeable in company; and to the natural amenity of his countrymen, he added an acquaintance with the usages of genteel company in the place which he had quitted. He acquired the esteem and the friendship of the Bailloni and the Antinori, two of the most noble and wealthy families of the town of Perugia.

In this town, and thus happily situated, he received the first specimen of his eldest son's abilities. Defective as this comedy must have been, he was infinitely flattered with it; for, calculating by the rules of arithmetic, if nine years gave four carats of talent, eighteen might give twelve; and, by regular progression, it was possible to arrive even at a degree of perfection. My father determined on having me with himself. This was a sad blow for my mother, who at first resisted, then hesitated, and at last yielded. One of the most favorable opportunities occurred at this time. Our family was very intimate with that of Count Rinalducci de Rimini, who, with his wife and daughter, was then at Venice. The Abbé Rinalducci, a Benedictine father, and the count's brother, was to set out for

Rome; and he undertook to pass through Perugia, and to take the charge of me to that place.

Everything was got ready, and the moment of departure arrived. I will not speak of the tears of my tender mother: those who have children well know what is suffered on such trying occasions. I was very warmly attached to her who had given me birth, who had reared and cherished me; but the idea of a journey is a charming consolation for a young man. Father Rinalducci and myself embarked in the port of Venice, in a sort of felucca, called peota-zuecchina, and we sailed for Rimini. I suffered nothing from the sea; I had even an excellent appetite, and we landed at the mouth of the Marecchia, where horses were in readiness for us. When a horse was brought to me, I was in the greatest possible embarrassment. At Venice no horses are to be seen in the streets; and though there are two academies, I was too young to derive any advantage from them. In my infancy I had seen horses in the country, but I was afraid of them, and did not dare to approach them. The roads of Umbria, through which we had to pass, were mountainous, and a horse was the most convenient mode of conveyance for passengers; there was, therefore, no alternative. They laid hold of me by the middle, and threw me on the saddle. Merciful Heaven! Boots, stirrups, whip, and bridle! what was to be done with all these things? I was tossed about like a sack; the reverend father laughed very heartily at me, the servants ridiculed me, and I even laughed at myself. I became by degrees familiarized to my pony: I regaled it with bread and fruit, and in six days' time we arrived at Perugia.

My father was glad to see me, and still more glad to see me in good health. I told him, with an air of im-

portance, that I had performed the journey on horseback ; he smiled as he applauded me, and he embraced me affectionately. The place where we were lodged was exceedingly dismal, and the street steep and dirty ; I entreated my father to remove, but he could not, as the house belonged to the hotel or palace d'Antinori ; he paid no rent, and was quite near the nuns of St. Catharine, whose physician he was.

I now viewed the town of Perugia ; my father conducted me everywhere himself ; he began with the superb church of San Lorenzo, which is the cathedral of this country, where the ring with which St. Joseph espoused the Virgin Mary is still preserved : it is a stone of a transparent bluish color, and very thick contour ; so it appeared to me,—but this ring, it is said, has the marvellous property of appearing under a different color and form to every one who approaches it. My father pointed out to me the citadel, built when Perugia was in the enjoyment of republican liberty, by order of Paul the Third, under the pretext of a donation to the Perugians of an hospital for patients and pilgrims. He introduced pieces of cannon in carts loaded with straw, and the inhabitants soon found themselves obliged to acknowledge Paul the Third. I saw fine palaces and churches, and agreeable walks. I asked whether there was a theatre, and I was told there was none. “So much the worse,” said I ; “I would not remain here for all the gold in the world !”

After passing a few days in this manner, my father determined that I should renew my studies ; a very proper resolution, which accorded with my own wishes. The Jesuits were then in vogue, and on being proposed to them, I was received without difficulty. The humanity-classes are not regulated here as in France ;

there are only three,—under grammar, upper grammar, or humanity, properly so called, and rhetoric. Those who employ their time well may finish their course in the space of three years. At Venice I had gone through the first year of under grammar, and I might now have entered the upper, but the time which I had lost, the distraction occasioned by travelling, and the new masters under whom I was about to be placed, induced my father to make me recommence my studies; in which he acted very wisely, for you will soon see, my dear reader, how the vanity of the Venetian grammarian, who plumed himself on the composition of a play, was in an instant wofully mortified. The literary season was well advanced, and I was received in the under class as a scholar properly qualified for the upper. My answers to the questions put to me were incorrect; I hesitated in my translations; and the Latin which I attempted to make was full of barbarisms and solecisms; in short, I became the derision of my companions, who took a pleasure in challenging me; and as every encounter with them ended in my defeat, my father was quite in despair, and I myself was astonished and mortified, and believed myself bewitched.

The time of the holidays drew near, when we had to perform a task, which in Italy is called the *passage Latin*; for this little labor decides the fate of the scholar, whether he is to rise to a higher class, or continue to remain in the same. The latter alternative was all that I had a right to expect. The day came: the regent or rector dictated; the scholars wrote down; and every one exerted himself to the utmost. I strained every nerve, and figured to myself my honor and ambition at stake, and the concern of my father and mother;

I saw my neighbors bestowing a side glance at me, and laughing at my endeavors: *facit indignatio versum*. Rage and shame spurred me on and inspired me; I read my theme, I felt my head cool, my hand rapid, and my memory fresh; I finished before the rest, I sealed my paper, took it to the regent, and departed very well pleased with myself. Eight days afterwards the scholars were collected together and called on; and the decision of the college was published. The first nomination was, "Goldoni to the Upper"; on which a general laugh burst out in the class, and many insulting observations were made. My translation was read aloud, in which there was not a single fault of orthography. The regent called me to the chair; I rose to go; I saw my father at the door, and I ran to embrace him.

The regent wished to speak to me in private; he paid me several compliments, and told me, that notwithstanding the gross mistakes which I committed from time to time in my ordinary lessons, he had suspected that I was possessed of talents from the favorable specimens he occasionally perceived in my themes and verses; he added that this last essay convinced him that I had purposely concealed my talents, and he alluded jocularly to the tricks of the Venetians. "You do me too great an honor, reverend father," said I to him; "I assure you I have suffered too much during the last three months to amuse myself at such an expense: I did not counterfeit ignorance; I was in reality what I seemed, and it is a phenomenon which I cannot explain." The regent exhorted me to continue my application, and as he himself was to pass to the upper class to which I had gained a right of entrance, he assured me of his favor and good-will.

My father, who was perfectly satisfied with me, en-

deavored to recompense and amuse me during the time of the vacation. He knew that I was fond of plays; he admired them also himself; he even collected a society of young people, and obtained the use of a hall in the palace d'Antinori, where he constructed a small theatre; the actors were formed by himself, and we represented plays. In the pope's dominions (except the three legations) women are not allowed on the stage. I was young, and by no means ugly, and a female character was allotted to me; I even got the first character and was charged with the prologue. This prologue was so singular a piece that it has never gone out of my head, and I must treat my reader with it. In the last century the Italian literature was so corrupted that both prose and poetry were turgid and bombastical; and metaphors, hyperboles, and antitheses supplied the place of common-sense. This depraved taste was not altogether extirpated in 1720; and my father was accustomed to it. The following is the commencement of the precious composition which I was made to deliver: "Benignissimo cielo!" (I was addressing my auditors) "ai rai del vostro splendissimo sole, eccoci qual farfalle, che spiegando le deboli ali de' nostri concetti, portiamo a sì bel lume il volo," etc.; which, in plain English, signifies, "Most benign Heaven, in the rays of your most resplendent sun, behold us like butterflies, who, on the feeble wings of our expressions, take our flight to your admirable light," etc.

This charming prologue procured me an immensity of sweetmeats, with which the theatre was inundated, and myself almost blinded. This is the usual expression of applause in the Pope's dominions. The piece in which I acted was "La Sorellina di Don Pilone"

(The Little Sister of Don Pilone), and I was highly applauded; for in a country where plays are rare the spectators are not difficult to please. My father said that I seemed to comprehend my part, but that I should never be a good actor; and he was not mistaken. We continued to act till the end of the holidays. I took my place at the opening of the classes; at the end of the year I passed to rhetoric; and I finished my course with the friendship and esteem of the Jesuits, who did me the honor to offer me a place in their society, — an honor which I did not accept. During this period great changes took place in our family. My mother could no longer bear the absence of her eldest son; and she entreated her husband either to return to Venice or to permit her to join him. After many letters and many discussions, it was at length decided that Madame Goldoni, with her sister and her youngest son, should join the rest of the family; and this was immediately carried into execution.

My mother could not enjoy a single day of good health in Perugia, so much did the air of the country disagree with her. Born and brought up in the temperate climate of Venice, she could not bear the cold of the mountains. She suffered a great deal, and was almost at death's door, but she was resolved to surmount the pains and dangers of her situation so long as she believed my residence in that town necessary, that the course of my studies, which were now so far advanced, might not be exposed to interruption. When my course was finished, she prevailed on my father to satisfy her, and he very willingly consented. The death of his protector, Antinori, had been productive of several disagreeable circumstances; the physicians of Perugia bore him little good-will, and this induced

him the more readily to resolve on quitting the territory of Perugia and approach the mouth of the Adriatic.

II.

IN a few days the project was carried into execution. A carriage, capable of holding four persons, was purchased, and we had my brother into the bargain. We took the road of Spoleti, as the most commodious, and we arrived at Rimini, where the whole family of Count Rinalducci was assembled, and where we were received with transports of joy. It was of the utmost consequence that my literary application should not be a second time interrupted. My father destined me for medicine, and I had to enter on the study of philosophy.

The Dominicans of Rimini enjoyed a great reputation for logic, the key to all the sciences, physical as well as speculative. Count Rinalducci introduced us to Professor Candini, and I was intrusted to his care. As the count could not keep me in his own house, I was boarded with M. Battaglini, a merchant and banker, the friend and countryman of my father. Notwithstanding the remonstrances and regrets of my mother, who would never willingly part from me, the whole family set out for Venice, where I could only join them when it might be thought proper to send for me. They embarked for Chiozza,* in a bark belonging to that

* Chiozza is eight leagues from Venice, and built on piles like the capital. It is computed to contain forty thousand souls, all of the lower order, — fishermen, sailors, and women, who make a coarse lace, in which a considerable trade is carried on ; there are very few individuals above the vulgar. Every person is ranged there in one of two classes, — the rich or the poor ; those who wear a wig and cloak are the rich ; and the others, who have only a cap and *capotto*, are the poor ; and yet it frequently happens that the latter possess four times more wealth than the others.

place; and the wind being favorable, they arrived there in a very short time; but, on account of the fatigue of my mother, they were obliged to stop there for the sake of repose.

This place agreed very well with my mother, the air of Chiozza corresponding with that of her native place. She was elegantly lodged, enjoyed an agreeable view, and a charming degree of freedom; her sister was complaisant, my brother was still an infant unable to speak, and my father, who had projects, communicated his reflections to his wife, by whom they were approved. "We must not return to Venice," said he, "till we are in a situation to enable us to live without being burdensome to any one." It was necessary, therefore, that he should first go to Modena to arrange the family affairs. This was accordingly done. My father was now at Modena, my mother at Chiozza, and myself at Rimini.

I fell sick, and was seized with the small-pox, but of a very mild kind. M. Battaglini did not inform my parents till he saw me out of danger. It is impossible to be better taken care of and attended to than I was on this occasion. I was hardly in a condition to go out, when my landlord, who was extremely attentive and zealous for my welfare, urged me to return to Father Candini. I went very unwillingly: this professor, who was a man of great celebrity, wearied me dreadfully; he was mild, wise, and learned; he possessed great merit, but he was a Thomist in his soul, and could not deviate from his ordinary method; his scholastic circumlocutions appeared to be useless, and his *barbara* and *baralipton* ridiculous. I wrote from his dictation; but, instead of going over my note-books at home, I nourished my mind with a much more useful and agreeable philosophy; I read Plautus, Terence, Aristophanes,

and the fragments of Menander. It is true, I did not shine in our daily circles ; but I had the address to persuade my companions that my indifference to the master's lessons proceeded neither from laziness nor stupid ignorance, but from being fatigued and disgusted with their length and inutility. There were many of them who thought on this subject like myself. Modern philosophy had not then made the considerable progress which has been since witnessed ; and it was at that time necessary (especially for ecclesiastics) to keep to the systems of Thomas, or Scot, or the peripatetic, or the mixed, the whole of which only wander from the philosophy of good sense.

I had great want of some agreeable amusement to relieve the ennui which overpowered me. I soon found an opportunity, of which I availed myself ; and my readers will not be displeased perhaps to pass with me from the circles of philosophy to those of a company of comedians. We had one at Rimini, which appeared to me quite charming. It was the first time I saw women on the stage ; and I found that they ornamented the scene in the most attractive manner. Rimini is in the legation of Ravenna ; women are admitted on the theatre, and we do not see there, as at Rome, men without beards or even the signs of them. The first day or two, I went very modestly into the pit ; but seeing young people like myself on the boards, I endeavored also to get there, and succeeded without difficulty. I bestowed a side-glance on the ladies, who looked boldly at me. By and by I grew more familiar, and from one subject of conversation to another, and from question to question, they learned that I was a Venetian. They were all country-people of my own, and I received compliments and caresses without number

from them. The director or manager himself loaded me with kindness; he asked me to dine with him, and I went. The reverend Father Candini was now entirely out of my head.

The comedians were on the point of finishing their engagement, and taking their departure, which was a most distressing circumstance for me. On a Friday, a day of relaxation for all Italy, the state of Venice excepted, we formed a rural party; all the company were with us, and the manager announced the departure for the following week; he had engaged the bark, which was to conduct them to Chiozza. "To Chiozza!" said I, with a cry of surprise. "Yes, sir, we are to go to Venice, but we shall stop fifteen or twenty days at Chiozza, to give a few representations in passing." "Ah! my mother is at Chiozza; how gladly would I see her!" "Come along with us." "Yes, yes," cried one and all; "with us, with us, in our bark; you will be very comfortable in it; it will cost you nothing; we shall play, laugh, sing, and amuse ourselves." How could I resist such temptations? How could I lose so fine an opportunity? I accepted the invitation, and I began to prepare for my journey.

I opened the business to my landlord, but he opposed me warmly. As I insisted, however, he communicated my project to Count Rinalducci, and I had every one against me. I pretended to acquiesce, and I kept myself quiet. On the day fixed for my departure I put two shirts and a nightcap into my pocket; I repaired to the port, was the first to enter the vessel, and concealed myself well under the prow. I had my inkhorn with me; I wrote an excuse to M. Battaglini: I told him I could not resist the desire of seeing my mother; I requested him to make a present of my clothes to the

nurse who took care of me in my illness; and I told him that I was on the point of departure. This was a fault, I own; I have committed others, and I shall own them in the same manner. The players arrived. "Where is M. Goldoni?" Goldoni then sallied out of his hiding-place, at which every one began to laugh. I was feasted and caressed. We set sail. Adieu, Rimini. My comedians were not Scarron's company, but on the whole, they presented a very amusing *coup-d'œil*. Twelve persons, actors as well as actresses, a prompter, a machinist, a store-keeper, eight domestics, four chambermaids, two nurses, children of every age, cats, dogs, monkeys, parrots, birds, pigeons, and a lamb; it was another Noah's ark! The bark was very large, and divided into a number of apartments. Every female had her little corner, with curtains. An excellent bed was fitted up for me beside the manager; and all of us were comfortable. The steward, who was at the same time cook and butler, rang a little bell, which was our signal for breakfast. On this we all assembled in a sort of saloon in the middle of the vessel above the chests, trunks, and packages. An oval table was covered with coffee, tea, milk, roast meat, water, and wine.

The principal actress (*première amoureuse*) asked for soup. There was none. She was quite in a rage, and they had all the difficulty in the world to pacify her with a cup of chocolate. She was the ugliest and the most difficult to please of the whole. After breakfast, play was proposed till dinner should be ready. I played tresset pretty well. It was the favorite game of my mother, from whom I learned it. We were going to begin tresset and piquet, but a faro-table on deck drew everybody towards it. The bank was more

a matter of amusement than interest, and the director would not have suffered it on any other terms. We played, laughed, joked, and gave ourselves up to all manner of tricks till the bell summoned us to dinner. Macaroni! Every one fell upon it, and three dishes were devoured. We had also alamode beef, cold fowl, a loin of veal, a dessert, and excellent wine. What a charming dinner! No cheer like a good appetite.

We remained four hours at table; we played on different instruments, and sang a great deal. The actress who played the waiting-maid sang divinely. I considered her attentively; she produced a singular sensation in me. Alas! an adventure took place which interrupted the happiness of the society. A cat escaped from her cage, the favorite of the principal actress, who called on every one for assistance. She was briskly chased, but, being as wild as her mistress, she skipped, leaped about, and crept into every hole and corner. When she found herself at last rather warmly pursued, she climbed up the mast. Seeing the distress of Madame Clarice, a sailor sprang up after her, when the cat leaped into the sea, where she remained. Her mistress was in despair, she attempted to kill every animal within reach of her, and to throw her waiting-maid into the watery grave of her darling. We all took the part of the waiting-maid, and the quarrel became general. The manager made his appearance, laughed, rallied, and caressed the afflicted lady. She at last began herself to laugh, and the cat was forgotten. The wind was unfavorable, and we remained three days at sea, always with the same amusements, the same pleasures, and the same appetite. We arrived on the fourth day at Chiozza.

I had not the address of my mother's lodgings, but

I had not long to inquire, — Madame Goldoni and her sister wore a head-dress; they were in the rich class, and known by everybody. I requested the manager to accompany me: he very readily consented, and announced himself on his arrival. I remained in the antechamber. “Madam,” said he to my mother, “I come from Rimini; I have news from your son.” “How does my son?” “Very well, madam.” “Is he content with his situation?” “Not remarkably so, madam; he suffers a great deal.” “From what?” “From being so far from his tender mother.” “Poor child! I wish I had him beside me.” (All this was heard by me, and my heart beat within me.) “Madam,” continued the manager, “I offered to bring him with me.” “Why then did you not?” “Would you have been pleased?” “Undoubtedly.” “But his studies?” “His studies! Could he not return? Besides, masters are everywhere to be had.” “Then you would willingly see him?” “With the greatest joy.” “Here he is, then, madam.” On this he opened the door, and I made my entrance; I threw myself at my mother’s feet, who cordially embraced me; neither of us could speak for our tears. The actor, accustomed to scenes of this nature, after passing some agreeable compliments, took his leave of my mother, and departed; I remained with her, and frankly owned the folly I had committed; she scolded me one moment, and caressed me the next, and we were quite pleased with each other. My aunt was then out; on her entrance, we had a repetition of the same surprise and the same caresses. My brother was at that time boarded out.

On the day after my arrival, my mother received a letter from M. Battaglini at Rimini, who communicated to her my prank, of which he complained

bitterly, and informed her that she would soon receive a portmanteau, containing my books, linen, and other articles, which my nurse knew not what to do with. My mother was very uneasy, and disposed to scold me; but apropos of letters, she remembered that she had received a very interesting one from my father; she went to look for it, and put it into my hands: the following is the substance of it.

“PAVIA, March 17, 1721.

“MY DEAR WIFE, — I have news for you concerning our dear son, which will give you great pleasure. I quitted Modena, as you know, to go to Piacenza, for the sake of arranging affairs with my cousin, M. Barilli, who still owes me a part of my mother’s fortune; and if I can join this sum to the arrears which I have just received at Modena, we shall be able to settle ourselves comfortably.

“My cousin was not at Piacenza; he had set out to Pavia, to be present at the marriage of a nephew of his wife. As the journey was not long, I resolved on joining him at Pavia. I found him, spoke to him, he owned the debt, and matters are arranged. He is to pay me in six years; but you shall hear what has happened to me in this town.

“On alighting at the hotel of the Red Cross, I was asked my name, for the purpose of having it entered at the police. Next day, the landlord introduced a servant of the governor’s to me, who very politely asked me to repair, at my convenience, to the government palace. Notwithstanding the word *convenience*, I was far from being at my ease at that moment, and I was quite at a loss to conjecture what they could possibly want with me. I went first to my cousin, and after our affairs were settled, I spoke to him of this sort of invitation, which disquieted me a great deal, and I asked him whether he was personally acquainted with the governor of Pavia. He told me he was, that he had known him a long time, that he was the Marquis Goldoni-Vidoni, of a good family of Cremona, and a senator of

Milan. At the name of Goldoni, I banished every fear; I conceived the most flattering ideas, and I was not deceived. I went to see him in the afternoon; he received me in the most respectful and gracious manner. It was my signature which had inspired him with the desire of knowing me. We talked a great deal; I told him that I was originally from Modena: he did me the honor of observing that the town of Cremona was not very distant from Modena. People came in, and he asked me to dine with him next day. I did not fail to go, as you may well believe; there were four of us at table, and we had a very good dinner. The two other guests left us after coffee, and the senator and myself were left by ourselves. We spoke of a number of things, but principally of my family, my situation, and my actual circumstances; in short, he promised to do something for my eldest son. At Pavia there is a university as famous as that of Padua, and several colleges, where those who have exhibitions are alone received. The marquis engaged to obtain for me one of those exhibitions in the Pope's College; and if Charles behaves himself, he will take care of him.

“Write nothing of this to my son. At my return I shall send for him. I wish to have the pleasure of informing him of it myself.

“I shall not be long, I hope,” etc.

The contents of this letter were quite calculated to flatter me, and inspire me with the most unbounded hopes. I then felt all the imprudence of my proceeding. I dreaded my father's indignation, and I was afraid lest he should be inclined to distrust my conduct in a town still more distant, and where I should be much more at liberty. My mother informed me that she would endeavor to screen me from my father's reproaches, — that she would take everything on herself, particularly as my repentance appeared sincere. I was reasonable enough in fact for my age; but I was apt to act incon-

siderately at times. This has done me much injury, as the reader will see, and perhaps he will sometimes be inclined to pity me.

My mother wished to introduce me to her acquaintance; but my only dress consisted of an old surtout, which at sea had served me for dress, nightgown, and a covering for my feet. She ordered a tailor, and I was soon properly equipped, and in a state to make my appearance abroad. My first care was to call on my travelling companions, who were very glad to see me. They were engaged for twenty representations; and as I received a right of admission, I resolved to take advantage of it with the good pleasure of my affectionate mother. She was very intimate with the Abbé Gennari, a canon of the cathedral. This good ecclesiastic was rather a rigorist. Plays in Italy are not proscribed by the Roman church, and players are not excommunicated; but the Abbé Gennari maintained that the comedies which were then acted were dangerous for youth, in which he was probably not much in the wrong. My mother therefore forbid me the theatre. I was obliged to obey; but, though I did not go to the representations, I visited the actors, and the actress who performed the part of the waiting-maid more frequently than the others. I have always continued to have a predilection for those who act that character.

In six days my father arrived. I trembled all over: my mother concealed me in her dressing-closet, and took the rest on herself. My father ascended the steps; my mother ran to meet him; my aunt did the same, and the usual embraces took place. My father appeared chagrined and thoughtful, and he had not his usual gayety. They supposed him fatigued. On entering the room, my father's first words were, "Where is my

son?" My mother answered with perfect sincerity, "Our youngest son is boarded out." "No, no," replied my father in a rage, "I want the eldest, and he must be here. In concealing him from me, you are doing very wrong; he must be corrected for his misconduct." My mother was quite at a loss what to do or say; she uttered vaguely, "But — how?" My father interrupted her, stamping with his feet: "Yes, I have been informed of everything by M. Battaglini, who wrote to me at Modena, and I found the letter in passing through it." My mother entreated of him, with an afflicted air, to hear me before condemning me. My father, still in a rage, asked again where I was. I could contain myself no longer; I opened the glass door, but I durst not advance. "Go out," said my father to his wife and sister; "leave me alone with this profligate." When they were gone, I came forward trembling: "Ah, father!" "How, sir! How do you happen to be here?" "Father — you have been told." "Yes, I have been told that, in spite of remonstrances and good advice, and in opposition to every one, you have had the insolence to quit Rimini abruptly." "What should I have done at Rimini, father? It was lost time for me." "How, lost time! Is the study of philosophy lost time?" "Ah! the scholastic philosophy, the syllogisms, the enthymemas, the sophisms, the *negos propos* and *concedos*; do you remember them, father?" (He could not avoid displaying a slight movement of the lips which indicated his desire to laugh; I was shrewd enough to perceive it, and I took courage.) "Ah, father!" I added, "teach me the philosophy of man, sound moral philosophy, and experimental natural philosophy." "Come, come; how did you arrive here?" "By sea." "With

whom?" "With a company of players." "Players!" "They are very respectable people, father." "What is the name of the manager?" "He is Florindo on the stage, and they call him Florindo de' Macaroni." "O, I know him: he is a worthy man; he acted Don Giovanni in the 'Festino di Pietra'; he thought proper to eat the macaroni belonging to Harlequin, and that is the way he came by that surname." "I assure you, father, that this company —" "Where is the company gone to?" "It is here." "Here?" "Yes, father." "Do they act here?" "Yes, father." "I shall go to see them." "And I also, father?" "You, rascal! What is the name of the principal actress?" "Clarice." "O, Clarice! — excellent, ugly, but very clever." "Father —" "I must go to thank them." "And I, father?" "Wretch!" "I beg your pardon." "Well, well, for this time."

My mother, who had heard everything, now entered: she was very glad to see me on good terms with my father. She mentioned the Abbé Gennari to him, not with the view of preventing me from going to the play (for my father was as fond of it as myself), but for the sake of informing him that the canon, suffering under different diseases, was anxious to see him; that he had spoken to the whole town of the famous Venetian physician, pupil of the great Lancisi, who was instantly expected; and that he had only to show himself to receive more patients than he could desire. This is what really happened. Everybody wished to have Doctor Goldoni; rich and poor flocked to him, and the poor paid better than the rich. He took more commodious apartments, and settled at Chiozza, to remain there so long as fortune should continue favorable to him, or till some other physician in vogue should supplant him.

Seeing me unoccupied, and in want of good masters in town, my father wished himself to make something of me. He destined me for medicine, and till he should have the letters announcing my nomination to the College of Pavia, he ordered me to accompany him in his daily visits. He thought that a little practice before the study of the theory would give me a superficial acquaintance with medicine, which I might find very useful for the understanding technical terms and the first principles of the art.

I was not over fond of medicine; but I durst not be refractory, for I should have been then told that I wished to do neither one thing nor another.

III.

I WAS naturally gay, but subject from my infancy to hypochondriacal or melancholy vapors, which threw a dark shade over my mind. Attacked with a violent fit of this lethargic disease, I sought for relief but could find none. The players were gone; Chiozza had no longer any amusement to my taste; I was discontented with medicine, I became gloomy and thoughtful, and fell away more and more every day. My parents soon perceived my state; my mother was the first to question me. I confided my uneasiness to her. One day, when we were partaking of a family dinner without strangers or the presence of servants, my mother turned the conversation to me. There was a debate of two hours. My father was absolutely resolved that I should apply to medicine. It was in vain for me to agitate myself, make wry faces, and look gloomy, he would not yield. My mother at length proved to my father that he was wrong, and she did it in this way:

“The-Marquis Goldoni,” said she, “wishes to take our child under his care. If Charles be a good physician, his protector may favor him, it is true; but can he give him patients? Can he persuade people to prefer him to so many others? He may procure him the place of professor in the University of Pavia; but then, what an immense time and labor before he can get it; whereas if my son were to study law and become an advocate, it would be easy for a senator of Milan to make his fortune without the smallest trouble or difficulty.”

My father made no answer; he remained silent for a few minutes. At length, turning to me, he said jocularly: “Would you like the Code and Digest of Justinian?” “Yes, father,” I replied, “a great deal better than the Aphorisms of Hippocrates.” “Your mother,” said he, “is a sensible woman; her reasons are good, and I may acquiesce in them; but in the mean time you must not remain idle, but continue to accompany me.” I was still therefore where I was. My mother then took up my cause with warmth. She advised my father to send me to Venice and settle me with my uncle Indric, one of the best attorneys of the capital, and she proposed to accompany me herself and to remain with me there till my departure for Pavia. My aunt supported her sister’s project. I held up my hands and wept for joy. My father consented, and I was to go instantly to Venice. I was now contented, and my vapors were immediately dissipated. Four days afterwards my mother and myself took our departure. We had but a passage of eight leagues, and we arrived at Venice at the hour of dinner. We went to lodge with M. Bertani, a maternal uncle of my mother; and next day we called on M. Indric, by

whom we were very politely received. M. Paul Indrie had married my paternal aunt. It was a charming family: a good husband and father, a good mother and wife, and children excellently brought up. I was entered in the office. I was the fourth clerk, but I enjoyed certain privileges which my consanguinity could not fail to procure me.

My present occupation was more agreeable than that under my father at Chiozza: but the one seemed as useless to me as the other. Supposing that I should be called to the bar at Milan, I could derive no advantage from the practice of that at Venice, which is unknown to all the rest of Italy. It was impossible to foresee that by a series of singular adventures I should one day plead in the courts where I then considered myself a stranger. Discharging my duty with accuracy, and meriting my uncle's praise, I contrived nevertheless to avail myself of the pleasures of a residence at Venice and to partake of its amusements. It was my native place; but I was too young when I quitted it to know anything of it again.

Venice is so extraordinary a city that it is impossible to form a correct idea of it without seeing it. Maps, plans, models, and descriptions are insufficient; it must be seen. All other cities bear more or less resemblance to one another, but Venice resembles none; and every time I have seen it after a long absence it has been a new subject of astonishment and surprise for me. As I advanced in years, and my knowledge increased and furnished me with more numerous objects of comparison, I ever discovered new singularities and new beauties in it. But I then saw it as a youth of fifteen, who could not be supposed to be struck with what in reality was the most remark-

able, and who could only compare it with the small towns which he had lived in. What I was most astonished at was the surprising view which it presents on a first approach. On seeing the extent of small islands so close together and so admirably connected by bridges, we imagine we behold a continent elevated on a plain and washed on every side by an immense sea which surrounds it. This is not the sea, but a very extensive marsh more or less covered with water at the mouths of several ports with deep canals, which admit large and small vessels into the town and its environs. If you enter by the quarter of St. Mark through a prodigious quantity of vessels of every description, ships of war, merchantmen, frigates, galleys, barks, boats, and gondolas, you land at the Piazzetta (Small Place), where in one direction you see the palace and the ducal church, which announce the magnificence of the republic, and in another, the place or square of St. Mark, surrounded with porticos from designs by Palladio and Sansovino. In going through the streets where haberdashery goods are sold, you tread on flags of Istrian marble, carefully roughened by the chisel to prevent their being slippery. The whole quarter is a perpetual fair till you arrive at the bridge of a single arch, ninety feet in breadth over the great canal, which, from its elevation, allows the passage of barks and boats in the highest tides, which offers three different roads to passengers and which upholds twenty-four shops with lodgings, the roofs of which are covered with lead. This view, I own, appeared surprising to me; and I have not found it properly described by travellers. I ask my reader's pardon if my fondness has got the better of me.

I shall not say more at present; but I shall take

the liberty of giving some idea of the manners and customs of Venice, its laws and constitution, when circumstances shall lead me to the subject, and when my knowledge may be supposed to have obtained more consistency and precision. I shall conclude this notice with a succinct account of its spectacles. In Italy their places of public amusement are called theatres. There are seven in Venice, each bearing the name of the titular church of its parish. The theatre of St. John Chrysostom was then the first in the town, where the grand operas were represented, where Metastasio opened his dramatic, and Farinello, Faustine, and Cozzoni, their musical career. At present the theatre of St. Benedict is highest in rank. The six other theatres are called St. Samuel, St. Luke, St. Angelo, St. Cassian, and St. Moses. Of these seven, two are generally dedicated to grand operas, two to comic operas, and three to plays. I shall advert more particularly to all of them when I become an author, in the manner of that country; for there are none of them which have not had works of mine, and which have not contributed both to my honor and profit.

I acquitted myself tolerably well in my employment with the attorney at Venice. I possessed great facility in giving a summary and abstract of a law-suit, and my uncle would fain have kept me, but I was recalled by a letter from my father. The situation in the Pope's College had become vacant, and was kept open for me. The Marquis Goldoni communicated the circumstance to us, and advised us to lose no time in setting out. My mother and myself quitted Venice and returned to Chiozza. My trunks were ready and corded, my mother and my aunt in tears. My brother, who

had been taken home, wished to accompany me. The separation was highly pathetic; but the chaise arrived, and we were obliged to part.

We took the road of Rovigo and Ferrara, and arrived at Modena, where we remained three days in the house of M. Zavarisi, a very respectable notary in that town, and a near relation of ours by the mother's side. This worthy man had all my father's affairs in hand. He drew our government annuities and our house-rents, and, having supplied us with money, we went to Piacenza. My father, when there, took care to visit his cousin Barilli, who had not altogether fulfilled his engagements. He contrived to make him discharge the arrears of the two years which were owing, so that we were now tolerably well stocked with ready money, which turned out very useful to us in the unforeseen circumstances in which we were afterwards placed.

On arriving at Milan, we lodged at the inn of the Three Kings, and the day following we went to pay our visit to the Marquis Goldoni. It is impossible to be better received than we were. My protector seemed satisfied with me, and I was perfectly so with him. The college was spoken of, and the day was even fixed for my making my appearance in Pavia; but the marquis, on looking more attentively at me, asked my father and myself why I was in a lay dress, and why I did not wear the clerical band (*petit collet*). We were quite at a loss to know what he meant. At length we learned for the first time that to enter the College of Ghislieri, called the Pope's College, it was essentially necessary, first, that those who held exhibitions should be tonsured; secondly, that they should have a certificate of their civil situation and their

moral conduct; thirdly, another certificate of their not being married; and fourthly, a certificate of baptism. My father and myself were quite thunderstruck, for all this was new to us. The senator conceived that we ought to have been informed of it, for he had instructed his secretary to transmit us a note on the subject; but this note was still remaining in his bureau. This occasioned a number of excuses and a number of entreaties for pardon on the part of the secretary. The master was kind, and we should have gained nothing in being cross.

But it was necessary to remedy the mistake. My father resolved to write to his wife. She went immediately to Venice, and set on foot every species of solicitation. The certificates of celibacy and good morals were easily procured, and the baptismal certificate still more so; but the great embarrassment was the tonsure, as the patriarch of Venice would not grant dimissorial letters without the constitution of the patrimony ordained by the canons of the church. What was to be done? The property of my father was not situated in the Venetian dominions, and my mother's was entailed. We were obliged to apply to the senate for a dispensation. What delays, contradictions, and loss of time! The senatorial secretary made us pay dear for his excuses and his blunders. There was nothing but patience for us. My mother gave herself a deal of trouble, and she was at length successful; but while she was laboring for her son at Venice, what were we about at Milan?

We remained fifteen days at Milan, dining and supping every day with my protector, who showed us everything magnificent in that city, which is the capital of Austrian Lombardy. I shall say nothing at present

of Milan. I have to return to it; and I shall speak more at large concerning it when I shall be more qualified to handle the subject. In the mean time my costume was changed, and I wore the clerical band. We set out at length for Pavia, well provided with letters of recommendation. We lodged and boarded in the house of one of the towns-people, and I was introduced to the superior of the college where I was to be received. We had a letter from Senator Goldoni for M. Lauzio, professor of law; who himself conducted me to the university. I followed him into his class, and did not lose my time waiting for my title of collegian.

M. Lauzio was a juriconsult of the greatest merit. He possessed a very rich library, to which I had free access as well as to his table. His wife was very kind to me. She was still young enough, and must have been pretty, but she was terribly disfigured by a monstrous goitre which descended from her chin to her breast. These ornaments are by no means rare at Milan and Bergamo; but that of Madame Lauzio was altogether particular in its kind, for it had a small family of little goitres around it. The small-pox is certainly a great scourge for women; but I know no young woman pitted with the small-pox who would exchange her scars for a Milanese goitre.

I derived great profit from the professor's library. I ran over the institutes of Roman law, and furnished my head with the matters for which I was destined. I did not always confine myself to jurisprudence. There were shelves filled with a collection of ancient and modern comedies, which were my favorite reading. I resolved to divide my time between the study of law and the perusal of comedies during the

whole period of my stay at Pavia ; but my entry into the college was the occasion of more dissipation than application ; and I did well to profit by the three months in which I waited for my dimissorial letters and certificates from Venice. I reread with more knowledge and greater pleasure the Greek and Latin poets, and I said to myself, I wish it were in my power to imitate them in their plans, their style, and their precision ; but I should not be well pleased if I did not throw more interest into my works, more marked characters, more of the *vis comica*, and bring about a more successful termination of the plot.

“Facile inventis addere.”

We ought to respect the great masters who have paved the way for us in science and art ; but every age has its peculiar genius, and every climate its national taste. The Greek and Roman authors were acquainted with Nature, and closely copied her ; but they exposed her unveiled and without restraint. It was on this account that the fathers of the church wrote against plays, and that the popes excommunicated them. They have been corrected by decency, and the anathema has been recalled in Italy. It deserves much more to be recalled in France ; and that it is not so is a phenomenon which I cannot comprehend.

Rummaging about in this library, I saw English, Spanish, and French theatres ; but I found no Italian theatre. There were here and there old Italian pieces, but no collection which could do honor to Italy. It was with pain I saw that the nation which was acquainted with the dramatic art before every other in modern times, was deficient in something essential. I

could not conceive how Italy had in this respect grown negligent, vulgar, and degenerate. I passionately desired to see my country rise to the level of others, and I vowed to endeavor to contribute to it.

But I now received a letter from Venice, with the dimissorials, certificates, and baptismal extract. The latter was on the point of plunging us into a new embarrassment. I was two years under the age requisite for my reception into the college. I know not to what saint I was beholden for the miracle; but I do know well, that I went to bed one night only sixteen, and rose next morning two years older. My mother had address enough to remedy the want of patrimony necessary to obtain the dimissorial letters from the patriarch of Venice; they were ordered to be issued by M. Cavanis, a secretary of the senate, on the condition that if I embraced the ecclesiastical state, a revenue should be constituted in my favor. I received then the tonsure from the hands of Cardinal Cusani, archbishop of Pavia; and I went with my father on leaving his eminence's chapel, to present myself in the college. The superior, called prefect, was the Abbé Bernerio, professor of canon law in the university, and apostolical prothonotary, and in virtue of a bull of Pius V. he enjoyed the title of prelate, immediately subject to the holy seat. I was received by the prefect, vice-prefect, and almoner. They delivered to me a short sermon, and introduced me to the oldest of the scholars. I was then installed. My father embraced and quitted me, and next day he took the road for Milan on his way home.

Perhaps, my dear reader, I abuse your complaisance too much, in taking up your time with trifles, which can but little interest or amuse you; but I have a

strong desire to mention this college to you, where I ought to have made my fortune, and where I met with a sad reverse. I wish to avow my errors, and to prove to you at the same time that at my age and in my situation the utmost virtue was requisite to avoid them. Listen to me with patience. We were very well fed and lodged in this college; we had liberty to go out to the university, and we went where we pleased. The regulation allowed two to go out together, who were also to return together. We separated at the first turning, after appointing a rendezvous for our return, and when we returned alone, the porter took his money and said nothing. His place was worth that of the porter of a minister of state. We were as elegantly dressed as the abbés who figure away in the world; English cloth, French silk, embroidery, lace, with a sort of robe-de-chambre, without sleeves above the coat, and a velvet stole fastened to the left shoulder with the Ghislieri arms embroidered in gold and silver, surmounted by the pontifical tiara, and the keys of St. Peter. This robe, called *sovrana*, which is the device of the college, gives an air of importance to the wearer very well calculated to inspire a young man with a high idea of himself. Our college was not, as you may perceive, a community of boys. We acted precisely as we pleased. There was a great deal of dissipation within, and a great deal of freedom without. I learned there fencing, dancing, music, and drawing; and I learned also all possible games of commerce and chance. The latter were prohibited, but they were not the less played, and that of *primero* cost me dear.

On going out, we looked at the university at a distance, and contrived to find our way into the most

agreeable houses. Hence the collegians at Pavia are viewed by the towns-people in the light of officers in garrison towns; they are detested by the men and received by the women. My Venetian jargon was agreeable to the ladies, and gave me some advantage over my comrades; my age and figure were not unpleasing, and my couplets and songs were by no means ill relished. Was it my fault that I did not employ my time well? Yes; for among the forty which our number consisted of, there were several wise and considerate individuals, whom I ought to have imitated; but I was only sixteen, I was gay, weak, fond of pleasure, and I yielded to temptation. But enough for my first year of college; the holidays are approaching; they begin about the end of June, and terminate with October.

IV.

FOUR months of vacation! Sixty leagues from home, and the same distance returning! We paid no board in this college, but such an expense was by no means a matter of indifference. I might have boarded myself in Pavia, but no student remained there who did not belong to the place. The *sovrana* is not then worn; and not having the Pope's arms on our shoulders, it was to be feared lest the towns-people of Pavia should contest with us certain rights of preference which we had always been accustomed to enjoy.

I was certain, besides, that my mother would be highly delighted to see me. I resolved, therefore, to take my departure; and, being short of money, I went by water, having for servant and guide a brother of the butler of the college. The voyage was in no way remarkable. I quitted Chiozza in a secular dress, and

returned in an ecclesiastical one. My band was not much calculated to inspire devotion; but my mother, who was piously inclined, imagined she was receiving an apostle. She embraced me with a certain degree of consideration, and requested me to correct my brother, who was causing her some uneasiness. He was a very impatient and unruly lad, who absented himself from school for the sake of fishing, and who at eleven years of age fought like a devil, and cared for nobody. My father, who knew him well, destined him for a soldier; but my mother wished to make a monk of him, and this was a subject of continual dispute betwixt them. I troubled myself very little about my brother. I sought for amusement, and found none. Chiozza appeared to me more dirty than ever. I had formerly a small library, and I looked for my old Cicognini, of which I could find but a part, my brother having used the rest in making papers for his hair.

The Canon Gennari was still the friend of the family. My father had cured him of all the diseases which afflicted him, real and imaginary; and he was more frequently with us than at home. I requested him to procure me some books, but of the dramatic kind if possible. The good canon was not himself overstocked with literature, but he promised, however, to do what he could for me; and he kept his word. He brought me, a few days afterwards, an old comedy, bound in parchment, and, without taking the trouble of looking into it, he gave it to me, on my promise to return it instantly, for he had taken it, without saying anything, from the closet of one of his brethren. It was the *Mandragora* of Machiavel. I was not acquainted with it, but had heard of it, and knew very well that it was not the most chaste production in the

world. I devoured it on the first reading, and I perused it at least ten times afterwards. My mother paid no attention to the book I was reading, for I had received it from an ecclesiastic; but my father surprised me one day in my room while I was making notes and remarks on the *Mandragora*. He knew the piece, and was aware how dangerous it was for a young man of seventeen. He insisted on knowing from whom I got it, and I told him. He lectured me severely, and quarrelled with the poor canon, who had merely sinned through inadvertency.

I had very good and very solid reasons to urge as an excuse to my father, but he would not listen to me. It was neither the free style nor the scandalous intrigue of the piece which fascinated me; its lubricity even disgusted me, and I could perceive that the abuse of confession was a heinous crime both in the eye of God and man; but it was the first comedy of character which had ever fallen into my hands, and I was quite enchanted with it. How desirable it would have been, had the Italian authors continued, after this comedy, to give decent and respectable pieces, and to draw their characters from nature instead of the romantic intrigues in which they indulged. But the honor of ennobling comedy, and making it subservient to purposes of utility, by exposing vice and absurdity to derision and correction, was reserved for Molière. I was yet unacquainted with this great man, for I knew nothing of French. I proposed, however, to learn it, and in the mean time I accustomed myself to consider men closely, and to remark every appearance of originality of character.

The holidays were now drawing to an end, and my departure became necessary. An abbé of our acquaint-

ance was going to Modena, and my father availed himself of the opportunity. He was the more disposed to make me take that road, as I was to be supplied with money in Modena. My companion and myself embarked with the courier of Modena. We arrived in two days, and went to lodge with one of my father's tenants who let furnished lodgings.

I had enough to pay the expenses of posting to Pavia; but not finding my cousin Zavarisi at Modena, who had orders to supply me with some money, I should have been quite destitute on reaching college, where those who have exhibitions require a purse for their pocket expenses. I arrived in the evening of the same day at Piacenza. I had a letter of recommendation from my father for Counsellor Barilli, whom I accordingly visited, and who received me very politely. He offered to lodge me in his house; an offer which I very properly accepted. He was indisposed and desirous of repose, and I was equally so,—so that we made a hasty supper and went early to bed. Reflecting seriously on my situation, I was tempted to borrow a hundred crowns from my dear relation, who appeared so good and kind to me; but he no longer owed anything to my father, having paid him even before the two last instalments became due; and I was afraid lest my age, and my quality of scholar, should appear by no means calculated to inspire him with confidence in me.

In this state of irresolution and apprehension, I went to bed; but thank Heaven! neither embarrassments nor chagrins nor reflections have ever destroyed my appetite or disturbed my repose; and I slept soundly. Next morning the counsellor sent to inquire whether I would breakfast with him. I was completely dressed,

and on descending I found everything ready. My laudlord had a dish of soup, and there was a cup of chocolate for me; and, breakfasting and talking together, the conversation became at last interesting. "My dear child," said he, "I am old, I have had a dangerous attack, and I expect every day the orders of Providence to take my leave of this world." I was proceeding to say those kind things which are usually uttered in such cases; but he interrupted me. "No flattery, my friend; we are born to die, and my career is far advanced. I have satisfied your father," he continued, "for the remainder of the dower which was due from my family to his; but on searching among my papers and the accounts of my domestic concerns, I have found an account opened between M. Goldoni your grandfather, and myself." "O heavens," said I to myself, "do we then owe him anything?" "I have made every examination," added the counsellor; "I have compared letters and books, and I am certain that I still owe a sum to his heirs." I began now to breathe, and I wished to speak, but he still interrupted me and continued his discourse. "I should not like to die," said he, "without discharging it. I have heirs who only wait for my death to dissipate the property which I have saved for them, and your father would have some difficulty in procuring payment. Ah! if he were here," continued he, "with what pleasure would I give him the money!"

"Sir," said I, with an air of importance, "I am his son; '*Pater et filius censentur una et eadem persona*'; so says Justinian, as you know better than I do." "Aha!" said he, "you are studying law then?" "Yes, sir," said I; "and I shall be a licentiate in a short time; I shall go to Milan, where I mean to fol-

low the profession of advocate." He looked at me, and smiled; and then asked me my age. I was a little embarrassed, for my certificate of baptism and my reception in the college did not tally. I answered, however, with assurance and without violation of truth: "I have in my pocket, sir, the letters-patent of my college; would you wish to look at them? You will see that I was past eighteen when I was received, and this is my second year; eighteen and two are twenty, and I am close on my twenty-first year: 'Annus inceptus habetur pro completo'; and, according to the Venetian code, majority is attained at twenty-one." (I tried to perplex matters, but I was only nineteen.) M. Barilli, however, was not to be duped. He clearly saw that I was still in my minority, and that he should be risking his money. He had, however, a recommendation from my father in my favor, and why was he to suppose me capable of deceiving him? But he changed the discourse; he next asked me why I had not followed the profession of my father, and no longer talked of money. I answered, that I had no taste for medicine; and immediately recurring to what was uppermost in my mind, "Might I ask you, sir," said I, "what is the amount of the sum you owe my father?" "Two thousand lire of this country; the money is in that drawer." Still, however, he did not touch it. "Sir," added I, with a degree of curiosity somewhat keen, "is it in gold or silver?" "It is in gold," said he, "in sequins of Florence, which, after those of Venice, are in the greatest request. They are very convenient for carrying. Would you," said he, with a waggish air, "take the charge of them?" "With the greatest pleasure, sir," replied I, "I shall give you a receipt, I shall inform my father,

and account to him for it." "Will you dissipate it?" said he; "will you dissipate this money?" "Alas! sir," replied I, with vivacity, "you do not know me; I assure you, I am incapable of a bad action; the almoner of the college is the treasurer whom my father has appointed for my little revenue; and upon my honor, sir, on reaching Pavia, I shall place the sequins in the hands of this worthy abbé."

"Well, well," said he, "I shall rely on your honesty; write me a discharge agreeably to this draft which I have prepared." I took the pen; M. Barilli opened his drawer and spread out the sequins on the desk. I looked at them with an eye of affection. "Stop," said he, "I forgot you are travelling, and there are robbers." I remarked that I travelled post, and that there was nothing to apprehend. He was of a different opinion, however, and continued to insist on the danger. I brought in my guide, the brother of the butler, and then M. Barilli appeared satisfied. He delivered a lecture to both of us. I still trembled. At last he gave me the money, and I was consoled for everything. The counsellor and myself dined together, and after dinner the horses arrived. I took my leave, and set out for Pavia. Scarcely had I entered the town, when I went to deposit the sequins in the hands of my treasurer. I asked six for myself, which he gave me, and I continued to manage the remainder of the sum so well, that I had enough for the whole season at college and my expenses home.

This year I was somewhat less dissipated than the former. I attended to my lessons at the university, and seldom accepted the parties of pleasure to which I was invited.

In October and in November four of my companions

were licentiated. In Italy no ceremony can take place without the decoration of a sonnet. I was supposed to possess a faculty of versification, and had become the panegyrist of the deserving and undeserving. During the Christmas holidays the Marquis Goldoni came to Pavia, at the head of a commission from the senate of Milan, to investigate a canal in the district of Pavia, which had become the subject of several lawsuits, and he did me the honor of taking me with him. Six days afterwards I returned to the college, quite proud of the distinction I had received. This piece of ostentation was highly injurious to me; it excited the envy of my companions, who from that moment, perhaps, meditated the revenge which they took the following year.

When the holidays came, I was desirous of passing them at Milan; but two countrymen of my own whom I met by chance in a tennis-court induced me to alter my determination. These were the secretary and *maître d'hôtel* of the resident of the republic of Venice at Milan. This minister (M. Salvioni) having quitted this life, it became necessary for his suite and equipages to return to Venice; and the two persons in question were at Pavia for the purpose of hiring a covered barge, in which they offered to give me a place. They assured me that the society would be delightful, that I should want neither for good cheer, play, nor excellent music, and all gratis. Could I refuse such an opportunity?

When the company was ready to set off, I was sent for; I repaired to the banks of the Ticino, and entered the covered barge where all were assembled. Nothing could be more convenient or more elegant than this small vessel, called *burchiello*, and which had been sent for expressly from Venice. There was

a roomy apartment and an antechamber covered over with wood, surmounted with a balustrade, lighted up on both sides, and adorned with glasses, paintings, and engravings, and fitted up with cupboards, benches, and chairs, in the first style of convenience. It was a very different affair from the bark of the comedians of Rimini.

We were in all ten masters and a number of domestics. There were beds under the prow and under the poop; but we travelled only by day; and it was decided that we should sleep in good inns, or when we could find none, that we were to demand hospitality from the rich Benedictines who are in the possession of immense property along the two banks of the Po. All these gentlemen played on some instrument. We had three violins, a violoncello, two oboes, a French horn, and a guitar. I was the only person who was good for nothing. I was ashamed of it, and by way of remedying my want of ability, I employed myself two hours every day in putting in verse, either good or bad, the anecdotes and agreeable adventures of the preceding day. This piece of complaisance was productive of great pleasure to my travelling companions, and served to amuse us after our coffee. Music was their favorite occupation. At the close of day they ranged themselves on a sort of deck which formed the roof of our floating habitation, and, making the air resound with their harmony, they attracted from all quarters the nymphs and shepherds of this river, which was the grave of Phaeton. Perhaps, my dear reader, you will be inclined to observe that I am a little pompous here. It may be so; but this is the way I painted our serenade in my verses. The fact is, that the banks of the Po (called

by the Italian poets the king of floods) was lined with all the inhabitants of the environs, who came in crowds to hear us. The display of hats and handkerchiefs in the air was a sufficient indication of their pleasure and their applause.

We arrived at Cremona at six o'clock in the evening. The inhabitants had got notice that we were to pass through that place; and the banks of the river were filled with people awaiting our arrival. We landed; we were received with transports of joy. We were ushered into a superb house which was partly in the town and partly in the country. We gave a concert, and the musicians of the town added to the pleasure. We had a splendid supper, danced the whole night, and, with the sun, returned to our barge, where we found our mattresses delicious. The same scene nearly was repeated at Piacenza, Stellada, and at the Bottrigues, in the house of the Marquis Tassoni; and in this manner, amidst every species of delight and amusement, we arrived at Chiozza, where I was to separate from the most amiable and interesting society in the world. My companions were friendly enough to accompany me. I introduced them to my father, who thanked them most sincerely, and even urged them to sup with him, but they wished to reach Venice that evening. They asked me for the verses which I had composed on our voyage. I requested time to make a fair copy of them. I promised to send them, and I kept my word.

My mother had formed an acquaintance with a Donna Maria-Elizabetta Bonaldi, a nun of the convent of St. Francis, sister of M. Bonaldi, advocate and notary, of Venice. They had received in this convent, from Rome, a relic of their seraphic founder, which

was to be exposed with pomp and edification. For this purpose a sermon was requisite, and Donna Bonaldi, on the faith of my clerical habiliments, believed me moralist, theologian, and orator. She was the protector of a young abbé, graceful in manner, and possessed of a good memory; and she entreated of me to compose a sermon and confide it to her protégé, being sure that he would deliver it admirably. I at first sought to be excused, but afterwards reflecting that the panegyric of Pius V. was delivered every year in my college, and was composed by one of the students, I accepted this opportunity of exercising myself in an art which did not appear to me very difficult. I composed my sermon in fifteen days. The little abbé committed it to memory, and delivered it as well as an old practised preacher could have done. The sermon produced the greatest effect: the audience wept, applauded, and kept sideling upon their chairs. The orator grew warm, and worked away with his hands and feet. On this the applause increased, and the poor devil was quite exhausted. He called for silence from the pulpit; and silence immediately ensued. It was known that I composed it, and the compliments and happy presages were numberless. I had highly flattered the nuns, and turned the discourse on them in a delicate manner, ascribing to them the possession of every virtue unblemished by bigotry (I knew them, and was well aware that they were not bigots); and this was the means of procuring me a magnificent present in embroidery, lace, and sweetmeats. The labor of my sermon and the discussions which followed occupied me so long that my holidays had nearly expired. My father wrote to Venice for a carriage to convey me to Milan. An opportunity immediately occurred. My

father and myself went to Padua, where there was a return chaise for Milan. The driver was known and could be relied on; and I set out alone in his chaise.

I alighted at the Marquis Goldoni's, and remained there six days, till the end of the holidays. The conversation of my protector was altogether calculated to inspire me with hope and ardor. I believed myself on the very pinnacle of good fortune, while I stood on the verge of ruin.

V.

I LEARNED at Milan the death of the superior of my college, and I was acquainted with the Abbé Scarabelli, his successor. On my arrival at Pavia, I immediately paid my respects to the new prefect, who was very intimate with Senator Goldoni, and who assured me of his good wishes. I also visited the new dean of the students, who, after the usual ceremonies, asked me if I wished to maintain my civil-law thesis this year. He added that it was my turn, but that if I was not particularly desirous, he should like to pass another in my place. I told him very frankly that as my turn was come, I had good reasons for availing myself of it, as I was anxious to finish my course and settle at Milan. The same day I requested the prefect to have the goodness to cause lots to be drawn to ascertain the points I had to defend. The day was fixed; the articles were destined for me; and I was to maintain my thesis during the Christmas holidays. Everything went on charmingly, and I was considered a spirited young man, desirous of acquiring honor. In the mean time some amusement was necessary. Two

days afterwards I went out for the purpose of paying visits; and I began with the house which I was fondest of. I rang the bell (in Italy there are no porters) and, on the door being opened, I was told that the lady of the house was sick, and that her daughter received no visits. I was sorry for this, and a number of compliments passed on both sides. I went to another door, and, on seeing the servant, asked if I could have the honor of seeing the ladies. "They are all in the country, sir" (and yet I had seen two female heads at the window). As I could make nothing of all this, I went to a third place, and still nobody was at home. I own that I was very much piqued, that I believed myself insulted, and I could not conjecture the cause. I resolved, however, not to expose myself to any more of those unpleasant occurrences, and with a troubled mind and enraged heart I returned home.

In the evening I related, at the fireside where the students generally assembled, with an air of greater indifference than I really felt, the adventure which I had experienced. Some pitied me and others laughed at me. On the arrival of the supper hour, we entered the refectory, and afterwards withdrew to our respective rooms. While I was musing on the unpleasant circumstances which I had experienced, I heard a knocking at my door, and four of my comrades immediately entered, who told me they had something serious to communicate to me. As I had not a sufficient number of chairs for them, we made a settee of the bed. I willingly prepared to listen to them; but all four wished to speak at once; each had his story to tell, and each his opinion to give. The following is the substance of what I could gather from their account.

The towns-people of Pavia were sworn enemies to

the students, and, during the last holidays, they had entered into a conspiracy against us. It was agreed on at their meetings, that any girl who received the visits of a student should never be asked in marriage by a townsman, and a resolution to this purpose was signed by forty of them. This resolution had been circulated in every house; the mothers and daughters had taken the alarm, and the students had all of a sudden become a dangerous object in their eyes. The general opinion of my four companions was in favor of revenge. I had no great desire to interfere in the business; but they treated me as a coward and a poltroon, and I was foolish enough to consider my honor at stake, and to promise not to quit the party.

I imagined I was speaking to four friends; but they were traitors who ardently desired my ruin. They still entertained a grudge against me for the affair of the preceding year, and they had nourished hatred against me for a whole twelvemonth in their hearts, and wished for nothing more than an occasion for giving vent to it. I was their dupe, but I had scarcely entered my eighteenth year, and I had to do with old foxes of twenty-eight and thirty.

These worthies were in the habit of carrying pistols in their pockets, to the use of which I was an entire stranger. They very generously furnished me with them; I thought them pretty, I delighted in handling them, and my head was quite turned. I had fire-arms on me and knew not what to do with them. Could I dare to force open a door? Independently of the danger of such an attempt, it would have been a violation of the rules of decency and respectability. I wished to rid myself of this useless encumbrance; my good friends frequently came to visit me and renew the

powder in the pan ; they recounted unheard-of feats of courage, the obstacles which they had surmounted, the rivals whom they had vanquished ; I, in my turn, had also sprung over barriers, reduced mothers and daughters to subjection, and made head against the bravos of the town ; we were all equally-veridical, and all of us perhaps equally brave.

When the traitors saw that notwithstanding my pistols, I did nothing to draw attention towards me, they went to work in a different way. An accusation was lodged with the superiours against me of having fire-arms in my pockets, and I was visited one day, on entering the college, by the servants, who found my pistols on me. The prefect of the college was not at Pavia, and the vice-prefect ordered me to be confined to my room under arrest. I was desirous of taking advantage of this time to get on with my thesis, but my pretended friends still came to tempt me, and to employ more dangerous means of seduction, as they had a tendency to tickle my self-love.

“ You are a poet,” said they ; “ and you have consequently much more sure and efficacious instruments for your revenge than pistols and other fire-arms ; a stroke of the pen, judiciously applied, is a bomb which crushes the principal object, and of which the splinters carry havoc right and left among the adherents.” “ Courage ! courage !” they all exclaimed at once ; “ we shall furnish you with singular anecdotes, and you will be revenged, and we also.” I was quite aware of the danger and inconveniences to which they wished to expose me, and I represented to them the troublesome consequences which might be the result. “ By no means,” said they ; “ nobody will know ; we are all four good friends, and men of honor ; we promise to

observe the utmost discretion, and we are willing to take a solemn and sacred oath that nobody shall ever learn anything of the business." Constitutionally weak, and occasionally foolish and imprudent, I yielded to the temptation; and in thus satisfying the desires of my enemies, I put arms in their hands against myself. My first idea was to compose a comedy in the manner of Aristophanes; but distrusting the sufficiency of my powers, and being limited besides in point of time, I composed an Atellano, a species of rude comedy among the Romans, abounding in pleasantry and satire. The title of my Atellano was the Colossus. That I might give the perfection of beauty in all its proportions to the colossal statue, I took the eyes of Miss Such-a-one, the mouth of another, the neck of a third, etc.; but the artists and amateurs were of different opinions, and found defects everywhere.

This satire was calculated to wound the delicacy of several decent and respectable families, and, unfortunately for me, I contrived to give an interest to it by amusing and attractive sallies, and by traits of that *vis comica*, which in me had a great deal of nature and very little prudence. My work was charming in the opinion of my four enemies; they immediately sent for a young man who made two copies of it in one day, which the knaves seized upon, and circulated in every society and coffee-house of the town. My name was not to be mentioned, the oaths of secrecy were reiterated, and they kept their word, for my name was not pronounced; but having formerly composed a quatrain, containing my name, surname, and country, they tacked this quatrain to the tail of the Colossus, as if I had had the audacity to boast of it.

The Atellano became the novelty of the day, and

those who were not implicated in it laughed at the work, while they condemned the author. Twelve families cried for vengeance, and my life was sought after; but fortunately for me, I was still under arrest. Several of my companions were insulted; the Pope's College was besieged; the prefect was written to, who returned precipitately, and, wishing to save me, wrote immediately to the Senator Goldoni. The latter despatched letters to the Senator Erba Odescalchi, governor of Pavia; the archbishop from whom I had received the tonsure was applied to in my favor, as well as the Marquis Ghislieri, by whom I was named; but all my protections, and all manner of proceedings were useless; my sacrifice was inevitable, and had it not been for the privilege of the place in which I was, I should have been laid hold of by the ministers of justice. My exclusion from college was announced to me, and I was detained till the storm was calmed, that I might take my departure without danger.

What an accumulation of horror, remorse, and regret! My hopes vanished, my situation sacrificed, my time lost! Parents, protectors, friends, acquaintances, would all be justified in taking part against me; I was afflicted and inconsolable; I kept my room, I saw nobody, and nobody came to see me. What a miserable state of mind,—what a wretched situation! In my solitude I was oppressed with grief, and filled with objects which incessantly tormented me, and projects which rapidly succeeded one another on my mind. The injury which I had done to myself, and the injustice which I had been guilty of towards others, were perpetually before my eyes; and the sense of this injustice weighed more on my mind than my own personal disaster. If at the distance of sixty years, there should

still remain at Pavia some remembrance of my person and my imprudence, I entreat the forgiveness of those whom I offended, while I assure them that I have been amply punished for my fault, and that I believe it to be sufficiently expiated.

While I was plunged in remorse, and occupied with these reflections, I received the following letter from my father, which was a terrible augmentation of my chagrin and despair : —

“ I should wish you, my dear son, to pass the vacation this year at Milan. I have engaged to go to Udine in Venetian Friuli, to undertake a cure, which may occupy me some length of time, and I am uncertain but I may also be obliged to go into Austrian Friuli, on account of another person suffering under the same disease. I shall write a letter of acknowledgment to the marquis for his generous offers to us, but you must also on your part endeavor to merit his goodness. You inform me that you have shortly to defend a thesis ; endeavor to acquit yourself with honor. By this means you will please your protector, and highly delight your father and mother, who love you dearly,” etc.

This letter completed my degradation. “ How,” said I, “ shall I dare to exhibit myself before my parents, covered with shame and universal contempt ? ” I was in such dread of this terrible moment, that to extricate myself from the consequences of one fault I meditated another, which might have totally ruined me. “ No ; I will not expose myself to the most deserved and the most cutting reproaches ; no, I will not appear before my irritated family ; Chiozza shall never see me more ; I will go anywhere rather than return to it ; I will run away, and try my fortune, and either make reparation for my fault, or perish. I will go to Rome,

where I shall perhaps find the friend of my father who was so kind to him, and who will not abandon me. Ah! if I could but become the pupil of Gravina, the man the most versant in belles-lettres, and the most skilled in the dramatic art. Ah! if he should but conceive such an affection for me as he had for Metastasio! Have not I also good dispositions, talents, and genius! Yes, I must to Rome. But how can I get thither? Have I money enough? I must go afoot — afoot! — yes, afoot. And my trunk and my effects? Let the trunk and effects go to the devil. All that I want is some shirts, some stockings, neckcloths, and night-caps." While occupied with these extravagant reflections, I kept filling a portmanteau with linen, which I placed in the bottom of my trunk, destining it for my journey to Rome.

As my departure was to be instantaneous, I wrote to the almoner of the college for money, who, in his answer, informed me that he had no property of my father's in his hands, but that, nevertheless, the expense of my passage by water, and my board to Chi-ozza, should be defrayed by him, and that the proveditor of the house would furnish me with a small supply, for which my father should be accountable. At the break of the following day a coach came for me; and after my trunk was put into it, the proveditor entered it along with me. We drove to the Ticino, where we got into a small boat, and at the place where the Ticino flows into the Po, we went on board a large and ugly bark, which had brought a lading of salt. My guide consigned me over to the care of the master, to whom he whispered something. He afterwards gave me a small packet from the almoner of the college, and after saluting me and wishing me a prosperous voyage,

he at last took his leave. The first thing I did was to examine my treasure. I opened the packet. Heavens! what an agreeable surprise for me: I found in it forty-two sequins of Florence (nearly twenty louis-d'ors). This was sufficient to take me to Rome, supposing I travelled post and took my trunk with me. But how could the almoner, who had no money belonging to my father, confide this sum to me? While I was occupied with these reflections and these charming projects, the proveditor made his appearance again in his boat. He had committed a mistake: the money given to me belonged to the college, and was destined to pay a wood-merchant; and he took back the packet, and gave me thirty paoli in lieu of it, amounting to the value of about twelve shillings!

I was now rich with a vengeance! I did not want money for my passage to Chiozza, but how was I to manage my journey to Rome? The sequins which I had been handling added mightily to my mortification; but I was obliged to console myself in the best way I could, and to bring my mind to bear with the inconveniences of a pilgrimage. My bed was under the prow, and my trunk beside me: I dined and supped with the master of the bark, whose long stories were quite insufferable.

On the second day we arrived at Piacenza, where the master, having some business to transact, was induced to land. This appeared to me a favorable moment for my escape. I took my portmanteau, and told my gentleman that I was commissioned to give it to Counsellor Barilli, and that I would take this favorable opportunity to do so; but the knave would not let me go. He said he had positive instructions to detain me; and when I persisted in my intention, he threat-

ened to have recourse to violent measures. I was obliged to yield to force, and stomach my chagrin: I had no alternative but to go to Chiozza, or throw myself into the Po. I retired to my nook: my misfortunes had not hitherto drawn a tear from me, but I now wept bitterly. "In the evening I was sent for to supper, but refused to go. A few minutes afterwards, I heard the words "Deo gratias" pronounced in a pathetic tone by an unknown voice. It was still tolerably light; and on looking through a crevice of the door, I observed a monk, who was addressing himself to me. I opened, and let him in. He was a Dominican of Palermo, the brother of a famous Jesuit, highly celebrated as a preacher; and he had embarked that day at Piacenza, and, like myself, was bound for Chiozza. He knew my story, the master having revealed everything to him; and he came to offer me the temporal and spiritual consolation which his vocation entitled him to bestow upon me, and which my situation seemed to require. He displayed a great deal of sensibility and fervency in his discourse. I saw him shed tears; at least I saw him apply his handkerchief to his eyes. I was touched with this, and abandoned myself to his mercy.

The master sent to inform us that they were waiting for us. The reverend father was by no means disposed to lose his collation, but, seeing me full of compunction, he begged the master to have the goodness to wait a moment. Then turning towards me, he embraced me, and, with tears in his eyes, pointed out to me the dangers of my situation, and showed me that the infernal enemy might take possession of me and plunge me into an eternal abyss. I have already hinted that I was subject to fits of hypochondriacal vapors, and

I was then in a most deplorable situation. My exorcist, perceiving this, proposed confession to me. I threw myself at his feet. "God be praised!" said he; "yes, my dear child, prepare yourself till my return"; and he then went and supped without me. I remained on my knees and began a conscientious examination of myself. In half an hour the father returned with a wax-light in his hand and seated himself on my trunk. I delivered my confiteor, and went through my general confession with the requisite humility and contrition. It was necessary to exhibit signs of repentance; and the first point was to make reparation for the injury done by me to the families against whom I had directed my satire. But how was this to be done at present? "Till you are enabled to retract your calumnies," said the reverend father, "you can only propitiate the wrath of God by means of alms; for alms-giving is the first meritorious work which effaces sin." "Yes, father," said I to him, "I shall bestow them." "By no means," he replied; "the sacrifice must be instantly made." "But I have only thirty paoli." "Very well, child; in foregoing the money which we possess we have as much merit as if we gave more." I drew forth my thirty paoli, and requested my confessor to take the charge of distributing them to the poor. This he willingly acceded to, and then he gave me absolution. I wished to continue still longer, having some things to say which I had forgotten; but the reverend father began to doze, and his eyes closed every moment: he told me to keep myself quiet, and he took me by the hand, gave me his benediction, and hurried away to his bed.

We were still eight days longer on our passage; I wished to confess myself every day, but I had no more

money for penitence. I arrived, trembling, at Chiozza, with my confessor, who undertook to bring about a reconciliation between me and my relations. My father was at Venice on business; my mother saw me coming, and received me with tears; for the almoner of the college had not failed to inform my family of the particulars of my conduct. The reverend father had but little difficulty in touching the heart of a tender mother; she possessed ability and firmness, and, turning towards the Dominican, by whom she was fatigued, "My reverend father," said she, "if my son had committed a knavish action, I would never have consented to see him more; but he has been guilty of a piece of imprudence, and I pardon him."

My travelling companion would have wished that my father had been at home to present him to the prior of St. Dominic. There was something under this which I could not well comprehend. My mother told him that she expected my father in the course of the day; at which the reverend father appeared satisfied, and without any ceremony he invited himself to dine with us. While we were at table my father arrived, and I rose and shut myself in the adjoining room. On my father's entrance he perceived a large cowl. "This is a stranger," said my mother, "who demanded hospitality." "But this other plate,—this other chair?" It was no longer possible to be silent respecting me; my mother wept; the monk harangued; he did not forget the parable of the prodigal son. My father was good-natured, and very fond of me; in short, I was sent for, and at last restored to favor.

In the afternoon my father accompanied the Dominican to his convent. They were unwilling to receive him, as all monks who travel ought to have a written

permission from their superiors, which they call obedience, and which serves for a passport and certificate; and the one in the possession of the present applicant was old, torn, and illegible, and his name unknown. My father, who had credit, got him to be received, on condition that he should not remain long. Let us finish the history of this worthy monk. He spoke to my father and mother of a relic which was set in a silver watch, and he made them fall on their knees when he showed them a piece of cord twisted round iron wire. This was a piece of the lace of the Virgin Mary, which had even served for her divine Son; and the proof was confirmed, as he said, by a miracle which never failed; for when the lace was thrown into the fire, the flames respected the relic; it was drawn out uninjured; and it was then plunged into oil, which immediately became miraculous oil and performed wonderful cures. My father and mother could have wished to see this miracle, but it could not be performed without preparations and pious ceremonies, and in presence of a certain number of devout persons, for greater edification and the glory of God. A good deal of conversation took place on this subject; and as my father was the physician of the nuns of St. Francis, he managed matters with them so well that they determined to allow the miracle to be performed according to the instructions of the Dominican; and the day and place were fixed for the ceremony taking place. The reverend father contrived to procure a good stock of oil and some money for the masses which were necessary for him on his journey. Everything was executed; but next day the bishop and magistrate having learned that a religious ceremony had taken place without permission, in which a strange monk had dared to put on the stole, bring people to-

gether, and boast of his miracles, proceeded separately to the verification of the facts. The miraculous lace, which resisted the flames, was nothing more nor less than iron wire arranged in such a manner as to deceive the eyes. The nuns were reprimanded, and the monk disappeared.

My father and myself took our departure a few days afterwards for Friuli, and we passed through Porto-Gruero, where my mother possessed some revenue as a public creditor. This small town, on the borders of Friuli, is the residence of the Bishop of Concordia, a city of great antiquity, but almost abandoned on account of the badness of the air. Continuing our route, we passed the Tailliamento, sometimes a river and sometimes a torrent, which must be forded, as there are neither bridges nor ferry-boats; and we at length arrived at Udine, the capital of Venetian Friuli.

VI.

My father followed his profession at Udine, and I resumed my studies. M. Movelli, a celebrated jurisconsult, gave lectures on civil and canon law, in his own house, for the instruction of one of his nephews; he admitted a few persons belonging to the country to his lessons, and I had the good fortune to be of the number. I own that I profited more during six months, on this occasion, than I had done during the three years at Pavia.

I had a great desire to study; but I was young, and required some agreeable relaxation; I sought for amusements, and found them of various sorts. Lent arrived; I went on Ash-Wednesday to the cathedral, to hear Father Cataneo, a reformed Augustine, whose

sermons I found admirable. On going away, I retained the three points of his division, word for word; and I endeavored to compress his argument, and give an idea of its development and moral in fourteen verses; and in my own opinion I made a very tolerable sonnet of it. The same day I went and communicated it to M. Treo, a gentleman of Udine, well versed in the belles-lettres, who had a great taste for poetry, and my sonnet appeared very passable to him also. He was kind enough to correct a few of the expressions, and to encourage me to compose others. I followed the preacher with great exactness, performed the same task every day, and at the close I found I had put thirty-six excellent sermons into thirty-six sonnets of one kind or another. I had taken the precaution of sending them to the press as soon as I had sufficient materials for a sheet in quarto, and during Easter week I published my pamphlet, which was dedicated to the deputies of the town. I was overpowered with thanks from the orator, and received many acknowledgments, and a great deal of applause from the first magistrates. The novelty of the thing gave pleasure, and the rapidity of the execution was still more surprising.

My father was at Gorizia, in the house of his illustrious patient Count Lantieri, lieutenant-general in the army of the Emperor Charles the Sixth, and inspector of the Austrian troops in Carniola and German Friuli. I was very well received by that amiable nobleman, who was the delight of his country. We did not remain long at Gorizia, but passed immediately to Vipack, a very considerable market town in Carniola, at the source of a river from which it takes its name, and a fief of the house of Lantieri. We passed four months there in the most agreeable manner possible.

The nobility of that country pay their visits in whole families; fathers, children, masters, servants, horses, all set off at once, and all are received and lodged. Thirty masters may be frequently seen, sometimes in one house, and sometimes in another; but as Count Lantieri was accounted valetudinary, he went nowhere and received everybody. His table was not delicately but abundantly served. I still remember a dish of roast, which was the etiquette; a foreleg of mutton, or venison, or a breast of veal, constituted the base of it; above this there were hares or pheasants; with red and gray partridges again above them, and next woodcocks or snipes or thrushes; and the pyramid ended with larks and fig-peckers.

This strange assemblage was immediately shared out and distributed. The small birds were served up on their arrival; every one laid hold of the game to cut it up: and the amateurs of meat saw the large pieces which were most to their taste uncovered before them. It was also the etiquette to serve up three sorts of soup at each repast: bread soup with the ragouts; an herb soup with the first service, and peeled barley with the *entremets*: this barley was moistened with the gravy of the roast meat, and I was told that it was good for digestion.

What was most troublesome to me was the healths which we were every moment obliged to drink. On St. Charles's day they began with his imperial majesty, and each guest was presented with a drinking vessel of a very singular kind; it was a glass machine of a foot in length, composed of different balls, which diminished progressively, and were separated from one another by small tubes, and which were terminated by a longitudinal aperture, that could be very conven-

iently applied to the mouth, and through which the liquor issued; the bottom of this machine, called the *glo-glo*, was filled, and on placing the top to the mouth, and raising the elbow, the wine which passed through the different tubes and balls, rendered a harmonious sound; and all the guests performing the same operation at the same time, made a concert of a very new and pleasant sort. I know not whether the same customs are still observed in that country; everything changes, and everything may be there changed; but if in those cantons there be yet any persons of the olden times, like me, they may perhaps be glad to have this brought to their recollection.

Count Lantieri was very well satisfied with my father, for he was greatly recovered, and almost completely cured; his kindness was also extended to me, and to procure amusement for me, he caused a puppet-show, which was almost abandoned, and which was very rich in figures and decorations, to be refitted. I profited by this, and amused the company by giving them a piece of a great man, expressly composed for wooden comedians. This was the *Sneezing of Hercules*, by Peter James Martelli, a Bolognese.

This celebrated man was the only person who could have left us a complete theatre, if he had not possessed the folly of attempting a new species of versification for the Italians; verses of fourteen syllables, and rhymed by couplets nearly like the French verses. I shall speak of these Martellian verses in the second part of the *Memoirs*; for notwithstanding their proscription, I took it into my head to be pleased with them fifty years after the death of their author.

Martelli published, in six volumes, dramatical compositions of every possible description, from the most

severe tragedy to the puppet-show called *Bambocciata* by him, of which the title was the Sneezing of Hercules. The imagination of the author sent Hercules into the country of the pygmies. Those poor little creatures, frightened at the aspect of an animated mountain with legs and arms, ran and concealed themselves in holes. One day as Hercules had stretched himself out in the open field, and was sleeping tranquilly, the timid inhabitants issued out of their retreats, and, armed with prickles and rushes, mounted on the monstrous man, and covered him from head to foot, like flies when they fall on a piece of rotten meat. Hercules waked, and felt something in his nose which made him sneeze; on which his enemies tumbled down in all directions. This ends the piece. There is a plan, a progression, an intrigue, a catastrophe, and winding up; the style is good and well supported; the thoughts and sentiments are all proportionate to the size of the personages. The verses even are short, and everything indicates pygmies. A gigantic puppet was requisite for Hercules; everything was well executed. The entertainment was productive of much pleasure; and I could lay a bet that I am the only person who ever thought of executing the *Bambocciata* of Martelli.

Our representations over, and Count Lantieri's cure still going on better and better, my father began to speak of returning home. I was at the same time invited to make a tour along with the secretary of the count, who was charged with commissions for his master. My father allowed me an absence of fifteen days; and we set out by post in a small four-wheeled chariot. We first arrived at Laubec, the capital of Carnioli, on the river of the same name. I saw nothing extraordinary there but crawfish of surprising

beauty and as large as lobsters, as some of them were a foot in length. From thence we passed to Gratz, the capital of Styria, where there is a very ancient and very celebrated university, much better frequented than that of Pavia, as the Germans are much more studious and less dissipated than the Italians. I could have wished to extend my journey as far as Prague; but my companion and myself were both limited, he by the orders of his master, and I by those of my father. All that we could do was not to return by the same road: we traversed Carinthia; we saw Trieste, a considerable seaport on the Adriatic Sea; from thence we passed through Aquileia and Gradisca, and returned to Vipack two days later than the time prescribed us.

Immediately on my return my father took his leave of Count Lantieri, who, as a recompense for his care, made him a present of a very handsome sum of money, adding a very pretty box with his portrait and a silver watch for myself. A young man in those times was glad to have a silver watch, and now the lackeys will not deign to carry them.

VII.

ON our arrival at Chiozza we were received as a mother receives her dear son, as a wife receives her dear husband after a long absence. I was delighted to see again that virtuous mother who was so tenderly attached to me; my mother and myself were very partial to each other; but how different the love of a mother for her son from that of a son for his mother! Children love from gratitude; but mothers love by a natural impulse, and self-love has not a less share in their tender friendship; they love the fruits of their conjugal

union, conceived by them with satisfaction, carried by them with pain in their bosom, and brought into the world with so much suffering. They have seen them grow up from day to day; they have enjoyed the first display of their innocence; they have been accustomed to see them, to love them, to watch over them. I am even disposed to believe that the last reason is the strongest of all, and that a mother would not be less fond of a child changed at nurse than of her own, provided she had *bonâ fide* received it for her own, had taken care of its first education, and been accustomed to caress and cherish it.

This is a digression foreign to these memoirs, but I like to gossip occasionally; and without hunting for fine things, nothing interests me more than the analysis of the human heart. But to resume the thread of our discourse.

My father received a letter from his cousin Zavarisi, a notary at Modena, to the following import: The duke had renewed an ancient edict by which every possessor of rents and real property was prohibited from absenting himself from his dominions without permission, and these permissions cost a great deal. M. Zavarisi added in his letter, that as my views respecting Milan had failed, it would be advisable for my father to send me to Modena, in which there was a university as at Pavia, where I might finish my legal studies, receive a license, and afterwards be entered as an advocate! This worthy relation, who was sincerely attached to us, put my father in mind that his ancestors had always held distinguished places in the duchy of Modena; that I might revive the ancient credit of our family, and, at the same time, save the expense of a permission, which would require to be renewed every two years. He

concluded with telling us that he would take care of my person, and that he would see that I should be comfortably and respectably boarded. In a postscript he mentioned that he had a good marriage in view for me. This letter gave rise to endless reasonings for and against between my father and mother. The master, however, carried the point, and it was decided that I should instantly depart with the courier of Modena.

At Venice there are couriers who travel and couriers who do not travel. The former are called couriers of Rome, as they ordinarily go only to Rome and Milan, though at other times they are despatched wherever the republic may want them. Their number is fixed at thirty-two, and they enjoy a certain consideration in the community. But with respect to the other couriers the case is very different; they are merely conductors of packet-boats, paid by those who respectively farm them. They are enabled, however, to improve their fortune by availing themselves of nooks in their boats for the concealment of parcels. These packet-boats, which are five in number, are very convenient. They set out for Ferrara, Bologna, Modena, Mantua, and Florence; the passengers are boarded in various styles, according to their wishes, and the price is very moderate. There is but one trifling inconvenience, that in the same voyage the bark is three times changed. Every state through which the couriers pass claims the right of employing their own boats and crew, and the different contiguous states have never fallen upon an arrangement favorable for the common interest without incommoding passengers. I could wish the masters of the Po to read my memoirs, and to profit by my advice.

I entered the packet-boat of Modena; we were four-

teen passengers: our conductor, named Bastia, was a very aged and spare man, of a severe physiognomy, but a very respectable man, and even devout withal. We took our first dinner all of us together at the inn, where the master procured the necessary provisions for our supper, which was to be taken on our passage. At nightfall two lamps diffused a light everywhere, and the courier then made his appearance in the midst of us with a chaplet in his hands and begged and exhorted us very politely to recite along with him aloud a third part of a rosary and the litanies of the Virgin. We all gave our assent to the pious request of the good man Bastia, and ranged ourselves in two rows to divide the pater-nosters and ave-marias, which we recited with becoming devotion. In a corner of the boat there were three of our travellers who sat with their hats on and kept laughing and mimicking us. Bastia, having perceived this, requested the three gentlemen to observe good manners at least, if they were not disposed to be devout. The three unknown persons on this laughed full in his face. The courier was vexed, but said nothing further, as he knew not whom he had to do with; but a sailor, who recognized them, told the courier they were three Jews. Bastia's fury exceeded all bounds, and he cried out like a mad person, "What! you are Jews, and at dinner you ate bacon!" At this unexpected sally everybody began to laugh, and the Jews as well as the rest. The courier continued, "I pity those who are so unfortunate as not to know our religion; but I despise those who observe none. You ate bacon; you are knaves." The Jews in a fury threw themselves on the courier: we took the reasonable part of defending him, and we forced the Israelites to keep by themselves. Our rosary, thus interrupted,

was postponed to the following day. We supped with tolerable gayety, and we went to sleep on our little mattresses. Nothing extraordinary took place during the remainder of the voyage.

On approaching Modena, Bastia asked me where I meant to lodge. I knew not myself, as M. Zavarisi was to find me out a boarding-house. Bastia requested me to board with him; he was acquainted with M. Zavarisi, and he flattered himself that it would meet with his approbation. This was actually the case; and I went to lodge with the courier. It was a most sanctified house: father, sons, daughters, daughter-in-law, and children were all possessed of the greatest devotion. I found no amusement with them; but as they were honest people, who lived prudently and tranquilly, I was very well pleased with their attentions; and people are always estimable when they fulfil their social duties. My cousin Zavarisi, well pleased to have me beside him, first presented me to the rector of the university, and took me afterwards to the house of a celebrated advocate of the country, where I was to become acquainted with the practice of the law, and where I instantly took my place. In this study there was a nephew of the celebrated Muratori, who procured me the acquaintance of his uncle, a man of universal talents, who was an honor to his nation and age, and who would have been cardinal if he had been less strenuous in his writings in favor of the house of Este.

My new companion showed me everything most curious in the town; and, among other things, the ducal palace, which was extremely beautiful and magnificent, and which contained the valuable collection of pictures then at Modena, but since purchased by the King of

Poland for the sum of a hundred thousand sequins. I was curious to see the famous bucket, the subject of the *Secchia Rappita* of Tassoni: I saw it in the steeple of the cathedral, where it is suspended by an iron chain. I contrived to amuse myself tolerably well; and I believe the residence at Modena would have suited me well, both on account of the literary societies which abound there, and on account of the spectacles, which are very frequent, and the hope which I had of repairing my losses.

But a frightful scene which I witnessed a few days after my arrival, a horrible ceremony, a piece of pomp of religious jurisdiction, struck me so much, that my mind was troubled and my senses agitated! I saw in the middle of a crowd of people, a scaffold elevated to the height of five feet, on which a man appeared with his head uncovered and his hands tied. This was an abbé of my acquaintance, an enlightened literary man, a celebrated poet, well known and highly esteemed in Italy; it was the Abbé J—— B—— V——. One monk held a book in his hand; another interrogated the sufferer, who answered haughtily. The spectators clapped with their hands, and encouraged him: the reproaches augmented; the man subjected to this piece of degradation trembled with rage: I could bear the scene no longer. I went off in a state of thoughtfulness and agitation, and quite stunned; my vapors instantly attacked me: I returned home, and shut myself up in my room, plunged in the most dismal and humiliating reflections for humanity. “Good God!” said I to myself, “to what are we subject in this short life, which we are obliged to drag out? Here is a man accused of uttering improper language to a woman who had been taking the sacrament. Who denounced him?”

The woman herself. Heavens! is not misfortune alone a sufficient punishment?"

Whilst I was indulging my sad reveries, Father Bastia, knowing of my return, came to propose to me to join his family in reciting the rosary. I required something to relieve my mind, and I accepted the proposal with pleasure. I said my rosary with devotion, and I found my consolation in it. Supper was served up, and the Abbé V—— was spoken of. I marked the horror which I felt for that spectacle; my host, who was of the secular society of that jurisdiction, considered the ceremony superb and exemplary. I asked him how the spectacle terminated. He told me that his pride had at length been humbled; that his obstinacy had at length yielded; that he was obliged to avow with a loud voice all his crimes, to recite a formula of retractation presented to him, and that he was condemned to six years' imprisonment. The terrible aspect of this man under his ignominious treatment never quitted me. I saw no one; I went to mass every day with Bastia: I went to sermon and to prayers with him; he was quite contented with me, and endeavored to nourish in me that unction which appeared in my actions and my discourse, by accounts of visions, miracles, and conversions. My resolution was taken, and I was firmly resolved to enter the order of Capuchins. I wrote to my father a very labored letter, which, however, was destitute of common-sense. I requested his permission to renounce the world, and envelope myself in a cowl. My father, who was no fool, took care not to oppose me: he flattered me a great deal; he seemed satisfied with the inspiration I displayed, and merely begged me to join him immediately on the receipt of his letter, promising me that he

himself and my mother wished for nothing more than to see me satisfied.

At sight of this answer, I prepared for my departure. Bastia, who did not that day take the charge of the bark for Venice, recommended me to his comrade, who was to perform the voyage. I bade adieu to the devout family; I begged to be remembered in their prayers, and I parted from them under the workings of contrition. On arriving at Chiozza, my dear parents received me with endless caresses. I asked their benediction, which they gave me with tears; and I spoke of my project, which they did not disapprove. My father proposed to take me with him to Venice; but this I refused with all the frankness of devotion. On his telling me, however, that it was to present me to the guardian of the Capuchins, I willingly consented. We went to Venice, where we visited our relations and friends, dining with some and supping with others. They deceived me. I was taken to the play, and in fifteen days there was no longer any thought of the cloister. My vapors were dissipated, and I was restored to reason. I pitied always the man whom I saw on the scaffold; but I discovered that it was not necessary to renounce the world to avoid it. My father took me back to Chiozza, and my mother, who was pious without being bigoted, was very glad to see me in my usual state. I became still more dear and interesting to her on account of the absence of her youngest son.

My brother, who had always been destined for the army, was sent to Zara, the capital of Dalmatia; he was consigned to M. Visinoni, a cousin of my mother, and a captain of dragoons, and adjutant to the provéditeur-general of that province, which belongs to the

republic of Venice. This brave officer, whom all the generals who succeeded to the command of Zara wished to have beside them, took the charge of my brother's education, and afterwards placed him in his regiment.

For my part, I knew not what was to become of me. At the age of twenty-one I had experienced so many reverses, so many singular catastrophes had happened to me, and so many troublesome events, that I no longer flattered myself with anything, and saw no other resource in my mind than the dramatic art, which I was still fond of, and which I should long before have entered into, if I had been master of my own will. My father, however, vexed to see me the sport of fortune, did not allow himself to be cast down by those circumstances, which began to wear a serious aspect both for him and me. He had been at a considerable and useless expense to give me a profession, and he could have wished to procure me a respectable and lucrative employment, which should cost him nothing. This was not so easily to be found; he did find one, however, and so much to my taste that I forgot all the losses which I had sustained, and I had nothing further to regret.

The republic of Venice sends a noble Venetian for governor to Chiozza, with the title of "podestà," who takes with him a chancellor for criminal matters; an office which corresponds with that of "lieutenant-criminel" in France; and this criminal chancellor must have an assistant in his office, with the title of coadjutor. These appointments are more or less lucrative, according to the country in which they are situated; but they are all very agreeable, as the holders of them are admitted to the governor's table, are in

his excellency's party, and see every person of distinction in the place. However small the labor, it turns out pretty well. My father enjoyed the protection of the governor, who was at that time the noble Francis Bonfadini. He was also very much connected with the criminal chancellor, and well acquainted with the coadjutor. In short, he procured my appointment as adjunct to the latter.

The period of the Venetian government is fixed; the governors are changed every sixteen months. When I entered my place, four months had only elapsed. Besides, I was a supernumerary, and could not pretend to any kind of emoluments; but I enjoyed all the pleasures of society, a good table, abundance of plays, concerts, balls, and fêtes. It is a charming employment; but as they are not regular offices, and as the governor can give the commission to whomsoever he pleases, there are some of their chancellors who languish in inaction, and others who pass over the rest, and have no time to repose themselves. It is personal merit which brings them into repute; but most frequently protections carry the day. I was aware of the necessity of securing a reputation to myself; and in my quality of supernumerary, I took every means of instructing myself, and making myself useful. The coadjutor was not too fond of employment; I assisted him as much as possible; and at the end of a few months I had become as competent as himself. The chancellor was not long in perceiving it; and he gave me thorny commissions without their passing through the channel of his coadjutor, which I was fortunate enough to execute to his satisfaction.

Criminal procedure is a very interesting lesson for the knowledge of human nature. The guilty indi-

vidual endeavors to clear himself of his crime, or to diminish the horror of it : he is either artful by nature, or becomes so through fear : he knows that he has to do with intelligent persons, with professional people, and yet he does not despair to deceive them. The law has prescribed to criminals certain forms of interrogation which must be followed, lest the demands should be captious, and lest weakness or ignorance should be surprised. However, it is necessary to know a little, or endeavor to conjecture the character and mind of the man about to be examined ; and, observing a medium between rigor and humanity, an endeavor is made to discover the truth without constraining the individual. What interested me the most was the review of the procedure, and the report which I prepared for my chancellor ; for on those reviews and reports the situation, honor, and life of a man frequently depends. The accused are defended, the matter is discussed ; but the report produces the first impression. Woe to those who draw up reviews without knowledge, and reports without reflection. Do not say, my dear reader, that I am puffing myself off ; you see when I commit imprudent actions, I do not spare myself ; and I must be requited when I am pleased with myself.

The sixteen months' residence of the podestà drew to a close. Our criminal-chancellor was already retained for Feltre, and he proposed to me the place of principal coadjutor, if I would follow him. Charmed with this proposition, I took a suitable time to speak of it to my father ; and next day an engagement was concluded between us. Here I was at length settled. Hitherto I had looked only on employments at a distance ; but now I held one which pleased and suited me. I resolved with myself never to quit it ; but man

proposes, and God disposes. On the departure of our governor from Chiozza, all were eager to show him every sort of honor; and the wits of the town, or those who thought themselves such, had a literary assembly, in which the illustrious person by whom they had been governed was celebrated both in verse and prose. I sang also all the sorts of glory of the hero of the festival, and I expatiated at great length on the virtues and personal qualities of the governor's lady; both of them had shown a kindness for me; and at Bergamo, where I saw them in office some time afterwards, as well as at Venice when his excellency was decorated with the rank of senator, they always continued to honor me with their protection.

Everybody went away, and I remained at Chiozza till M. Zabottini (this was the name of the chancellor) called me to Venice for the journey to Feltre. I had always cultivated the acquaintance of the nuns of St. Francis, where there were charming boarders; the Signora B—— had one under her direction who was very beautiful, very rich, and very amiable; she would have pleased me infinitely, but my age, my situation, and my fortune forbade me to flatter myself with the idea: the nun, however, did not despair; and when I called on her she never failed to send for the young lady to the parlor. I felt that I was becoming seriously attached; the directress seemed satisfied; I did not comprehend her: I spoke to her one day of my inclination and my fear; and she encouraged me and confided the secret to me. This lady possessed merit and property; but there was a stain on her birth. "However, this small defect is nothing," said the lady with the veil; "the girl is prudent and well educated; and I answer for her character and conduct. She has,"

she continued, “a guardian, who must be gained over; but let me alone for that. This guardian, who is very old and very infirm, has, it is true, some pretensions to his ward: but he is in the wrong, and—as I stand for something in this business—let me alone, I say again; I shall arrange things for the best.” I own, from this discourse, this confidence, and this encouragement, I began to believe myself fortunate. Miss N—— did not look upon me with an unfavorable eye, and I reckoned the affair as good as concluded. The whole convent perceived my inclination for the boarder, and there were ladies acquainted with the intrigues of the parlor who took pity on me, and informed me of what was passing. They did it in this way. The windows of my room were exactly opposite to the steeple of the convent; several apertures were contrived in its construction, through which the figures of those who approached them were confusedly seen. I had several times observed figures and signs at these apertures, and I learned in time that those signs marked the letters of the alphabet, that words were formed of them, and that a conversation could thus be carried on at a distance. I had almost every day a quarter of an hour of this mute conversation, which was of a discreet and decorous nature. By means of this manual alphabet I learned that Miss N—— was on the point of being married to her guardian. Indignant at the proceedings of Lady B——, I called on her after dinner, determined to display my resentment. I demanded to see her; she came, and on looking steadily at me, perceived that I was chagrined, and dexterously took care not to give me time to speak; she began the attack herself with a sort of vigor and a degree of vehemence.

“Very well, sir,” said she, “you are displeased, I see by your countenance.” I wished to speak then, but she would not listen to me; she raised her voice, and continued: “Yes, sir, Miss N—— is to be married, and her guardian is to marry her.” I wished to speak loud in my turn. “Silence, silence,” cried she, “listen to me; this marriage is my contrivance; I have, after mature consideration, been induced to second it, and it was for you that I solicited it.” “For me!” said I. “Yes; silence,” said she, “and you shall see the design of an honest woman, who is attached to you. Are you,” continued she, “in a situation to marry? No, for a hundred reasons. Would the lady have waited your convenience? No, for it was not in her power; she must have married: a young man would have married her, and you would have lost her forever. Now she is to be married to an old man, to a valetudinary, who cannot live long; you will receive a pretty widow who will be richer than she is at present; and in the mean time you can go on in your own way. Yes, yes, she is yours; I pledge myself for that; I give you my word of honor.”

Miss N—— now made her appearance and approached the grate. The directress said to me, with a mysterious air, “Compliment Miss on her marriage.” I could hold out no longer. I made my bow, and went away without saying a word. I never saw either the directress or the boarder again; and happily I soon forgot both of them.

As soon as I received the letter directing me to repair to Feltre, I set out from Chiozza, accompanied by my father, and went to Venice to be introduced along with him to his excellency, Paolo Spinelli, a noble Venetian, the podestà or governor, whom I was to

follow. We also called on Chancellor Zabottini, under whose orders I was to labor. I left Venice a few days afterwards, and in forty-eight hours I reached the place of my residence. Feltre or Feltri is a town situated in the Marcia Trevigiana, a province of the republic of Venice, sixty leagues from the capital. It contains a bishopric and a numerous nobility. The town is mountainous and steep, and so completely covered with snow during the whole winter, that from the doors in the narrow streets being choked up with snow and ice, they are obliged to make their way out at the windows. The following Latin verse is ascribed to Cæsar: —

“*Feltria perpetuo nivium damnata rigori.*”

Having arrived there before my colleagues, for the purpose of receiving from my predecessor the archives and other papers, I was very agreeably surprised to learn that there was a company of comedians in the town, who had been invited by the old governor, and who intended giving a few representations on the arrival of the new. This company was under the direction of Charles Veronese, the same who, thirty years afterwards, came to Paris to play the character of pantaloon at the Italian theatre, and who brought the beautiful Coralina and the charming Camilla, his daughters, along with him. This company was not amiss; the director, notwithstanding his glass eye, played the principal innamorato; and I saw with pleasure the same Florindo dei Macaroni whom I knew at Rimini, and who, on account of his age, only acted the characters of kings in tragedy and noble fathers in comedy.

Four days afterwards the governor arrived, and the chancellor and another officer of justice with the title

of vicar, who here and in several other provinces of the state of Venice, has a voice along with the podestà in sentences and judgments. I laid aside for several months every idea of pleasure and amusement, and applied seriously to labor, as, after this second government in which I acted as coadjutor, I could aspire to a chancellorship. I examined into the papers in the chancery, among which I found a commission from the senate that my predecessors had neglected. I gave an account of it to my principal, who judged the affair of an interesting nature, and charged me to follow it through with all my abilities. This was a criminal procedure on account of timber cut down in the forests of the republic; and there were two hundred persons implicated in the crime. This required an examination on the spot, to ascertain the *corpus delicti*. I went myself with surveyors and guards across rocks, torrents, and precipices. The procedure occasioned a great noise, and threw every one into consternation; for the wood had been cut down with impunity for more than twenty years, and there was reason to apprehend a revolt, which might have fallen on the poor devil of a coadjutor who roused the sleeping lion. Fortunately, this great affair terminated something in the same way as the parturition of the mountain. The republic was satisfied with securing its wood for the future. The chancellor lost nothing, and the coadjutor was indemnified for his fears.

I was intrusted some time afterwards with another commission of a much more agreeable and amusing nature. This was to carry through an investigation ten leagues from the town, into the circumstances of a dispute where fire-arms had been made use of, and dangerous wounds received. As the country where

this happened was flat, and the road lay through charming estates and country-houses, I engaged several of my friends to follow me; we were in all twelve, six males and six females, and four domestics. We all rode on horseback, and we employed twelve days in this delicious expedition. During all this time we never dined and supped in the same place; and for twelve nights we never slept on beds. We went very frequently on foot along delightful roads bordered with vines, and shaded with fig-trees, breakfasting on milk, and sometimes sharing the ordinary fare of the peasants, which is a soup composed of Turkey corn called polenta, and of which we made most delicious toasts. Wherever we went, we saw nothing but fêtes, rejoicings, and entertainments; and at every place where we stopped in the evening we had balls the whole night through, in which the ladies played their part as well as the men. In this party there were two sisters, one married and the other single. The latter was very much to my liking, and I may say I made the party for her alone. She was as prudent and modest as her sister was headstrong and foolish; the singularity of our journey afforded us an opportunity of coming to an explanation, and we became lovers.

My investigation was concluded in two hours; we selected another road for our return, to vary our pleasure; but on our arrival at Feltre, we were all worn out, exhausted, and more dead than alive. I felt the effects for a month, and my poor Angelica had a fever of forty days. The six gentlemen of our party proposed another species of entertainment to me. In the palace of the governor there was a theatre, which they wished to put to some use; and they did me the honor to tell me that they had conceived the project on my

account, and they left me the power of choosing the pieces and distributing the characters. I thanked them, and accepted the proposition, and with the approbation of his excellency and my chancellor, I put myself at the head of this new entertainment. I could have wished something comic, but I was not fond of buffoonery, and there were no good comedies; I therefore gave the preference to tragedy. As the operas of Metastasio were then represented everywhere even without music, I put the airs into recitative; I endeavored as well as I could to approximate the style of that charming author; and I made choice of *Didone* and *Siroe* for our representation. I distributed the parts, according to the characters of my actors, whom I knew, and I reserved the worst for myself. In this I acted wisely, for I was completely unsuited for tragedy. Fortunately, I had composed two small pieces in which I played two parts of character, and redeemed my reputation. The first of these pieces was the *Good Father*, and the second *La Cantatrice*. Both were approved of, and my acting was considered passable for an amateur. I saw the last of these pieces some time afterwards at Venice, where a young advocate thought proper to give it out as his own work, and to receive compliments on the subject; but, having been imprudent enough to publish it with his name, he experienced the mortification of seeing his plagiarism unmasked.

I did what I could to engage my beautiful *Angelica* to accept a part in our tragedies, but it was impossible; she was timid, and had she even been willing, her parents would not have given their permission. She visited us; but this pleasure cost her tears; for she was jealous and suffered much from seeing me on such

a familiar footing with my fair companions. The poor little girl loved me with tenderness and sincerity, and I loved her also with my whole soul; I may say she was the first person whom I ever loved. She aspired to become my wife, which she would have been if certain singular reflections, that, however, were well founded, had not turned me from the design. Her elder sister had been remarkably beautiful; and, after her first child, she became ugly. The youngest had the same skin and the same features; she was one of those delicate beauties whom the air injures, and whom the smallest fatigue or pain discomposes; of all which I saw a convincing proof. The fatigue of our journey produced a visible change upon her; I was young, and if my wife were in a short time to have lost her bloom, I foresaw what would have been my despair. This was reasoning curiously for a lover; but whether from virtue, weakness, or inconstancy, I quitted Feltre without marrying her.

VIII.

I HAD some difficulty in tearing myself from the charming object with whom I first tasted the charms of virtuous love. It must be owned, however, that this love was not of a very vigorous description, as I could quit my mistress. A little more mind and grace would perhaps have fixed me; but she possessed beauty alone; and even that beauty seemed to me on its decline. I had time for reflection, and my self-love was stronger than my passion.

I required something to divert my thoughts from the subject, and several circumstances occurred calculated to produce this effect. My father, who could never

settle in one place (a propensity which he left as an inheritance to his son) had changed his country. In returning from Modena, whither he went on family affairs, he passed through Ferrara, and there he received a very advantageous offer of being settled as a physician at Bagnacavallo, with a fixed income. This was a favorable proposition, and he accepted it; and it was arranged that I should join him there the very first opportunity my situation would admit of.

On leaving Feltre, I passed through Venice without stopping, and embarked with the courier of Ferrara. In the bark there were numbers of people, but they were ill assorted. Among others, there was a meagre and pale young man with black hair, a broken voice, and a sinister physiognomy, the son of a butcher of Padua, who set up for a great man. This gentleman grew weary, and invited everybody to play; nobody, however, would listen to him, and I had the honor of taking him up. He proposed at first faro on a small scale, tête-à-tête, but this the courier would not have permitted. We played at a child's game, called "calacarte," in which he who has the greatest number of cards at the end of the game gains a fish, and he who has the greatest number of spades gains another. I lost my cards always, and never had any spades: at thirty sous the fish, he contrived to obtain from me two sequins; I suspected him, but I paid my money without saying anything.

On arriving at Ferrara I had need of repose, and I went to lodge at the hotel of St. Mark, where the post-horses were kept. While I was dining alone in my room, I received a visit from my gambler, who came to offer me my revenge. On my refusing, he laughed at me, and, drawing from his pocket a pack of cards

and a handful of sequins, he proposed faro to me, which I still, however, refused. "Come, come, sir," said he; "I owe you your revenge. I am an honest man, willing to give it you; and you cannot refuse me. You don't know me," he continued. "To set your mind at ease with respect to me, there are the cards; hold you the bank and I shall punt." The proposition seemed to me fair; I was not yet cunning enough to suspect the tricks of this sleight-of-hand gentry; I believed in good earnest that chance would decide the business, and that I had an opportunity of recovering my money.

I drew ten sequins from my purse, as an equivalent for those of my antagonist, and I mixed the cards and gave him them to cut. He laid two punts, which I gained, and on which I was as frisky as a harlequin. I shuffled again, and gave the cards to him to cut: my gentleman doubled his stake and gained; he made paroli: this paroli decided the bank, and I could not refuse to hold it. I held it accordingly, and I gained. On this he swore like a trooper, took up the cards, which had fallen on the table, counted them, found an odd card, and maintained there was a false deal. He attempted to seize my money, which I defended. He then drew a pistol from his pocket; and I started back and let go my sequins. On hearing my plaintive and trembling voice, a waiter of the hotel, leagued in all probability with the cheat, made his appearance, and announced to us that we had both incurred the most rigorous penalties denounced against games of hazard, and threatened to inform against us instantly if we refused to give him some money. I was not long in giving him a sequin for myself, and I took post instantly, enraged at having lost

my money, and still more at having allowed myself to be swindled.

On arriving at Bagnacavallo, I was consoled with the sight of my dear parents. My father had had an attack of a mortal disease, and his only regret was, as he said, lest he should die without seeing me. Alas! he saw me, and I saw him; but this reciprocal pleasure lasted but a very short time.

Bagnacavallo is merely a large village, in the legation of Ravenna, very rich, very fertile, and very commercial. After introducing me into the best society of this place, my father, as an additional gratification for me, took me to Faenza. In this town was first discovered the sort of argillous matter mixed with potter's-earth and sand, of which the glazed earth is composed which the Italians call *majolica*, the French *faïence* and the English delft ware. In Italy a number of delft plates were painted by Rafaele d'Urbino, or by his pupils. These plates are framed in an elegant style, and preserved with great care in picture cabinets. I saw a very abundant and very rich collection of them at Venice, in the Grimani Palace at Santa Maria Formosa. Faenza is a very pretty town of Romagna, but there is nothing remarkable to be seen in it. We were very well received and treated by the Marquis Spada: we saw several comedies performed by a strolling company, and in six days we returned to Bagnacavallo.

A few days afterwards, my father fell sick. It was a year since he had been seized with his last disease: he perceived, on taking to bed, that the relapse was serious, and his pulse announced his danger to him. His fever became malignant on the seventh day, and grew worse and worse every hour. When he saw himself near his latter end, he called me to his bedside,

and, recommending his dear wife to my protection, bade me adieu, and gave me his blessing. He sent immediately for his confessor, and received the sacrament. On the fourteenth day my father was no more. He was buried in the church of St. Jerome of Bagnacavallo, the 9th March, 1731.

I will not dwell here on the firmness of a virtuous father, the grief of a tender wife, and the sensibility of a beloved and grateful son, but shall merely give you a rapid sketch of the most cruel moments of my life. The loss was keenly felt by me, and it occasioned an essential change in my situation and family. I endeavored to console my mother, and she in turn endeavored to comfort me: we required the assistance of each other. Our first care was to leave the place and return to my maternal aunt at Venice, and we lodged with her in the house of one of our relations, where fortunately there were apartments to let. During the whole journey from Romagna to Venice my mother did nothing but speak of my chancery-employment on the mainland, which she called a gipsy occupation, for it was necessary to be on the spot, and to be perpetually changing from country to country. She wished to live along with me, to see me occupied sedentarily beside her, and she conjured and solicited me with tears in her eyes to embrace the profession of an advocate. On my arrival at Venice, all our friends joined my mother in the same wish; I resisted as long as I could, but was at last obliged to yield. Did I act wisely? Will my mother long enjoy her son? She had every reason to think so; but my stars perpetually thwarted every one of my projects. Thalia expected me in her temple, she led me to it through many a crooked path, and made me endure the thorns and the briars before yielding me any of the flowers.

As I was on the point of appearing in my gown in the courts of law, where a few years before I appeared without one, I called on my Uncle Indric, with whom I acquired my knowledge of law-practice. He was glad to see me again, and assured me of his endeavors in my behalf. I had great difficulties, however, to surmount. To be received advocate at Venice, the first step is to be licensed by the University of Padua; and to obtain the license, a course of civil law in that town must be gone through, five consecutive years must be passed there, and the certificates of attendance at all the different classes of the public schools must be produced. Strangers alone can present themselves in the college, defend their theses, and receive their license on the spot without delay. I belonged by descent to Modena; but as both my father and myself were born in Venice, was I entitled to the advantage of strangers? I know not, but a letter written by order of the Duke of Modena to his minister at Venice, procured me a place in the privileged class. I was thus enabled to repair instantly to Padua and receive my degree of doctor; but a new and still more serious difficulty now occurred. The Venetian code is alone followed at the bar of Venice; and Bartolus, Baldus, and Justinian are never cited. They are scarcely known there; but they must be known at Padua. It is the same at Venice as at Paris, — young men lose their time in a useless study. I had lost my time like other people; I had studied the Roman law at Pavia, Udine, and Modena; but then for four years this study had been interrupted, and every trace of the Imperial law was lost. I saw myself, therefore, under the necessity of becoming once more a scholar.

I applied to one of my old friends, M. Radi, whom I

knew in my infancy, and who, having employed his time much better than myself, was become a good advocate, and an excellent master for the instruction of the candidates who frequent Padua only four times a year, to show themselves and obtain their certificates of attendance. M. Radi was a worthy man, but, from being fond of play, he was rather embarrassed in his circumstances. His scholars profited by his lessons, and frequently carried his money as well as his instructions away with them. When M. Radi thought me sufficiently prepared for a public exhibition, we set out together for Padua. I own that, notwithstanding the instruction I had received and a certain confidence acquired in my intercourse with the world, I entertained a considerable dread of the grave and solemn countenances by whom I was to be judged. My friend laughed at my apprehensions, and told me I had nothing to fear, and all that I had to pass through was nothing but ceremony, and that a person must be very ignorant indeed who failed to be crowned with the laurels of the university.

On arriving at the city of doctors, we waited first on M. Pighi, the civil-law professor, to request him to have the goodness to be my promoter, that is, the person who in quality of assistant presents and supports the candidates. He acceded to my request, and received with every expression of kindness a silver tea-board of which I made him a present. We next went to the office of the university, to deposit in the hands of the treasurer the sum which the professors divide among themselves. This advance is called a deposit; but it is there as at the theatre, the money is never returned after the drawing of the curtain. We had visits to pay to all the doctors of the college, and many of them we accomplished with cards; but on calling on the Abbé

Arrighi, one of the first professors in the university, the porter had orders to receive us. We found him in his closet, and paid him the usual compliments of requesting him to honor us with his presence, and to grant us his indulgence. He seemed very much astonished that we should confine ourselves to this dry and useless compliment. We could not comprehend the cause of this; but we afterwards obtained the following information.

A new regulation had been enacted and published, by order of the reformers of the course of studies at Padua, by which all candidates for a doctor's degree, before appearing in full college, were to undergo a particular examination for the purpose of ascertaining whether they were sufficiently instructed for a public examination. It was M. Arrighi himself who, seeing that this public examination of candidates was treated as a mere farce, that the indolence of youth was too much encouraged, that questions were selected at pleasure, that even the arguments were communicated and the answers furnished, and that they made only doctors without doctrine, thought proper in the excess of his zeal to solicit and obtain this famous regulation which would have destroyed the University of Padua had it been long enforced. I had therefore to go through this examination, and the Abbé Arrighi was to be my examiner. He requested M. Radi to retire into his library, and he began immediately to interrogate me. He was by no means disposed to spare me, but wandered from the code of Justinian to the canons of the church, and from the digests to the pandects. I always, however, gave an answer of one kind or another, though perhaps I was more often wrong than right; but I displayed a tolerable degree of knowledge and a great deal of confidence. My examiner, who was very strict and scru-

pulous, was by no means fully satisfied with me, and wished me to prolong my studies; but I told him frankly that I came to Padua to obtain my degree; that my reputation would be injured were I to return without one; and that I had made my deposit. "What!" said he, "you have deposited your money?" "Yes, sir." "And it was received without my orders?" "The treasurer received it without hesitation; and here is his receipt." "So much the worse; you run a risk of losing it. Have you the courage to venture yourself?" "Yes, sir, I am determined at all hazards. I would rather renounce forever my views of becoming an advocate, than return a second time." "You are very bold." "Sir, I possess honorable feelings." "Very well, fix your day, I shall be there; but take care; the most trifling fault will defeat your object." On this I made my bow and took my leave. Radi had heard everything, and was in greater apprehension than myself. I knew that my answers had not been very accurate; but in the college of doctors the questions are limited, and the candidate is not made to wander through the immense chaos of jurisprudence from one end to the other.

Next day we repaired to the university to see the points which fate should allot me drawn from the urn. The civil law point turned on intestate successions, and that of the canon law on bigamy. I was well acquainted with the titles of the one and the chapters of the other; I went over them the same day in the library of Doctor Pighi, my promoter; and I applied myself seriously till the hour of supper. My friend and myself sat down to table, when five young persons entered the room and wished to sup with us. This we willingly agreed to, and, after supper, we

began to laugh and amuse ourselves. One of the five scholars was a candidate who had been refused in the examination by Professor Arrighi; and he poured forth execrations against that abbé, who was a Corsican by birth, and satirized his barbarity and the barbarity of his country. I wished these gentlemen good night; for, as my examination was to take place next day, I required sleep; but they laughed at me, and drew from their pockets a pack of cards, and one of them produced his sequins on the table. Radi was the first to give in to the proposition; and the whole night through we played, and Radi and myself lost our money. We were interrupted by the beadle of the college, who brought me the gown which I was to appear in. The clock of the university summoned me to the examination, which I had to encounter without having closed my eyes, and smarting under chagrin at the loss of my time and money.

However, the exigency required exertion. On my arrival I was met by my promoter, who took me by the hand and seated me beside himself on a balustrade, with a numerous assembly in a semicircle in front of us. When every person was seated, I rose and began by reciting the usual ceremony and proposing the two theses which I had to defend. One of those deputed to carry on the argumentation attacked me with a syllogism *in barbara* with citations of texts in the major and minor. I resumed the argument, and in the citation of a paragraph I confounded No. 5 with No. 7; my promoter whispered my mistake to me, which I wished to correct. On this M. Arrighi rose from his seat and said aloud to M. Pighi, "I protest, sir, that I will not suffer the smallest infraction of the laws of the regulation. All assistance to candi-

dates is prohibited at a time like this. It may pass for this time; but I give you warning for the future."

I perceived that this misplaced sally excited universal indignation, and I seized the favorable instant to resume the substance of my thesis and the propositions of the argument. In place of the scholastic method I substituted learning, reasonings, and the discussions of compilers and interpreters. I gave a dissertation on the whole extent of intestate successions, which met with universal applause; and seeing the success of my boldness, I made an instantaneous transition from the civil to the canon law, and undertook the article of bigamy, which I treated like the other. I went through the laws of the Greeks and Romans, and cited councils. I was fortunate in the questions which fell to my lot; for I knew them by heart; and on this occasion I acquired an immortal honor. The votes were now taken, and the registrar published the result. I was made a licentiate "*nemine penitus penitusque discrepante*"; that is to say, without one dissentient voice, not even that of M. Arrighi, who, on the contrary, was very well satisfied. My promoter then put the doctor's cap on my head and proceeded to pass an eulogium on the licentiate; but as I did not follow the usual routine, he composed Latin prose and verse adapted to the occasion, which was highly honorable both to himself and me. Every one may enter on the reception of the candidate, and on this occasion I was quite overpowered by the compliments and salutations which I received. Radi and myself returned to our hotel, very well pleased with the termination of this affair, and very much embarrassed to find ourselves without money. This, how-

ever, was a *sine qua non*, and we obtained some without much difficulty, and took our departure exultingly and triumphantly for Venice.

On arriving at Venice, after embracing my mother and aunt, whose joy was excessive, I paid a visit to my uncle the attorney; whom I solicited to obtain a place for me with an advocate for instruction in the forms and practice of the bar. My uncle, who was enabled to make a choice, recommended me to M. Terzi, one of the best pleaders and chamber-counsel in the republic, with whom I was to remain two years; but I entered in the month of October, 1731, and left him in May, 1732; when I was received as an advocate. In all probability they looked merely to the date of the year and not to that of the months. There was always something extraordinary in all my arrangements, and, to say the truth, almost always to my advantage. I was born lucky, and whenever I have not been so the fault has been entirely my own.

The advocates at Venice must have their lodgings and be at their chambers in the quarter della Roba. I took apartments at San Paternian, and my mother and aunt did not quit me. I equipped myself in my professional gown, the same as that of the patricians, enveloped my head in an immense wig, and waited with great impatience for the day of my presentation in court. This presentation does not take place without ceremony. The novice must have two assistants, called at Venice *Compari di Palazzo*, whom the young man selects from among those old advocates who are the most attached to him. I chose M. Uccelli and M. Roberti, both my neighbors. I went between my two friends to the bottom of the great staircase in the great hall of the courts, and for half an hour I was

obliged to make so many bows and contortions that my back was almost broken, and my wig resembled the mane of a lion. Every one who passed me had something to say respecting me; some observed that I was a lad with some expression in my countenance; others, that I was a new sweeper of the courts; some embraced me, and others laughed in my face. At length I ascended and sent my servant in quest of a gondola, not daring to make my appearance in the open street in my then equipment, and I appointed him to meet me in the hall of the great council, where I seated myself on a bench and where I saw everybody pass without being seen by anybody.

I began to reflect on the profession of which I had made choice. There are generally two hundred and forty advocates in the list at Venice; of these there are from ten to twelve in the first rank, twenty perhaps in the second, and all the rest are obliged to hunt for clients, and the pettifogging attorneys are willing enough to become their hounds on the condition of sharing together the prey. I was in apprehension for myself as I was last on the list, and I regretted the chanceries which I had abandoned. But then, on the other hand, I saw no profession so lucrative and honorable as that of an advocate. A noble Venetian, a patrician, a member of the republic, who would not deign to become merchant, banker, notary, physician, or professor of a university, has no hesitation in embracing the profession of an advocate, which he follows in the courts, and he calls the other advocates his brothers. Everything depended on good fortune; and why was I to be less fortunate than another? The attempt required to be made, and it was incumbent on me to plunge into the chaos of the bar, where

perseverance and probity lead to the temple of fortune.

While I was thus musing by myself and building castles in Spain, I observed a fair, round, and plump woman of about thirty, advancing towards me, of a tolerable figure, with a flat nose, roguish eyes, a profusion of gold about her neck, ears, arms, and fingers, and in a dress which announced her to be of the inferior orders, but in easy circumstances; she accosted and saluted me. "Good day, sir." "Good day, madam." "Will you allow me to pay you my compliments?" "On what?" "On your admission; I observed you making your obeisance at court; upon my word, sir, you are prettily equipped!" "Am I not? Do you think me handsome?" "O, the dress is nothing; M. Goldoni becomes everything." "So you know me, madam?" "Have not I seen you four years ago in the land of litigation, in a long peruke and a short robe?" "You are in the right, when I was with an attorney?" "Yes, with M. Indric." "So you know my uncle, then?" "I? I know every person here, from the doge to the clerks of court." "Are you married?" "No." "Are you a widow?" "No." "Have you any employment?" "No." "You have a revenue, then?" "None at all." "But you are well equipped; and how do you live then?" "I am a girl of the courts, and the courts maintain me." "Upon my word, that is very singular! You belong to the courts, you say?" "Yes, sir; my father was employed in them." "What did he follow?" "He listened at the doors, and carried good news to those who were in expectation of pardons, or sentences, or favorable judgments; and as he had good legs he was always first with the news. My mother was always

here as well as myself ; she was not proud, she received money and accepted of a few commissions. I was born and brought up in these gilded halls, and you see I have gold upon me." "Your story is very singular ; so you follow the footsteps of your mother?" "No, sir, I do something else." "And what is that?" "I solicit lawsuits." "Solicit lawsuits! I do not understand you." "I am as well known as Barabbas ; all the advocates and attorneys are well known to be my friends, and many people apply to me to procure them counsel and defenders. Those who have recourse to me are not generally rich ; and I apply to new-comers, to persons without employment, who wish nothing better than to have an opportunity of making themselves known. Do you know, sir, that, such as you see me, I have made the fortune of a good dozen of the most famous advocates at this bar? Come, sir, take courage ; with your good leave I shall also be the making of you." I was amused with listening to her ; and as my servant did not arrive I continued the conversation.

"Very well, madam ; have you any good affair at present?" "Yes, sir, I have several, and some of them excellent ; I have a widow suspected of having concealed effects ; another anxious that a contract of marriage drawn posterior to its date should be held good ; I have girls who demand to be portioned ; I have wives who wish a separation ; and I have people of condition pursued by their creditors : you see, you have only to choose."

"My good woman," said I to her, "I have allowed you to speak, and I wish now to speak in my turn. I am young and entering on my career, and desirous of occasions of employment where I may appear to ad-

vantage; but the desire of labor and the itch of pleading will never induce me to undertake such bad causes as those you propose to me." "Ah, ah!" said she, "you despise my clients, because I told you there was nothing to be gained; but listen: you shall be well paid, and even paid beforehand if you choose." I saw my servant at a distance; I rose, and said to the woman with a firm and determined tone, "No, you are not acquainted with me; I am a man of honor." She laid hold of my hand, and said with a serious air, "Bravo! continue always to entertain the same sentiments." "Ah, ah," said I to her, "you change your language." "O yes," said she, "and the language which I now use is better than that I have quitted. Our conversation has not been without mystery; bear it in mind, and take care never to mention it. Adieu, sir, be always prudent and always honorable, and you will find your account in it." On this she went away, and I remained lost in astonishment. I could make nothing of the matter, but I afterwards learned that she was a spy; that she came for the purpose of sounding me; but I never either learned or wished to learn by whom she had been employed.

IX.

I WAS now an advocate; my introduction to the bar had taken place, and the next thing was to procure clients. I attended every day in court, listening to the masters of the profession, and looking round everywhere to see if my physiognomy happened to take with any one who might think proper to give me an opportunity of appearing in a cause of appeal. A new advocate cannot shine and show himself off to advantage

in the tribunals where causes originate ; and it is in the superior courts alone that he can display his science, eloquence, voice, and grace ; four means all equally necessary to place an advocate in the first rank at Venice. My Uncle Indric was liberal in his promises, and all my friends were incessantly flattering me ; but in the mean time I was obliged to pass the whole of the afternoon and part of the evening in a closet, that I might not lose the first favorable instant. -

One of the most essential articles in the profits of a Venetian advocate is derived from consultations. An advocate of the first order is paid for a consultation of not more than three quarters of an hour at the rate of two and three sequins ; and there are sometimes in a cause of consequence not less than twelve, fifteen, and twenty consultations before it is heard by the judge. If the advocate be employed to write and draw up a demand or an answer in the course of the suit, he receives an immediate payment of from four to six and twelve sequins. The pleadings are not in writing at Venice ; the advocate pleads *vivá voce*, and his harangue is paid for according to the interest of the cause and the merit of the defender. All this mounts to something very high ; in my moments of solitude and ennui, I used to amuse myself with attempts to calculate it ; and as far as I could judge, an advocate in great repute may gain, without injuring himself, forty thousand livres per annum ; a very large sum indeed for a country where living is not half so dear as at Paris.

Nobody visited me but a few curious persons for the sake of sounding me, or litigants of a dangerous description. I listened patiently to them, and gave them my opinion ; I did not keep my watch in my hand ; I allowed them to stay as long as they chose ; I accom-

panied them to the door, and they gave me nothing. This is the lot of all beginners, who must lay their account with waiting for three or four years before they can get a name, or gain any money. I am inclined to think, however, that if I had continued my career at the bar, I should have got on much more promptly than many of my brethren; for in six months I pleaded a cause and gained it; but my star already threatened me with a new change, which I could not avoid. I reserve, however, for another place, the origin and consequences of a revolution much more violent still than that which I had experienced in the College of Pavia.

Meanwhile I passed my time alone in my closet, or with very indifferent company, and I made almanacs. To make almanacs either in Italian or French is losing one's time with useless fancies; but at present, however, it was otherwise. I made a real almanac, which was printed, relished, and applauded. I gave it for title "The Experience of the Past; Astrologer of the Future; Critical Almanac for the year 1732." It contained a general discourse on the year, and four discourses on the four seasons in triplets, interwoven in the manner of Dante, containing criticisms on the manners of the age, and for every day of the year there was a prognostication containing a joke, a criticism, or a point. I shall not give an account of a trifle which does not deserve the trouble. I shall merely transcribe the couplet for Easter-day, because this piece of pleasantry, in other respects perhaps the most commonplace of the whole, produced a remarkable effect from the verification of the prognostication, and both procured me pleasure and services of great importance. The prediction in Italian verse ran as follows:—

“In sì gran giorno una gentil contessa
Al perucchier sacrifica la messa.”

“In this great day an amiable countess will sacrifice the mass to her hairdresser.”

This little work, such as it was, amused me very much; for there were then no public amusements in Venice, and my different occupations prevented me from thinking of them. The criticisms and pleasantries of my almanac were really of a comic description, and each prognostication might have furnished subject-matter for a comedy. I was then seized with a desire to return to my old project, and I sketched a few pieces; but on reflecting that comedy did not harmonize very much with the gravity of my gown, I concluded the majesty of tragedy to be more analogous to my profession, and I was guilty of a breach of fidelity to Thalia in ranking myself under the standard of Melpomene.

As I wish to conceal nothing from my reader, I must reveal my secret to him. My affairs became deranged (I shall soon explain why and wherefore). My closet brought me in nothing, and I was under the necessity of turning my time to some account. The profits in comedy are very moderate in Italy for the author; and from the opera alone I could gain a hundred sequins at once. With this view I composed a lyrical tragedy, called *Amalonte*. I was well pleased with my labor, and I found people to whom the reading of it seemed to give satisfaction; but, to tell the truth, I had not made choice of connoisseurs. I shall afterwards speak of this musical tragedy. But I must advert to a cause which my Uncle Indrie came to propose to me.

This cause was a contest originating in a hydraulic servitude. A miller made a purchase of a stream of

water for his mill. The proprietor of the source altered its direction; and the object of the action was to reinstate the miller in his rights, with damages and interest. The town of Crema took the miller's part. A model had been executed; and legal investigations, violences, and rebellions had taken place. The cause was of a mixed nature, partly civil and partly criminal; and it came before the *Avvogadori*, a very grave magistracy, like that of the Roman tribunes of the people. The advocate opposed to me was the celebrated *Cordelina*, the most learned and eloquent man at the bar of Venice; and I had to make an immediate answer without writing or time for meditation.

The day was appointed, and I repaired to the proper tribunal. My adversary spoke for an hour and a half; I listened to him without fear. On the conclusion of his harangue I began mine, in which I endeavored, by a pathetic preamble, to conciliate the favor of my judge. This was my first exhibition, and I required indulgence. On entering upon the subject, I boldly attacked the harangue of *Cordelina*; my facts were true, my reasons good, my voice sonorous, and my eloquence not displeasing. I spoke for two hours, and on my conclusion I retired bathed from head to foot. My servant waited for me in an adjoining room. I changed my linen; I was fatigued and exhausted. My uncle made his appearance, who exclaimed, "My dear nephew, we have gained the action, and the adverse party is condemned in costs. Courage, my friend," continued he; "this first attempt makes you known as a man who will get on, and you will not be in want of clients." Who would not conclude me very fortunate? — Heavens! what a destiny! What a number of vicissitudes and reverses!

The unfortunate event which I am about to recount, and which I have already announced, might have appeared among the anecdotes of the two preceding years; but I prefer giving the whole story at once, to interweaving it piecemeal with the rest of my narration. My mother had been very intimate with Madame St. — and Miss Mar—, two sisters living apart, though lodged under the same roof. During her travels the acquaintance dropped; but it was renewed on our settling again at Venice. I was introduced to these ladies; and as Miss Mar— was richest, she lodged on the first floor. As she saw company, she received the greatest number of visits. Miss Mar— was not young; but she still possessed the remains of beauty. At the age of forty she was as fresh as a rose, as white as snow, with a natural complexion; large, sparkling, and intelligent eyes, a charming mouth, and an agreeable embonpoint. Her nose alone disfigured her somewhat. It was aquiline, and à little too much raised, which, however, gave her an air of importance when she assumed a serious tone. She had always refused marriage, though from her respectable air and her fortune, she could never have been in want of advantageous offers; and for my good or bad fortune, it so happened that I was the happy mortal who made the first impression on her. We understood one another, but durst not speak; for she acted the prude, and I was afraid of a refusal. I consulted my mother, who was by no means displeasèd; and even, from an opinion that the match was advantageous to me, took upon her to open the matter. She proceeded very slowly, however, not to draw me from my professional occupation, and she was desirous to see me first somewhat more firmly established.

Meanwhile, I continued to pass my evenings with Miss Mar—. Her sister used to join the party, with her two daughters, who were marriageable. The oldest was deformed, and the other was ugly. She had, however, black and roguish eyes, an abundance of entertaining drollery, and possessed the most natural and engaging gracefulness. Her aunt disliked her, for she had frequently opposed her in her temporary inclinations, and never failed to use her utmost efforts to supplant her in my good graces. For my part, I amused myself with the niece, and kept steadfast to the aunt. In the mean time an excellency contrived to introduce himself to Miss Mar—, and paid her some attentions, of which she was the dupe. Neither of them had the least affection for the other; the lady wished the title, and his excellency the fortune.

However, seeing myself deprived of the place of honor which I had occupied, I was piqued, and, by way of revenge, paid my court to her detested rival. I carried my vengeance so far that in two months' time I became completely enamored, and I drew up for my ugly mistress a good contract of marriage, regular and formal in every respect. The mother of the young woman and her adherents, it is true, made use of every means to get hold of me. In our contract there were articles very advantageous for me; I was to receive an income belonging to the young lady; her mother was to give up her diamonds to her; and I was to receive a considerable sum of money from a friend of the family, whom they would not name to me.

I still continued to visit Miss Mar—, and passed the evenings as usual; but the aunt distrusted the niece, for whom my attentions were, as she could perceive, somewhat less reserved. She knew that for some time

I usually ascended to the second floor before entering the first; she was devoured by vexation, and wished to get rid of her sister, her nieces, and myself. For this purpose she solicited her marriage with the gentleman whom she supposed she had secured; and proposed to him to agree upon the time and conditions: but what was her astonishment and humiliation to receive for answer that his excellency demanded the half of her property as a donation on marrying her, and the other half after her death! She was seized with transports of rage, hatred, and contempt; she sent a formal refusal to her suitor, and almost died of grief. All this was communicated by persons about the house to the eldest sister, and it threw both mother and daughter into the greatest joy. Miss Mar— did not dare to speak; she was forced to stomach her chagrin; and, seeing me display marks of kindness for the niece, she cast now and then a furious look at me with her large eyes, which were inflamed with rage. In this society we were all of us bad politicians. Miss Mar—, who knew not the footing on which her niece received me, still flattered herself with the hope of tearing me from the object of her jealousy, and on account of the difference of fortune, of again seeing me at her feet; but the perfidious part of which I am now going to accuse myself soon completely undeceived her. I composed a song for my mistress, which was set to music by an amateur of taste, with the intention of having it sung in a serenade on the canal which the house of these ladies overlooked. I took an opportunity favorable for the execution of my project, fully sure of pleasing the one and provoking the other.

About nine o'clock in the evening, when we were assembled in a party in the saloon of the aunt, a very

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noisy symphony was heard on the canal under the balcony of the aunt, and consequently also under the windows of the niece. We all rose that we might enjoy it; and on the conclusion of the overture, we heard the charming voice of Agnese, a female singer then in fashion for serenades, who, from the sweetness of her voice and the purity of her expression, gave an effect to the music and a celebrity to the couplets.

The song was successful at Venice, and sung up and down everywhere; but it lighted up the torch of discord in the minds of the two rivals, each of whom appropriated it to herself. I tranquillized the niece by assuring her in a whisper that the fête was intended for her, and I left the mind of the other in doubt and agitation. I received compliments from every one, which, however, I refused, and continued *incognito*; but I was by no means sorry to be suspected.

Next day I made my entrance at the usual hour. Miss Mar—, who was watching for me, saw me enter, came out to me in the passage, and made me accompany her into her room. Having requested me to sit down beside her, she said to me, with a serious and passionate air, “You have regaled us with a very brilliant entertainment; but as there are more women than one in this house, for whom, pray, was this piece of gallantry intended? I know not whether I have a right to return you my thanks.” “Madam,” I answered, “I am not the author of the serenade.” Here she interrupted me with a proud and almost threatening air. “Do not conceal yourself,” said she; “the effort is useless; tell me only whether this amusement was intended for me or for another. I must warn you,” continued she, “that this declara-

tion may become serious; that it ought to be decisive; and another word shall not be heard from me on the subject."

Had I been free, I know not what answer I should have made; but I was tied down, and had but one answer to give. "Madam," said I, "supposing me to be the author of the serenade, I should never have dared to address it to you." "Why not?" said she. "Because," I answered, "your views are too elevated for me; and great lords alone can merit your esteem—" "This is enough," said she, rising: "I comprehend everything sufficiently: very well, sir, you will repent it." (She was in the right: I have repented it very much.)

War was now declared. Miss Mar—, piqued at being supplanted by her niece, and afraid of seeing her married before herself, turned her views elsewhere. Opposite her windows there was a respectable family, not titled, but allied to patrician families; and the eldest son had paid his court to Miss Mar—, and met with a refusal. She endeavored to renew the intercourse with the young man, who was not backward on his part; she purchased a very honorable situation for him, and in six days' time everything was agreed on and the marriage concluded. M. Z—, the new husband, had a sister who was to be married the same month to a gentleman of the mainland; both marriages of persons in easy circumstances; and that of my mistress and myself was to be the third; and notwithstanding our poverty, we were also obliged to put on an appearance of wealth and ruin ourselves. This was what deranged my affairs and reduced me to extremities. But how was I to extricate myself?

My mother knew nothing of what was going on in a

house which she seldom visited. Miss Mar—, availing herself of the ceremonies usual on such occasions, was malicious enough to inform her of it; she sent her a marriage card; my mother was greatly astonished; she spoke to me; I was obliged to own everything; still, however, I endeavored to soften the folly committed by me in giving effect to promises of a nature not altogether to be relied on; and I concluded by telling her that at my age a wife of forty was not a suitable match for me. This last reason seemed to appease my mother more than all the rest. She asked me whether the time was yet fixed for my marriage. I told her that it was, and that we had still three good months before us. A marriage at Venice in form, and with all the customary follies, is a much more ceremonious affair than anywhere else. In the first place, there is the signature of the contract, with the intervention of parents and friends, a formality which we avoided by signing our contract secretly. Secondly, the presentation of the ring. This is not the marriage-ring, but a stone ring, a solitary diamond, which the bridegroom must make a present of to his bride. The relations and friends are invited on this occasion: there is a great display in the house; great pomp and much dressing; and no meeting takes place at Venice without expensive refreshments. This expense we could not avoid; for our marriage, however ridiculous, could not be kept secret; and we were obliged to do like other people, and go completely through with things. The third ceremony is the presentation of the pearls. A few days before the nuptial benediction takes place, the mother, or the nearest relation of the bridegroom, waits on the bride, and presents her with a necklace of fine pearls, which the young lady wears regularly about

her neck from that day to the termination of the first year of her marriage. Few families possess these pearl necklaces, or wish to be at the expense of them; but they are hired, and if they are anything beautiful, the hire is very high. This presentation is attended with balls, entertainments, and dresses, and consequently is very expensive.

I shall say nothing of the other successive ceremonies which are nearly similar to those which take place everywhere. I stop at that of the pearls, which I ought to have gone through, but which I omitted for a hundred reasons; the first of which was, that I had no more money. On the approach of this last preliminary of the nuptials, I intimated to my intended mother-in-law, that I now expected the performance of the three conditions of our contract. These were the revenues which were to be assigned over to me, the diamonds which the mother agreed to deposit in the hands of her daughter, or mine, before the day of the presentation of the pearls, and the putting me in possession of the whole or part of the considerable sum which was promised to her by the unknown protector. The following is the result of the conference which one of my cousins took the charge of. The revenues of the young lady consisted in one of those life-annuities destined by the republic for a certain number of females; but they must all wait their turn; and there were still four to die before Miss St. — could enjoy hers; she herself might even die before touching the first quarter's payment. As to the diamonds, they were decidedly destined for the daughter; but the mother, who was still young, would not consent to part with them during her own lifetime, and would only agree to give them after her death. With regard to the gentleman who was

to give the money (for what reason is not so clear), he had undertaken a journey, and was not to return for some time.

Such was the comfortable situation in which I was placed. I had not sufficient means to support an expensive establishment, and still less to enable me to vie with the luxury of two fortunate couples. My closet yielded me little or nothing; I had contracted debts: I saw myself on the brink of a precipice, and I was in love! I mused, I reflected, I sustained a distressing conflict between love and reason; but at last the latter gained the victory over the dominion of the senses. I communicated my situation to my mother, who, with tears in her eyes, agreed with me that some violent resolution was absolutely necessary to avoid ruin. She mortgaged her property to pay my debts at Venice; I assigned over my Modena property for her maintenance, and I formed the resolution of departing. In the moment when I had the most flattering prospects, after the successful appearance made by me in court in the midst of the acclamations of the bar, I quitted my country, my relations, my friends, my love, my hopes, and my profession; I took my departure, and landed at Padua: the first step was taken, the rest cost me nothing; for, thanks to the goodness of my temperament, excepting my mother, everything else was soon forgotten by me; and the pleasure of liberty consoled me for the loss of my mistress.

On leaving Venice, I wrote a letter to the mother of the unfortunate young woman; and I attributed to her the immediate cause of the resolution to which I was reduced. I assured her that on the fulfilment of the three conditions of the contract, I should soon return; and, expecting an answer, I still continued my

journey. I carried my treasure along with me. This was Amalasonte, which I had composed during my leisure, and respecting which I entertained hopes which I believed to be extremely well founded. I knew that the opera of Milan was one of the most considerable not only of Italy, but of all Europe. I proposed, therefore, to present my drama to the direction at Milan, which is in the hands of the nobility. I calculated on the reception of my work, and that I could not fail to obtain the hundred sequins; but he who reckons without his host, reckons twice.

X.

IN my way from Padua to Milan, I arrived at Vi-
cenza, where I stopped for four days. In this city I was acquainted with Count Parminion Triscino, of the family of the celebrated author of Sophonisba, a tragedy composed in the Grecian manner, and one of the best pieces of the good age of Italian literature. I knew M. Trissino in early youth at Venice. We both of us had a taste for the dramatic art. I showed him my Amalasonte, which he applauded very coldly, and he advised me to be constant to comedy, for which he knew me to possess talents. I was displeased to find he did not think my opera charming, and I attributed his coolness to the preference which he himself manifested for comedy.

I saw with pleasure at Vienza the famous Olympic theatre of Palladio, a very celebrated architect of the sixteenth century, and a native of that city; and I admired his triumphal arch, which with no other ornaments but those of the regularity of its proportions, passes for the chef-d'œuvre of modern architecture.

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Maffei
The beautiful models exist, and the imitations are rare. I passed from Vicenza to Verona, where I was desirous of becoming acquainted with the Marquis Maffei, the author of *Merope*, a very successful work, which has been happily imitated. This man, who was versed in every department of literature, knew better than any person the necessity for the reform of the Italian theatre. He attempted the undertaking, and published a volume with the title of "Reform of the Italian Theatre"; which contained his *Merope* and two comedies, the *Ceremonies* and *Rajout*. The tragedy met with general applause; but the two comedies were not so successful.

Desenzano
Salò
Not finding M. Maffei at Verona, I took the road to Brescia, and stopped for the night at Desenzano, on the Lago di Garda. Supping at the *table-d'hôte*, where, notwithstanding my chagrin, I ate with the best appetite in the world, I happened to be seated beside an abbé of the town of Salò, whose agreeable conversation prompted me to visit that charming country, where we proceed through orange-trees in the open air, and always along the banks of a delightful lake. Another reason determined me to turn aside from my road. I was very short of money. Fortunately, my mother was proprietor of a house at Salò, and, being known to the tenant, I had reason to flatter myself that I should obtain something from him.

Salò
Desenzano
It was but four leagues from Desenzano to Salò, and the abbé and myself proposed this journey on horseback for the sake of enjoying the pleasure of the road. On the third day I returned alone, after a great deal of amusement, with a few sequins in my pocket, advanced me by my mother's tenant. I paid the driver, who waited my return, his three days' repose, and resumed the Brescia road.

When at Vicenza, I wrote to M. Novello, whom I had known at Feltre in the quality of vicar of the government, and who was then assessor of the governor of Brescia. I alighted at the government-palace: M. Novello received me very graciously; and, recollecting some comic trifles composed by me at Feltre, he asked me in the course of the evening, at supper, whether I had anything of the same kind to show him. I mentioned my opera, which he expressed a curiosity to hear. We fixed on the following day. He invited to dinner along with us several literary men, of whom there are many in that part of the country in deserved estimation, and after coffee I commenced my drama, which was listened to with attention, and unanimously applauded.

As my judges were connoisseurs, I had every reason to be satisfied. They even analyzed my piece. The character of Amalante was well imagined and well sustained, and was a moral lesson for queen-mothers charged with the guardianship and education of their august children. The good and bad courtiers, artfully contrasted, formed an interesting picture, and the unfortunate catastrophe of Atalaric and the triumph of Amalante formed a dénouement, which, while it satisfied the severe laws of tragedy, was productive of the entertainment and pleasure peculiar to the melodrama. My style appeared to this judicious assembly more adapted to tragedy than music, and they could have wished me to suppress the airs and the rhyme for the sake of converting it into a good tragedy. I thanked them for their indulgence, but I was not in a situation to profit by their advice. In Italy a tragedy with all the excellence of Corneille or Racine might have gained me high honor, but very little profit; and I was

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in want of both. I quitted Brescia with the determination of leaving my drama untouched, and of offering it to the opera of Milan.

There is a shorter way from Brescia to Milan, but I was desirous of seeing Bergamo, and I took the road by that city. In traversing the country of Harlequin, I was curious to observe whether there was any existing trace of that comic character which afforded such entertainment to the Italian theatre. I could see neither the black visages, nor the small eyes, nor the ludicrous party-colored dress, but I observed the hair tails in the hats with which the peasants of those districts are still equipped. I shall speak of the mask and of the character and origin of Harlequin in a chapter dedicated to the history of the four masks of Italian comedy. On my arrival at Bergamo, I alighted at an inn in the suburbs, as carriages are unable to ascend to the town, which is very high and very steep. I went on foot to the government quarter, which is precisely the summit of this rough mountain. Extremely fatigued, and cursing my idle curiosity, knowing nobody, and requiring repose, I at last remembered that M. Porta, my old companion in the criminal chancery of Chiozza, had been appointed civil chancellor of Bergamo. I inquired for his residence, which I found out: my friend, however, was not at home, but six leagues distant, on a commission relative to his office. I requested his servant to allow me to rest myself a moment, and in the course of my conversation with him I asked who was governor of the town. What pleasing news! What an agreeable surprise for me! It was his excellency Bonfadini, he who was podestà at Chiozza while I served there in quality of vice-chancellor. I found myself all at once quite at home, and

I went immediately to the palace and announced myself.

While I was in the antechamber waiting for admission, I heard the governor himself laughing and exclaiming aloud, "Ah! the astrologer! It is the astrologer! Show him in. Ladies, you shall see the astrologer." I could not conceive the meaning of all this; I was afraid lest an attempt should be made to hold me up to ridicule, and I entered under very considerable embarrassment. The governor soon quieted my apprehensions, and put me at my ease. He rose, and came forward to receive me, and introduce me to his lady and the society: "This is M. Goldoni; do not you recollect, ladies, the Countess C——, whom we used to rally on account of being perpetually at her toilet and never at mass, and the prognostication of the anonymous author? Well, this is M. Goldoni, the author of the Critical Almanac in question." On this every one was anxious to show me some attention; the governor invited me to his house and his table; an invitation which I accepted and profited by, for fifteen days passed by me in the most agreeable manner in the world. I was obliged, however, to make one with the ladies at play, and I was neither rich nor fortunate.

The governor, who was both respectful and considerate, abstained from inquiring into the motives of my journey. After a few days, however, I thought proper to communicate my adventures and my situation to him. He felt for me, and offered to keep me with him during the ten remaining months of his government; an offer for which I thanked him, but which I could not accept. I requested him, however, to give me letters of recommendation for Milan; and he gave me several, and, among others, I received one from his

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lady for the Resident of Venice, which proved of great utility to me. On the expiration of fifteen days I took my leave of his excellency. My air was by no means expressive of content. He questioned me closely on the subject: but I did not dare to say anything; yet he could easily perceive that my embarrassment did not proceed from excessive wealth. He opened his purse, I refused; he insisted. I modestly took ten sequins, for which I wished to give him my note, but he refused to take it. What goodness and kindness! I took my departure next day, and continued my journey.

X I arrived at length at Milan, the venerable capital of Lombardy, the ancient appanage of the Spanish monarchy, where I should have appeared with the cloak and ruff, according to the Castilian costume, had not the satiric Muse deprived me of the place for which I was destined. I was now a candidate for the *cothurnus*; but the honors of a triumph were reserved for the *sock*. I went to lodge at the Hotel del Pozzo, one of the most famous in Milan; for if we wish to exhibit ourselves to advantage, we must, at least, appear rich, if we be not so in reality; and next day I carried the letter of recommendation of the governor's lady to the Resident of Venice.

M. Bartolini, secretary of the senate, and formerly vice-bay at Constantinople, was then resident. He was very rich, very magnificent, and in as high consideration at Milan as at Venice. Several years afterwards he was named, by *election* grand chancellor of the republic; a dignity which he continued to enjoy to the period of his death, which gives the title of "excellency" to the person who holds it, and gives him a place immediately after the actual nobility. The Resident of Venice being the only foreign minister resident

at Milan, on account of the daily affairs which take place between the two neighboring states, the Venetian envoy enjoys the highest consideration, and is considered on an equal footing with *grandeés* of the duchy of Milan.

This minister received me in the most frank and encouraging manner. He had a high esteem for the lady by whom I was recommended, and offered every assistance within his own power, or within the reach of his interest; but with a grave and ministerial air he inquired into the motives of my journey to Milan, and the nature of the adventures mentioned in the letter of Madame Bonfadini. The question was natural and proper, and my answer simple. I related to him, from beginning to end, the whole story of the aunt and the niece. The resident was acquainted with the persons, and laughed heartily at my recital; and with respect to the fear expressed by me, lest I should be pursued and molested, he assured me that I need be under no apprehension at Milan.

The naïveté of my conversation, and the detail of my adventures, led the minister to conclude I was by no means rich; and he asked me in a very noble manner, if I stood in need of anything for my present supply. I thanked him; I had still some of my Bergamo sequins, and I had my opera, and wanted assistance from nobody. M. Bartolini invited me to dine with him next day; I accepted his invitation, and took my leave of him.

I was eager to present my piece, and to have it read. We were then in the very time of the carnival. There was an opera at Milan, and I was acquainted with Caffariello, the principal actor, and also with the director and composer of the ballets, and his wife

(Madame Grossatesta), who was the principal dancer. I thought it would look becoming, and be of advantage, for me to be presented to the directors of the Milan theatre by known individuals. On a Friday, a day of relaxation throughout almost all Italy, I waited in the evening on Madame Grossatesta, who kept an open house, where the actors, actresses, and dancers of the opera usually assembled. This excellent dancer, who was my countrywoman, and whom I knew at Venice, received me with the utmost politeness; and her husband, a clever and well-informed Modenese, had a dispute with his wife respecting my country, in which he very gallantly maintained that by descent mine was the same as his own. It was still early, and as we were almost alone, I took advantage of that circumstance to announce my project to them. They were enchanted with it, and promised to introduce me, and they congratulated me beforehand on the reception of my work.

The company continued to increase; Caffariello made his appearance, saw and recognized me, saluted me with the tone of an Alexander, and took his place beside the mistress of the house. A few minutes afterwards, Count Prata, one of the directors of the theatre, the most skilled in everything relative to the drama, was announced. Madame Grossatesta introduced me to the count and spoke to him of my opera, and he undertook to propose me to the assembly of directors; but it would afford him infinite pleasure, he said, to know something of my work; a wish in which he was joined by my countrywoman. I wanted nothing so much as an opportunity of reading it. A small table and a candle were brought towards us, round which we all seated ourselves, and I began to read. I an-

nounced the title of "Amalasonte." Caffariello sang the word "Amalasonte"; it was long, and seemed ridiculous to him. Everybody laughed but myself: the lady scolded, and the nightingale was silent. I read over the names of the characters, of which there were nine in the piece. Here a small shrill voice, which proceeded from an old castrato who sung in the choruses, and who mewed like a cat, cried out, "Too many, too many; there are at least two characters too many." I saw that I was by no means at my ease, and wished to give over my reading. M. Prata imposed silence on this insolent fellow, who had not the merit of Caffariello to excuse him, and, turning to me, observed, "It is true, sir, there are usually not more than six or seven characters in a drama; but when a work is deserving of it, we willingly put ourselves to the expense of two actors. Have the goodness," he added, "to continue the reading, if you please."

I resumed my reading, — Act first, scene first, Clodesile and Arpagon. Here M. Caffariello again asked me the name of the first soprano in my opera. "Sir," said I, "it is Clodesile." "What!" said he, "you open the scene with the principal actor, and make him appear while all the people enter, seat themselves, and make a noise. Truly, sir, I am not your man." (What patience!) M. Prata here interposed. "Let us see," said he, "whether the scene is interesting." I read the first scene, and while I was repeating my verses, a little insignificant wretch drew a paper from his pocket, and went to the harpsichord to recite an air in his part. The mistress of the house was obliged to make me excuses without intermission. M. Prata took me by the hand, and conducted me into a dressing-closet at a considerable distance from the room.

The count, having requested me to seat myself, sat down beside me and endeavored to pacify me respecting the misbehavior of a set of giddy fools. He requested me to read my drama to himself alone, that he might be able to form a judgment of it, and to tell me his opinion with sincerity. I was very well pleased with this act of complaisance, for which I returned him my thanks, and I began the reading of my piece, which I went through from the first verse to the last, not sparing him a single comma. He listened with attention, with patience; and, on the conclusion of the reading, he gave me the result of his attention and judgment nearly in the following words: —

“It appears to me,” said he, “that you have tolerably well studied the poetries of Aristotle and Horace, and that you have written your piece according to the principles of tragedy. You do not seem to be aware that a musical drama is an imperfect work, subject to rules and customs destitute of common sense, I am willing to allow, but which still require to be literally followed. Were you in France, you might take more pains to please the public; but here you must begin by pleasing the actors and actresses; you must satisfy the musical composer; you must consult the scene-painter: every department has its rules, and it would be treason against the drama to dare to infringe on them, or to fail in their observance.

“Listen,” he continued, “I shall point out to you a few of those rules which are immutable, and with which you do not seem to be acquainted. The three principal personages of the drama ought to sing five airs each; two in the first act, two in the second, and one in the third. The second actress and the second soprano can only have three, and the inferior characters

must be satisfied with a single air each, or two at the most. The author of the words must furnish the musician with the different shades which form the chiaro-scuro of music, and take care that two pathetic airs do not succeed each other. He must distribute with the same precaution the bravura airs, the airs of action, the inferior airs, and the minuets and rondeaus.

“He must, above all things, avoid giving impassioned airs, bravura airs, or rondeaus, to inferior characters; those poor devils must be satisfied with what they get, and every opportunity of distinguishing themselves is denied them.”

M. Prata would have gone on; but I interrupted him. “You have told me enough, sir,” said I to him, “do not take the trouble of enlarging farther on the subject. I again returned him my thanks, and took my leave. I perceived at last that my judges at Brescia were in the right, and that Count Trissino of Vicenza was still more in the right, and that I alone was wrong. On returning to my lodgings, I felt one moment hot and the next cold; I was quite crestfallen. I drew my piece from my pocket, and at sight of it I felt half inclined to tear it to pieces. The waiter of the inn entered, and inquired what I wished for supper. “I shall not sup,” I answered, “but make up a good fire.” I still had my *Amalante* in my hands; I kept reading a few of the verses, which I thought charming. “Accursed rules! My piece is good, I am certain of it; but the theatre is bad, and the actors, actresses, composers, decorators—may the devil take them all! And thou, unfortunate production, which hast cost me so much labor, and deceived my hopes and expectations, I consign thee to the devouring flames!” On this I threw it into the fire, and looked upon it while burn-

ing, with a sort of cool complacency. My chagrin and indignation required some vent; I turned my vengeance against myself, and then I deemed myself sufficiently revenged. All was over, and the piece entirely out of my head; but on stirring up the ashes with the tongs, and collecting the remains of my manuscript to complete the work of destruction, I began to reflect that on no occasion had I sacrificed my supper to my chagrin. I called the waiter, and ordered him to cover the table instantly. I had not long to wait; I ate heartily, and drank still more so; I then went to bed, and enjoyed a profound sleep.

The only thing extraordinary was, that I awoke next morning two hours sooner than usual. Unpleasant remembrances now began to influence my mind. "Come, come," said I to myself, "no ill-humor; pluck up courage, and call on the Resident of Venice." He had invited me to dinner; and, that I might have a private interview with him, it was requisite that I should visit him instantly. I accordingly dressed myself and set out. The minister, seeing me at nine o'clock in the morning, suspected that something particular had urged my visit. He received me in his dressing-room. I gave him to understand that I wished to speak to him privately, and he gave orders for his servants to leave us. I related to him what had happened the preceding day. I gave him a description of the disagreeable conversation which had so much shocked me; communicated the opinion of Count Prata to him; and I concluded with observing that I was the most embarrassed man in the world.

M. Bartolini was much amused with the account of the comic scene of the three heroic actors, and asked me to allow him to read my opera. "My opera, sir?"

It is no longer in existence." "What have you done with it?" "I have burnt it!" "You have burnt it?" "Yes, sir, I have burned my whole stock, my sole property, all my resources and my hopes." The minister laughed still more heartily at this, and after laughing and talking for some time, the result was that I took up my residence with him; that he received me in the character of gentleman of his chamber, gave me a very pretty apartment; and, notwithstanding my disappointment, I found, taking everything into consideration, that I was rather a gainer than a loser.

My employment was confined to agreeable commissions, such as complimenting noble Venetians on their travels, or waiting upon the governor or magistrates of Milan in the business of the republic. These occasions were by no means frequent, and I had all my leisure at my disposal, for my amusement or otherwise as I might think proper.

There came to this town, in the beginning of Lent, a mountebank of a singular description, whose name deserves a place perhaps in the annals of the age. His name was Bonafede Vitali; he was a native of Parma, and he styled himself the Anonymous. He was of a good family, had received an excellent education, and had been a Jesuit. Disgusted with the cloister, he applied to the study of medicine, and succeeded in obtaining a professor's chair in the University of Palermo. This singular man, to whom no branch of science was unknown, possessed an inordinate ambition to display the extent of his knowledge; and, as he was a better orator than a writer, he quitted the honorable situation which he occupied, for the purpose of mounting the stage and haranguing the public; but as he was not rich enough to be satisfied with mere glory, he turned

his talents to account by vending his medicines. This was nothing more nor less than playing the mountebank ; but his specific remedies were good, and his science and eloquence procured for him a reputation and a degree of consideration by no means common. He resolved publicly all the most difficult questions which were proposed to him in every science and on the most abstruse subjects. Problems, points of criticism, history, and literature, were handed up to him on his empirical stage, and he returned an immediate answer, and gave very satisfactory dissertations. He appeared some years afterwards at Venice. He was sent for to Verona on account of an epidemical disease, which cut off all who were attacked by it. His arrival in that town resembled the appearance of Esculapius in Greece ; he cured everybody with a particular sort of apple (*pommes d'api*), and Cyprus wine. In gratitude for this, he was named first physician of Verona ; but he did not enjoy that dignity long, having died the same year, regretted by everybody excepting the physicians.

When at Milan, the Anonymous had the satisfaction of seeing the place where he exhibited always filled with crowds of people on foot and in carriages ; but as the learned were far from being the best purchasers, he was obliged to furnish his scaffold with objects calculated to attract and entertain the ignorant multitude, and the new Hippocrates vended his drugs and displayed his rhetoric, surrounded with the four masks of the Italian comedy. M. Bonafede Vitali had also a passion for comedy, and kept up at his own expense a complete company of comedians, who, after assisting their master in receiving the money thrown up in handkerchiefs, and returning the same handkerchiefs filled with small pots or boxes, represented

pieces in three acts, with the help of torches of white wax, in a style which might be called magnificent. I wished to become acquainted with the Anonymous, as much on account of the extraordinary man himself, as for the sake of his assistance. I called on him one day, under the pretext of purchasing his antidote. He interrogated me respecting the disease which I had, or which I believed myself to have; and he soon perceived that it was mere curiosity which brought me to his house. He gave orders to bring me a good cup of chocolate, which, he said, was the most suitable medicine for my disease. I was delighted with this piece of politeness. We conversed together for some time, and I found him as amiable in private as he was learned in public. In the course of our conversation I informed him that I was attached to the Resident of Venice. It occurred to him that I might be able to assist him in a certain project, which he communicated to me. I undertook to serve him, and I was fortunate enough to succeed. The affair was this: (but do not, my dear reader, let this digression disgust you, for you will soon perceive how necessary it is for the connection of my story.)

The theatres of Milan were closed during Lent, as is usual throughout Italy. The theatre for the representation of comedy was to have opened at Easter, and an engagement for that purpose had been entered into with one of the best theatrical companies; but the director, having received an invitation into Germany, set out without giving the slightest notice, and left the Milanese quite unprovided. The town, being then without entertainments, proposed to send to Venice and Bologna to raise a company. The Anonymous was desirous that the preference should be given to his,

which certainly was not excellent, but which, nevertheless, contained three or four individuals of merit, and which, on the whole, was very well arranged. In fact, M. Casali, who acted the principal lovers, and M. Rubini, who was an admirable pantaloon, were both called the following year to Venice, the first for the theatre of St. Samuel, and the other for that of St. Luke. I willingly accepted of a commission, which promised every way to be agreeable to me. I imparted it to the minister, who undertook to speak to the principal ladies of that city. I myself mentioned the business to Count Prata, whose acquaintance I continued to cultivate; I employed my own credit, and that of the Resident of Venice, with the governor; and in three days' time the contract was signed, and the Anonymous satisfied; and I had, by way of recompense, a second box in front, large enough to contain ten persons. Availing myself of this company, with which I was on an intimate footing, I resumed the composition of some theatrical trifles. I should not have had sufficient time for a comedy, as the arrangement with the Anonymous was merely for the spring and summer, to the month of September; and as there was a musical composer, and a male and female who sang pretty well in the company, I composed an interlude for two voices, under the title of the "Venetian Gondolier," which was executed with all the success that such a species of composition ought to have. This is the first comic production of mine which appeared in public and afterwards in print; for it was published in the fourth volume or the Venetian edition of my comic operas by Pasquali.

Whilst they were acting my Venetian Gondolier at Milan, together with sketches or outlines of comedies,

the first representation of Belisarius was given out, and it was continually announced during six days to excite the public curiosity and secure a full house. In this the comedians were not deceived. The theatre of Milan at that time, afterwards burnt down, — the almost universal destiny of theatres, — was the largest in Italy next to that of Naples ; and on the first representation of Belisarius, the crowd was so great that the passages even were choked up. But what a detestable piece ! Justinian was imbecile, Theodora a courtesan, and Belisarius a long-winded divine. He appeared on the stage deprived of his eyes ; Harlequin was his guide, and drove him along with a cudgel. Everybody was shocked, and no one more so than myself, having distributed a number of tickets to persons of the first merit.

Next day I called on Casali, who fell a laughing when he saw me, and said in a bantering tone, “ Very well, sir ; what do you think of our famous Belisarius ? ” “ I think,” said I, “ that it is such a piece of indignity to the public as I could hardly have expected.” “ Alas, sir,” he replied, “ you know but little of actors. There is not a company which does not occasionally fall upon similar tricks to gain money ; and this in the theatrical jargon is called *una arrostita* (roasting). “ What do you mean by *arrostita* ? ” said I. “ It means,” he answered, “ in good Tuscan, *una corbellatura* ; in the Lombard dialect *una minchionada* ; and in French *une attrape* (a trick). The actors are in the habit of availing themselves of it, and the public is accustomed to suffer it ; all are not equally delicate, and the arrostitas will be continued till they are suppressed by a reform.” “ I entreat of you, M. Casali,” said I, “ not to roast me a second time ; and I advise you to burn your Belisarius, for there never was anything, I believe, more detestable.”

“You are in the right,” said he; “but I am persuaded that a good piece might be made of this bad one.” “Undoubtedly,” I observed; “for the history of Belisarius may furnish the subject of an excellent piece.” “Well, sir,” replied Casali, “as you are desirous of laboring for the theatre, you cannot do better than begin with this.” “No,” said I, “I will begin with a tragedy.” “Make a tragi-comedy of it.” “Not in the taste of yours.” “Let there be no masks nor buffoonery.” “I shall see what I can do.” “Stop a moment, here is Belisarius.” “I don’t want it; I shall take history for my guide.” “So much the better; I recommend my friend Justinian to you.” “I shall do the best I can.” “I am not rich, but I shall endeavor —” “Nonsense.” “I write for my amusement.” “I must impart a secret to you, sir. I am going next year to Venice, and if I could only carry a Belisarius along with me, — a magnificent Belisarius (*in fiochi*).” “You shall have it perhaps. “But you must promise me.” “Well, I do promise.” “On your honor?” “On my honor.” With this, Casali was satisfied; and I quitted him and returned home, determined to keep my word with him carefully and religiously.

The resident, knowing that I was returned, sent for me for the purpose of informing me that he was on the point of setting out for Venice on particular business, having received permission from the senate to absent himself from Milan for some days. He had a Milanese secretary; but they were not on good terms with each other. The secretary was somewhat too fastidious, and the minister was subject to very violent sallies of passion. He honored me with several commissions, and as there was reason to apprehend from the rumors

which were in circulation that Lombardy was on the point of being implicated in a war, he charged me, among other things, to write to him every day, and to be an attentive observer of everything which should take place. This was encroaching on the duties of the secretary; but I could not refuse, and it would have been in vain to argue the point with the minister. I did not fail to execute the commissions intrusted to me; but I endeavored, at the same time, to undertake the work which I promised to execute on my word of honor.

In a few days I completed the first act. I communicated it to M. Casali, who was enchanted with it, and wished to copy it instantly; but two events took place at the same time, the first of which retarded my progress in the work, and the other prevented me from working for a long time.

XI.

EARLY one morning my servant burst into my room and drew aside the curtain. On seeing me awake, he exclaimed, "Ah, sir! I have great news to tell you: fifteen thousand Savoyards, horse and foot, have taken possession of the city, and are drawn up in the square of the cathedral." Astonished at this piece of unexpected news, I put a hundred questions to my lackey, who knew nothing more than what he had already told me. I dressed myself with all possible expedition, and repaired to the coffee-house, where ten people endeavored to speak at once to me. All were anxious to be the first to inform me; and I had many different accounts, but the following is actually what took place. We were in the commencement of the war of 1733,

called the war of Don Carlos. The King of Sardinia, having declared himself for that prince, had united his forces with those of France and Spain against the house of Austria. The Savoyards, having marched all night, arrived by break of day at the gates of Milan. The general demanded the keys of the town, and, Milan being too large for a defence, the keys were accordingly delivered over to him. Without inquiring farther into the matter, I deemed myself sufficiently instructed to communicate the event to the resident. I returned and wrote an account of it, which I sent off express to Venice, and three days afterwards the Venetian minister returned to Milan.

In the mean time the French troops soon made their appearance, and joined their allies the Sardinians, and they formed together that large army which was called by the Italians *l'armata dei Gallo-Sardi*. The allies prepared for laying siege to the castle of Milan, and they made approaches for the purpose of battering the citadel, which obliged the inhabitants of the parade to shift their quarters. The besieging army soon began to open their trenches and to construct their covered ways; the siege proceeded rapidly; the batteries kept firing night and day, and the guns of the citadel answered those of the besiegers. The bombs now and then improperly directed paid us a visit in the town.

A few days afterwards my minister received a ducal letter in parchment, and sealed with lead, from a courier of the republic of Venice, directing him to leave Milan and take up his residence at Crema during the war. This information the resident immediately communicated to me. He took this opportunity to get rid of his secretary, whom he disliked, and he conferred this honorable and lucrative situation on me, and ordered me to hold myself in readiness to set out next day.

Crema is a town belonging to the republic of Venice, and is governed by a noble Venetian with the title of podestà. It lies forty-eight leagues from the capital and nine from the city of Milan. The Resident of Venice was enabled in this town to have an eye over everything that was taking place, and to watch the designs of the belligerent powers without committing the republic, which was neuter, and which could not acknowledge the new masters of the Milanese. But this minister was not the only person similarly employed; for a senator had been despatched from Venice to Crema at the same time, with the title of extraordinary proveditor; and both exerted themselves to the utmost of their power in keeping up correspondences and transmitting the most recent and certain information to the senate.

We received every day at least ten, twelve, and even sometimes so many as twenty letters from Milan, Turin, Brescia, and every part of the country, through which troops were to pass or where forage or stores were demanded. It was my business to open them, compare them, make extracts from them, and then to project a despatch agreeably to the most uniform and most satisfactory accounts. The minister, guided by my labors, made his selections accordingly, and afterwards proceeded to make his remarks and reflections, and we sometimes despatched four messengers in the course of one day to the capital. This exercise gave me, no doubt, a great deal of employment, but I was infinitely amused by it. I became in this manner initiated into the knowledge of politics and diplomacy, from which I derived very great advantage when I was named four years afterwards Genoese consul at Venice.

After a siege of twenty days, during four of which there was a practicable breach, the castle of Milan was

under the necessity of capitulating, having demanded and obtained all the honors of war, drums beating, colors flying, and covered wagons to Mantua, which was the general rendezvous of the Germans, who were not yet sufficiently strong to oppose the progress of their enemies. The combined armies, profiting by this favorable conjuncture, laid siege a few days afterwards to Pizzighetone, a small frontier town in the Cremonese, at the confluence of the Serio and Ada, very well fortified and possessing a very considerable citadel. The theatre of war advancing nearer and nearer to Crema, we were the better enabled to procure news, as we could distinctly hear the discharge of the guns; but hostilities did not proceed much farther, for the Germans, who were in expectation of orders from Vienna or Mantua, demanded an armistice of three days, which was readily granted to them.

On this occasion I was sent, in the quality of an honorable spy, to the camp of the allies. It is impossible to draw with accuracy such a picture as a camp presents during an armistice; the most brilliant festivity prevails, and altogether it exhibits the most astonishing spectacle which it is possible to imagine. A bridge thrown over the breach afforded a communication between the besiegers and the besieged: tables were spread in every quarter, and the officers entertained one another by turns: within and without, under tents and arbors, there was nothing but balls, entertainments, and concerts. All the people of the environs flocked there on foot, on horseback, and in carriages: provisions arrived from every quarter; abundance was seen in a moment, and there was no want of stage doctors and tumblers. It was a charming fair, a delightful rendezvous. I enjoyed it for several hours every day;

and on the third I saw the German garrison march out with the same honors as those which had been granted to the castle of Milan. I was amused to see French and Piedmontese soldiers leaving their standards and thrusting themselves in the midst of the ranks of their countrymen, and thus desert with impunity.

In the evening I made a report of all that I saw or learned to the minister; and I ventured to assure him, in consequence of the conversations which I had had with different officers, that the combined armies were to encamp in the duchies of Parma and Piacenza for the purpose of securing them from the incursions which there was every reason to apprehend from the Germans. The event corresponded with the information; the allies gradually defiled towards the Cremonese and established themselves in the environs of Parma, where the duchess-dowager, at the head of the regency, governed the state. The distance of the troops diminished my labor very much, and afforded me leisure to apply to more agreeable occupations. I resumed my *Belisarius*, on which I employed myself with great assiduity and interest, and I never quitted it till it was finished, and till I thought I had every reason to be satisfied.

In the mean time my brother, who on the death of M. Visnoni had quitted the service of Venice, and repaired to Modena, in the hopes of being employed by the duke, having been disappointed in this expectation, came to join me at Crema. I received him in a very friendly manner, and presented him to the resident, from whom he received the place of gentleman, formerly occupied by myself. But if the one was hot and impatient, the other was fiery in the extreme; and they could not agree together. The resident gave my brother his dismissal, and he took his leave in very bad humor.

The ill-conduct of my brother did me some injury in the mind of the minister, who never afterwards had the same kindness or friendship for me. A hypocritical Dominican contrived to worm himself into his confidence, and when I was not in the way he wrote to his dictation. All this had a tendency to disgust me. My superior and myself were now two beings discontented with each other, and the following adventure had the effect of producing a total rupture.

One day when I was in my chamber, a servant entered with the information that I was wanted by the minister. I made my appearance before the resident, who gave me a manuscript to copy. It was the manifesto of the King of Sardinia, with the reasons which induced him to engage in the French cause. This production was at that moment of some value, for the original was still in the press at Turin, and it required to be copied that it might be sent off to Venice.

The minister did not dine nor sup at home that day. He ordered me to bring him the manuscript and copy next morning when he awoke. The paper was pretty voluminous and badly written, but it required despatch. I returned to my room, and sat down instantly to work, and labored at it till nine o'clock in the evening, taking no other dinner than a cup of chocolate. On finishing, I locked the two copies in my desk, and repaired to the Stag inn, where I engaged in a faro party with four gentlemen, none of whom were known to me. I punted and won, and I durst not therefore go away first. We passed the whole night at play. When I looked at my watch, I found it was seven o'clock in the morning. I was still a winner, but I could not remain any longer; and I therefore made my excuses to the company, and took my leave of them.

I met one of our servants a few steps from the inn, by whom I was informed that I had been sought for by order of the resident in every corner. He rose at five o'clock in the morning, and asked for me; and on being told that I had slept out all night, he became quite furious. I made all the haste I could home, and entered my chamber, from which I took the two papers, and delivered them to the minister. He gave me a very unpleasant reception, and even went so far as to suspect me of having communicated the King of Sardinia's manifesto to the extraordinary proveditor of the republic of Venice. This imputation hurt and distressed me very much, and, contrary to my usual mode of behavior, I gave way to an impulse of passion. The minister threatened to have me arrested. I quitted him, and sought a refuge with the bishop of the town, who took my part, and undertook to make up matters with the resident. I thanked him for his kind intention; but my resolution was taken to depart as soon as my innocence should be established. The resident had time to make inquiry where I had passed the night, and his opinion of me underwent a change; but I was unwilling to expose myself any more to similar unpleasant scenes, and I asked permission to give up my situation, which was accordingly granted. I called on the minister for the purpose of excusing myself, and returning him my thanks. I then packed up the different articles belonging to me, hired a chaise for Modena, where my mother still remained, and set out three days afterwards.

On arriving at Parma, the 28th of June, St. Peter's Eve, in 1733, a memorable day for that town, I went to lodge at the Osteria del Gallo. I was awaked next morning by a dreadful noise. On springing out of bed,

and opening my room window, I perceived the place full of people running in all directions, and rushing against one another. There was nothing but weeping, crying, and distress: I observed women carrying their children in their arms, and others dragging them along the ground; men loaded with hampers, baskets, trunks, and packages; old men unable to support themselves; sick persons in their shirts; carts upturned and the horses running about loose. "What is the meaning of all this," said I; "is it the end of the world?"

I wrapped myself in my great-coat over my shirt, rushed hastily down stairs to the kitchen; but to all my demands and questions I could receive no answer. The innkeeper was packing up his plate, and his wife, with her hair all dishevelled, held a box of jewels in her hand and her clothes in her apron. I wished to speak to her, but she threw me against the door and rushed out. "What is the matter? what is the matter?" I asked of every person I met. At length I perceived a man at the stable-door, whom I recognized to be my driver. I went up to him, and he was able to satisfy my curiosity.

"The whole place is in uproar," said he, "and not without reason; for the Germans are at the gates of the town, and if they enter it, it is sure to be pillaged. Every one is taking refuge in the church, and confiding their effects to the protection of God." "Will the soldiers," said I to him, "have time for reflection on such an occasion? Besides, are all the Germans Catholics?"

While I was thus conversing with my guide, the scene immediately changed, and nothing but cries of joy, ringing of bells, and discharging of all manner of fireworks, was to be heard. The churches were im-

mediately empty, the property was carried back again, friends were inquiring kindly for one another and embracing in an affectionate manner. How was this change brought about? The affair was this: a spy in the pay of both the allies and the Germans appeared the night before in the camp of the former at the village of St. Peter, a league distance from the city, and gave information that a detachment of the German troops were to forage the following day in the environs of Parma with the intention of surprising the town. The Marshal de Coigny, who then commanded the army, detached the two regiments of Picardy and Champagne to watch the enemy; but as this brave general never failed in precaution or vigilance, he caused the spy whom he distrusted to be arrested, and gave orders that the whole camp should remain under arms. M. de Coigny was not mistaken; on the two regiments arriving within sight of the ramparts of the town, they discovered the German army to the number of forty thousand, under Marshal de Mercy, with ten field-pieces. The French, who were advancing on the highway, surrounded with large ditches, had no means of retreat; they advanced boldly, but they were nearly all cut down by the enemy's artillery.

This was the signal of surprise for the French commander. The spy was instantly hanged, and the army began its march with the utmost expedition. The road was confined and the cavalry could not advance; but the infantry made such a vigorous charge that the enemy were forced to retreat, and it was then that the alarm of the Parmesans was converted into joy. Everybody ran to the ramparts of the town, and I ran with the rest. It was impossible to have a nearer view of a battle; the smoke frequently prevented us

from distinguishing objects ; but still we had a very rare *coup-d'œil*, such as few people can boast of having enjoyed. A continual fire was kept up for nine hours without interruption, and night separated the two armies. The Germans dispersed themselves among the mountains of Reggio, and the allies remained masters of the field of battle. Next day I saw Marshal de Mercy, who was killed in the heat of the battle, brought into Parma on a litter. This general was embalmed and sent to Germany, as was also the Prince of Würtemberg, who shared the same fate.

But a much more horrible and disgusting spectacle was seen by me in the afternoon of the following day. This was the dead bodies which had been stripped during the night, and which were said to amount to twenty-four thousand. They were lying naked in heaps ; and limbs, arms, skulls, and blood were scattered in all directions. What a carnage ! The Parmesans dreaded lest the air should be infected from the difficulty of interring such a number of massacred bodies ; but the republic of Venice, whose territories are almost contiguous to those of Parma, and which was interested in the preservation of the purity of the air, sent an abundance of lime, that all these carcasses might speedily disappear from the surface of the earth.

On the third day after the battle I was desirous of proceeding to Modena. My guide observed that the roads in that direction were all impracticable, on account of the continual incursions of the troops of the two parties. He added that if I wished to go to Milan, to which place he belonged, he would conduct me there, and if I were inclined to go to Brescia he knew one of his comrades who was on the point of

setting out for that city with an abbé, whom I might accompany. I accepted this last proposition. Brescia was the more suitable place of the two for me, and I set out next day with the Abbé Garoffini, a very well-informed young man, who was a great lover of spectacles. We had a long conversation during our journey; and, as I had the disease common to all authors, I took care to mention my *Belisarius*. The abbé expressed a curiosity to hear it; and at our first dining station I drew my piece from my trunk and began the reading. I had not finished the first act before the driver urged us to proceed. The abbé was displeased, as he took an interest in the piece. "Never mind," said I, "I can read in the carriage as well as here." We resumed our seats in the chaise, and as the drivers go very slowly, I continued my reading without the slightest difficulty.

While we were both occupied in this manner, the carriage suddenly stopped, and we observed five men with mustachios and a military uniform, who with drawn swords ordered us to alight. Could we hesitate to obey the absolute orders of these gentlemen? I alighted at one side, and the abbé at the other. One of them demanded my purse, which I instantly gave him; another took my watch; a third rummaged my pockets, and took my box, which was only shell; the two last treated the abbé in the same manner; and the whole five fell next upon our trunks, my little strong-box, and our bundles of night-clothes. When the driver found himself at liberty, he galloped off with his horses, and I took to flight also. I sprang over a very broad ditch, and ran across the fields, fearing that the rascals might also wish to take my great-coat, my coat and breeches, and even my life; and I esteemed

myself exceedingly fortunate in escaping with the loss of my money and effects, and in having saved Belisarius from the wreck.

Having lost sight of the robbers, and not knowing what was become of my travelling companion, I discovered an avenue of trees, and I lay down tranquilly beside a stream. I allayed my thirst with the water which I lifted to my mouth in the hollow of my hand, and the water tasted delicious. Feeling myself exhausted with fatigue, and my mind having become more calm, and not seeing any person to whom I could apply, I took by chance one of the directions of the avenue, which I was persuaded would terminate in some inhabited place. I soon perceived laborers at work in the field. I accosted them with confidence, and communicated my adventure to them, of which they knew something already, having seen the knaves who stripped us proceed along a cross road laden like mules. They were deserters, who attacked passengers, and did not even spare the hamlets and farm-houses. Such are the unfortunate fruits of war, which fall indiscriminately on friends and foes, and distress the innocent. "How," said I, "can these robbers get rid of the effects stolen by them in this manner without being apprehended?" The peasants were all anxious to answer me, and their eagerness marked their indignation. At a short distance from the place where we then were, there was a company of rich individuals established and tolerated for the purpose of purchasing the spoils of the victims of war; and the purchasers paid no attention whether the effects came from the field of battle or the highway.

The sun was setting. These good people offered me a small fragment of their repast, which, notwith-

standing my disaster, I ate with considerable appetite. They invited me to pass the night with them, and I was disposed to accept with gratitude the hospitality of those kind individuals, when a respectable old man, the father and grandfather of my benefactors, remarked to me, that with them I could only repose on straw and hay, and that it would be better to allow them to conduct me to Casal Pasturlengò, which was only a league distant, and where the parish priest, a very worthy and polite man, would receive and lodge me with the utmost pleasure. This opinion met with general applause. A young man undertook to conduct me. I followed him, proffering thanks to Heaven, which, while it tolerates the wicked, excites also kind and virtuous hearts to relieve their fellow-creatures.

XII.

ON arriving at Casal Pasturlengo, I desired my guide to inform the clergyman of my accident. A few minutes afterwards this worthy pastor came to the door, offered me his hand, and requested me to walk in. Enchanted with this favorable reception, I turned towards the young man by whom I had been escorted, and in thanking him, I testified my regret at my inability to recompense him. The clergyman perceived my embarrassment, and gave a few pence to the peasant, who went away quite satisfied. This is a trifle, it is true; but it proves the way of thinking of a just and compassionate man.

The supper is taken at an early hour in the country. That of the clergyman was ready when I arrived, and I made no ceremony, but gladly shared with him what had been prepared by his governante. Our conversa-

tion turned at first on the war, and I mentioned what I had seen at Parma, Milan, and Pizzighetone. Insensibly I found myself engaged in some details respecting my employment and occupations; and my discourse ended as usual with the article of Belisarius. The ecclesiastic, who was a very wise and exemplary man, did not condemn decent and moral plays, and he expressed a curiosity to hear my piece; but I was then too fatigued to begin the reading, and it was put off till next day. I was shown to a delightful bed, where I forgot all my chagrins, and slept till ten o'clock the next morning.

As soon as I was awake, an excellent cup of chocolate was brought me. As the weather was fine, I walked out till midday, the hour of dinner, when we saw each other again with pleasure. Two other abbés of his parish dined with us, and after dinner I began the reading of my piece. My host demanded my permission to admit his governante and his *regisseur*. For my part, I could have wished the whole village present. The piece was very much relished. The three abbés, who were by no means blockheads, distinguished the most interesting and remarkable passages; and the villagers proved by their applause that my work was suited to every capacity, and equally capable of pleasing the learned and the ignorant.

I received the compliments of my host, who thanked me for my complaisance; the two other abbés followed his example, and each of them gave me an invitation to dinner; but I was unwilling to occasion any inconvenience to my landlord, and I was, besides, anxious to continue my route. The clergyman asked me in what manner I intended to travel. I told him I was very well disposed to set out on foot; but this worthy

man would not hear of such a thing. He gave me his horse and his servant, and he gave the servant orders to pay for my dinner. I took my leave next day, overcome with the favors and acts of kindness I had received.

On arriving at Desenzano, I dined in the same inn on the Lake di Garda, where I had twice before slept, and I arrived at Verona at nightfall.

Verona is one of the finest cities of Italy. It deserves, without doubt, that I should speak of its beauties, its ornaments, its academies, and the talents which it has produced and fostered in every age; but this digression would lead me too far; and I shall merely confine myself to the mention of the monument which has some relation, perhaps, to the subject of my memoirs. At Verona there is an amphitheatre, the work of the Romans. It is not known whether it belongs to the period of Trajan or Domitian; but it is in such excellent preservation, that it may be used at present as well as in the time when it was constructed. This vast edifice, called in Italy l'Arena di Verona, is of an oval form; its greatest interior diameter is two hundred and twenty-five Paris feet, and the smallest one hundred and thirty-three. Forty-five rows of marble steps surround it, which are capable of containing twenty thousand persons seated at their ease. In the central space spectacles of all kinds are given: courses, jousts, bull-fights; and in summer, plays are even represented with no other light than that of the natural day. For this purpose, in the middle of the space, there is erected, on very strong supports, a theatre in boards, which is taken down every winter and refitted again in the fine season; and the best companies of Italy occasionally resort here to display their talents. There are no boxes

for the spectators; a space inclosed off with boards forms a vast pit with chairs. The lower orders are allowed, for a trifling expense, to range themselves along the steps in front of the theatre; and notwithstanding the small expense of admission, there is not a theatre in Italy that yields so much as the Arena.

On leaving my inn the day after my arrival, I observed playbills, in which I read that "Harlequin Mute through Fear" was to be acted that day. I went in the afternoon, and placed myself in the enclosure, in the middle of the Arena, where there was a very numerous assembly. The curtain was drawn; an apology was to be delivered for the change of the piece, which was not the "Mute through Fear," as had been promised, but another, the name of which I do not now remember. But what an agreeable surprise for me! The actor who came forward to address the public was no other than my dear friend Casali, the proposer and proprietor of my *Belisarius*.

I quitted my place to get upon the stage. As the place was not very extensive, my intention was immediately opposed. I asked for Casali; he came forward, and appeared quite enchanted to see me. He made way for me, and introduced me to the director, the principal actress, the second and third, and the whole company. All were eager to speak to me. Casali took me apart; we went behind a curtain; the decoration was changed, and I remained exposed to the audience; I escaped with all possible expedition from the hisses with which I was assailed. This was rather an unlucky prelude for an author; but the Veronese have sufficiently indemnified me in the sequel for this little disagreeable incident. The company was the one which Casali mentioned to me at Milan; it belonged to

the Grimani theatre of St. Samuel, in Venice, where it played every autumn and winter, passing the spring and summer on the mainland.

The company was under the direction of M. Imer, a very polite and respectable Genoese, who invited me to dine with him next day, which was a holiday with them. I accepted his invitation, and promised in return to read him my *Belisarius*. We were all in unison, and satisfied with one another. Next day I repaired accordingly to the director's, where I found all the company assembled. Imer wished to treat his companions with the novelty which Casali had been mentioning to them. The dinner was splendid, and the gayety of the comedians quite charming. They made couplets, and sang bacchanalian songs. They anticipated every wish of mine; they were so many crimps anxious to enlist me.

When dinner was over, we retired to the director's room, where I read my piece. It was listened to with attention, and at the conclusion the applause was general and complete. Imer took me by the hand, and with a magisterial tone pronounced, "Bravo!" I was complimented by every one; Casali wept for joy. One of the actors asked me very politely if his comrades were to have the good fortune of being the first to represent my piece. Casali rose, and in a decided tone, answered: "Yes, sir, M. Goldoni did me the honor to labor for me"; and, laying hold of the piece which was lying on the table, "I shall," said he, "with the good pleasure of the author, proceed to copy it out myself." Without waiting the author's answer he carried it off instantly.

Imer took me apart, and requested me to accept of a single apartment in the same house beside his own;

he invited me also to his table all the time that his company should remain at Verona. In my circumstances I could refuse nothing. Without having had the advantage of a regular education, Imer possessed intellect and information; he was passionately fond of comedy: he was naturally eloquent, and could have supported with great ease the part of an extempore lover according to the Italian practice, had his height and figure corresponded with his talents. Being short, squat, with a short neck or rather with none, small eyes, and a little flat nose, he appeared ridiculous in serious characters, and overcharged characters or caricatures were not in fashion. He possessed a good voice; he contrived the introduction into comedy of musical interludes, which had so long been inseparable from the grand opera, and had at last been suppressed to make room for ballets.

The comic opera had its origin at Naples and Rome, but it was unknown in Lombardy and the Venetian dominions, so that the project of Imer succeeded, and the novelty was productive of much pleasure, and highly profitable to the comedians. He had two actresses in this company for interludes; the one a very pretty and a very able widow of the name of Zanetta Casanova, who played the part of young lovers in comedy; and the other a woman possessed of a charming voice, but who had no talents for acting. This was Madame Agnese Amurat, the same singer whom I mentioned as employed by me in my serenade at Venice. Neither of these two women knew a single note of music, and Imer was precisely in the same situation; but they were all three possessed of taste, a correct ear, and a perfect execution; and the public were satisfied with them.

The first interlude they began with was the *Cantatrice*, a small piece composed by me at Feltre for a private theatre; and I had thus contributed to the advantage of the Venice company without knowing it and without being known. No wonder then that I stood high in the opinion of the director, to whom I was announced by Casali as the author of the *Cantatrice*; and this was the true cause of the kindness with which I was treated by him; for, in general, we give nothing without an equivalent, and my *Belisarius* would have been insufficient, had I not given a proof of my qualifications for dramatic poetry.

Imer, who possessed judgment and penetration, foresaw that my *Belisarius* would everywhere be successful. This he was not displeased at; but he was at the same time desirous that his person and his new employment should participate in the success which he anticipated. He requested me, therefore, to compose an interlude for three voices with all possible despatch, that there might be time to set it to music. I composed an interlude in three acts, which I called *La Pupilla*. I took the plot of this piece from the private life of the director; I perceived that he had a decided inclination for the widow of his company: I saw also that he was jealous of her, and I brought him accordingly into the piece. Imer was not long in perceiving it, but the interlude appeared to him so well written, and the attack so respectful and delicate, that he easily pardoned me this piece of pleasantry. He overpowered me with thanks and applause, and instantly despatched my work to Venice to the musician whom he had already engaged. Meanwhile *Belisarius* had been copied, and the parts distributed. A few days afterwards the first rehearsal took place

with the parts in their hands; and the piece produced a still greater impression at the second reading than at the first.

Casali, more and more satisfied with me, after assuring me that the director and proprietor of the theatre would take care to recompense me, requested me to do him the favor to receive, as a particular mark of his gratitude, a present of six sequins.

I remained tranquilly at Verona till the end of September. At last I set out with Imer for Venice in a postchaise, and we arrived there at eight o'clock in the evening of the same day. Imer conducted me into his house, showed me the room which he destined for me, introduced me to his wife and his daughters, and as I had a strong desire to see my maternal aunt, I requested him to dispense with my supping with his family. I was very desirous of obtaining information respecting Madame St. — and her daughter, and learning whether they still entertained any pretensions to me. My aunt assured me that I might keep myself perfectly tranquil; that these high-minded ladies, on hearing that I had entered into an engagement with comedians, had set me down as unworthy to approach them, and entertained no other sentiments for me but those of contempt and indignation. "So much the better," said I, — "so much the better; this is still another advantage which I shall owe to my talents. With the comedians I am like an artist in his workshop. They are worthy people, much more estimable than the slaves of pride and ambition." I next spoke of my family affairs. My mother, who was still at Modena, was in good health, and my debts were almost wholly paid off. I supped with my aunt and my relations. After taking leave of them to

return to my host, I chose the longest road, and went round by the bridge of the Rialto and the square of St. Mark; and I enjoyed the charming spectacle of a city still more wonderful by night than by day.

I had not yet seen Paris, but I had returned from several towns where at night everything was total darkness. It appeared to me that the lamps of Venice formed a decoration both useful and agreeable, and the more deserving of praise, as the burden does not fall on individuals, but is defrayed by an additional drawing of the lottery every year. Besides this general illumination, there is that of the shops, which at all seasons remain open till ten o'clock in the evening, and a great number are not shut till midnight, and several are never shut at all.

Everything eatable is to be found displayed at midnight in Venice, the same as in the middle of the day; all the taverns are open, and suppers are in preparation in every inn and hotel; for company dinners and suppers are not common in Venice, but parties of pleasure and picnics bring together individuals with greater liberty and gayety. In summer the square of St. Mark and its environs are frequented by night as much as by day. The coffee-houses are full of fashionable company, males and females of every description. In every square, street, and canal singing is to be heard. The shopkeepers sing while they sell their wares; the workmen sing on quitting their labors; the gondoliers sing while waiting for their masters. The essential character of the people is gayety, and the character of the Venetian language is pleasantry.

Delighted to see my country again, which always appeared to me more and more extraordinary and amusing, I returned to my new lodging, where I found

Imer waiting for me, who informed me of his intention of calling on M. Grimani, the proprietor of the theatre, next day, and of taking me with him to be introduced to his excellency, if I had no other engagements. As I was unengaged, I accepted his proposition, and we accordingly went together. M. Grimani was the most polite man in the world; and he had nothing of that inconvenient haughtiness which is as prejudicial to the great as it is humiliating to inferiors. Illustrious by birth, and estimable from his talents, he was desirous only of being beloved, and his amiable qualities captivated every heart.

He received me with great kindness, and engaged me to labor for the company which he maintained; and by way of farther encouragement, he gave me hopes, that as he was also proprietor of the theatre of St. John Chrysostom, and undertaker of the grand opera, he would endeavor to employ me and attach me to that theatre. Quite pleased with his excellency, and the kind offices which Imer had rendered me with him, I gave up every thought but that of deserving the public suffrage. The first representation of *Belisarius* was fixed for St. Catharine, a period when the vacations of the courts are at an end, and when the company return from the country. In the mean time we were occupied with rehearsals, sometimes of my *tragi-comedy*, and at other times of my *interlude*; and as my occupations were not very considerable, I prepared something new for the carnival. I undertook the composition of a tragedy called *Rosimonda*, and another *interlude* called *La Birba*. I derived the plot of the large piece from *La Rosimonda del Mute*, a paltry romance of the last century, and the smaller one was a picture of the *Jugglers of the Square of St. Mark*, whose lan-

guage, humor, tricks, and whole behavior I had studied with great care. The comic traits that I made use of in my interludes were so much grain that I sowed in my field to ripen one day into an agreeable and profitable harvest.

XIII.

AT length, on the 24th November, 1734, my *Belisarius* appeared on the stage for the first time. It was my *débût*, and it could not have been more brilliant or satisfactory for me. My piece was listened to with a silence altogether extraordinary and unusual in the Italian theatres. The public, accustomed to noise, gave vent to it between the acts; and by expressions of joy, clapping of hands, and reciprocal signs between the pit and boxes, the author and actors received the most distinguished marks of applause. All these displays of an unusual degree of satisfaction redoubled at the end of the piece to such a degree that the actors were quite affected. Some wept while others laughed, and these different effects flowed from the same feeling of joy. The author of the piece is not called for in Italy for the purpose of being seen and applauded on the stage. But when the principal actor presented himself to announce the play for the succeeding evening, all the spectators at once cried, "*Questa, questa, questa,*" that is to say, "*The same, the same*"; and the curtain was dropped. The same piece was accordingly given next day, and it was continued to be given every day till the 14th of December, when the autumn performances were closed. This was a very fortunate commencement for me, for the piece was by no means so valuable as it had been estimated, and I hold it myself in so little consid-

eration that it shall never appear in the collection of my works.

Elegant literature is as well understood and as much cultivated at Venice as in any other place; but the connoisseurs could not avoid applauding a work, the imperfections of which were well known to them. Seeing the superiority of my piece over the farces, and other ordinary productions of the comedians, they were induced to augur from this first attempt a succession of other pieces capable of exciting emulation and paving the way for a reform of the Italian theatre. The principal defect of my piece was the appearance of Belisarius with his eyes put out and bleeding; with this exception, the play, which I called a tragi-comedy, was not destitute of merit; and it interested the spectator in a suitable and natural manner. My heroes were men and not demigods, their passions had the degree of elevation suitable to their rank, but they appeared with the properties of human nature with which we are acquainted, and their virtues and vices were not carried to an imaginary excess. My style was not elegant, and my versification has never been any way sublime; but this was precisely what was requisite to bring back to reason a public accustomed to hyperboles, antitheses, and everything ridiculously gigantic and romantic.

At the sixth representation of Belisarius, Imer thought he might add *La Pupilla*, and this little piece was very well received by the public; but while Imer supposed the interlude supported the tragi-comedy, it was, on the contrary, the tragi-comedy which supported the interlude. At all events I was a great gainer; for the public seeing me come forward at the same time in the two walks and in a manner altogether new, I was

honored with the general esteem of my countrymen, and I received the most flattering and distinguished encouragement from them.

On this occasion I made an acquaintance with his excellency Nicolas Balbi, a Venetian patrician and senator, whose warm and constant protection has always been highly honorable to me, and whose opinions, credit, and adherence have always been of the greatest utility to me. On the 17th January my *Rosimonda* was represented for the first time. It was not damned; but after *Belisarius* I could hardly flatter myself with an equally brilliant success: it had four very tolerable representations. On the fifth, *Imer* supported it with a new interlude. *La Birba* gave high pleasure; this very comic and very gay trifle maintained *Rosimonda* during four other representations; but at last we were obliged to return to *Belisarius*. This piece had the same success on being resumed as at first, and *Belisarius* and *La Birba* were played together till Shrove-Tuesday, and finished the carnival; and with them we terminated the theatrical year.

The theatres are not opened at Venice till the beginning of October; but during the fifteen days of the fair of the Ascension, there is a grand opera, and sometimes two, which have sometimes as many as twenty representations. Grimani, the proprietor of the theatre of St. Samuel, had an opera in that season represented on his account; and he attached me to that spectacle, as he had promised. The drama which they were to give this year was not new; they had chosen *La Griselda*, an opera of Apostolo Zeno and Parlati, who worked in conjunction before the departure of Zeno for Vienna, in the emperor's service, and the

composer who was to set it to music was the Abbé Vivaldi, called *il prete rosso* (the red priest), on account of his hair. He was much better known by this nickname than by his real name.

This ecclesiastic, who was an excellent performer on the violin and an indifferent composer, had trained and instructed in singing Miss Giraud, a young singer, born at Venice, but the daughter of a French hairdresser. She was not pretty, but graceful; her shape was elegant, her eyes and hair were beautiful, and her mouth charming; she had very little voice, but a great deal of action. She was to represent the character of Griselda.

M. Grimani sent me to the musicians to make the necessary changes in the opera, both for the sake of shortening it, and changing the position and character of the airs to suit the actors and the composer. I called therefore on the Abbé Vivaldi, and announced myself as having come from his excellency Grimani. I found him surrounded with music, and with the breviary in his hand. He rose, and made the sign of the cross, put his breviary aside, and then, after the usual compliments, "What motive, sir," said he, "procures me the pleasure of seeing you?" "His excellency Grimani has employed me to make such changes as you may deem necessary in the opera of next fair: I therefore wish to be informed, sir, what are your intentions." "So, so, you are employed to make the changes in the opera of *Griselda*; M. Lalli is not now then attached to the theatre of M. Grimani?" "M. Lalli, who is very old, will always enjoy the profits, the epistles dedicatory, and the sale of books, which I do not care for, — I shall have the pleasure of being employed in an exercise highly amusing for me, and I shall have the honor of commencing under the orders of M. Vi-

valdi." (The abbé resumed his breviary, made a second sign of the cross, and returned no answer.) "Sir," said I, "I should be sorry to withdraw you from your religious occupation; I will wait upon you another time." "I know very well, my dear sir, that you have talents for poetry. I have seen your *Belisarius*, which gave me a great deal of pleasure; but this is a very different affair; it is possible to make a tragedy and an epic poem if you will, and yet not be able to write a single musical quatrain." "Be so good as allow me to look at your drama." "O yes, with all my heart; where is *Griselda* gone to? It was here — *Deus in adiutorium meum intende — Domine — Domine — Domine — Domine* — it was here this very instant — *Domine ad adjuvandum* — Ah, here it is. See, sir, this scene between *Gualtiere* and *Griselda* is very interesting and touching. The author has tacked a pathetic air to it, but *Miss Giraud* is not fond of languishing songs; she wishes something expressive and full of agitation, an expression of the passions by different means, by words interrupted, for example, by sighs, with action and motion; I don't know whether you understand me?" "Yes, sir, I understand you perfectly well; besides, I have had the honor of hearing *Miss Giraud*, and I know that her voice is not very powerful." "What, sir, do you mean to insult my scholar? She is good at everything, she can sing anything." "Yes, sir, you are right; give me the book, and allow me to proceed." "No, sir, I cannot part with it, I am in want of it, and am pressed for time." "Very well, sir, if you are pressed lend it to me a moment, and I will instantly satisfy you." "Instantly?" "Yes, sir, instantly."

The abbé laughed at my attempt, and gave me the

drama, and paper and ink, resumed his breviary, and walked about, reciting his psalms and hymns. I read over the scene with which I was already acquainted; I recapitulated all that the musician desired, and, in less than a quarter of an hour I wrote down an air of eight verses, divided into two parts. I then called my ecclesiastic, and showed him my work. Vivaldi read it, his countenance brightened up, he read it again, threw down his prayer-book, and called Miss Giraud. When she entered, he exclaimed "Ah, here is a wonderful man, here is an excellent poet: read this air; this gentleman composed it here without stirring from the spot in less than a quarter of an hour." Then turning towards me, he said, "I beg your pardon, sir"; and he embraced me, and protested he would never have any other poet than myself. He confided the drama to me, with orders to make some other changes; in all of which he was satisfied with me, and the opera succeeded admirably. I was now initiated in the opera, in comedy, and in the interludes, which were the forerunners of the Italian comic operas.

The company of Grimani had gone to Padua, to perform there during the spring season, and I was expected there with impatience to give my pieces. When I got clear of the opera of Venice, I repaired to Padua. My novelties made their appearance at the theatre of that place, and the applauses of my brethren the doctors were equal to those of my countrymen. I found that great changes had taken place in the company; the waiting-maid had gone to Dresden, having been engaged by that court, and the harlequin had been discharged; and M. Campagnani, a Milanese, the delight of the amateurs of his country, but insupportable when acting with professional actors, had been adopted in

his place. But the greatest loss experienced by the company was that of the Widow Casanova, who, notwithstanding her connection with the director, had accepted of an engagement in the service of the King of Poland. She was succeeded as a singer by Madame Passalacqua, who at the same time performed the characters of waiting-maids; and for the parts of lovers, they had made an acquisition of a Madame Ferramonti, a charming actress, who was young, beautiful, very amiable, and very intelligent, full of talents and interesting qualities.

I was not long in discerning her merit, and I attached myself in a particular manner to her; I became the friend of her husband, who was not employed in the company; and I formed the project of making an excellent actress of this young woman. The other women did not fail to become jealous of her. I experienced several disagreeable occurrences in consequence; and I should have suffered still more if she had not been carried off by death the same year.

My comedians had given at Padua the number of representations agreed upon, and they were preparing to visit Udine in Venetian Friuli.

Imer proposed that I should accompany him, and I consented to follow the company; but I did not travel with the director. I made my excuse to him, and set out in an excellent carriage with Madame Ferramonti and the good man her husband.

My works were very much applauded at Udine. That town was prepossessed in my favor; and the author of the Easter poetry was, in their opinion, a very excellent dramatic poet.

On returning to Venice, the first thing I did was to embrace my mother; we had a long conversation to-

gether; my Venetian property was disencumbered; my Modena revenue increased; my brother had re-entered the army, and my mother was desirous that I should again resume my profession of advocate. I reasoned with her on the subject, and declared that as I had once quitted it, and made my appearance in my country in a character altogether different, I could no longer flatter myself with the confidence which I did not merit; while the career which I had entered upon was equally honorable, and might in time turn out lucrative.

My mother, with tears in her eyes, said that she durst not oppose my wish, that she reproached herself with having seduced me from the Criminal Chancery, and that, having confidence in my reason, honor, and activity, she left me at full liberty to choose my own profession. I thanked her and embraced her a second time; and from one thing to another I came to the article of Madame St. — and her daughter, quite satisfied that the contempt expressed by these ladies for the employment chosen by me had relieved me from all fear and embarrassment.

“By no means,” said my mother, “you are quite mistaken; Madame St. — and her daughter have waited on me; they overpowered me with their politeness, and they spoke to me of you as an estimable and wonderful young man. Your distinguished success has rendered you in their eyes worthy of their consideration, and they still reckon on you.”

“No,” said I, with a tone of indignation; “no, my mother, I will never connect myself with a family by whom I was deceived, ruined, and at last treated with disdain.”

“Do not alarm yourself,” replied my mother; “they

are not richer than they were; I shall return their visit, and endeavor to reason with them, and I undertake to procure your release. Let us talk of something else," continued she; "tell me what you have been doing since our separation."

I instantly satisfied her, and communicated several of my adventures, though I concealed also a great number. I made her successively weep, laugh, and tremble: we dined with our relations; my mother was anxious to tell the company what I had imparted to her; but she only confused matters and excited their curiosity, and I was myself obliged to tell everything over again; when, exhilarated by the gayety of the repast, I ventured to mention a number of particulars which were quite new to my mother. "Ah, you knave!" she exclaimed from time to time, "you did not tell me this, or that, or that other." I passed my time very agreeably, and made old uncles and aunts laugh at my expense, who never laughed before in their lives. My conversation was perhaps in those days more engaging than my writings.

Towards the end of September my company of comedians returned to the capital; we rehearsed our opening piece, and on the 4th of October it appeared on the stage. The novelty produced surprise; the literary assembly was relished; the comedy in one act failed on account of the harlequin, who was not an agreeable actor; the comic opera was well received, and became a standing piece at the theatre.

XIV.

THE actors of St. Samuel were to pass the spring the next year at Genoa, and the summer at Florence; and

as there were six new actors in the company, Imer deemed my presence necessary, and proposed that I should accompany him. I had thus an excellent opportunity of seeing two of the most beautiful cities of Italy, and all my expenses were to be defrayed. I spoke to my mother, who always approved of my reasons, and I set out for Genoa with the director.

After passing through the very rich and delightful village of San Pietro d'Arena, we discovered Genoa in the direction of the sea. What a charming and surprising spectacle! It is a semicircular amphitheatre, which on the one hand forms the vast basin of the port, and gradually rises on the other along the declivity of the mountain with immense buildings, which at a distance seem placed above one another, and are terminated by terraces, balustrades, or gardens, which serve for roofs to the different habitations. In front of these, rows of palaces, hotels, and houses of citizens, some coated with marble, and others ornamented with painting, the two moles which form the mouth of the port, are to be seen; a work worthy of the Romans, as the Genoese, notwithstanding the violence and depth of the sea, have overcome nature, which seemed to oppose their establishment.

We alighted near the lighthouse, and entered by the gate of St. Thomas. We saw the immense Doria palace, where three sovereigns were lodged at the same time, and we then went straight to the inn of St. Martha till we got the lodgings which were to be procured for us. The lottery was drawing that day, and I had a great desire to see that ceremony. The lottery, called in Italy "Il lotto di Genova," and at Paris "La loterie royale de France," was not then established at Venice. There were, however, persons who

disposed of tickets underhand for the lottery of Genoa, and I had one of these tickets in my pocket, which I brought from home with me. The lottery was invented at Genoa, and the first idea of it was suggested by chance. The Genoese draw twice every year, by lot, the names of five senators to supply the places of those who go out of office. The names of all those who are in the urn, and who may be drawn, are known at Genoa. Individuals of the town began by betting among themselves: one said, "I bet that such a one will come out at next drawing"; another said, "I bet that a different person will be drawn"; and the wager was equal. Some time afterwards, banks for and against were opened by artful persons, who gave an advantage to those who put into them. This came to the ears of government, and the small banks were prohibited; but the farmers who offered for them were listened to. In this manner the lottery was established for two drawings, and some time afterwards the number was augmented. The lottery is now almost universal, and I shall not presume to say whether it is deserving of praise or blame: I speak of everything without deciding anything; and endeavoring to view things in as favorable light as possible, it appears to me that the lottery of Genoa furnishes a good revenue for the government, an occupation for the idle, and a hope for the wretched and unfortunate. For my part I was quite delighted with the lottery on this occasion; for I gained a prize of a hundred pistoles, with which I was very well satisfied.

But at Genoa a piece of good fortune of still greater value happened to me, which shed its blissful influence over all the rest of my life: for I there married a prudent, kind, and charming young woman, who inden-

nified me for all the tricks played me by other women, and reconciled me to the fair sex. Yes, my dear reader, I became a husband, and I will tell you how. The director and myself were lodged in a house belonging to the theatre. I had observed, opposite the windows of my room, a young woman who appeared to me rather pretty, and with whom I wished to form an acquaintance. One day, when she was alone at her window, I saluted her somewhat tenderly; she bowed and instantly withdrew, and did not make her appearance again. This excited my curiosity, and irritated my self-love. I endeavored to learn who lived opposite my apartments. The house belonged to M. Conio, a notary of the College of Genoa, and one of the four notaries deputed to the Bank of St. George; a respectable man, possessed of property, but who, having a very numerous family, was not in such easy circumstances as he ought to have been.

So far good: I was desirous of forming an acquaintance with M. Conio; I knew that Imer had paper of that bank derived from the rents of boxes which he negotiated by means of exchange brokers. I requested him to confide one of the bank-bills to my care, which he very willingly did; and I went to the Bank of St. George to present this bill to M. Conio, and to avail myself of that opportunity to discover his character. I found the notary surrounded with people, and I waited till they were gone; I then went up to him, and requested him to have the goodness to pay the value of my note. This worthy man received me with great politeness; but he told me that I had made a mistake, that the bills were not payable at the bank, but that the first exchange broker or merchant would have given me cash for them instantly. I begged to be ex-

cused; I told him that I was a stranger, and his neighbor. I had a great deal to say to him, but the hour was advanced, he requested permission to shut up his office, and told me that we should converse together on our way home.

We went out together, and he proposed taking a cup of coffee with me till dinner-time; I accepted the proposal, for in Italy we take ten cups of coffee a day. We entered a lemonade shop, and as M. Conio had seen me with the comedians, he asked me what characters I played. "Sir," said I, "your question does not offend me, for any other person would have made the same mistake." I told him who I was, and what my employment was; he apologized for his mistake: he was fond of plays, and frequented the theatre where he had seen my pieces, and he was delighted as much to have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with me, as I was with him. This brought us together; he visited me, and I visited him in turn: I had opportunities of seeing Miss Conio, who appeared every day more agreeable and deserving in my eyes. In a month's time I demanded from M. Conio his daughter in marriage.

He was in no way surprised, having perceived my inclinations, and he had no apprehension of a refusal on the part of the young woman; but, like a wise and prudent man, he requested a little time, and wrote to the Genoese consul at Venice for information respecting my character. I could not object to this delay, and I wrote off at the same time, imparting my project to my mother, and describing my future wife to her; and I requested her to send me instantly all the certificates which are necessary on similar occasions.

In a month's time I received my mother's consent and the requisite papers; and a few days afterwards M. Conio also received the most flattering accounts of me. Our marriage was fixed for the month of July, the portion agreed on, and the contract signed.

Imer knew nothing of all this; I had grounds for apprehending that he would endeavor to frustrate my project. He was in reality very much chagrined at it, as he was obliged to pass the summer at Florence, and I could not accompany him. I promised, however, that I would not quit the company; that I should labor for the season at Venice, and return in good time, and I kept my word. I was now the most contented and happy man in the world; but was it possible for me to experience happiness without some misfortune afterwards? I was seized with a fever on my marriage-night, and I experienced a second attack of the small-pox, which I had had at Rimini in my youth. Fortunately for me I was not dangerously ill, and my features were not impaired. My poor wife shed many a tear over my pillow; she was then, and has always since been, my chief consolation.

At length my wife and myself set out for Venice in the beginning of September. O heavens! What tears were shed! What a cruel separation for my wife; she quitted all at once, father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts — but she went with her husband. On arriving at Venice with my wife, I introduced her to my mother and aunt. My mother was enchanted with the mildness of her daughter-in-law, and my aunt, who was not in easy circumstances, made a friend and confidante of her niece. It was a charming family: all was peace and harmony; and I was the happiest man in the world. My comedians, who had

renounced all hopes of me, were glad to see me again, more especially as I brought them a new piece, "Rinaldo di Montalbano," a tragi-comedy, in five acts and in verse.

This subject was derived from the stock of the Italian theatre. I purified it from the gross faults which rendered it insufferable, and brought it as near as possible to the style of the ancient chivalry, and the decency and decorum requisite in a piece where Charlemagne made his appearance. The public, accustomed to see Rinaldo, Paladin of France, appear in the council of war wrapped up in a torn cloak, and harlequin defend his master's castle and put to flight the emperors' soldiers with kettles and broken pots, were pleased to observe the calumniated hero maintain his cause with dignity, and were not discontented with the suppression of the misplaced buffoonery.

Several changes took place in the company during Lent, which brought it as near the point of perfection as possible.

We changed *La Bastona*, the mother, for *La Bastona*, the daughter, an excellent actress, full of intelligence, noble in serious parts, and very agreeable in comic. *Vitalba*, the principal actor, was succeeded by *Simonetti*, who was not so brilliant as his predecessor, but more decorous, intelligent, and docile. We made an acquisition of *Golinetti* for a pantaloon, who was but indifferent with his mask, but admirable in the character of young Venetians without one; and we gained also *Lombardi*, who both in figure and talents was unrivalled in the part of the doctor.

What rendered the company perfect was the acquisition of *Sacchi*, the famous harlequin, whose wife was tolerable in the part of secondary lovers, and whose

sister, though a little extravagant in her action, performed very well in the character of waiting-maid.

“ I am now,” said I to myself, “ perfectly at my ease, and I can give loose to my imagination. Hitherto I have labored on old subjects, but now I must create and invent for myself. I have the advantage of very promising actors ; but in order to employ them usefully I must begin with studying them. Every person has his peculiar character from nature ; if the author gives him a part to represent in unison with his own, he may lay his account with success. Well then,” continued I, “ this is perhaps the happy moment to set on foot the reform which I have so long meditated. Yes, I must treat subjects of character : this is the source of good comedy ; with this the great Molière began his career, and he carried it to a degree of perfection which the ancients merely indicated to us, and which the moderns have never seen equalled.”

Was I wrong in encouraging myself in this manner ? No : for my inclinations were fixed on comedy, and good comedy was the proper aim for me. I should have been wrong had I entertained the ambition of equalling the masters of the art ; but I merely aspired to reform the abuses of the theatre of my country, and this required no great extent of learning to accomplish. Agreeably with this mode of reasoning, which seemed to me perfectly just, I cast my eyes round the company for the actor best adapted to sustain a new character to advantage. I fixed on Golinetti the pantaloon, not for the purpose of employing him in a mask which conceals the physiognomy and prevents a sensible actor from displaying the passion which he feels in his countenance, but I admired his behavior in the companies where I had seen and sounded him ; I believed him

possessed of qualifications for an excellent actor, and I was not mistaken.

I composed, therefore, a comedy of character, under the title of "Momolo Cortesan." Momolo in Venetian is the diminutive of Girolamo (Jerome); but it is impossible to translate the adjective *cortesan* into any other language. This term *cortesan* is not a corruption of the word *courtier* (courtesan), but is rather derived from *courtesy* and *courteous*. The Italians themselves are not generally acquainted with the Venetian *cortesan*: hence when I committed this piece to the press, I called it "L'Uomo di Mondo," and were I to translate it into French, I should be induced to give it the title of "The Accomplished Man." Let us see whether I am mistaken. The true Venetian *cortesan* is serviceable, officious, and possessed of probity. He is generous without profusion; gay without rashness; fond of pleasure without ruining himself; he is prepared to bear a part in everything for the good of society; he prefers tranquillity, but will not allow himself to be duped; he is affable to all, a warm friend and a zealous protector. Is not this an accomplished man?

I shall be asked whether there are many of these *cortesans* at Venice. Yes; a tolerable number. There are people possessed of these qualities in a greater or less degree; but when we are to exhibit the character to the public, we must always display it in all its perfection.

That any character may be productive of effect on the stage, it has always appeared to me necessary to contrast it with characters of an opposite description. In this piece I introduced a rascally Venetian, who deceives strangers; and my *cortesan*, without being acquainted with the persons imposed on, secures them

from the deceit and unmasks the knave. Harlequin is not a stupid servant in this play; he is an idle fellow who insists on his sister supporting his vices; the cortesán procures an establishment for the girl, and subjects the lazy fellow to the necessity of working for his bread. In short, this accomplished man finishes his brilliant career by marriage, and chooses among the women of his acquaintance the one with the least pretensions and the greatest share of merit.

This piece was wonderfully successful, and I was satisfied. I saw my countrymen renouncing their old relish for farces; I saw the announced reform, but I could not yet boast of it. The piece was not reduced to dialogue; and the only part written out was that of the principal actor. All the rest was outline; I had endeavored to suit the actors; but they were not all equally qualified to fill the void with skill. There was not that equality of style which characterizes the production of one author; I could not reform everything at once without stirring up against me all the admirers of the national comedy, and I waited for a favorable moment to attack them boldly with greater vigor and greater safety. My comedians were to play on the mainland during the spring and summer; they were desirous of my following them; but I told them, in the language of Scripture, "*Uxorem duxi*" (I have taken a wife).

Another reason confirmed me in my resolution of remaining at Venice. The proprietor of the theatre where my comedies were acted in autumn and winter employed me to write a musical drama for the fair of the Ascension of that year. I composed this piece during Lent, and I was desirous of being present at the execution. It was to be set to music by the celebrated

Galuppi, who went by the name of Buranello ; but, recollecting, before delivering it to him, that I was mistaken in my Amalasonte, and being uncertain whether I had succeeded in observing all the extravagances which are called rules in the musical drama, I wished it to be seen and examined before submitting it to the public, and I made choice of Apostolo Zeno, who had then returned from Vienna, where he was succeeded by Metastasio, as my judge and adviser.

These two illustrious authors effected the reformation of the Italian opera. Before them, nothing but gods, devils, machines, and wonders were to be found in these harmonious entertainments. Zeno was the first who conceived the possibility of representing tragedy in lyrical verse without degradation, and of singing it without producing weakness. He executed the project in a manner the most satisfactory for the public and the most glorious for himself and his nation. In his operas we see heroes such as they actually were, or at least such as they have been handed down to us by historians ; his characters are vigorously supported ; his plans always well conducted ; his episodes are necessarily connected with the main action ; and his style is masculine and vigorous, and the words of the airs adapted to the music of his day. Metastasio, who succeeded him, brought lyrical tragedy to the utmost perfection of which it was susceptible ; his style is pure and elegant ; his verses flowing and harmonious ; an admirable precision and clearness prevail throughout his sentiments, and this precision is concealed under the veil of an apparent facility ; he displays the most affecting energy in the language of the passions ; his portraits, his groups, his rich descriptions, his mild morality, his insinuating philosophy, his analysis of the

human heart, the profusion and skilful application of his knowledge; his airs, or rather his incomparable madrigals, sometimes in the manner of Pindar and sometimes that of Anacreon, have all rendered him the subject of most deserved admiration, and entitled him to the immortal crown conferred on him by the Italians and acquiesced in by other nations.

Were I to venture on comparisons, I should say that, in his style, Metastasio has imitated Racine, and that Zeno imitated the vigor of Corneille. Their genius resembled their characters. Metastasio was mild, polished, and agreeable in company. Zeno was serious, profound, and instructive. To the latter then I made my application to analyze my *Gustavus*. I found this respectable author in his closet; he received me in a very polite manner, and listened to my drama from beginning to end without uttering a single word. I could discern, however, from the expression of his countenance, the good and faulty passages of my work. "This is good," said he, taking me by the hand; "it will do very well for the fair of the *Ascension*."

I understood his meaning, and I was proceeding to tear my drama to pieces; but he prevented me, and told me by way of consolation that my opera, however indifferent, was a hundred times better than those which their authors, under the pretext of imitation, only copied from others. He durst not mention himself; but I knew the plagiarisms of which he had good grounds for complaint. I profited by the mute corrections of M. Zeno; I made a few changes in those places at which my judge gnashed his teeth; my opera was given; the actors were good, the music excellent, and the ballets very gay; nothing was said of the drama; I kept behind my curtain; I shared in the applause to

which I had no claim ; and I said, by way of quieting myself, This is not my forte ; I shall have my revenge in my first comedy.

The work, which I had in readiness for the return of my comedians, was " *Il Prodigio* " (The Prodigal). The subject of this piece was not selected by me from the class of the vicious, but from that of the ridiculous. My Prodigal was neither a gamester, a debauchee, nor magnificent. His prodigality was merely weakness ; he gave for the sole pleasure of giving ; his heart at bottom was excellent ; but his simplicity and credulity exposed him to embarrassment and derision. This was a new character ; I knew the originals ; I had seen and studied them on the banks of the Brenta, among the inhabitants of those magnificent and delightful country-houses where opulence shines forth and mediocrity is ruined. The excellent actor, who had supported so well the brilliant character of the Venetian Cortesan, succeeded admirably in representing the slowness and apathy of character of my Prodigal. I gave this rich and liberal individual a knavish and dexterous steward, who availed himself of the disposition of his master and furnished him with occasions and means for satisfying it. Whenever money was wanted, this easy individual always ended with saying to the traitor who seduced him : " *Caro vecchio fe vu* " ; that is to say, " I rely on you, my friend, do the best you can. " Certain persons in whose mouths this phrase was familiar were recognized, and attempts were made to discover the original. I selected him from the crowd of rich individuals who are the dupes of their weakness and their seducers ; but an anecdote which I invented happened, unfortunately for me, to correspond with an occurrence in real life, and nearly ruined me. A young

woman, who would have become his wife but for the decayed state of his affairs, is, with her relations, on a visit at the Prodigal's house on the Brenta. The lover offers her a valuable ring, which the lady refuses. Some time afterwards, the attorney of the Prodigal arrives from Venice with the news that he has gained his lawsuit. The generous man is desirous of showing his joy and gratitude, and, having no money, he gives the ring to the attorney, which he accepts, and then returns home. In the mean time the lady, having been advised to accept the trinket, lest the young spendthrift should dispose of it in an improper manner, returns and mentions the ring, and excuses her former refusal; she could not receive it without permission; that permission she had now obtained — Alas! the ring is no longer in his possession; the lover is inconsolable, the Prodigal in despair! What trouble and embarrassment! This is one of those fortunate situations which amuse the spectators, which produce revolutions, and which bring the action naturally to a close.

It was said that this adventure had actually happened to an individual of high rank, to whom I lay under considerable obligations. Fortunately, this lord did not discover the circumstance, or affected not to perceive it. He was interested in my success; my piece succeeded; and he was as well pleased with it as myself. My Prodigal had twenty successive representations when it first came out; it was equally fortunate when resumed during the carnival; but the characters in masks complained that I did not give them enough to do, and that I was on the point of ruining them. They had their amateurs and protectors disposed to defend their cause.

In consequence of their complaints, and agreeably to

the plan laid down by me. in the beginning of the comic year I gave a comedy of intrigue, entitled the "Thirty-two Misfortunes of Harlequin." The execution of this fell to Sacchi at Venice; and I was certain of its success. This actor, known on the Italian stage by the name of Truffaldin, added to the natural graces of his action a thorough acquaintance with the art of comedy and the different European theatres. Antonio Sacchi possessed a lively and brilliant imagination; he played in comedies of intrigue; but while other harlequins merely repeated themselves, Sacchi, who always adhered to the essence of the play, contrived to give an air of freshness to the piece, by his new sallies and unexpected repartees. It was Sacchi alone whom the people crowded to see. His comic traits and his jests were neither taken from the language of the lower orders nor that of the comedians. He levied contributions on comic authors, on poets, orators, and philosophers; and in his inpromptus we could recognize the thoughts of Seneca, Cicero, or Montaigne; but he possessed the art of appropriating the maxims of these great men to himself, and allying them to the simplicity of the blockhead; and the same proposition which was admired in a serious author became highly ridiculous in the mouth of this excellent actor. I speak of Sacchi as of a man no longer in existence; for, on account of his great age, there remains only to Italy the regret of having lost him without the hope of ever possessing his equal.

My piece, supported by the actor above-mentioned, was as successful as such a comedy could be. The amateurs of masks and outlines were satisfied with me. They found more propriety and common-sense in my *Thirty-two Misfortunes* than in the comedies of art.

I observed that what gave the greatest pleasure in my piece was the accumulation of events upon one another. I availed myself of this discovery, and gave, fifteen days afterwards, a second comedy of the same kind, still more crowded with business and events, as I called it "The Critical Night; or, The Hundred and Four Events in the same Night."

This piece might be called the touchstone of the comedians, for it was labored with such complication and ingenuity, that none but the actors to whom I intrusted it could have executed it with the same accuracy and facility. I experienced the truth of this four years afterwards. I was then at Pisa in Tuscany. A strolling company thought proper, by way of paying court to me, to act this piece. Next day, in a coffee-house on the quay of the Arno, I heard a person say, "Dio mi guardi da mal di denti e da Cento e Quattro Accidenti" (God keep me from the toothache and The Hundred and Four Accidents). This proves that the reputation of an author frequently depends on the execution of the actors. He ought not to lose sight of that truth. We require the assistance of one another, and we ought to entertain for one another reciprocal love and esteem, *servatis servandis*.

XV.

I HAD satisfied the barbarous taste of my countrymen, and laughed in my sleeve at their compliments; and I burned with the desire of carrying the reform completely through. But an event took place this year, which interrupted for several months the course of my favorite occupation.

Count Tuo, the Genoese consul at Venice, having

died, the relations of my wife, who were in the enjoyment of credit and influence, demanded the place for me, and soon carried it.

I was now in the bosom of my country, honored with the confidence of a foreign republic; and it required some time to become acquainted with an employment of which I was altogether ignorant. The only Genoese minister at Venice was their consul. I was therefore charged with everything. I wrote off despatches every eight days; I communicated news, and set up for politician. This trade I learned at Milan, and I had not yet forgotten it. My accounts, reflections, and conjectures were relished at Genoa, and I was by no means on bad terms with the diplomatic body at Venice.

My new situation and my new occupations did not prevent me from resuming the thread of my theatrical pursuits; and in the carnival of the same year I gave an opera to the theatre of St. John Chrysostom, and a comedy of character to that of St. Samuel.

My opera, the title of which was "Orontes, King of Seythia," had a very brilliant success. The music of Buranello was divine; the decorations of Jolli superb; the actors excellent; not a word was said of the book; but the author of the words did not on that account the less enjoy the good fortune of this charming spectacle.

But at the theatre, when a new piece of mine, called "The Bankruptcy," was acted at the same time, all the applauses, all the clapping of hands and bravos, were for me. In this piece there were far greater numbers of written scenes than in the two preceding ones. I proceeded quietly in making my advances towards the liberty of writing my pieces entirely out; and notwithstanding the impediments of masks, I soon accomplished my wish.

I was now full of honors and joy ; but you know, my dear reader, that my happy days have never been of long duration. When the consulate of Genoa was offered to me, I accepted it with gratitude and respect, without demanding what were the emoluments of the office. This was another of my follies, for which I paid dearly. I thought of nothing at first but rendering myself worthy of the good-will of the republic, with whose confidence I was honored. I took lodgings in which I could receive foreign ministers in a suitable manner. I increased my domestic establishment, my table, and my retinue. I thought I could not with propriety act otherwise. In writing after the lapse of some time to the secretary of state, with whom I corresponded, I mentioned the article of my salary ; and I received for my consolation from the secretary an answer nearly in the following terms : “ Count Tuo [my predecessor] served the republic for nearly twenty years without any emolument ; the senate were satisfied with me ; the government considered it proper that I should be recompensed, but the Corsican war rendered the republic unable to defray an expense which for so long a time it had ceased to provide for.”

What sad news for me ! The profits of the consulate did not amount to a hundred crowns per annum. I wished to throw up my situation instantly ; but by the following courier I received a letter from a Genoese senator, confiding an intricate commission to my care, and encouraging me to remain in office.

A person intrusted with the affairs of the republic of Genoa, and who held in a foreign court the commission of the senate, and full powers from the public creditors, had abused the confidence of the Genoese, escaped with considerable sums of money, and been

living for several days quietly at Venice. The senator sent me letters of credit for Santin Cambiasio, the banker, and a power to obtain the body or a seizure of the goods of his debtor. The commission was delicate, and the execution promised to be attended with difficulty. I knew my country, however; in a government where there are almost as many primary tribunals as matters subject to contestation, if the affair be good, there are means of obtaining justice without violating the delicacy of the law of nations. I was listened to, and well served; my client was indemnified, and the money and effects passed through my hands into those of M. Cambiasio, to be disposed of by the Genoese patrician. This affair, which was well conducted and happily terminated, did me infinite honor; but my unlucky star was not long in overwhelming me with its influence. In the inventory of the effects recovered by me, there were two boxes of gold enriched with diamonds. I was intrusted with the sale of them. I confided them to a broker; this rascal pledged them with a Jew, left the duplicates, and made his escape. I was the responsible person, and it was requisite to pay for their recovery. M. Cambiasio supplied me with money on account of the senator, and my father-in-law paid it back again at Genoa out of the remainder of his daughter's portion which he still owed me.

I was by no means therefore in easy circumstances in the beginning of the year 1740; and to add to my misfortune, I was all at once deprived of the best part of my rents. The war between the French and Spaniards on the one hand, and the Austrians on the other began to break out. It was called the war of Don Philip; and Lombardy was inundated with foreign

troops to install that prince in the possession of Parma and Placentia. The Duke of Modena joined his forces to those of the Bourbons. He was a generalissimo of their army; and, to support the expenses of the war, he stopped the payment of the annuities of the ducal bank called Luoghi di Monte.

This void in my domestic affairs threw me into great consternation. I could no longer maintain my rank in society. I formed the resolution of setting out instantly for Modena in quest of money at all hazards, and to pass on to Genoa, and demand justice. I wrote in consequence to the republic, and demonstrated the necessity of a journey, I demanded permission to appoint a substitute in my place, and I waited for the consent of the senate. In this expectation, and in the midst of my chagrins and embarrassments, my brother arrived from Modena, as much dissatisfied as myself with the suspension of our annuities, and still more piqued at not having been included in the new promotion made by his royal highness in his troops. He had quitted the service altogether, and came to enjoy his tranquillity at my expense.

On the other hand, I was teased for works by the comedians. This was my only consolation; but Sacchi had left us, and the half of his comrades had followed him. Golinetti, the pantaloon, was no longer with us, and the most essential actors were all new to me. I sought out the individual amongst them most capable of interesting me, and my predilection for waiting-maids induced me to fix on Madame Baccherini, who succeeded the sister of Sacchi in that character.

She was a young Florentine, extremely pretty, very gay, and very brilliant, with a plump and round figure, white skin, dark eyes, a great deal of vivacity, and a

charming pronunciation. She had not the skill and experience of the actress who preceded her, but she was possessed of a most happy aptitude for improvement, and she required nothing but study and time to arrive at perfection. Madame Baccherini was married as well as myself. We became friends; we were necessary to each other; I contributed to her glory, and she dissipated my chagrin.

It was an established custom amongst the Italian actors, for the waiting-maids to give several times every year pieces which were called transformations, as the Hobgoblin, the Female Magician, and others of the same description, in which the actress, appearing under different forms, was obliged to change her dress frequently, to act different characters and speak various languages. Of the forty or fifty waiting-maids whom I could name, not two of them were bearable. The characters were false, the costumes caricatured, the languages indistinct, and the whole illusion destroyed. What else was to be expected? for to enable a woman to support in an agreeable manner such a number of changes she must be under the real operation of the charm which is supposed in the piece. My beautiful Florentine was dying of eagerness to display her pretty countenance in different dresses. I corrected her folly at the same time that I endeavored to gratify it. I invented a comedy, in which, without change of language or dress, she could support different characters; an affair which is not very difficult for a woman, and especially a clever woman.

The title of this piece was "La Donna di Garbo" (The Admirable Woman). It afforded great pleasure in the reading; Madame Baccherini was enchanted with it, but the theatres at Venice were on the point

of closing. The company were to pass the spring at Genoa, and it was to be acted there for the first time. I proposed to appear there also at the first representation, but I became all of a sudden the sport of fortune. Events of a singular nature overturned my projects, and I did not witness the representation of my piece till four years afterwards.

On the removal of the comedians I felt myself lonely; for in my then disagreeable situation every company wearied me. I thought only of my journey: my mother and my aunt stood in no need of my assistance; my wife was to follow me, and my brother alone was burdensome to us all. He entertained the highest idea of himself: I was of a different opinion, and he was offended at my way of thinking. For example, he did not hesitate to ask me to propose him to supply my place during my absence from Venice, or to send him to Genoa to solicit the salary of my office; but I did not believe him cut out for either of these commissions, and I went on as usual, till I should receive letters from Genoa, in the execution of my project.

The letters arrived, the permission was granted, my substitute was approved of, and I was satisfied. I resolved therefore to go to Modena to demand payment of my annuities; to go to Genoa to solicit payment of my salary; to be present at the representation of the *Donna di Garbo*, as *La Baccherini* would perhaps require my assistance, and at any rate would be very glad to see me. The charms of this delightful actress added to my eagerness; I feasted myself with the idea of seeing her perform this important part in my piece.

But, O heavens! the brother of *Madame Baccherini* was still at Venice. He waited on me; I saw him in tears; he could not pronounce a single word; he put a

letter from Genoa into my hands, containing an account of the death of his sister.

After this event I still adhered to my project, but I was not so eager to set out, and even endeavored to put off my departure. A society of noble Venetians had taken a lease of the theatre of St. John Chrysostom for five years, and demanded an opera from me for the fair of the Ascension. At first I refused to satisfy them; but on becoming master of my time, I accepted of the commission, and finished in a few days an opera entitled "Statira," which I had in my portfolio. I was present at the rehearsals and the representation of this drama, and I drew the profits of authorship and received an extraordinary recompense from these generous lessees. I had reason to be satisfied with this prolongation of my stay in Venice, but I paid very dear for it in the sequel, and I was indebted to my brother for the cruel embarrassment in which I was placed. He entered my house one day at two o'clock in the afternoon, and pushed open with his cane the folding doors of my study. His hat was drawn over his brow, his countenance was red, his eyes sparkling,—I knew not whether from joy or rage. Looking hard at me with a disdainful air, "Brother," said he, "you will not always treat me as lightly as you do now." "What do you mean, brother?" "I do not compose verses, but every one has his value,—I have made a discovery." "If it can be of any use to you, I shall be exceedingly glad." "Yes, useful and honorable for me, and still more useful and honorable for you." "For me!" "Yes: I have made an acquaintance with a Ragusan captain, a man,—a man who has not his fellow. He keeps up a correspondence with the principal courts of Europe;

he has commissions at which you would tremble; he is employed to raise recruits for a new regiment of two thousand Slavonians; but, O heavens! if the government of Venice were to discover this, we should be ruined, — brother, — brother, — I have disclosed the matter, you know the importance of discretion.”

I wished to suggest a few reflections to him. “Listen to me,” said he, interrupting me; “there is a captaincy here open for me; I have served in Dalmatia, as you know; this my friend also knows; he knew my uncle Visinoni at Zara, and he destines a company for me. But for you,” continued he, “it is quite another affair.” “For me? what the devil does he want with me?” “He knows you by reputation, he esteems you, you will be the auditor, the grand judge of the regiment.” “I?” “Yes, you.”

At that moment the servant entered, and announced to us that dinner was ready. “The deuce take both you and the dinner!” said my brother; “we have business to transact; leave us undisturbed.” “But cannot you defer it,” said I, “till after dinner?” “Not at all; it must wait.” “Why?” “The captain is coming.” “So you have asked him?” “Yes; are you displeased that I have taken the liberty to invite a friend?” “The captain is your friend, then?” “I have no doubt of it.” “You have just formed acquaintance with him, and he is your friend already?” “We soldiers are not courtiers; we know one another at first sight; honor and glory form the bond of our union, and next moment we become friends.”

My wife arrived, and entreated us to be done. “Good heavens! madam,” cried my brother, “this is being very impatient.” “It is your mother,” said she, “who is growing impatient.” “My mother, my

mother, — let her dine and go to bed.” “All this, my brother, smells sadly of gunpowder.” “I am sorry, I am sorry; but the captain cannot be long.” A knock was heard; it was the captain; a number of compliments and excuses passed, and we sat down to dinner.

This man had more the appearance of a courtier than a soldier. He was supple, mild, affected, his complexion was wan, his face long, his nose aquiline, and his eyes small, round, and greenish. He was very gallant, very attentive to the ladies, holding grave discourses to the old women, and saying pleasant things to the young, yet none of his little stories seemed to take off his attention from his dinner. We took our coffee at table; my brother put me in mind of the remainder of my stock of wine for the sake of entertaining his friend, and the Ragusan, my brother, and myself went to shut ourselves up in my study.

As the recommendation of my brother did not give me the most favorable idea of this unknown person, and as he did not want for address or foresight, he recounted to me in a very rapid and elegant preamble, his name, his country, his condition, his titles, his exploits, and concluded with showing me the letters-patent, written in the Italian language, in which he was empowered to raise two thousand men of the Illyrian nation for a new regiment in the service of the power from whom he held the commission. In these letters the Ragusan was appointed colonel of the regiment, with the power of naming officers, judge, quartermasters, etc., and they contained the signatures of the sovereign minister and secretary of state of the war department with the seal of the crown. I was not any great judge of these foreign signatures, and I was dis-

trustful of a man whom I only saw for the first time, and till I should be enabled to verify their authenticity, I ventured to put a few questions to the captain, who did not fail to give me satisfactory answers. I first asked him by what accident my brother and myself were so fortunate as to interest him in our favor.

“Your brother,” said he, “is a man who may be of utility to my interests. He is acquainted with Dalmatia and Albania, where he has served, and these are two provinces capable of supplying excellent men for our regiment. I mean to provide him with letters and money and send him there to recruit.” At this my brother clung round the Ragusan. “You shall see, my friend, you shall see; I shall procure for you Dalmatians, Albanians, Croatians, Molachians, Turks and devils; let me alone, — Gospodina, Gospodina, dobro, jutro, Gospodina.”

The captain, who was himself a Slavonian, and laughed in his sleeve perhaps at this displaced Illyrian salutation of my brother, smiled, and turning towards me: “For you, sir,” said he, “I do myself an honor in requesting you to accept the office of auditor-general of my regiment. You are bred to the law, and your situation of consul — But apropos of the place which you fill,” continued he, “I have a favor to demand of you. I am at present in Venice, which is a free country; but the affair in which I am now engaged is very delicate, and might give offence to the government on account of their Dalmatian subjects; I am beset by spies; I am afraid of being taken by surprise; and if you could lodge me in your house, I should not perhaps be secure from the pursuits of the republic, but I should have time to escape them.”

“Sir,” said I, “my lodgings are not sufficiently

commodious." My brother exclaimed, interrupting me, "I shall give up my room to the captain." I endeavored to defend myself, but in vain. Thus the Ragusan got himself established in my house.

The society of this man was agreeable enough; I allowed myself to be gained over without difficulty; and I could not bring myself to suspect him. I wished, however, to have nothing to reproach myself with. Wherever I heard persons mentioned as being concerned in the secret of the business in question, I began to make inquiries. I called on the merchants employed for the regimental uniforms. I spoke to the officers engaged by the brevet-colonel. He received one day a bill of exchange for six thousand ducats, drawn on MM. Pommer, brothers, German bankers; the bill was not accepted because they had received no letters of advice, but the signatures were exactly imitated. My belief was at length fixed, and I fell into the snare. Three days afterwards the Ragusan entered the house in great agitation and consternation; he had to pay six thousand livres in the course of the day, and he could procure no delay; the officers of the law would be despatched in pursuit of him; the nature of the debt would discover everything; he was in despair, as all was ruined. I was affected by his discourse, my brother solicited me, my heart determined me. I made what efforts I could to raise this sum; I was fortunate enough to succeed, I gave it in the course of the day to my guest, and next day the scoundrel disappeared.

I was plunged in embarrassment; my brother made inquiries after him to kill him; but he was fortunately out of danger. All those who were duped by the Ragusan repaired to my house, and we were forced to stop their complaints to avoid the indignation of the

government and the derision of the public. What resolution could I adopt? The robber left Venice on the 15th of September, 1741, and I embarked on the 18th with my wife for Bologna.

XVI.

SAD, thoughtful, and plunged in chagrin, I was about to pass a most disagreeable night in that courier's bark, which in former times I had found very comfortable and very amusing. My wife, who was more reasonable than myself, instead of complaining of her situation, sought only to console me. Animated by her example and advice, I endeavored to dispel the regret for the past by the hope of better fortune in future. I fell asleep, and I found myself, on awaking, like a man who has been shipwrecked and who has saved himself by swimming.

On arriving at the bridge of Lago Scuro on the Po, at a league's distance from Ferrara, I took post and arrived in the evening at Bologna. I was well acquainted with that city, and well known there. The directors of the theatres called upon me; they asked me for some of my pieces; I made some difficulty, but I was in want of money; they took care to offer me some, and I was not backward in accepting it. I confided three of my originals to them to be copied out. It was necessary to wait; I waited accordingly, and I did not lose my time.

I was asked at Venice for a comedy without females and susceptible of military exercises, for a college of the Jesuits. The pretended captain, who deceived me, occurred to my mind and furnished me with a subject. I entitled my piece "The Impostor"; I employed in

it all the warmth which indignation could possibly inspire; I portrayed my brother in vivid characters in it; I did not spare myself, and I covered my simplicity with all the ridicule which it deserved. This little undertaking was of infinite benefit to me; it effaced from my mind the dark hues with which it was colored by the wickedness of a knave; I deemed myself revenged. My piece was concluded; the directors returned me my manuscripts, and I proposed setting out for Modena.

At Bologna there was an excellent actor who played pantaloons, and who, being in easy circumstances, preferred enjoying himself in the fine season, and to confine his acting to winter. This man, whose name was Ferramonti, had never quitted me during my stay at Bologna. He had entered into an engagement with a company of comedians at Rimini, in the service of the Spanish camp, and he came to take his leave of me on setting out.

“You are going to Rimini,” said I, “and I am going to Modena.” “What are you going to do at Modena?” said he, “they are all in consternation there; the duke has left the place.” “What, the duke is not there?” “He is engaged in a ruinous war.” “I know that; but where is he?” “He is at Rimini, in the Spanish camp, where he will pass the winter.”

This threw me into great distress. “I have lost my opportunity through my own fault; I have lost too much time.” “Come along with me to Rimini,” said Ferramonti, “where you will find a tolerable company; they ought to know and esteem you. Come with me, you shall do something for us, and we will do everything for you.”

The proposition did not displease me ; but I wished to consult my wife. She was a Genoese ; we were on the road to her relations ; but, poor child ! she was goodness and complacency personified. Whatever her husband proposed was approved of by her. Content to see me tranquil and satisfied, she encouraged me to follow my new project, and we set out three days afterwards with the good old Venetian.

On arriving within sight of the ramparts of Rimini, we were stopped at the first advanced post and escorted to the main guard. There the comedian was set at liberty on declaring who he was, and my wife and myself were sent to the court of Modena. I knew several persons of all ranks attached to his highness ; I was well received, and even caressed. A lodging was procured for me, and next day I was presented to that prince, who received me with kindness, and asked me the motive which induced me to visit Rimini. I was not long in telling him the truth ; but I had no sooner pronounced the words “ ducal bank ” and “ arrears,” than his highness turned the conversation to the theatre, my piece, and my success ; and the audience terminated two minutes afterwards. I saw that I had nothing to hope for from this quarter ; I turned my views next to the comedians, where my expectations were better realized.

I was invited to dinner with the director, to whom Ferramonti had spoken a great deal about me. All the company were present ; the principal female character was an excellent actress, but very much advanced in years ; the second actress was a stupid and badly educated beauty ; Colombina was a fresh and attractive brunette ; she was the waiting-maid.

Everybody asked me for pieces ; every one wished

to be the principal subject. To whom was I to give the preference? The Count de Grosberg extricated me from my embarrassment. This brave officer, brigadier-general of the regiment of Walloon guards, in the army of his Catholic Majesty, was strongly attached to the theatre. He was a particular protector of harlequin. He requested me to labor for that character, and I did so with the greatest pleasure, as the harlequin was good and the protector generous.

The theatre was closed on the termination of the carnival. M. de Gages, who acted along with the generalissimo as general commandant, kept up the most exact order, and the most rigorous discipline throughout the whole army. There was no gaming, no balls, no suspicious characters. Rimini resembled a convent. The Spaniards paid their court to the ladies of the country in the Castilian manner; and the ladies were pleased to see the sons of Mars on their bended knees before them. The societies were numerous attended, but free from tumult, and gallantry shone forth without scandal.

The German troops quartered in the Bologna territories made some movements which alarmed the Spaniards. In three days the army decamped, and I remained at Rimini in a state of greater embarrassment than ever. I was a subject of the Duke of Modena; and I was Genoese consul at Venice; and these two nations in that war took the side of the Bourbons. I had every reason to fear being considered by the Austrians as a suspicious character. I communicated my fears to persons belonging to the country with whom I was acquainted. Everybody considered them well founded; but then how was I to act? Neither horses nor carriages were to be had. The army had carried off everything.

I found some foreign merchants in the same predicament with myself. I entered into an arrangement with them; we agreed to go by sea, and hired a bark for Pesaro. The weather was favorable, but there had been a storm the night before, and the sea was still in agitation. Our women suffered very much; my wife spit blood. We anchored in Catholica Roads, the half of our projected voyage; and finished our journey by land in a peasant's cart. We left our effects in charge of some of our domestics, who were to join us at Pesaro, and we arrived in that town fatigued and exhausted, without acquaintances and without lodgings, and yet these were the least of the evils in store for us. All was in confusion in Pesaro, which had more people than could be contained in it. There was no room in the inns, and no furnished lodgings to be had.

Count de Grosberg was at Fano; all the officers of my acquaintance were occupied, and the persons attached to the Duke of Modena could only offer me their table. A Modenese valet, in possession of a garret, resigned his elegant apartment to me for money. Next day I left my wife in her garret, and went to the mouth of the Foglia to see if my goods were arrived. I found my travelling companions there on the same errand. They had passed the night still more uncomfortably than myself. No barks from Rimini: no news of our effects. I went back to the town. Count de Grosberg had returned; he took compassion on me, and allowed me to lodge with himself. At this I was not a little rejoiced; but two hours afterwards I was plunged again in a terrible consternation.

I met one of the merchants whom I had seen by the seashore, and found him in great distress and

tation. "Well, sir," said he, "no news yet?" "Alas!" said he, "all is lost: the Austrian hussars have taken possession of Catholica; our bark, our effects and servants, are in their hands. I have just now received a letter from my correspondent at Rimini, communicating the news." "O heavens! what shall we do?" said I. "I know not," he replied; and abruptly quitted me.

I stood thunderstruck. The loss was irreparable for me; my wife and myself were very well equipped; we had three trunks, two portmanteaus, boxes, and handboxes; and now we were left without a shirt. Great evils require great remedies. I formed my project instantly; I thought it a good one, and proceeded to communicate it to my protector. I found him apprised of the invasion of Catholica, and acquainted him with the loss of my effects. "I shall go and endeavor to recover them," said I; "I am not a soldier, I am not attached to Spain; I require merely a conveyance for myself and wife." Count de Grosberg admired my courage; and to get rid of us perhaps, he commenced with procuring for me the passports of the German commissary, who followed the Spanish troops for that purpose, and who gave orders to let me have a chaise. There was no post at that time; the drivers concealed themselves. One was at length discovered, and they forced him to take me. He was kept all night in M. de Grosberg's stables, and I set out early next morning.

I have not spoken of my wife since this last accident, for the sake of not tiring my reader's patience, but the situation of a woman who loses all at once—her jewels, dress, and everything belonging to her, may be easily imagined. However, she was of a

thoroughly good and reasonable temper, and readily accompanied me on my journey. The driver, a fair speaking but crafty fellow, came for us when he was ready, and exhibited not the slightest mark of discontent; and we set out after taking some breakfast, quite tranquil and gay. The distance from Pesaro to Catholica was ten miles; we had gone three of them, when we were under the necessity of alighting. I ordered the driver to stop; we got down, and the rascal turned the horses immediately, set off at a gallop for Pesaro, and left us in the middle of the highway without either resource, or the slightest hope of finding any. Not a living soul was to be seen. Not a peasant in the fields, not a single inhabitant in any of the houses; everybody dreaded the approach of the two armies; my wife wept, I raised my eyes towards heaven, and felt myself inspired. "Courage," said I, "my dear friend; we are but six miles from Catholica; we are young enough and strong enough to walk that distance; we must not return, — we must have nothing to reproach ourselves with." She complied with the best grace in the world, and we continued our journey on foot.

After an hour's walk we came to a rivulet too broad to be leaped and too deep to be forded by my wife. There was a small wooden bridge for the convenience of foot-passengers, but the planks were all broken. This did not disconcert me: I stooped down, my wife put her arms round my neck, I rose smiling, crossed over the stream with inexpressible joy, and said to myself, "*Omnia bona mea mecum porto*" (I carry all my property upon me). My feet and legs were wet, but it did not signify. We continued our journey, and after some time came to another stream like that we had passed. The depth was similar, and

the bridge was equally ruinous. This was no obstacle; we passed it as we did the former, and with the same gayety. But it was a very different matter when, close upon Catholica, we came to a torrent of considerable breadth, which rushed along with great fury. We sat down at the foot of a tree, till Providence should afford us the means of crossing it without danger.

Neither carriages, horses, nor carts were to be seen; there was no inn in the neighborhood; we were fatigued, we had passed this day without eating anything, and we were therefore in want of some refreshment. I rose for the purpose of looking about me. "This torrent," said I, "must necessarily enter the sea. If we descend its banks, we shall at last come to the mouth of it." We proceeded accordingly down the stream, instigated by distress and supported by hope; and we began to discover sails, which were an indication of the proximity of the sea. This infused courage into us, and we quickened our pace. As we proceeded, we observed the torrent become less and less agitated, and our joy was not to be contained when at length our eyes were blessed with the sight of a boat. It belonged to some fishermen, from whom we met with a very kind reception. They carried us over to the opposite bank, and returned us a thousand thanks for a paoli which I gave them. A second consolatory circumstance was neither less agreeable nor less necessary to us. A branch of a tree attached to a cottage announced a place of refreshment; we procured milk and new-laid eggs, with which we were highly satisfied.

The repose and slight nourishment which we had taken enabled us to proceed on our journey. We

were guided by a lad of the inn to the first advanced posts of the Austrian hussars. I presented my passport to the serjeant, who detached two soldiers to escort us, and we arrived through fields of trodden grain, and vines and trees cut down in all directions, to the quarters of the colonel commandant. This officer received us at first as he would any two foot-passengers; but on reading the passport which one of the soldiers gave him, he requested us to be seated. Then looking at me with an air of goodness, he exclaimed: "What, are you M. Goldoni?" "Alas! I am, sir." "The author of *Belisarius* and of the *Venetian Cortesan*?" "The same." "And is this lady Madame Goldoni?" "She is my only remaining property." "I was told that you were on foot." "It is but too true, sir."

I then recounted to him the rascally trick which the driver of Pesaro played us; I described our sad journey to him, and concluded with mentioning the seizure of our property, assuring him that my resources and my situation in life depended altogether on my recovering them.

"Not so fast, if you please," said the commandant; "why do you follow the army? Why are you connected with the Spaniards?"

As the truth had never yet injured me, but had always, on the contrary, been my support and my defence, I gave him a short account of my adventures. I mentioned my Genoese consulate, my Modena annuities, my views of indemnification; and I told him that I should be completely ruined if I were deprived of the small remains of my wrecked fortune.

"Console yourself," said he in a friendly tone to me, "you shall not lose it." My wife rose with tears of

joy in her eyes, and I in turn wished to express my gratitude; but the colonel would not listen to me. He ordered my servant and all my property to be sent to me, but on one condition, that I might take any road but that of Pesaro. "No, certainly," said I; "your kindness, the obligations which I have—" He would not give me time to conclude; he had business, he embraced me, kissed my wife's hand, and went to shut himself up in his closet. His valet-de-chambre accompanied us to a very comfortable inn. I offered him a sequin, which he very nobly refused, and left us. An hour afterwards, my servant arrived in tears at seeing himself free and us happy; our trunks had been forced open, but I had the keys. A locksmith soon put them to rights.

I hired next morning betimes a cart for my passage. My wife and myself travelled post, and we went to join our good friends at Rimini. On arriving at the first advanced post, I was escorted to the main guard of Rimini. The captain was at table. On learning that a man who came post was in waiting, he gave orders for our entrance. The first person whom I saw on entering was my friend and countryman M. Borsari, who was principal secretary of Prince Lobcowitz, field-marshal and general commandant of the Imperial army. M. Borsari knew that I had passed the winter at Rimini, and that I left it with the Spaniards. I imparted to him my motive for returning, the singular particulars of my journey, and my intention of visiting Genoa.

"No," said he; "so long as we remain here, you shall not go to Genoa." "What shall I do here?" said I. "You shall amuse yourself." "That is the best business, I know; but still one must be doing

something." "We shall find you something to do; we have a tolerable theatre here." "Who are the principal actors?" "Madame Casalini is a very good actress; Madame Bonaldi—" "The waiting-maid, you mean?" "Yes." "She is my friend. Well, I shall be glad to see her again." While M. Borsari and myself were carrying on this conversation, my wife did not feel the greatest ease in the company of the German officers, who did not prostrate themselves before the ladies like the Spaniards. She made me a sign that the conversation was becoming wearisome to her. We took our leave of the company, and Borsari did not quit us. My servant was waiting for me at the door, to inform me that my old lodgings were occupied. Borsari promised that I should have them again, as he could prevail on the officer, who was an acquaintance of his, to relinquish them for others. In the mean time he accommodated us in his own house, and gave us a room beside his own, which we gladly accepted and occupied for three days.

Next day my friend presented me to his master. The prince had heard of me. He communicated the plan of a fête to me, and intrusted me with the management of it. The empress-queen, Maria Theresa, had just then married the archduchess, her sister, to Prince Charles of Lorraine. Marshal Lobcowitz was desirous of displaying rejoicings at Rimini for this august marriage; he enjoined me to write a cantata; and he left the choice of the composer, and the number and quality of the voices, to Borsari and myself. He left us masters of everything, and all that he recommended was order and promptitude. There was a music-master at Rimini named Ciccio Maggiore, by no means of the first rank of composers, but who might well pass in

time of war. We made choice of him for the music, and ordered two male and two female singers from Bologna. I composed words to some old music of our composer, and in a month's time our cantata was executed in the theatre of the town, to the satisfaction of the person who proposed it, and of the foreign officers and nobility of the place. The composer and myself were very liberally recompensed by the German general; but the Neapolitan, who was by no means a fool, suggested beforehand a means which he had perhaps more than once put in practice for the augmentation of our profits. We bound up a considerable number of copies of our printed cantata; and we went round in a handsome coach to present copies to all the officers of the staff of the different regiments in the town and environs. We received as the fruits of this proceeding a purse very decently filled with Venetian sequins, Spanish pistoles, and Portuguese pieces, which we divided equally between us.

In the mean time I received a letter from Genoa, acquainting me that a Venetian merchant, without any intention of injuring me, solicited my office of consul, in case I was unwilling to retain it, and offered to do the duty without any emolument, for the sake of the title, which, in his situation, was of much greater advantage to him than it could be to me. The Genoese senate did not deprive me of the office, but they placed me in the predicament of either withdrawing, or serving gratuitously. I adopted the first resolution; I resigned the office and never thought of it afterwards.

Besides, I had suffered so much that I was glad to have an opportunity of enjoying some tranquillity for a little time. I had money, I had nothing to do, and I was happy.

Rimini presented quite a different appearance from that which it exhibited during the possession of it by the Spaniards. There were amusements of every description : balls, concerts, public games, brilliant societies. Every description of character, every situation in life, might find entertainment of some kind or other. I was fond of my wife, I shared my pleasures with her, and she followed me everywhere.

The journey to Genoa was now useless ; I was free, and the master of my inclinations ; I possessed a sufficiency of money, and I was induced to carry into execution a project which I had long entertained.

I wished to visit Tuscany ; to go over it and reside there for some time. I required to get familiarized with the Florentines and Sieneſe, who are the living texts of the pure Italian language. I imparted this wish to my wife ; I pointed out to her that this journey brought us nearer to Genoa ; she appeared ſatisfied, and we determined on ſetting out for Florence.

My wife and myſelf took poſt to Caſtre-carro ; from thence we croſſed the Alps of St. Benedict on horſeback, and we arrived at length in that fine territory to which we owe the revival of letters. I will not enlarge on the beauty and attractions of the city of Florence ; all writers and travellers do juſtice to it. Elegant ſtreets, magnificent palaces, delightful gardens, ſuperb walks, numerous ſocieties, literature generally cultivated, multitudes of curioſities, the arts patronized, talents held in eſtimation, a flouriſhing agriculture, a rich ſoil, an important commerce, a rich river running through the town, a conſiderable ſea-port in its dependencies, handsome men and beautiful women, gayety, wit, ſtrangers from all nations, amuſements of every deſcription, — it is a charming country.

I passed four most delightful months in this city, where I formed several very interesting acquaintances: that of the Senator Ruscellai, Auditor of the Jurisdiction; Doctor Cocchi, a systematic physician and an agreeable philosopher; the Abbé Gorri, an enlightened antiquary, well versed in the Etruscan language; the Abbé Lami, author of a literary journal, the best work of the kind ever seen in Italy.

It was my intention to pass the summer in Florence and the autumn in Siena; but the desire which I entertained of seeing and hearing the Chevalier Perfetti determined me to set out in the beginning of the month of August.

Perfetti was one of those poets, only to be met with in Italy, who compose and deliver verses extempore; but he was so superior to every other person, and added such science and elegance to the facility of his versification, that he gained the honor of being crowned in the capitol of Rome; an honor which had never been conferred on any since the days of Petrarch.

This celebrated man was very aged; he was seldom to be seen in company, and still less in public. I was told that he was to make his appearance on Assumption Day at the Academy of the Intronati of Siena. I set out instantly with my faithful mate; and we were admitted as strangers to a place in the Academy. Perfetti was seated in a sort of pulpit; one of the academicians addressed him; and as he could not wander from the subject of the festival for which the academy was met, he proposed for argument the rejoicings of the angels on the approach of the immaculate body of the Virgin.

The poet sang for a quarter of an hour strophes in the manner of Pindar, and nothing could be more

surprising; he was by turns a Petrarch, a Milton, and a Rousseau; he was Pindar himself. I was glad that I had heard him, and I paid him a visit next day. My acquaintance with him procured me a number of others. The society of Sienna was delightful. There was not a gaming party which was not preceded by a literary conversation; every one read their own compositions, or those of others, and the ladies participated in this as well as the men.

XVII.

I INTENDED to stay only a few days at Pisa, and I remained three years there. I settled in the place without wishing it, and entered into engagements without considering what I was about. My comic genius was not extinguished, but suppressed. Thalia, piqued at my desertion, despatched emissaries from time to time to bring me again to her standards. I yielded at length to the gentle violence of an agreeable seduction, and I quitted a second time the temple of Themis for that of Apollo.

I shall use my utmost endeavors to comprise in a few words the transactions of a period of three years which alone would require a volume.

I amused myself in examining the remarkable curiosities of Pisa the first day after my arrival: the cathedral, which is rich in statues and paintings; the singular steeple, which outwardly seems to incline very much to one side, and which appears straight in the inside; the churchyard, surrounded with a superb portico, and containing earth impregnated with alkali or calcareous salts, which reduces dead bodies to ashes in twenty-four hours. But I began to be wearied, for I knew nobody.

Walking one day near the castle, I observed a number of coaches round a gateway, and people entering. On looking in, I saw a vast court with a garden at the end of it, and a number of persons seated under a sort of arbor.

I approached nearer; I observed a man in livery, who had the air and manners of a man of importance. I asked to whom the place belonged, and why such a number of people were then assembled.

This very polite and intelligent valet was not long in satisfying my curiosity. "The assembly which you see," said he, "is a colony of the Arcadi of Rome, called la Colonia Alfea, the Colony of Alpheus, a very celebrated river in Greece, which flowed through the ancient Pisa in Ellis."

I inquired whether I could be present at the meeting. "By all means," said the porter; who accompanied me himself to the entrance of the garden, and then presented me to one of the valets of the academy, by whom I was seated in the circle. I listened attentively, and heard productions of every description. I applauded the bad as well as the good.

Everybody looked at me, and seemed curious to know who I was; I was seized with a desire to satisfy them. The man who procured me the place was not far from my chair. I called him, and desired him to ask the person who presided in the assembly whether a stranger might be permitted to express in verse the satisfaction which he had experienced. The president announced my demand to the assembly, who readily gave their consent.

I had a sonnet in my head, composed by me in my youth, under similar circumstances; I hastily changed a few words to adapt it to the occasion. I delivered

my fourteen verses with the tone and inflection of voice which set off sentiment and rhyming to the greatest advantage. The sonnet had all the appearance of being extemporaneous, and was very much applauded. I know not whether the sitting was to have been longer protracted, but all the assembly rose and flocked round me.

Here was a circle of acquaintances formed at once; a number of societies to choose from. That of M. Fabri was the most useful and agreeable for me. He was chancellor of the Jurisdiction of the Order of St. Stephen, and he presided over the Assembly of the Arcadi, under the pastoral title of Guardian.

I saw all the Arcadian shepherds who were that day assembled in succession: I dined with some and supped with others. The Pisans are very kind and obliging to strangers, and they conceived a great friendship and consideration for me. I announced myself as a Venetian advocate; I told them part of my adventures; they saw that I was a man without employment, but capable of it; they proposed to me to resume the gown which I had quitted, and they promised me clients and books. Any foreign licentiate may practise at the bar of Pisa; and I undertook boldly to plead as a civil and criminal advocate.

The Pisans were every way as good as their word, and I was fortunate enough to satisfy them. I labored night and day; I had more causes than I could undertake; I found out the secret of diminishing the burden to the satisfaction of my clients; I demonstrated to them the folly of litigation, and endeavored to bring about a reconciliation with adverse parties. They paid me for my consultations, and we were all of us satisfied.

Whilst my affairs were going on prosperously, and my closet was in such a flourishing state as to inspire my brethren with jealousy, the devil, I believe, sent a company of comedians to Pisa. I could not abstain from seeing them, and I was seized with a strong desire to give them something of mine. They were too indifferent actors for me to think of confiding a comedy of character to them; but I abandoned to them my outline of a comedy called "The Hundred and Four Accidents in one Night"; and it was on this occasion I experienced the disagreeable circumstances mentioned in a former part of these memoirs. Mortified at the failure of my piece, I resolved nevermore to go near the comedians, or to think of comedy. I redoubled my legal assiduity, and I gained three lawsuits the same month. I also derived infinite honor from a criminal defence. A young man of family had robbed his neighbor. A door had been forced, and the young man was on the point of being condemned to the galleys. The family was respectable, he was an only son, his sisters were unmarried, all these circumstances stimulated me to endeavor to save him. After satisfying the party complaining, I caused the lock of his apartments to be changed, so that the key of the other party could open it. The young man had taken one floor for another, he had opened the door by mistake; and, seeing the money spread out, the opportunity had tempted him.

I began my memorial with the seventh verse of the Twenty-fifth Psalm: "Delicta juventutis meæ et ignorantias meas ne memineris, Domine" (Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions, O Lord). I strengthened my pleading with classical quotations, decisions of the Roman law and of the Criminal Cham-

ber of Florence, called *Il Magistrato degli Otto* (the Tribunal of Eight). I employed both reasoning and pathos; he was not a criminal inured to crimes, who endeavored to palliate his guilt, but a rash and inconsiderate young man, who owned his fault, and only asked forgiveness for the sake of the honor of a respectable father and two interesting young women of quality who were fit for marriage. My youthful robber was at length condemned to remain in prison for three months; the family were very well satisfied with me, and the criminal judge was pleased to compliment me on the occasion. This attached me more and more to a profession which was at once productive of both honor and pleasure, and a very reasonable profit.

In the midst of my labors and occupations, I received a letter from Venice, which threw all my blood and spirits into commotion. It was a letter from Sacchi. This comedian had returned to Italy; he knew I was at Pisa; he asked me for a comedy; he even sent me the subject of one, which he left me at freedom to work on as I pleased. What a temptation for me! Sacchi was an excellent actor; comedy had been my passion; I felt my old taste, my old fire and enthusiasm, reviving within me. The subject proposed was “*The Servant of Two Masters*”; and I easily saw what might be made of it with such an actor as Sacchi. I was therefore devoured with a desire of trying my hand again—I knew not what to do—lawsuits and clients crowded on me—but my poor Sacchi—but “*The Servant with Two Masters*”—Well, for this time—but I cannot—yes, I can. At length I wrote in answer that I would undertake it.

I labored by day for the bar, and by night at my play: I finished the piece, and sent it to Venice. No-

body knew the circumstance ; my wife only was in the secret, and she suffered as much as myself. While I worked at my piece, my doors were closed at nightfall, and I did not pass my evenings in the coffee-house of the Arcadi. The first time I made my appearance there, I was reproached for my neglect, and I excused myself on account of my increase of business. These gentlemen were very glad to see me employed ; but still they were unwilling that I should forget the delightful amusement of poetry.

M. Fabri arrived, and was delighted to see me. He drew a large packet from his pocket, and presented me with two diplomas which he had procured for me ; the one was my charter of aggregation to the Arcadi of Rome, under the name of Polisseno ; the other gave me the investiture of the Fegean fields. I was on this saluted by the whole assembly in chorus under the name of Polisseno Fegeio, and embraced by them as a fellow-shepherd and brother. The Arcadians are very rich, as you may perceive, my dear reader ; we possess estates in Greece ; we water them with our labors for the sake of reaping branches of laurels ; and the Turks sow them with grain and plant them with vines, and laugh at both our titles and our songs.

Notwithstanding my occupations, I still composed sonnets, odes, and other pieces of lyrical poetry from time to time for the sittings of our academy. But however much the Pisans might be satisfied with me, I was not satisfied myself. I must do myself justice, I have never been a good poet. In point of invention perhaps I have not been defective, and the theatre is a proof of it ; for my genius took that turn.

Some time afterwards Sacchi communicated to me the success of my piece. "The Servant of Two Mas-

ters" was applauded and drew immense crowds, and he sent me a present which I did not expect; but he demanded another piece still, the subject of which he left entirely to me. He wished, however, as my last comedy had a comic foundation, that this should have an interesting fable for basis, susceptible of sentiment and all the pathos compatible with a comedy. This was the language of a man; I knew him well; I was very desirous of satisfying him, and his mode of acting engaged me still more to him; but then my closet — this kept my mind on the rack again. At my last piece I had said only this once. I had three days to answer him in. During these three days, walking, dining, or sleeping, I thought of nothing but Sacchi; and I was obliged to get this object out of my head to be good for anything else.

I composed on this occasion the piece known in France as well as Italy under the title of "Harlequin's Child Lost and Found." The success of this trifle was astonishing; it was the means of bringing me to Paris, and was therefore a fortunate piece for me; but it shall never see the light as long as I live, nor even have a place in my Italian theatre. I composed it at a time when my mind was agitated. It contained interesting situations; but I had not sufficient time to prepare them with that precision by which good works are characterized. There were diamonds perhaps in it, but then they were set in copper; some of the scenes appeared evidently the work of an author, but the piece as a whole seemed the production of a scholar. I own that the winding up of the plot might pass for a model if the comedy taken altogether were not disfigured by essential faults. Its principal defect is the want of probability throughout. I have always judged it with-

out prepossession, and I have never allowed myself to be seduced by the applause lavished on it.

When my piece was finished, I read it attentively over, and perceived all the beauties which might render it agreeable, and all the defects with which it abounded. I sent it, however, to its place of destination. Italy had just begun to relish the first attempts at the reform projected by me. There still were numbers of partisans of the old comedy, and I was certain that mine, which did not wander much from the ordinary and beaten track, would afford pleasure and even surprise from the mixture of comic and pathetic scenes which I had artfully introduced. I afterwards learnt the brilliant success which it met with, and I was not astonished; but what was my surprise, on arriving in France, to find that this piece drew crowds, and was applauded and even extolled to the skies in the Italian theatre of Paris. It must be owned that we enter theatres with very different ideas and prejudices; and the Frenchmen applaud in the Italian theatre what they would condemn in that of their own nation.

After sending the *Son of Harlequin* to M. Sacchi, who was to father it, I resumed my daily occupations. I had several causes to despatch, and I began with that which appeared to me most interesting. The client whose cause I was engaged in was only a peasant; but the peasants of Tuscany are in easy circumstances, always at law, and pay well. They have almost all of them leases of their possessions to themselves, their children, and grandchildren. They give a suitable sum on entering into possession, and pay an annual quit-rent. They consider these possessions as their own property, they are attached to them, they improve them carefully, and at the end of the lease the proprietor

derives the advantage. My client had to do with the prior of a convent, who wished the lease annulled on the ground that monks are always minors, and that the land might be let to greater advantage. I discovered the hidden spring of all this. It was a young widow, who, under the protection of the reverend father, wished to dispossess the countryman. I composed a memorial, which interested the nation, and in which I proved the importance of preserving leases for lives from infringement. I gained my cause, and derived infinite honor from my pleading. I was obliged some days afterwards to go to Florence to solicit an order from the government for shutting up a lady in a convent till the termination of the cause then commenced. She was of age and a rich heiress, and had signed a contract of marriage with a Florentine gentleman who held a commission in the Tuscan army, and she was desirous of marrying a young man more to her liking. While my client and myself were in the capital, the young lady contrived to manage matters with her new favorite in such a way as to elude our proceedings. The lawsuit assumed another appearance, and threatened to become serious. We listened to propositions, the lady was rich, and the affair was amicably arranged.

On returning from Florence, I was obliged to go to Lucca in another suit. I was glad to have an opportunity of seeing that republic, which is neither extensive nor powerful, but which is rich, agreeable, and very wisely governed. I took my wife along with me, and we passed six days there in the most agreeable manner in the world. It was the beginning of May. The day of the Invention of the Holy Cross is the principal festival of this town. In the cathedral there is an image of our Saviour, called *Il Volto Santo*, which is exposed

that day with the most brilliant pomp, and such a number of voices and musical instruments as I have never seen equalled either at Venice or Rome. A devout native of Lucca bequeathed a sum of money for receiving in the cathedral on that day every musician who comes forward, and to pay them not according to their talents, but the distance from which they come, and the recompense is fixed at so much per league or mile.

When my business was over, and my curiosity gratified, I quitted with regret that charming country, which, under the protection of the emperor, *pro tempore*, enjoys the most tranquil liberty, and possesses the most salutary and exact police. I was glad to see and show to my wife another very interesting part of Tuscany. We proceeded through the territories of Pescia, Pistoia, and Prato. It is impossible to see hills with a better exposure, estates better cultivated, or more luxuriant and delightful fields. If Italy be the garden of Europe, Tuscany is the garden of Italy.

A few days after my return to Pisa, my wife's eldest brother arrived at Genoa; he was sent by his parents to claim performance of my engagement to visit them. I had been twice absent on business, and I could not suffer myself to be absent a third time merely on pleasure. My wife said nothing, but I knew the desire which she had to see her family, and I foresaw the chagrin of my brother-in-law, if he had been obliged to return home alone. I arranged matters to the satisfaction of all three; my wife accompanied her brother to Genoa, and I remained by myself peaceably occupied with the business of my closet. I had causes in every tribunal, clients in every rank of life, the first-rate nobility, the richest citizens, merchants of the highest credit, parish priests, monks, rich farmers, and even one of my brethren-

ren, who, being implicated in a criminal action, made choice of me for his defender. Thus the whole town was on my side; at least anybody would have supposed so, as I myself most certainly did believe it; but I soon perceived that I was grossly mistaken. Through friendship and consideration I had become naturalized in the hearts of individuals; but I was still a stranger when these same individuals met in a body. At this time an old advocate of Pisa departed this life, who, according to the custom of the country, was nominated the defender of several religious bodies, of corporations and different houses in the town, all which brought in to him, in corn, oil, and money, a very respectable sum, which defrayed the expenses of housekeeping. At his death, I asked for all these vacant places, that I might obtain some of them; but they were all given to Pisans, and the Venetian was excluded. I was told by way of consolation, that I had only been two years and a half at Pisa; that my adversaries had, for four years at least, been taking steps for succeeding the deceased; that engagements had been entered into on the subject; and that the very first opportunity I should be satisfied. All this might be very true; but it was singular that, out of twenty places, I could not procure one. This event threw me into ill-humor, and indisposed me to such a degree that I no longer looked on my employment in any other light than as a casual and precarious mode of subsistence.

One day, as I was busied in reflections of this nature, a stranger, desirous of speaking to me, was announced. I observed a man nearly six feet high and broad in proportion, crossing the hall, with a cane in his hand, and a round hat, in the English fashion. He entered with measured step into my closet. I rose. He made a

picturesque gesticulation by way of preventing me from putting myself under any constraint. He advanced, and I requested him to be seated. Our conversation began in this way: —

“Sir,” said he, “I have not the honor of being known to you; but you must be acquainted with my father and uncle at Venice. I am your humble servant, Darbes.” “What! M. Darbes, the son of the director of the post of Friuli; the boy who was supposed lost, who was so much sought after, and so much regretted?” “Yes, sir, that same prodigal, who has never yet prostrated himself before his father.” “Why do you defer affording him that consolation?” “My family, my relations, my country, shall never see me, till I return crowned with laurels.” “What is your profession, sir?”

He rose, and struck his round belly with his hand, and in a tone which was a compound of haughtiness and drollery, said to me, “Sir, I am an actor.” “Every description of talent is estimable,” said I, “if he who possesses it has attained distinction.” “I am,” he replied, “the pantaloon of the company now at Leghorn; I am not the least distinguished of the company, and the public is pleased to flock to the pieces where I make my appearance. Medebac, our manager, travelled a hundred leagues in quest of me; I bring no dishonor on my relations, my country, or my profession; and without boasting, sir [striking his belly again as before], Garelli is dead, and Darbes has supplied his place.”

I wished to compliment him, but he threw himself into a comic posture, which set me a laughing and prevented me from continuing. “It is not through vanity,” he resumed, “that I make a boast of my ad-

vantages at present to you; I am an actor, and I am speaking to an author whose assistance I want." "You want my assistance?" "Yes, sir, I come to ask a comedy from you; I have promised my companions to obtain a comedy from Goldoni, and I am desirous of keeping my word."

"You wish one?" said I, smiling. "Yes, sir, I know you by reputation; you are as kind as you are able, and I know you will not refuse me." "I am occupied with business, and cannot gratify you." "I respect your occupations; you will compose the piece at your leisure, when you feel inclined."

He laid hold of my box while we were talking, took snuff from it, slipped into it several golden ducats, shut it again, and threw it down on the table with one of those gesticulations which indicate a wish to conceal what one would be very glad to have discovered. I opened my box and refused to accept the money. "Do not be displeased, I earnestly beg of you," said he; "this is merely to account of the paper." I wished to return the money; this gave rise to various postures and bows; he rose, withdrew, gained the door and disappeared.

What was to be done in such a case? I adopted, I think, the best resolution the affair admitted of. I wrote to Darbes that he might rely on the piece which he had demanded from me; and I requested to be informed whether he wished it for a pantaloon in a mask, or without one. Darbes soon answered me; he could not throw any gesticulations or contortions into his letter, but it was singular in its way. "I am to have then," said he, "a comedy from Goldoni. It will be the lance and buckler, with which I shall challenge all the theatres of the world— How fortunate I am!

I betted a hundred ducats with our manager, that I should obtain a piece from Goldoni; if I gain the bet, the manager must pay, and the piece is mine. I am young, and not yet sufficiently known; but I will challenge Rubini, the pantaloon of St. Luke, and Corrini, the pantaloon of St. Samuel in Venice; I will attack Ferramonti at Bologna, Pasini at Milan, Bellotti, known by the name of Tiziani, in Tuscany, and even Golinetti in his retreat, and Garelli in his grave."

He concluded by telling me that he wished his character to be that of a young man without a mask, and he pointed out as a model an old comedy of art, called "Pantalon Paroncin."

This word *paroncin*, both in the literal translation and the character, corresponds exactly with the French word *petit-maitre*; for *parou*, in the Venetian dialect, is the same as *patrone* in Tuscan, and *maitre* in French; and *paroncin* is the diminutive of *paron*, as *petit-maitre* is the diminutive of *maitre*.

In my time the Venetian paroncini played the same part at Venice as the *petit-maitres* at Paris; but everything changes.

There are now none in France, and perhaps they exist no more in Italy.

I composed a piece for Darbes under the title of "Tonin Bella Grazia," which may be translated, "The Elegant Antonio."

I finished my work in three weeks, and carried it myself to Leghorn, a town with which I was well acquainted, being but four leagues from Pisa, and where I had friends, clients, and correspondents. Darbes, to whom I sent notice of my arrival, called upon me at the inn where I lodged; I read over my piece to him; he appeared very well satisfied with it, and with many

ceremonies, bows, and broken words, he very gallantly gave me the bet which he had gained, and, to avoid my thanking him, ran out instantly, under the pretext of communicating the piece to the manager.

XVIII.

AFTER my conversation with Darbes, I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock. I could not, at such a late hour, break in on any of my friends, and I gave orders to have something brought me from the kitchen of my inn. As they were covering the table, M. Medebac was announced. On entering, he overpowered me with politeness, and invited me to dine with him. The soups were already on my table, and I thanked him. Darbes, who accompanied the manager, took my hat and cane, and presented them to me. Medebac insisted on his part; Darbes laid hold of my left arm and the other by the right; they locked me between them, dragged me along, and I was forced to accompany them.

On entering the manager's, Madame Medebac came to receive us at the door of her antechamber. This actress, as estimable on account of her propriety of conduct as her talents, was young and handsome. She received me in the most respectful and gracious manner. We sat down to a very respectable family dinner, which was served up with the utmost order and neatness. They had advertised for that day a comedy of art; but, by way of compliment to me, they changed the bills, and gave out "Griselda"; adding, "A tragedy by M. Goldoni." Although this piece was not altogether mine, my self-love was flattered, and I went to see it in the box destined for me.

I was extremely well pleased with Madame Medebac, who played the part of Griselda. Her natural gentleness, her pathetic voice, her intelligence, her action, rendered her altogether an interesting object in my eyes, and raised her as an actress above all whom I had ever known. I complimented Madame Medebac and her husband. This man, who was acquainted with my works, and to whom I had confided the mortifications experienced by me at Pisa, made a very interesting proposal to me a few days afterwards. I must mention it to my reader; for it was in consequence of this proposal of Medebac that I renounced the profession followed by me for three years, and that I resumed my old occupation.

“If you are determined on quitting Tuscany,” said Medebac one day to me; “if you mean to return to the bosoms of your countrymen, your relations, and friends, I have a project to propose to you, which will at least prove to you the value which I set on your person and talents. There are two play-houses at Venice,” continued he; “I engage to direct a third, and to take a lease of it for five or six years, if you will do me the honor of laboring for me.”

The proposition appeared to me flattering; and it required no great offer to turn the scale in favor of comedy. I thanked the manager for the confidence he reposed in me; I accepted the proposition; we made an agreement, and the contract was instantly drawn up. I did not sign it at that moment, for I wished to communicate it to my wife, who had not yet returned. I knew her docility, but I owed her my esteem and friendship. When she arrived, she approved of it, and I sent my signature to Leghorn.

My muse and pen were thus again at the disposal of

an individual. A French author will, perhaps, think this a singular engagement. A man of letters, it will be said, ought to be free, and to despise servitude and constraint. If this author be in easy circumstances like Voltaire, or cynical like Rousseau, I have nothing to say to him; but if he be one of those who have no objection to share in the profits derived from the sale of their works, I beseech him to have the goodness to listen to my justification. The highest price of admission to the theatre in Italy does not exceed the sum of a Roman paoli, ten French sous. All those, it is true, who go to the boxes, pay the same sum in entering; but the boxes belong to the proprietor of the theatre, and the receipts cannot be considerable; so that the author's share is hardly worth the looking after. Men of talents in France have another resource; gratifications from the court, pensions, and royal presents. But there is nothing of this kind whatever in Italy; and hence the description of people the best qualified perhaps for mental excellence remain sunk in lethargy and idleness.

I have sometimes been tempted to look upon myself as a phenomenon. I abandoned myself, without reflection, to the comic impulse by which I was stimulated; I have, on three or four occasions, lost the most favorable opportunities for improving my situation, and always relapsed into my old propensity; but the thought of this does not disturb me; for though in any other situation, I might perhaps have been in easier circumstances, I should never have been so happy. I was very pleased with my new situation, and my agreement with Medebac. My pieces were to be received without any power of rejection, and to be paid for without waiting the result. One representa-

tion was the same to me as fifty; and if I bestowed more attention and zeal in the composition of my works, to insure their success, I was stimulated solely by the love of glory and honor.

I connected myself with Medebac in the month of September, 1746, and I was to join him at Mantua in the month of April in the following year. I had thus six months' time to arrange my affairs at Pisa, to despatch the causes in hand, to give up others which I could not retain, to take leave of my judges and clients, and to bid a poetical adieu to the Academy of the Arcadi. I discharged every duty, and set out after Easter. Before quitting Tuscany, I was anxious once more to pay a visit to the city of Florence, the capital. In taking leave of my acquaintances, it was proposed to me to visit the Academy of the Apatisti. It was not unknown to me; but I wished to see that day the sibillone, a sort of literary amusement which takes place from time to time, and which I had never yet seen. The sibillone, or great sibyl, is a child of only ten or twelve years of age, who is placed on a tribune in the middle of the assembly. Any one of the persons represent puts a question to the young sibyl; the child must pronounce some word on the occasion which becomes the oracle of the prophetess, and the answer to the proposed question. These answers of a boy, without time for reflection, are in general destitute of common-sense; but an academician beside the tribune rises up, and maintains that the sibillone has returned a very proper answer, and undertakes to give an immediate interpretation of the oracle.

That the reader may have some idea of the Italian imagination and boldness, I shall give some account of the question, the answer, and the interpretation, the day when I was present.

A person who, like myself, was a stranger, asked the sibyl to inform him why women weep with greater ease and more frequently than men. The only answer which the sibyl returned was *straw* ; and the interpreter, addressing the author of the question, maintained that nothing could be more decisive or satisfactory than the oracle. This learned academician, who was a tall and lusty abbé of about forty, with a sonorous and agreeable voice, spoke for nearly three quarters of an hour. He went into an analysis of different slender plants, and proved that straw surpassed them all in fragility ; he passed from straw to women ; and in a manner equally rapid and luminous, entered into an anatomical view of the human body. He explained the source of tears in the two sexes. He proved the delicacy of fibres in the one, and the resistance in the other. He concluded with a piece of flattery to the ladies who were present, in assigning the prerogatives of sensibility to weakness, and took care to avoid saying anything of their having tears at command.

I own that this man surprised me. It was impossible to display more erudition and precision in a matter which did not seem susceptible of it. These are tricks, I am willing to admit, something in the taste of the masterpiece of an unknown author (*chef-d'œuvre d'un inconnu*) ; but it is not the less true that such talents are rare and estimable, and that they only want encouragement to rise to a level with many others, and carry those who possess them down to posterity.

On returning to my lodgings the same day, I found a letter from Pisa, informing me that my trunks were at the custom-house of Florence. I sent them off next day for Bologna, and arrived at Mantua towards the end of April.

Medebac, who impatiently expected me, received me with joy, and procured me lodgings with Madame Balletti. She was an old actress, who, under the name of Fravolletta, had excelled in the characters of waiting-maids. She had left the stage, and was in easy circumstances, and, at the age of eighty-five, still possessed remains of beauty and an attractive wit. She was mother-in-law to Miss Silvia, the delight of the Italian theatre at Paris, and mother-in-law to M. Balletti, who distinguished himself in Venice as a dancer, and afterwards in France as an actor.

I passed a month at Mantua very uncomfortably, and almost always confined to bed. The air of that marshy country did not agree with me. I gave the manager two new comedies composed by me for him. He appeared satisfied with them, and allowed me to go to Modena, where he was to pass the summer. I was wise in leaving Mantua, for I felt relieved on reaching the second station, and I arrived at Modena in perfect health.

The war was now over. The Infante Don Philip was in possession of the duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla. The Duke of Modena had returned to his dominions; the ducal bank proposed an arrangement with the annuitants; and I was glad to have an opportunity of attending myself to my own interests.

Towards the end of July Medebac and his company arrived at Modena, where I gave him a third piece; but I kept my novelties for Venice. I had there laid the foundation of an Italian theatre, and it was there I intended to labor in the construction of that new edifice. I had no rivals to contend with, but I had prejudices to overcome.

If my reader has had the complaisance to follow me

thus far, the matter which I have now to offer to his attention will engage him perhaps to continue his kindness towards me. My style will be always the same, without elegance and without pretension, but animated by zeal for my art, and inspired by a love of truth.





PART THE SECOND.

I.

WHAT a satisfaction for me to return at the end of five years to my country, which had always been dear to me, and which improved in my eyes after every absence. After my last departure from Venice, my mother took apartments for herself and sister in the court of St. George, in the neighborhood of St. Mark. The quarter was beautiful, and the situation tolerable; and I joined my dear mother, who always caressed me, and never complained of me. She questioned me respecting my brother, and I made similar inquiries of her; neither of us knew what had become of him. My mother believed him dead, and shed tears; but I knew him somewhat better, and was certain that he would one day return to be a burden to me. In this I was not deceived.

Medebac had taken the theatre of St. Angelo, which was not over large, was less fatiguing to the actors, and contained a sufficient number of people to produce adequate receipts. I have forgotten the piece which was represented at the opening of the theatre. I only know that the company, being strangers, had to struggle with very able rivals, and had the greatest difficulty in obtaining protectors and partisans.

Darbes, who acted the Venetian characters, had al-

ways been well received and even applauded hitherto in them ; but he had never yet played without a mask, and the absence of this was precisely what was most calculated to set him off to advantage. He durst not act in the characters composed by me for Golinetti in the theatre of St. Samuel. In this respect I thought him quite right ; for first impressions are not easily effaced, and comparisons ought, as far as possible, carefully to be avoided. Darbes could only therefore appear in the Venetian piece which I had composed for him. I was afraid that "The Elegant Antonio" would not equal the "Cortesan Veneziano," but we could only make a trial.

We began to put it in rehearsal. The actors were quite overcome with laughter, and I laughed heartily myself. We thought the public would follow our example ; but the public, which is said to have no opinion of its own, was quite firm and decided against this piece at its first representation, and I was obliged instantly to withdraw it. In similar circumstances I have never been disgusted either with the spectators or actors, but have always begun coolly to examine myself. I saw this time that I was clearly in the wrong. This unfortunate comedy is in print. So much the worse for me and for those who take the trouble of reading it. I shall only observe, in atonement for my fault, that when I wrote this comedy, I had been four years out of practice ; my head was occupied with my professional employment, I was uneasy in mind and in bad humor, and, to add to my misfortune, it was approved of by my actors. We were sharers in the folly, and we were equal sharers in the loss.

Poor Darbes was very much mortified, and it be-

came necessary to console him. I instantly began a new piece of the same sort, and in the mean time I made him appear with his mask in a new comedy which did him great honor and was eminently successful. This was "The Prudent Man," a piece in three acts, and in prose. This comedy had the greatest success in Venice. The declamations with which it abounded were not in the taste of good comedy, but Darbes could not possibly have been more at his ease in displaying the superiority of his talents in the different shades which he had to express. Nothing more was necessary to procure him the general character of the most accomplished actor then on the stage. But to establish his reputation still more, it was necessary to exhibit him in a situation where he could shine with his countenance unmasked. This was my project, and the principal aim I had in view. While Darbes was in the enjoyment of the applause he derived from his Prudent Man, I labored at a piece for him entitled "The Venetian Twins."

I had had sufficient time and opportunities to examine into the different personal characters of my actors. In Darbes I perceived two opposite and habitual movements in his figure and his actions. At one time he was the gayest, the most brilliant and lively man in the world; and at another he assumed the air, the manners, and conversation of a simpleton and a blockhead. These changes took place quite naturally, and without reflection. This discovery suggested to me the idea of making him appear under these different aspects in the same play. The play was extolled to the very skies. The incomparable acting of Darbes contributed infinitely to its success. His glory and his joy were at their height. The director was not less pleased to

witness the complete success of his undertaking, and I had my share also in the general satisfaction in seeing myself caressed and applauded a great deal more than I deserved.

I had given three new pieces since my return to Venice without having my tranquillity disturbed by any criticism ; but during the Christmas holidays, when those who had no employment were deprived of the amusement of the theatres, several pamphlets against the author and the players made their appearance. It was the company of Medebac which was principally aimed at. They called it the Company of Rope-Dancers ; and these expressions were the more malicious, as they had some sort of truth for their foundation. Madame Medebac was the daughter of a rope-dancer. The uncle who acted Brighella had been clown ; and Darbes was married to the sister-in-law of the principal of these tumblers. This family, however, though educated in a perilous and disreputable situation, were most exemplary in their morals, and were nowise defective in point of education. Medebac, who was a good actor, and the friend and countryman of these people, observing that several of them possessed talents for comedy, advised them to change their situation. To this they agreed, and Medebac took upon himself to form them. The new actors made the most rapid progress under him, and in a short time were enabled to make head against the oldest and most respectable companies in Italy. Was it fair to reproach this company, which had always behaved most respectably, and now had attained great proficiency, with their former profession ? This was pure malice, and proceeded from the jealousy of their rivals. They were dreaded by the other theatres of Venice, who,

unable to ruin them, were mean enough to treat them with contempt. When I first saw these *co sin indaao* Leghorn, I was as much attached to them on account of their talents as their conduct; and I endeavored to raise them, through their own care and my efforts, at that degree of consideration which they every way merited. But all these efforts of the enemies of Medebac were vain. The comedians gained every day a firmer footing; and the play which I am about to mention completely established their credit and enabled them to enjoy the most perfect tranquillity.

We opened the carnival of the year 1748 by the "*Vedova Scaltra*" (The Coming Widow). Several of my plays had been very fortunate, but none of them equalled this. It had thirty successive representations; and was everywhere represented with the same success. The commencement of my reformation could not be more brilliant. I had another play still to give for the carnival. It was of importance that the close of it should not disappoint the expectations which the success of the beginning of the year gave rise to. I hit upon a work perfectly calculated to crown my labors.

I had seen at the theatre of St. Luke a piece called "*Le Putte de Castello*" (The Girls of the Quarter of Castello). This was a popular comedy, the principal subject of which was a Venetian girl without talents, morals, or address. The work made its appearance before the theatres were placed under the control of a censor. Character, plot and dialogue, everything was faulty, everything was dangerous. It was a national comedy, however. It amused the public, and served to draw crowds, who laughed at the misapplied jokes. I was so much pleased with the public,

who began to prefer comedy to farce, and decency to scurrility, that, to prevent the mischief which this piece was calculated to produce in minds yet undecided, I gave one in the same style, but respectable and instructive, which I called, "La Putta Onorata" (The Respectable Girl), and which was calculated to prove an antidote to the poison of "The Girls of the Quarter of Castello."

In some of the scenes of this comedy I painted the Venetian gondoliers from nature in a very entertaining manner to those who are acquainted with the language and manners of my country. I wished to be reconciled to this class of domestics, who were deserving of some attention. and who were discontented with me. The gondoliers at Venice are allowed a place in the theatre, when the pit is not full; but as they could not enter at my comedies, they were forced to wait for their masters in the streets or in their gondolas. I had heard them myself distinguish me with very droll and comical epithets; and having procured them a few places in the corners of the house, they were quite delighted to see themselves brought on the stage, and I became their friend. The piece had all the success which I could desire. It was impossible to conclude the season with greater brilliancy. My reform was now far advanced. What a happiness and pleasure for me! While I worked on the old plots of the Italian comedy, and only gave pieces partly written and partly sketched, I was allowed the peaceable enjoyment of the applause of the pit; but when I announced myself for an author, an inventor, and poet, the minds of men awoke from their lethargy, and I was supposed worthy of their attention and their criticisms. My countrymen, so long accustomed to trivial farces and gigantic representations,

became all at once the most rigid censors of my productions. The names of Aristotle, Horace, and Castelvetro were re-echoed in every circle, and my works became the subject of the conversation of the day. I might be excused from mentioning, at this distance of time, those verbal disputes, fleeting as the wind, which were soon stifled by my successes; but I am not displeased to have an opportunity of adverting to them for the purpose of informing my readers of my mode of thinking with respect to the rules of comedy, and of the method I laid down in carrying them into execution. The unities requisite for the perfection of theatrical works have in all times been the subject of discussion among authors and amateurs. The censors of my plays of character had nothing to reproach me with in respect to the unity of action and of time; but they maintained that in the unity of place I had been deficient. The action of my comedies was always confined to the same town; and the characters never departed from it. It is true, they went from one place to another; but all these places were within the same walls; and I was then and am still of opinion, that in this manner the unity of place was sufficiently observed.

In every art and every discovery experience has always preceded precepts. In the course of time a method has been assigned by writers to the practice of the invention, but modern authors have always possessed the right of putting an interpretation on the ancients. For my part, not finding, either in the poetries of Aristotle or Horace, a clear and absolute precept founded on reason for the rigorous unity of place, I have always adhered to it when my subject seemed to me susceptible of it; but I could never induce myself to sacrifice a good comedy for the sake of a prejudice

which might have rendered it bad. The Italians would never have been so rigidly disposed towards me, especially in the case of my first productions, had they not been provoked by the injudicious zeal of my partisans. They extolled my pieces greatly beyond their merit, and well-informed people only condemned their fanaticism. The disputes grew more and more warm on the subject of my last piece. My champions maintained that the "Putta Onorata" was a faultless comedy, and the rigorists maintained that the protagonist was injudiciously chosen. I ask pardon of my readers for here making use of a Greek word, which ought to be known, but which is very little used. It is not to be found in any dictionary that I know of; but it has been frequently used by celebrated authors of my country. The term "protagonist" is employed by Castelvetro, Crescimbeni, Gravina, Quadriò, Muratori, Maffei, Metastasio, and many others, to signify the principal subject of the piece. The utility of this Greek word, which comprises the meaning of six words in one, is evident; and I request permission to avail myself of it for the purpose of avoiding the monotony of a phrase which in the course of my work might at length become wearisome. It was said that the character of the Protagonist was ill-chosen, because it was selected from the class of vicious or ridiculous characters. "The Respectable Girl," on the other hand, was virtuous and interesting from her morals, her mildness, and her position, and I had failed, it was said, in the object of my comedy, which is, to hold vice up to abhorrence, and to correct failings. My censors were in the right; but I was not in the wrong.

My object was to begin by flattering the country for which I was employed, and the subject was new, agree-

able, and national. I proposed a model to my spectators for their imitation. If we succeed in inspiring a love of probity, is it not better to endeavor to gain hearts by the charms of virtue than by the horror of vice? In speaking of virtue, I do not mean an heroical virtue, affecting from its distresses, and pathetic from its diction. Those works which in French are called dramas have certainly their merit; they are a species of theatrical representation between tragedy and comedy, and an additional subject of entertainment for feeling hearts. The misfortunes of the heroes of tragedy interest us at a distance, but those of our equals are calculated to affect us more closely. Comedy, which is an imitation of nature, ought not to reject virtuous and pathetic sentiments, if the essential object be observed of enlivening it with those comic and prominent traits which constitute the very foundation of its existence. Far be it from me to indulge the foolish presumption of setting up for a preceptor. I merely wish to impart to my readers the little I have learned, and have myself done; and in the most contemptible books we always find something deserving of attention.

The Venetian language, which I used in the comedy of the "Putta Onorata," and in several other plays, is undoubtedly the mildest and most agreeable of all the dialects of Italy; its pronunciation is clear, delicate, and easy, its words abundant and expressive, and its phrases harmonious and ingenious; and as the character of the Venetian nation is distinguished for gayety, their language is in the same manner distinguished for lightness and pleasantry.

This does not prevent the language from being susceptible of treating in an elevated manner the most grave and interesting subjects. The advocates plead

in Venetian, and the harangues of the senators are delivered in the same idiom; but without derogating from the majesty of the throne or the dignity of the bar, our orators possess a happy faculty of associating the most agreeable and interesting graces with the most sublime eloquence.

II.

OF all my pieces the "Vedova Scaltra" was the most fortunate; but it also underwent the most severe and dangerous criticisms. My adversaries, or those of my comedians, made an attempt which would have ruined all of us, if I had not been courageous enough to step forward in defence of the common cause. At the third representation of the second season of this piece, the play-bills of St. Samuel announced a new comedy, called "The School for Widows." I was told that it was a parody of my piece, but it was no such thing, it was my widow herself, with the same plot and the same incidents. Nothing was changed but the dialogue, which was filled with insulting invectives against me and my comedians. One actor uttered a few phrases of my original, another added silly stuff. Some of the bon-mots and pleasantries of my piece were repeated, and a cry was set up in chorus of "Stupid! stupid!" This work cost no trouble to the author, who had merely followed my plan, and whose style was not superior to my own: applause, however, burst forth from every quarter, and the sarcasms and satirical traits were received with laughter, cries of bravo, and reiterated clapping of hands. I was in my box, covered with my mask. I kept silence, and called the public ungrateful; but I was in the wrong; for this

inimical public was none of mine. Three fourths of the spectators were composed of people who had an interest in my ruin; for Medebac and myself had to struggle against six other theatres in the same city. Each of them had its several friends and adherents; and those who were not interested were amused with the scandal.

I instantly formed my resolution. I had resolved to answer no criticisms; but I might have been reproached with cowardice, had I not attempted to stop the torrent which then threatened to overwhelm me. I returned home, and gave orders to my family to sup and retire to bed, and leave me to myself. I immediately shut myself up in my closet, and seized my pen in dudgeon, which I did not quit till I imagined myself avenged. I put my apology into action, and composed a dialogue with three characters, under the title of "Apologetic Prologue of the Cunning Widow." I did not dwell on the stupidity of the work of my enemies. My first endeavor was to point out the dangerous abuse of theatrical liberty, and the necessity of a police to preserve decency in theatres. I had remarked in this wicked parody certain expressions which could not but shock the delicacy of the republic with respect to strangers. The people of Venice, for example, use the word "Panimbruo" by way of insult to Protestants. It is a vague word, somewhat like that of Huguenot in France; and the gondolier of my lord, in "The School for Widows," thought proper to call his master Panimbruo. The other strangers were not treated with more ceremony; and I was sure that my observations could not fail to effect the object which I had in view. After advocating the interest of civil society, I defended my own cause, and set forth the in-

justice which I had experienced. I opposed reason to satire, and answered insults by decent reflections. On the completion of my work, I did not present it to government. I avoided everything like the conflict of jurisdictions and protections. I therefore sent my pamphlet to the press, and addressed my complaints to the public. I could not conceal my project, which was known and dreaded, and every means was resorted to to prevent its execution.

Medebac had a protector in the first order of the nobility and in the first officers of state, who ought to have favored me; but he was afraid lest my temerity should occasion my own ruin and that of his protégé. He did me the honor to visit me, and advised me at first to withdraw my Prologue, but when he saw that I was determined, he informed me that I ran the risk of displeasing the supreme tribunal to which the police of the state is intrusted. I was, however, firm in my resolution and not to be shaken by anything; and I told his excellency very frankly, that my work was in the press; that my printer was known; and that the government might seize my manuscript if it thought proper; but that if this was attempted, I should instantly set out to have it printed in another country. This nobleman was astonished at my firmness. He knew me; he was kind enough to rely on me; he took me by the hand with an air of confidence, and left me to prosecute my wishes. The day following, my pamphlet made its appearance. Three thousand copies were thrown off, and I gave orders for their distribution gratis at all the coffee-houses, theatres, and other places of assembly, and to my friends, protectors, and acquaintance. "The School for Widows" was instantly suppressed, and, two days afterwards, an order was issued

by the government for the license of theatrical productions. My "Cunning Widow" was more applauded and drew greater crowds than ever; our enemies were humbled, and we redoubled our zeal and activity. If my reader should be curious to know the author of "The School for Widows," I cannot satisfy him. I shall never name those whose intentions have been directed to ruin me.

The termination of the carnival of 1749 was approaching. We went on admirably, and had the advantage over all the other theatres; but, after the battles which we had gained, something brilliant was requisite to crown my year. The malice of my enemies had given me too much occupation to allow me to execute the project of a brilliant close, which I had sketched. I found a comedy in my portfolio which by no means satisfied me, and which I was therefore unwilling to hazard. I should have wished the remainder of the carnival filled up with old plays; but Medebae told me that, as we had only given two new plays in the course of the year, and as the public which seemed satisfied with the defence of "The Cunning Widow" would not perhaps be equally disposed to pardon us for our want of novelty, it would be absolutely necessary to obviate this reproach by closing with a new comedy. To these suggestions, which were not without foundation, I at once yielded. I gave "The Fortunate Heiress," a comedy in three acts, and in prose. It fell, however, as I had foreseen; and as the public easily forget those who have contributed to their amusement, and never pardon those who have wearied them, we were on the point of closing our theatre under very unpleasant circumstances.

Another event of a much more disagreeable nature

and much more dangerous consequences happened to disturb our repose at the same time. Darbes, who was an excellent actor and one of the pillars of the company, was demanded from the republic of Venice by the Saxon minister for the service of the King of Poland. He had to set out instantly, and quitted us abruptly to prepare for his journey. Medebac's loss was the greater, as we knew of no person capable of supplying his place, and the boxes for the ensuing year began to be thrown up.

Piqued at the ill-humor of the public, and presuming something on my own worth, in the closing address delivered by the principal actress, I promised, in very indifferent verses, but very distinctly and positively, that, next year, I would bring out sixteen new pieces. When I entered into this engagement, I had not a single subject in my head. However, there was no alternative but keeping my word, or destruction. My friends trembled for me, my enemies smiled; I comforted the former, and laughed in my turn at the others. You will see how I extricated myself. This was a terrible year for me, and the remembrance of it still makes my flesh creep. Sixteen comedies of three acts each, and each act filling up, according to the custom of Italy, two hours and a half of representation. But what alarmed me the most was the difficulty of finding an actor equal in point of ability and agreeable qualities to the one we had lost. Every endeavor was used by Medebac and myself to discover a suitable person on the continent of Italy; and at length we found out a young man who played the character in which we were deficient in strolling companies with applause. We brought him to Venice for trial. He acquitted himself very well with his mask, and still better with his

countenance uncovered. His voice and figure were good, and he sang delightfully. This was Antonio Mattiuzzi, called Collalto, of the city of Vicenza. This man, who had received a good education and was not deficient in abilities, only knew the old comedies of intrigue, and required to be instructed in the new kind introduced by me.

I attached myself to him, and took him under my care. He placed an implicit reliance on me. His docility pleased me more and more; and I followed the company to Bologna and Mantua, for the sake of completing the formation of my new actor, who had become my friend. During the five months which we passed in these two cities of Lombardy I did not lose my time, but continued laboring night and day, and we returned towards the commencement of autumn to Venice, where we were expected with great impatience. We opened the theatre with a piece entitled "*Il Teatro Comico*" (The Comic Theatre). I had announced it as a comedy in three acts, but in reality it was only a piece of poetry thrown into action, and divided into three parts. It was my intention, in composing this work, to place it at the head of a new edition of my theatre; but I was pleased to have also an opportunity of instructing those who are not fond of reading, and engaging them to listen to maxims and corrections from the stage, which would have wearied them in a book. The piece finished with applause. I have not time to mention the compliments of my friends and the astonishment of my enemies. My object at present is not to boast of my projects, but to state the manner in which they were carried into execution.

A few days afterwards, we gave the first representation of the "*Donne Pontigiose*"; or, "*The Punctilious*

Ladies." I composed this comedy during my residence at Mantua, and it was acted in the theatre of that town by way of trial. It was received with great pleasure, but I ran the risk of drawing on myself the indignation of one of the first ladies of the country, who, a short time before, had been in the situation of one of the females of the piece. Every one fixed their eyes on her box; but, fortunately for me, she possessed too much good sense to give any furtherance to the malice of the evil-disposed, and warmly applauded all the passages which could bear an application to her. The same thing happened afterwards to me at Florence and Verona; and in each of these cities it was believed that I had taken the subject of my play from among them. This is an evident proof that Nature is everywhere the same, and that, if we consult her, we shall never fail in our characters. This piece was not so fortunate at Venice as elsewhere, and that for very good reasons. The wives of the patricians are in a situation which secures them from having their pre-eminence called in question at home; and they are unacquainted with the punctilios of the provinces.

I had taken this piece from the class of nobles, but the following from the middle class. It was in Italian, "La Bottega di Cafe" (The Coffee-House), and it had a very brilliant success. The assemblage and contrast of the characters could not fail to please. That of the backbiter was placed to several well-known individuals. One of them vowed vengeance against me, and I was threatened with swords, knives, and pistols; but, curious perhaps to see sixteen new plays in one year, they gave me time to finish them. At a time when I was looking out for subjects of comedy everywhere, I recollected having seen the "Liar" of Corneille, translated

into Italian, represented at Florence in a private theatre; and as a piece which we have seen acted is more easily retained, I remembered very distinctly those places with which I had been the most struck. I recollect having said, when I saw it, "This is a good comedy, but the character of the Liar is susceptible of a much greater degree of comic humor." As I had not much time to hesitate respecting the choice of my subjects, I fixed on this; and my imagination, which was then very quick and ready, instantly furnished me with such an abundance of matter for comedy, that I was tempted to create a new "Liar." But I rejected my project. To Corneille I was indebted for the first idea, and I respected my master, and considered it an honor to work after him; adding, however, what seemed necessary for the taste of my nation and for the success of my piece, which had all the applause I could possibly desire. The subject of a liar, which was less vicious than comic, suggested another to me of a more wicked and dangerous nature; I mean the flatterer. Rousseau's was unsuccessful in France, but mine was very well received in Italy; for this reason: the French poet treated the subject more as a philosopher than a comic author; whereas I endeavored, in inspiring horror for the vice, to enliven at the same time the piece by comic episodes and prominent traits.

The following comedy is altogether different in kind from the preceding; for it is taken from among the class of the ridiculous, — an alternation which is not without its use in the production of several works. The "*Famiglia del l'Antiquario*" (The Antiquary's House) was the sixth of the sixteen projected plays. I called it at first merely "The Antiquary" from the protagonist; but, fearful lest the disputes between his wife

and daughter-in-law should produce a double interest, I gave a title to the comedy which embraced the whole at once, especially as the failings of the two wives and that of the head of the family set off one another, and contributed equally to the humor and the morality of the work. The word "antiquarian" is equally applied in Italy to those who devote their learning to the study of antiquity, and those who pick up, without knowledge, copies for originals and trifles for precious monuments. I took my subject from among the latter.

III.

FOR some time the novel of "Pamela" had been the delight of the Italians, and my friends urged me strongly to turn it into a comedy. I was acquainted with the work, and felt no difficulty in seizing the spirit of it, and approximating the objects; but the moral aim of the English author was not reconcilable with the manners and laws of my country. A nobleman in London does not derogate from his nobility in marrying a peasant; but at Venice a patrician who should marry a plebeian would deprive his children of the patrician nobility, and they would lose their right to the sovereignty. Comedy, which is, or ought to be, a school for propriety, should only expose human weaknesses for the sake of correcting them: and it would be unjustifiable to hazard the sacrifice of an unfortunate posterity under the pretext of recompensing virtue. I renounced, therefore, the charm of this novel, but necessitated as I then was to multiply my subjects, and surrounded both at Mantua and Venice by persons who iustigated me to labor upon it, I willingly consented. I did not, however, begin the work till I had in-

vented a *dénouement* which, instead of being dangerous, might serve as a model to virtuous lovers, and render the catastrophe both more agreeable and more interesting. The comedy of "Pamela" is a drama, according to the French definition; but the public found it interesting and amusing, and of all my works yet given, it was the most successful.

After a sentimental piece, I gave one founded on the usages of civil society, under the title of "Il Cavaliere di buon gusto," which might be translated in French, "L'Homme de Gout" (The Man of Taste). This title, it is true, would in France announce a person acquainted with the sciences and fine arts; whereas the Italian of good taste, whom I paint in my piece, is a man who, with a moderate fortune, contrives to possess a charming house, select servants, an excellent cook, and shines in society as an affluent individual, without injuring any one or deranging his affairs. There are curious individuals in the piece anxious to conjecture his secret, and slanderers who attack his fame; and the latter are of the number of those who frequent his table and profit by his generosity. This piece succeeded tolerably well, but it was its misfortune to follow "Pamela," which had turned everybody's head. It was more fortunate when resumed the following year. The same thing happened to "The Gamester," which was the ninth comedy of my engagement; but as it did not rise again like the other, I myself coincided with the public in regarding it as a piece condemned without remedy.

In the comedy of "The Coffee-House," the third piece of this year, I had very happily introduced a gamester, and the character was acted by our new pantaloon, without a mask, in a very agreeable and

interesting manner. Believing that I had not then said enough on the subject of this unfortunate passion, I proposed to treat the matter more thoroughly; but the episodical gamester of "The Coffee-House" had the advantage of the one which was the principal subject of the piece. I may be allowed also to add that all sorts of games of hazard were then tolerated at Venice; and that the famous Ridotto, which enriched some and ruined others, but which drew gamesters from the four quarters of the world, and threw money into circulation, was then also in existence. It was unadvised in me, therefore, to lay open the consequences of this dangerous amusement, and still more the tricks of certain gamblers, and the artifices of the brokers; and in a city of two hundred thousand souls, my piece could not fail to have a number of enemies. The republic of Venice has since prohibited games of hazard and suppressed the Ridotto. This suppression may be complained of by certain individuals; but to prove the wisdom of this measure, it is only necessary to state that those very members of the grand council who are fond of gaming gave their voices in favor of the new law. I do not state this with a view to excuse the failure of my piece by arguments foreign to the subject. It fell, and consequently it was bad; and it is no small matter for me that of sixteen comedies, it was the only one which failed. The public called out for "Pamela"; but I refused to gratify the wish. I was jealous of fulfilling my engagement, and I had still seven new pieces to give.

After the failure of my last piece it was said that Goldoni's fire was exhausted; that he began to decline; that he would end badly, and that his pride would be humbled. This last expression alone gave me any

displeasure. I might be accused of imprudence in having contracted an engagement which might cost me the loss of my health, or that of my reputation; but as to pride, I never possessed any, or at least, I could never perceive it. I treated this libel with contempt; but I was more and more convinced of the necessity of re-establishing the interest, gayety, instruction, and the old credit of my theatre. All these views were fulfilled in the comedy of "The True Friend," which was announced at the opening of the carnival. I derived the plot from an historical anecdote, and I treated it with all the delicacy the subject demanded. This is one of my favorite plays; and I had the pleasure of seeing the public of the same opinion with myself: and indeed I was astonished that I could bestow the necessary time and care on it in so laborious a year for me. But the "Finta Ammalata" (The Feigned Invalid), by which it was followed, cost me no less trouble, and was attended with equal success.

Madame Medebac, who furnished me with the subject of it, was an excellent actress, strongly attached to her profession, but she was subject to fits of ennui; she was often ill, often imagined herself so, and sometimes nothing ailed her but her fits, which she had at her command. In this last case we had only to propose giving a fine character to a subaltern actress, and she recovered instantly. I took the liberty of drawing Madame Medebac herself; she partly saw it, but as she found the part charming, she accepted it, and represented it admirably. Notwithstanding the simplicity of the subject, this piece was generally well received, and extremely applauded. Perhaps it owed its success to the actress, who took a pleasure in playing her own character, and exhibited it without the smallest

effort or constraint. The physicians of different characters, and a deaf *quidnunc* of an apothecary, who mistook everything that was said to him, and preferred the reading of gazettes to that of prescriptions, contributed no less to the success.

After the comedy of "Pamela," and more especially during the equivocal success of "The Man of Taste," and the failure of "The Gamester," my friends absolutely insisted that I should give another play borrowed from some novel, that I might, as they said, spare myself the trouble of invention. Wearied with their solicitations, I at last told them that, instead of reading a novel for the sake of composing a play, I should prefer composing a piece from which a novel might be made. Some began to laugh, and others took me at my word. "Give us, then," said they, "a novel in action; a piece as full of plot as a novel." "I will do so." "In earnest?" "Yes, in earnest." "On your honor?" "On my honor."

I returned home, and, warm with my promise, I began the play and the novel at the same time, without having the subject of either the one or the other. "I must," said I to myself, "have a great deal of intrigue; I must surprise and astonish, and at the same time excite an interest; I must have the comic combined with the pathetic. A heroine would excite a stronger interest than a hero; but where shall I seek her? We shall see: but in the mean time let us adopt an unknown lady for protagonist": and I immediately wrote down on my paper, "L'Incognita, a comedy; act first, scene first." "This woman should have a name, let us give her that of Rosaura; but is she to make her appearance alone, to give the first account of the argument of the play? No, that is the fault of the ancient comedies;

we must make her enter with — yes, with Florindo — Rosaura and Florindo.” In this way I began “The Incognita,” and continued it in the same manner, constructing a vast edifice without knowing whether it would turn out a temple or an exchange. Each scene produced another: one event gave birth to four; and at the end of the first act the picture was sketched, and required nothing but to be filled up. I was myself astonished at the quantity and novelty of the anecdotes with which my imagination supplied me.

At the end of the second act I began to think of the dénouement, and to prepare something which, while it was unexpected, should not appear to fall from the clouds. My friends were satisfied, and so were the public; and everybody owned that my piece might have furnished sufficient materials for a novel of four large volumes, octavo.

But it became necessary to leave these sentimental pieces, and return to character and true comedy; and more particularly as the end of the carnival was approaching, and the theatre required to be enlivened and brought to the level of everybody. “La Donna Volubile” (The Capricious Lady) was the last but one of the season. We had an actress in the company, the most capricious woman in the world, whom I merely copied; and Madame Medebac, who knew the original, was not sorry, with all her goodness, to have an opportunity of laughing a little at her companion. This character is in itself comical, but, if not supported by interesting and agreeable situations, extremely apt to become wearisome. We may ridicule changes in dress and entertainments, but to render a changeable woman a subject of comedy, the ridicule must arise from the caprice of her mind. A woman who is in love one moment, and

no longer so the next, who utters maxims, and who is inflamed with a passion quite the reverse of her first way of thinking, forms a proper subject for comedy. The winding-up of this piece is suitable to the folly which is proposed to be corrected. Rosaura decides at length for marriage, but everybody shuns her and refuses to have her. Madame Medebac played the character admirably. Her natural mildness was excellently adapted to the silliness of the Capricious Woman, and the piece produced all the effect which I could desire.

I had but another comedy to give to conclude the year, and fulfil my engagement. We were at the last Sunday of the carnival but one, and I had not written a line of this last piece, nor even imagined the subject of it. I sallied out of my house that day, and, by way of recreation, repaired to the square of St. Mark. I looked round to see if any of the masks or jugglers might furnish me with the subject of a comedy, or some sort of spectacle for Shrovetide. I observed under the arcade of the clock a man with whom I was instantly struck, and who furnished me the subject I was in quest of. This was an old Armenian, ill-dressed, very dirty, and with a long beard, who ran about the streets of Venice, selling the dried fruits of his country, which he called *abagigi*. This man, who was to be found everywhere, and whom I had myself so frequently met, was so well known and so much despised, that when any one wished to laugh at a girl desirous of a husband, he proposed to her *Abagigi* in derision. This was enough to send me home satisfied. On entering my house, I shut myself up in my closet, and began a low comedy, which I called "I Pettigolezzi" (The Gossips). Under this title it has been translated into French by M. Ric-

eboni the younger, and represented at the Italian theatre in Paris. The translator very properly changed the character of Abagigi, which was unknown in France, into that of a Jew dealer in spectacles; but neither the French Jew nor the Italian Armenian is the protagonist; and they are only serviceable in carrying forward the plot of the piece, which succeeded in both languages. I could only give it on Shrove Tuesday for the first time, and with it we closed the carnival. The concourse was so extraordinary that day that the price of boxes was tripled and quadrupled, and the applause was so tumultuous that the passengers were in doubt whether they were the expression of satisfaction or a general disapprobation. I was seated very tranquilly in my box, surrounded by my friends, who wept for joy. A crowd of people came in quest of me, obliged me to leave the place, dragged and carried me in spite of all my endeavors to the Ridotto, exhibited me from one hall to another, and lavished a profusion of compliments on me, which I should willingly have escaped if possible. I was too much fatigued to support such a ceremony; besides, as I was ignorant of the origin of this enthusiasm of the moment, I was displeased to think that this piece should be preferred to so many others of which I was more fond. But I soon discerned the true motive of this general acclamation. It was the triumph of the fulfilment of my engagement.

IV.

AT the age of forty-three I had a great facility both in invention and execution, but still I was a man subject to infirmities like others. The assiduity of my labors at length undermined my health, and I fell sick,

and paid the penalty of my folly. I was always subject to fits of spleen, which attacked body and mind at once; but I felt a renewal of them at this time with more violence than ever. I was literally worn out with fatigue, but still my wretched state was, in a great measure, occasioned by the chagrin which I felt. I must conceal nothing from my readers.

I had given sixteen pieces in the course of a year. The director, it is true, did not demand them; but still he profited by them. What benefit had I derived? Not a farthing beyond the annual stipulation, not the smallest gratification. I received abundance of praise, and a profusion of compliments, but not the most trifling acknowledgment. I was displeased at this, but I said nothing. However, we cannot live on glory alone; and I had no other resource but an edition of my works. Who would suppose that in this I should meet with opposition from Medebac, and that some of his protectors should approve of the opposition? This man disputed my right of authorship under the pretext of having purchased my works. Of the period of our engagement there was still some time to run; I could not, or rather I was unwilling, to enter into a litigation with persons whom I should have occasion to see every day; I was too great a lover of peace to sacrifice it to interest; and I yielded my pretensions, and was satisfied with the permission of printing every year a single volume of my comedies. From this singular permission I discovered that Medebac counted upon my remaining attached to him during my whole life; but I waited the expiration of my fifth year to take my leave of him. I gave the manuscripts of four of my pieces to Antonio Bettinelli, the bookseller, who undertook the first edition of my "Theatre," and published the first volume at Venice in 1751.

Our company were to pass the spring and summer at Turin. I thought that a change of air and the pleasure of the journey might contribute to the restoration of my health. I followed the company at my own expense; and, in the intention of visiting Genoa, I took my dear companion along with me. I was unacquainted with Turin, which I found a delightful place. The uniformity of the buildings in the principal streets produces a charming effect. The squares and churches are exceedingly beautiful; the citadel is a superb promenade; and the royal residences, both in town and country, display great magnificence and taste. The inhabitants of Turin are very kind and polite; they have much of the manners and customs of the French, and speak the language familiarly; and on the arrival of a Milanese, a Venetian, or a Genoese, they are in the habit of saying, "He is an Italian."

My pieces were represented at Turin with applause, to crowded audiences; but there were a set of singular beings, who, at every one of my productions, observed, "This is good, but it is not Molière." This was doing me more honor than I deserved, for it had never entered into my head to compare myself with the French author. I knew that those who pronounced this vague and ridiculous judgment, merely went to the theatre for the sake of making the circuit of the boxes, and indulging in conversation. I was acquainted with Molière, and respected this master of the art as highly as the Piedmontese, and I was seized instantly with a desire to give them a convincing proof of it. I immediately composed a comedy in five acts, and in verse, without masks or change of scene, of which the title and principal subject were Molière himself. The argument was taken from two anecdotes of his private life:

the one, his projected marriage with Isabelle, the daughter of Bejard; and the other, the prohibition of his "Tartuffe." These two historical facts accord so well together that the unity of action is perfectly observed. The impostors of Paris, alarmed at the comedy of "Molière," knew that the author had sent to the camp, where Louis XIV. then was, to obtain permission for its representation, and they were afraid lest the revocation of the prohibition should be obtained. I employed in my piece a person of the name of Pirlon, a hypocrite in every sense of the word, who introduces himself into the author's house, discovers to La Bejard Molière's love for her daughter, of which she was yet ignorant, engages her to quit her companion and director; behaves in the same manner to Isabelle, holding up to her the situation of an actress as the road to perdition, and endeavors to deceive La Foret, their waiting-woman, who, more adroit than her mistresses, dupes the duper, inspires him with a love for her, and takes his cloak and hat from him to give to Molière, who appears on the stage with the dress of the impostor. I was bold enough to exhibit in my piece a much more marked hypocrite than that of Molière; but hypocrites had then lost a great deal of their ancient credit in Italy. During the interval between the fourth and last acts of my comedy, the "Tartuffe" of Molière is acted on the theatre of the Hôtel de Bourgogne; all the characters of my piece make their appearance in the fifth act, for the purpose of complimenting Molière: Pirlon, concealed in a closet, where he was expecting La Foret, is forced to come forth in the presence of all the spectators, and is assailed with the sarcasms which he so richly deserved; and Molière, to add to his joy and happiness, marries Isabelle, in spite of the mother, who aspired to the conquest of her future son-in-law.

In this piece are to be found several details of the life of Molière. The character of Valerio is Baron, an actor of Molière's company. Leander is a copy of La Chapelle, a friend of the author, and often mentioned in the account of his life; and Count Lasca is one of the Piedmontese who judged of pieces without seeing them, and instituted an awkward comparison between the Venetian and French authors, that is to say, between the scholar and the master. This work is in verse: I had composed tragi-comedies in blank verse, but this is the first comedy which I composed in rhyme. As its subject was a French author, who wrote largely in that style, it became necessary to imitate him; and I found nothing that approached the Alexandrines but the Martellian verses, of which I have already spoken in the first part of these memoirs. On the conclusion of my piece, and the distribution of the parts, I witnessed two rehearsals at Turin, and set out for Genoa without seeing it acted. The actors, and a few of the townspeople, were let into the secret of the character of Count Lasca. I charged them to acquaint me with the result; and I learned, a few days afterwards, that the piece had the greatest success; that the original of the criticism was discovered, and that he had been candid enough to avow that it was deserved.

I remained the whole summer at Genoa, leading a most delicious and completely idle life. How delightful it is, especially after much severe labor, to pass a few days without doing anything! But the autumn was fast approaching; the season began to grow more cool, and I resumed the road to my workshop.

On arriving at Venice, I found my first volume in print, and money in the hands of my bookseller. I received at the same time a gold watch, a box of the

same metal, a silver board with chocolate, and four pair of Venice ruffles. These were presents from those to whom I had dedicated my four first comedies. Medebac arrived a few days after me, and spoke highly of the pleasure which "Molière" gave at Turin. I had a strong desire to see it myself; and we brought it out at Venice in the month of October, 1751. This piece contained two novelties, the subject and the versification; for the Martellian verses were at that time forgotten. The monotony of the cæsural pause, the great frequency of the rhyme, and the perpetual recurrence of couplets, disgusted the ears of the Italians during the lifetime of the inventor, and every person was prejudiced against me for pretending to revive a mode of versification already proscribed. But the effect gave the lie to this anticipation; my verses were equally well relished with the piece, and "Molière" was classed by the public voice along with "Pamela." Were I permitted to pronounce my own opinion of the relative worth of my comedies, I should have a great deal to say in favor of the "Padre di Famiglia" (Father of a Family); but, taking the decision of the public respecting my works for my guide, I am forced to rank it only in the second class of my comedies. I bestowed all the care which my observation and my zeal inspired me with on this interesting subject; and I was even tempted to call my piece the "School for Fathers"; but great masters have alone a right to give Schools; and I might possibly be deceived as well as the author of the "School for Widows." I had seen in the world indulgent mothers, unjust step-mothers, spoiled children, and dangerous preceptors; I grouped all these different objects in a single picture, and in the conduct of a wise and prudent father, I

exhibited a strong instance of the proper punishment of vice and the example of virtue. In this comedy there is another father, by way of episode, who contributes to the development and winding-up of the plot. This father has two daughters; the one brought up at home, and the other educated at an aunt's, by which a convent is meant, as this word dare not, in Italy, be pronounced on the stage. The first turns out well, but the other has every possible defect concealed under the mask of hypocrisy. My intention was to give the preference to a domestic education; and this was perfectly understood by the public, and met with their approbation. To this moral and critical piece an interesting and virtuous subject succeeded, which was infinitely relished, and which the public placed in the first class of my productions: this was "The Venetian Advocate."

In my comedy of "The Prudent Man" I had given a specimen of my old profession of criminal advocate in Tuscany; in the present I wished to recall to the recollection of my countrymen that I had also been a civil practitioner at the bar of Venice. This piece gave universal satisfaction; and my brethren, accustomed to see the gown ridiculed in the old comedies of intrigue, were pleased with the honorable point of view in which I now exhibited it. Still, however, the intention of the author and the effect of the work were called in question by the evil-disposed. One person, in particular, exclaimed that my piece was an attack on the bar; that my protagonist was an imaginary being, whom no person living could imitate; and that I had exhibited an incorruptible advocate, by way of drawing the public attention to the weakness and avility of so many others. He even mentioned the

most respectable names at the bar, in point of talents, as those whose probity was the most to be suspected. It will scarcely be believed that the author of the criticism belonged himself to this respectable body; the fact, however, is but too true; and this audacious man had even the impudence to make a boast of it: he was punished by universal contempt, and obliged to change his profession.

Let us pass from one fortunate piece to another which was not less fortunate, "*Il Feudatario*" (The Feudatary); the principal subject of which is a presumptive heiress of a fief fallen into the hands of strangers. The differences between the lady and the possessor of the estate in question are arranged by a marriage between these two persons; but the piece contains incidents of a very interesting nature, and it is enlivened by characters and scenes of a comical, new, and original description. I derived this provision of ridicule from a residence, some years before, at Sanguinetto, a fief of Count Leoni, in the Veronese, when I was there employed by that nobleman in drawing up a legal report. I know not whether this comedy is equal in point of merit to the "*Padre di Famiglia*"; but its success was greater, and I am therefore bound to respect the opinion of my judges.

The same fortune also befell the "*Figlia Obbediente*" (Obedient Daughter); inferior also in my opinion to the "*Padre di Famiglia*," but which was equally successful with the foregoing comedy. On inquiring into the cause of this phenomenon, I am led to impute it to the pleasure received from the comic scenes with which the two last plays abound, whereas the principal merit of the other is of a critical and moral nature. This is a proof that in general we prefer amusement to

instruction. In this last comedy the principal subject is far from being very interesting, for it is destitute of suspension, as the winding-up of the plot is foreseen at the commencement of the action. It owed its fortune entirely to the original and very comic episodes with which it abounded. Rosaura, the heroine of the play, sacrifices her love to her respect for her father, who does not condemn the inclination of his daughter; but in the absence of her lover he engages her to a rich stranger, and he is the slave of his word. The person to whom Rosaura is destined by her father is of so singular a character that it would have been thought improbable and unnatural if the original had not been recognized. In his extravagance there is nothing to detract either from his morals or his probity: he is even noble, just, and generous; but his manners, his monosyllabic conversation, his injudicious prodigality, his whimsical though sensible reflections, rendered him highly comic, and the subject of general conversation. How could I lose sight of such an original? I brought him forward, but with every regard to decency, and those who knew him and were even attached to him could not complain of me. Another personage, not so noble, but not less comic, contributed to increase the amusement of the comedy. This was the father of a dancer, proud of the wealth of his daughter, derived, as he said, from her talents, without derogating from her virtue. When sick at Bologna, I was visited in my convalescence by this man, who never ceased speaking to me of princes, kings, and the like, and of the excessive delicacy of his daughter. I returned his visit as soon as I was able to go out. His daughter was not at home; but he showed me her plate. "Observe," said he, "all these silver dishes;

everything is silver with us, even the very warming-pan is silver." Could I forget the father satisfied, the daughter happy, and virtue recompensed? This episode is very well connected in the piece with that of the extraordinary man, and both contributed to the success of the obedient daughter, who marries her lover with the approbation of her father. The piece was applauded, and with it we closed the autumn of 1751.

V.

DURING the Christmas holidays, an adventure took place extremely fortunate for Medebac, and agreeable for myself. Marliani, the Brighella of the company, was married; and his wife, who, like himself, had been a rope-dancer, was a very pretty and amiable young Venetian, full of wit and talents, and with the happiest disposition for the stage. I took her under my care, and composed a piece for her *débüt*. Madame Medebac supplied me with interesting and affecting ideas when I wished for comic scenes of a simple and innocent description; and Madame Marliani, who was lively, witty, and naturally artful, gave a new flight to my imagination, and encouraged me to labor in that species of comedy which requires a display of finesse and artifice.

I began with the "*Serva Amoroſa*," or "*The Generous Waiting-Maid*"; for the adjective *amoroso-a*, in Italian, is applied to friendship as well as love. This piece met with the most complete success, and Coralina was very much applauded in it; but she became all at once, from this circumstance, a formidable rival for Madame Medebac. The wife of the director was entitled to some consolation; and it was our duty, be-

sides, to encourage and flatter the actress who for three years had been the principal support of our theatre. I gave out, therefore, immediately, a comedy expressly written for her, called "La Moglie Saggia" (The Sensible Wife). The piece was universally and constantly applauded, and the directress was immediately cured of her jealous frenzy.

I still felt at that time, and have ever since continued to feel, the consequences of the excessive fatigue I sustained in composing my sixteen comedies. I required a change of air, and I went to join my comedians at Bologna. On my arrival in this town I entered a coffee-house facing the church of St. Petronius. No one knew who I was. A few minutes after my entrance, a nobleman of that country came in, and addressing himself to five or six persons of his acquaintance, seated round a table, he said to them in good Bolognese, "Have you heard the news, my friends?" He was asked what he alluded to, and he answered, "Goldoni has just arrived." "That is of no consequence to me," said one. "What is that to us?" said another. The third answered more politely, "I should be very glad to see him." "A fine object to see, truly!" said the two former. "He is the author of those beautiful comedies," said the other. Here he was interrupted by the man who had not yet spoken, and who exclaimed aloud, "O yes, the great author! the magnificent author, who has suppressed masks and ruined comedy!" At that moment Doctor Fiume arrived, who said, while he embraced me, "Welcome, my dear Goldoni." The person who had expressed a desire to know me advanced towards me, and the others stole out one by one without saying a word. I was highly amused with this little scene. I was

glad to see the doctor, who some years before had been my physician, and I made the best return I could to the polite Bolognese, who had expressed so good an opinion of me. We all went out together to call on the Marquis d'Albergati Capacelli, a senator of Bologna.

This nobleman, well known in the republic of letters, from his translations of several French tragedies, from several good comedies of his own composition, and still more from the high opinion entertained of him by Voltaire, independently of his science and his genius, possessed an admirable talent for theatrical declamation. There were no actors or amateurs then in Italy who equalled him in representing tragedy heroes, or lovers in comedy. His country, whose delight he was, had the pleasure of enjoying his talents sometimes at Zola and sometimes at Medicina, his estates; where he was seconded by male and female amateurs, whom he animated by his intelligence and experience. I was fortunate enough to contribute to his pleasure, having composed five pieces for his theatre, of which I shall give some account at the end of this second part. M. d'Albergati always showed great kindness and friendship for me. I made his house my home whenever I went to Bologna, and, in our present distance from each other, he has not forgotten me, having addressed one of his comedies to me, preceded by a very charming epistle, with which I have every reason to be highly flattered.

During my stay in Bologna I did not lose my time, I labored for my theatre, and composed, among other things, a comedy entitled "I Pontigli Domestici," (The Domestic Disputes), with which we opened, at Venice, the comic year 1752. I passed from an interesting

subject to one of a comic nature. I had seen a very rich man with an only daughter, who was young and pretty, and who possessed a fine talent for poetry, to whose marriage he would not give his consent, that he might have the sole enjoyment of this charming muse. He held literary assemblies in his house. Every one went with pleasure for the sake of the daughter; but the ridiculous behavior of the father was quite insufferable. When the young lady recited her verses, this infatuated man used to rise from his seat; he would look about him to the right and left, and enjoin strict silence. A sneeze discomposed him; he was offended if snuff were taken; and he exhibited such a variety of gestures and contortions, that it was the most difficult thing in the world to refrain from laughter. When the verses of the daughter were finished the father was the first to applaud them, and then he left the circle. Without the smallest consideration for those poets who were reciting their compositions, he went behind the chairs of all present, expressing himself loudly, and with the utmost indecorum, in such terms as these: "Did you hear my daughter? What do you think of her? This is quite another thing!" I was several times present at scenes of this nature; but the last which I witnessed took rather an unfortunate turn; for the authors quarrelled in good earnest, and quitted the place very abruptly. This foolish father determined on a journey to Rome, that his daughter might be crowned in the capitol. He was prevented by the relations of the family; and the government having at length interfered in the business, the lady was married in spite of him; the consequence of which was, that fifteen days afterwards he fell sick and died of chagrin.

On this anecdote I composed a comedy under the

title of "Il Poeta Fanatico" (The Fanatical Poet), in which I was induced to give the father also a taste of some kind or other for poetry, for the sake of throwing more gayety into the piece; this work, however, is by no means equal to the "Metromanie" of Piron; but, on the contrary, one of my most indifferent comedies. It met, however, with some success at Venice; but this was owing to the entertainment which I had thrown into the principal subject. Collalto acted a young improvisatore, and in the delivery of his verses pleased by the graces of his singing. The servant was also a poet, and his compositions and burlesque impromptus were very amusing; but a comedy without interest, intrigue, or suspense, notwithstanding the beauties of particular parts, is still, after all, a poor piece. Why was it printed then? Because the booksellers lay hold of everything, without so much as consulting the authors, even during their own lifetime.

On the arrival of the Christmas holidays of the year 1751, it became time to put Medebac in mind that the end of our engagement was approaching, and to give him notice not to rely on me for the following year. I spoke to him in an amicable way, and without any formality. He answered me very politely that he was sorry for it, but that I was the master of my own inclinations. He did his utmost, however, to induce me to remain with him, and even sent several of his friends to speak to me on the subject; but my resolution was firmly fixed; and during the ten days of relaxation I entered into an agreement with his excellency Vendramini, a noble Venetian, and proprietor of the theatre of St. Luke.

I had still to labor for the theatre of St. Angelo till the close of 1752; and I discharged my duty so

well that I gave more pieces to the director than he had time to act, and he had some remaining which he used after our separation. Madame Medebac was still unwell; her ill-humors became every day more troublesome and ridiculous: she laughed and wept in the same instant, and uttered cries and exhibited grimaces and contortions. The good people of the family thought her bewitched, and sent for exorcists. She was loaded with relics, and played with these pious monuments like a child of four years of age. Seeing the principal actress unable to appear on the stage, I composed, at the opening of the carnival, a comedy for Coralina. Madame Medebac made her appearance in good health on Christmas Day; but on hearing that "La Locandiera," a new piece, composed for Coralina, was given out for the following day, she took to her bed again with a new species of fits, which completely exhausted the patience of her mother, husband, relations, and servants. We opened the theatre then on the 26th of December with "La Locandiera," a word derived from *locanda*, which has the same signification in Italian as *hôtel garni* in French. There is no word, however, in the French language to indicate the man or woman who keeps one of those hotels; and in translating this piece into French it would be necessary to take the title from the character, and call it "The Dexterous Woman" (*Femme Adroite*). The success of this piece was so brilliant that it was not only placed on a level with, but even preferred to everything which I had yet done in that species of comedy where artifice supplies the place of interest. It would perhaps be scarcely credited, without reading it, that the projects, proceedings, and triumph of the heroine of the piece could all take place, with probability, in

the space of twenty-four hours. I was perhaps flattered in Italy; but I was told that it was the most natural and best conducted of all my pieces, and that the action was completely supported and perfect in every respect.

From the jealousy with which Madame Medebac viewed the progress of *Coralina*, this last piece, one might have thought, would have killed her outright; but as her disorder was quite singular in its kind, she quitted her bed in two days and demanded the representation of the "*Locandiera*" to be stopped for the purpose of again giving out "*Pamela*." The public was not highly satisfied with this; but the director did not think proper to oppose the desire of his wife, and "*Pamela*" appeared again on the theatre after the fourth representation of a fortunate and new comedy. These little pieces of kindness will every now and then take place where despotism disdains to yield to reason. For my part I had nothing to say in the business; the dispute related to two of my daughters, and I was a tender father to both the one and the other.

VI.

I PASSED from the theatre of St. Angelo to that of St. Luke, where there was no director, but where the actors shared the receipts; and the proprietor of the house, who enjoyed the benefit of the boxes, paid their salaries in proportion to their merits, or the length of their services. This patrician was the person with whom I had to act. I gave him my pieces, which were instantly paid for, before even being read. My emoluments were almost doubled; I enjoyed the full liberty of printing my works, and I was not

obliged to follow the company to the continent. My situation was therefore become much more lucrative, and at the same time infinitely more honorable.

But what is there in this world without its disadvantages? The principal actress of the company was almost fifty. They had lately received a charming Florentine, but for second parts only; and I ran the risk of being obliged to give subordinate characters to this young woman, and those of lovers to the old actress. Madame Gandini, the first actress, had the good sense to do herself justice; but her husband declared, in high terms, that he would not allow his wife to sustain the slightest injury; and the proprietor of the theatre, who had the right to decide, was afraid of discharging two old persons, to whom the company had been much indebted.

I spoke to M. Gandini in private, and asked him how long he thought his wife capable of enjoying her situation and her profits. "My wife," said he, "may yet shine on the stage for these ten years." "Very well," said I; "I am authorized by the proprietors to secure to Madame Gandini her salary and her situation for the space of ten years. I engage, for my part, to bring her forward in characters calculated to gain applause; but then you must leave me at liberty to employ her as I please." "No, sir," he answered abruptly; "my wife is the principal actress, and I would rather be hanged than see her degraded." So saying, he turned his back to me in a rude and indecorous manner. I swore that I would be even with him; and you will see, in the third piece of this year, whether I kept my word.

The company were to pass the spring and summer at Leghorn, and I calculated on remaining at Venice,

where my first object was to look after the edition of my works. The two first volumes had been published by Bettinelli the bookseller, and I was on the point of taking the manuscript of the third to him; but what was my astonishment when I was told by this phlegmatic man, with the most chilling indifference, that he could no longer receive any more copy from me; that he was to receive it from the hands of Medebac; and that he was to continue the edition on account of this comedian. On recovering from my surprise, and when my indignation was succeeded by a calm, "Take care, friend," said I to him; "you are not rich, and have children; do not ruin yourself, do not force me to ruin you." He persisted, however, in his resolution. Bettinelli, whom I had too early, perhaps, allowed to receive the privilege of printing my works, had been gained over by money: and I had therefore to contend against the director, who contested the right of property of my pieces, and against the bookseller, who was empowered to publish them.

I should, without doubt, have gained my suit, but this would have required litigation, and chicanery is the same all the world over. I took the shortest method; for I went instantly to Florence, and commenced a new edition, leaving Medebac and Bettinelli at liberty to continue the one at Venice: but I published a prospectus which threw both of them into consternation; for I announced corrections and alterations. I applied at Florence to a M. Paperini, a very respectable printer and a worthy man. We concluded our agreement in two hours' time, and in the month of May, 1753, we had the first volume in the press. This fortunate edition of ten volumes, octavo, by subscription, and at my expense, was extended to

seventeen hundred copies; and on the publication of the sixth volume, it was completely filled up. I had five hundred subscribers at Venice, and the entry of my edition was prohibited in the territories of the republic. This proscription of my works in my own country may appear singular; but it was a mere affair of commerce. Bettinelli had found protectors to secure to him his exclusive privilege, and the body of booksellers seconded him, because mine was a foreign edition.

Notwithstanding, however, this prohibition, and all the precautions of my adversaries, every time that one of my volumes issued from the press, five hundred copies were despatched to Venice. An asylum for them had been found on the banks of the Po; a company of noble Venetians went in quest of the contraband commodity to the Venetian confines, introduced it into the capital, and made the distribution in open day; for the government would not interfere in an affair which was more ridiculous than interesting.

When I was at Florence, and my new company at Leghorn, I visited them occasionally, and put into the hands of the principal actress two comedies which I found leisure to compose, notwithstanding the fatiguing and assiduous attention which my edition required from me. We all met at Venice in the beginning of the month of October, and the first new piece which we gave was "L'Avaro Geloso" (The Jealous Miser). I drew the protagonist of this piece from nature. I became acquainted with his portrait and his history at Florence, where this man lived to the disgrace of humanity. He was charged with two vices equally odious, but which, from the contrast between his passions, placed him in highly comic situ-

ations. The infamy of this character is calculated to excite disgust; however, the piece would still have succeeded, but the actor to whom the part was intrusted was exceedingly deformed, and in no estimation with the public. I thought I acted properly in choosing, for a wicked character, a man who answered that description pretty well himself, and I imagined that his leanness, his ill looks, and his broken voice would suit tolerably well with the part. In this, however, I was much deceived. Some time afterwards I gave the same part to Rubini, who acted the Venetian characters; and the same piece, which completely failed at its débüt, became afterwards one of the favorite pieces of that excellent actor.

My enemies, who were not sorry at the unfortunate issue of my first piece, and the partisans of the theatre of St. Angelo, observed, with a sort of malicious joy, that I would repent having quitted a company to whom I was indebted for the success of my works. None of these observations gave me the smallest uneasiness. I was sure of silencing them with my third piece; but in the mean time I was in great apprehension for the second, which I was about to give. This was the "*Donna di Testa Debole, ò la Vedova Infatuata*" (The Silly Woman, or Infatuated Widow). The piece fell at its first representations, as I had foreseen; and I unfortunately saw my prognostication too well verified.

I perceived, when it was too late, the circumstances which were unfavorable for me and my comedians. They were not yet sufficiently instructed in the new method necessary for my comedies: I had not yet had time to infuse into them the taste, tone, or natural and expressive manner which distinguished the actors

of the theatre of St. Angelo. Another circumstance was still more remarkable. The theatre of St. Luke was much larger, and from that circumstance everything simple and delicate in action, everything refined, agreeable, and truly comic, lost much of its attraction. It was natural to suppose that the public in time would reconcile themselves to the situation, and listen with more attention to regular and natural pieces; but it was requisite to make a strong impression at first by vigorous subjects, by actions which, without being gigantic, rose above the level of ordinary comedy.

This was my first project; but the publication of my works did not leave me the master of my wishes, and it was not till my third piece that I made the requisite effort of imagination to install myself with honor in the new theatre, where I had to carry through reform and support my reputation. Having this object in view, I looked out for a subject capable of supplying me with comic and interesting situations and showy exhibitions. I had perused the modern history of Salmon, translated from the English into Italian: but I did not find there the fable which forms the subject of my piece. In that instructive work, however, I acquired information respecting the laws, manners, and customs of the Persians; and from the details of the English author, I composed a comedy entitled "*La Sposa Persiana*" (*The Persian Spouse*).

The subject of this piece is not heroic: a rich financier of Ispahan, of the name of Machmout, engages and forces Thamas, his son, to marry against his will, Fatima, the daughter of Osman, an officer of rank in the army of the Sophi. This is what we every day see in our pieces; a young lady betrothed to a young

man whose heart is already preoccupied. However, the names of Fatima, Machmout, and Thamas began to lead the public to expect something extraordinary ; and the saloon of the financier furnished with a sofa and cushions in the Mahometan style, and the dresses and turbans in the Oriental costume, announced a strange nation, and whatever is strange naturally excites curiosity. Thamas had a Circassian slave of the name of Hircana, to whom he was tenderly attached, and who, notwithstanding her servitude, proudly refused to allow her lover and master to share her favors with other women, not even with the one his father destined for his spouse. This comedy was highly successful, and was represented so long that some curious individuals had time to transcribe it, and it appeared in print without a date some time afterwards.

I owed the flattering reception of this piece to Madame Bresciani, who acted the character of Hircana, and for whom I had conceived and executed it. Gandini would not allow the prerogatives of his wife to be encroached on ; and this would have been all very well if Madame Gandini had not been on the verge of fifty ; but to avoid disputes, I gave a character to the second actress greatly superior to that of the first. I was highly recompensed for my pains ; for it was impossible to represent a strong and interesting passion with more force, energy, and truth than was displayed by Madame Bresciani in this important character. This actress, who, to her talents and information, added the advantage of a sonorous voice and a charming pronounciation, produced such an impression in this fortunate comedy, that she always went afterwards by the name of Hircana. The interest taken by the public in the character of Hircana might lead to a suspicion that I had

mistaken the title of the piece, or weakened the principal action. Fatima, however, is the protagonist, and Hircana the antagonist ; but the illusion was not in unison with this arrangement, and the slave of twenty-five triumphed over the spouse of fifty.

The public, always attached to the charming Circassian, was sorry to see her leave the stage with a sigh, and would have wished to know whither she went and what became of her. I was asked for the sequel to the "Persian Spouse," and yet it was not the spouse which interested the curious. I should have willingly contented them, but could not. Gandini was piqued against the public and against me, whom he accused of having played him a cursed trick ; for I had had, he said, the diabolical art to sacrifice his wife without his perceiving it. It was not my intention to injure him. I merely wished to force him to accept the advantageous offer which I proposed to him, and I was in reality doing him a service, notwithstanding his brutality. More obstinate than ever, this unreasonable man informed the proprietor of the theatre that his wife would not act in the sequel to the "Persian Spouse," of which he had heard. He met with a very unfavorable reception from his excellency Vendramini ; and the comedian, who could not give vent to his rage against his superior, took his watch to pieces and threw it, as he left the house, against a glass door, which he broke. But he did still worse than this ; he went to the Saxon minister, who was in want of actors for King Augustus of Poland, and engaged himself and his wife for Dresden. Both of them immediately disappeared without the least notice. No one was disposed to regret them, and least of all myself ; for by their departure I was left in perfect freedom to labor as I pleased, and I ac-

cordingly gratified my countrymen with the sequel which was so much desired by them.

I entitled the second piece on this subject, "Hircana at Julfa." Julfa, or Zulfa, is a town a league distant from Ispahan, and inhabited by a colony of Armenians, whom Schah-Abas invited into Persia for the advantage of trade. Hircana, forced to leave Ispahan, forms the resolution of repairing to Julfa, where at last Thamas makes her an offer of his hand. Her joy is at its height. They are now both satisfied; and the public thanked me with reiterated applauses for having terminated the catastrophe of Hircana in a satisfactory manner. But, next day, the very same public were asking if this spouse of Thamas was to be happy, if Machmout would pardon his son for all the displeasure he had caused him to experience, and if he would receive favorably a woman who had thrown his house into trouble and desolation. The novel, it was said, was greatly advanced, but not yet finished. I was aware of this also, and had foreseen the consequence so well, that I had a third piece quite arranged in my imagination, which I gave the following year under the title of "Hircana at Ispahan." This was so successful that it greatly surpassed the two others, still possessing the same interest, and leaving nothing more to be desired by the friends of the Circassian.

This third Persian comedy did not make its appearance on the stage till a year after the second, and three years after the first; but I have placed them here in succession, that my readers may have a distinct view at once of the three different actions on the same subject. The success of the last was even greater, if possible, than that of the others.

VII.

I MUST return to the year 1753, from which I was induced to wander, that I might not interrupt the continuity of "The Three Persians." The public demanded verses: there was no alternative; and in the ensuing carnival I gave "Il Filosofo Inglese" (The English Philosopher). The theatre represented a street in the city of London, with a coffee-house and a bookseller's shop. At that time a translation of the English "Spectator," a periodical work, was in the hands of everybody at Venice. The women of Venice, who till then were no great readers, began to relish that work, and to become philosophers. I was delighted to see criticism and instruction admitted to the toilets of my dear countrywomen, and this induced me to compose the piece in question.

In the beginning of the year 1754 I received a letter from my brother. For twelve years I had had no news of him; and he gave me then an account of himself from the battle of Veletri, in which he was present, in the suite of the Duke of Modena, to the day in which he thought proper to write to me. This letter was dated from Rome, in which city he had married the widow of a lawyer, by whom he had two children; a boy of eight and a girl of five years of age. His wife was dead; he was tired of residing in a country where military men were neither useful nor held in estimation; and he was desirous of living beside his brother, and of presenting him the two shoots of the family of Goldoni. Far from being piqued at a silence and neglect of twelve years, I instantly felt an interest in these two children, who might perhaps stand in need of my assistance. I invited my brother to return to

my house ; I wrote to Rome, that he might be supplied with the money he stood in need of ; and in the month of March of the same year I embraced with real satisfaction this brother, whom I had always loved, and my niece and nephew, whom I adopted as my children. My mother, who was still alive, felt a lively pleasure in seeing again a son whom she no longer reckoned among the living ; and my wife, whose goodness and sweetness of disposition never varied, received these two children as her own, and took care of their education.

Surrounded with all that was most dear to me, and contented with the success of my works, I was one of the happiest men in the world ; but I was, at the same time, extremely wearied. I was still suffering from the immense fatigue which I had undergone for the theatre of St. Angelo ; and the verses, to which I had unfortunately accustomed the public, cost me infinitely more trouble than prose. My spleen began to attack me with more than usual violence. The new family, which I maintained in my house, rendered my health more than ever necessary to me, and the dread of losing it augmented my complaint. My attacks were as much of a physical as a moral nature. Sometimes my imagination was heated by the effervescence of the bodily fluids, and sometimes the animal economy was deranged by apprehension. Our mind is so intimately connected with our body, that if it were not for reason, which belongs to the immortal soul, we should be mere machines. In my present state I required exercise and amusement. I resolved on a short journey, and I took all my family with me.

On my arrival at Modena I was attacked with a defluxion in my chest. Everybody was in an alarm

for me, but I was nowise alarmed myself; and this is the way in which I have been all my lifetime: possessing a great deal of courage when in danger, and suffering from ridiculous apprehensions when in good health. I got rid of my indisposition, but I had no time for amusement. My comedians were at Milan, where I went to join them; having my wife, my brother, and his two children, always along with me. The expense nowise alarmed me, as my edition went on successfully, and money poured in upon me from all quarters. Money has never been long stationary with me. "The Persian Spouse" had the same success at Milan as at Venice, and I was overwhelmed with praise, with offers of friendship, and presents. My health was improving, my spleen subsided, and I led a delicious life; but this state of happiness, prosperity, and tranquillity was not of long duration.

The company of the theatre of St. Luke made an acquisition of an excellent actor, of the name of Angeleri, a native of Milan, who had a brother at the bar, and whose relatives were of great respectability in the middle class of that place. This man was subject to fits of spleen, and I had several conversations with him at Venice on the extravagance of our malady. I met with him on my arrival at Milan, and found him worse than ever. He was tormented between the desire of displaying the superiority of his talents and the shame of appearing on the theatre of his native place. He suffered infinitely from seeing his companions applauded, and having no share himself in the applause of the public. This spleen gained ground every day, and the conversations which we had together tended also to excite mine. He yielded at length to the impulse of his genius, and exposed himself in public. He

played with great applause, and, on returning behind the scenes, he dropped down dead. The stage was empty; the actors did not make their appearance; the news gradually spread; and at last reached the box where I was. "O heavens! Angeleri dead? My companion in spleen!" I rushed out like a madman, and proceeded without knowing where. I reached home without being conscious of the way I took. Everybody perceived my agitation; and when I was asked the cause of it, I cried out repeatedly, "Angeleri is dead!" and threw myself upon my bed. My wife, who knew my disposition, endeavored to tranquillize me, and advised me to be bled. I believe I should have done well to have followed her advice; but in the midst of the phantoms which harassed me to a degree that almost suspended respiration, I was still sensible of my folly, and ashamed of having yielded to it. Notwithstanding my endeavors to call reason to my assistance, the revolution was so violent that I was seized with real illness, and my mind was more difficult to cure than my body.

Doctor Baronio, my physician, after frequently employing all the resources of his profession, cured me thoroughly one day by an advice which he gave me. "Consider your disease," said he, "in the light of a child who comes forward to attack you with a drawn sword. If you be on your guard, he cannot hurt you; but if you lay open your breast to him, the child will kill you!" This apologue restored me to health, and I have never forgotten it. I have found its use in every stage of my life; for this cursed child sometimes threatens me yet, and it costs me some efforts to disarm him.

During the progress of my recovery at Modena, and in the intervals of my fits at Milan, I never lost sight

of my theatre. I returned to Venice with a sufficiency of materials for the year 1754; and our theatre opened with a piece called "La Villegiatura" (The Country Excursion). I had observed, in my journey, a number of country houses along the banks of the Brenta, where all the pomp of luxury was displayed. In former times our ancestors frequented these spots for the sole purpose of collecting their property, and their descendants go there merely to spend theirs. In the country they keep open table, play high, give balls and theatrical entertainments, and the Italian *cicisbeo* system is there indulged without disguise or constraint, and gains more ground than elsewhere. I gave a view of all these circumstances shortly afterwards in three consecutive pieces. In the first there is no interest; but the details of a gallant nature are very amusing, and the variety of characters introduced gives rise to incidents and dialogues of a highly comic nature, and furnishes an opportunity for the display of much just and entertaining criticism. My object was seen through and applauded, and the piece, though in prose, met with more success than I could have imagined.

I prepared for the carnival a comedy in prose, the subject of which did not appear to me adapted for verse. I allude to the "Vecchio Bizzarro": this word *bizzarro* sometimes in Italian has the signification of the French word *bizarre*, and means capricious, fantastical, and even extravagant; but it is much more frequently used to express what is gay, amusing, and brilliant; and the best translation for my "Vecchio Bizzarro," is "The Amiable Old Man." I recollected the "Cortesan Veneziano," given by me fifteen years before to the theatre of St. Samuel, and represented by Golinetti with so much applause; and I was desirous of composing a

piece in the same style for Rubini, who acted Pantaloon in the theatre of St. Luke. But Golinetti was a young man, and Rubini fifty at the least; and as I wished to bring him forward in this piece without a mask, it was necessary to adapt the character to his age. Those men who have been amiable in their youth are proportionably so in their old age; and of this Rubini himself was a proof, for he was as agreeable on the stage as delightful in company.

I expected that this play would at least be equally successful with "The Cortesan"; but in this expectation I was sadly deceived. Rubini, who had never appeared without a mask, was so constrained and embarrassed in his acting, that he displayed neither grace nor art nor common-sense. The piece fell in the most cruel and humiliating manner for both himself and me: it was with the greatest difficulty that it was allowed to go on to the conclusion, and when the curtain was lowered, nothing but hisses were to be heard. I escaped with all possible expedition from the theatre, to avoid disagreeable compliments, and repaired to the Ridotto. I mixed, concealed beneath my mask, in the crowd which assembles there on leaving the theatres, and I had sufficient time and opportunity to hear the eulogies with which both myself and my piece were honored. I went from one gaming-table to another, and I found myself the universal subject of conversation. "Goldoni is done," said some; "Goldoni has emptied his bag," said others. I recognized a nasal voice which proceeded from a mask, and declared aloud that "the portfolio was exhausted." He was asked what portfolio he alluded to. "The manuscript," said he, "from which Goldoni has drawn everything that he has yet produced." Notwithstanding the desire which

every one seemed to have to laugh at my expense, this declaration of the nasal mask turned the current of ridicule completely against himself. I sought for criticism, but I could hear only the effusions of ignorance and animosity.

On returning home, I passed the night in meditating on the means of being revenged on my ill-natured critics. I was at length successful, and at break of day I began a comedy of five acts, and in verse, entitled "Il Festino" (The Citizen's Ball). I sent it, act by act, to the copyist. The comedians got off their parts in proportion as the work proceeded: on the fourteenth day the play was advertised, and on the fifteenth it was acted. It was a complete exemplification of the axiom "Facit indignatio versus." This piece was still founded on the *cicisbeo* system. A husband forces his wife to give a ball to her *cicisbeo*. I contrived to have in a saloon adjoining the ball-room an assembly of fatigued dancers. I turned the conversation to the "Vecchio Bizzarro," — I repeated all the ridiculous things which I heard at the *Ridotto*; I kept up a dispute for and against the piece and the author, and my defence met with the approbation and applause of the public.

In this manner I gave a proof that my "bag was not empty," and that my "portfolio was not exhausted." Listen to me, my fellow-laborers; we have no other means of being revenged on the public, but by compelling them to applaud us.

VIII.

AMIDST my several daily occupations, I never lost sight of the impression of my works. In my Florence edition I had published the pieces composed by me for

the theatres of St. Samuel and St. Angelo; and I began now to send to the press the productions of the two first years of my new engagement with that of St. Luke. This edition in octavo, under the title of "New Theatre of M. Goldoni," was undertaken by Pitteri, a bookseller of Venice. I supplied him with sufficient materials for six months, and then went to join my comedians, who were passing the spring at Bologna.

On arriving at the bridge of Lago-Seuro, a league from Ferrara, where certain duties are demanded, I forgot to submit my trunk to an examination, and I was taken into custody on leaving the village. I had a small store of chocolate, coffee, and tapers. These were contraband commodities, and liable to confiscation. This subjected me to a considerable fine; and in the dominions of the church the revenue-officers are by no means lenient. The custom-house officer, who had peace-officers along with him, on searching my trunk, found several volumes of my comedies, which he extolled as highly delightful. He acted himself in private parties. On my naming myself, he was surprised, enchanted, and kindly disposed towards me; and he gave me reason to entertain the most favorable hopes. Had he been alone, he would have set me instantly at liberty; but as it was, the guards would not have consented to lose their dues. The officer ordered my trunk to be packed up again, and took me with him to the custom-house. The director of the customs was not there: my protector went himself to Ferrara in quest of him; and he returned in three hours' time with an order for my liberation, on paying a small sum of duty for my provisions. I wished to recompense the officer for the service he had rendered me; but he refused two sequins which I requested him to accept, and even my choco-

late, which I offered to share with him. All I could do, therefore, was to thank and admire him: I wrote his name down in my memorandum-book; I promised him a copy of my new edition, an offer which he accepted with gratitude, and I entered my chaise, resumed my journey, and arrived in the evening at Bologna.

In this city, the mother of science and the Athens of Italy, complaints had been made some years before of my reformation, as having a tendency to suppress the four masks of the Italian comedy. This sort of comedy was in greater estimation at Bologna than elsewhere. There were several persons of merit in that place, who took a delight in composing outlines of pieces, which were very well represented there by citizens of great ability, and the delight of their country. The amateurs of the old comedy, on seeing the rapid progress of the new, declared everywhere that it was unworthy of an Italian to give a blow to a species of comedy in which Italy had attained great distinction, and which no other nation had ever yet been able to imitate. But what made the greatest impression on the discontented was the suppression of masks, which my system appeared to threaten. It was said that these personages had for two centuries been the amusement of Italy, and that it ought not to be deprived of a species of comic diversion which it had created and so well supported.

Before venturing to give any opinion on this subject, I imagine the reader will have no objection to listen for a few minutes to a short account of the origin, employment, and effects of these four masks. Comedy, which in all ages has been the favorite entertainment of polished nations, shared the fate of the arts and sciences, and was buried under the ruins of the empire during the decay of letters. The germ of comedy, however,

was never altogether extinguished in the fertile bosom of Italy. Those who first endeavored to bring about its revival, not finding, in an ignorant age, writers of sufficient skill, had the boldness to draw out plans, to distribute them into acts and scenes, and to utter, extempore, the subjects, thoughts, and witticisms which they had concerted among themselves. Those who could read (and neither the great nor the rich were of the number) found that in the comedies of Plautus and Terence there were always duped fathers, debauched sons, enamored girls, knavish servants, and mercenary maids; and, running over the different districts of Italy, they took the fathers from Venice and Bologna, the servants from Bergamo, and the lovers and waiting-maids from the dominions of Rome and Tuscany. Written proofs are not to be expected of what took place in a time when writing was not in use; but I prove my assertion in this way: Pantaloon has always been a Venetian, the Doctor a Bolognese, and Brighella and Harlequin, Bergamasks; and from these places, therefore, the comic personages called the four masks of the Italian comedy were taken by the players. What I say on this subject is not altogether the creature of my imagination: I possess a manuscript of the fifteenth century, in very good preservation, and bound in parchment, containing a hundred and twenty subjects, or sketches of Italian pieces, called comedies of art, and of which the basis of the comic humor are always Pantaloon, a Venetian merchant; the Doctor, a Bolognese juris-consult; and Brighella and Harlequin, Bergamask valets, the first clever and sprightly, and the other a mere dolt. Their antiquity and their long existence indicate their origin.

With respect to their employment, Pantaloon and

the Doctor, called by the Italians the two old men, represent the part of fathers, and the other parts where cloaks are worn. The first is a merchant, because Venice in its ancient times was the richest and most extensively commercial country of Italy. He has always preserved the ancient Venetian costume; the black dress and the woollen bonnet are still worn in Venice; and the red under-waistcoat and breeches, cut out like drawers, with red stockings and slippers, are a most exact representation of the equipment of the first inhabitants of the Adriatic marshes. The beard, which was considered as an ornament in those remote ages, has been caricatured, and rendered ridiculous in subsequent periods.

The second old man, called the Doctor, was taken from among the lawyers, for the sake of opposing a learned man to a merchant; and Bologna was selected, because in that city there existed a university, which, notwithstanding the ignorance of the times, still preserved the offices and emoluments of the professors. In the dress of the Doctor, we observe the ancient costume of the university and bar of Bologna, which is nearly the same at this day; and the idea of the singular mask which covers his face and nose was taken from a wine stain which disfigured the countenance of a juris-consult in those times. This is a tradition still existing among the amateurs of the comedy of art.

Brighella and Harlequin, called in Italy the two Zani, were taken from Bergamo; because, the former being a very sharp fellow, and the other a stupid clown, these two extremes are only to be found among the lower orders of that part of the country. Brighella represents an intriguing, deceitful, and knavish valet. His dress is a species of livery; his swarthy

mask is a caricature of the color of the inhabitants of those high mountains, tanned by the heat of the sun. Some comedians, in this character, have taken the name of Fenocchio, Fiqueto, and Scapin; but they have always represented the same valet and the same Bergamask. The harlequins have also assumed other names; they have been sometimes Tracagnins, Truffaldins, Gradelins, and Mezetins; but they have always been stupid Bergamasks. Their dress is an exact representation of that of a poor devil who has picked up pieces of stuffs of different colors to patch his dress; his hat corresponds with his mendicity, and the hare's tail with which it is ornamented is still common in the dress of the peasantry of Bergamo.

I have thus, I trust, sufficiently demonstrated the origin and employment of the four masks of the Italian comedy; it now remains for me to mention the effects resulting from them. The mask must always be very prejudicial to the action of the performer either in joy or sorrow; whether he be in love, cross, or good-humored, the same features are always exhibited; and however he may gesticulate and vary the tone, he can never convey by the countenance, which is the interpreter of the heart, the different passions with which he is inwardly agitated. The masks of the Greeks and Romans were a sort of speaking-trumpets, invented for the purpose of conveying the sound through the vast extent of their amphitheatres. Passion and sentiment were not, in those times, carried to the pitch of delicacy now actually necessary. The actor must, in our days, possess a soul; and the soul under a mask is like a fire under ashes. These were the reasons which induced me to endeavor the reform of the Italian theatre, and to supply the place of farces

with comedies. But the complaints became louder and louder; I was disgusted with the two parties, and I endeavored to satisfy both; I undertook to produce a few pieces merely sketched, without ceasing to give comedies of character. I employed the masks in the former; and I displayed a more noble and interesting comic humor in the others; each participated in the species of pleasure with which they were most delighted; with time and patience I brought about a reconciliation between them; and I had the satisfaction, at length, to see myself authorized in following my own taste, which became, in a few years, the most general and prevailing in Italy. I willingly pardoned the partisans of the comedians with masks the injuries they laid to my charge; for they were very able amateurs, who had the merit of giving themselves an interest to sketched comedies.

I was most disgusted with those persons of quality who called for vengeance against me for having ridiculed the *cicisbeo* system, and ventured to attack the nobility. I was not desirous of excusing myself in this respect, and still less of correcting myself; but I entertained too high a value for the suffrage of the Bolognese, not to endeavor to convert the discontented, and to deserve their esteem. I invented a comedy, the subject of which was worthy of a country where the arts, sciences, and literature were more generally cultivated than elsewhere. I selected for the subject of my piece "Terence the African"; as I had, several years before, selected the French Terence. This comedy is one of my favorites; it cost me infinite labor, and procured me a great deal of satisfaction; it merited the general eulogium of the Bolognese; could I then possibly refrain to give it the preference? Content with the suc-

cess of my "Terence," I returned to Venice, and passed the rest of the summer at Bagnoli, a superb estate in the district of Padua, belonging to Count Widiman, a noble Venetian, and a feudatory in the imperial dominions. This rich and generous nobleman was always accompanied by a numerous and select society. They represented plays, and he himself bore a part in them; and, notwithstanding his natural seriousness, there was not a harlequin of them all more gay and nimble than himself. He had studied Sacchi, and imitated him to admiration. I supplied little sketches; but I durst not venture to play in them. Some ladies of the party obliged me to take the character of a lover; I satisfied them, and thus enabled them to laugh, and enjoy themselves at my expense. I was piqued; and next day I sketched a small piece, entitled "The Fair"; and in place of one character for myself, I took four, — a stage-doctor, a sharper, a stage-manager, and a ballad-monger. In the first of these characters I mimicked the jugglers of the square of St. Mark; and I uttered under the mask of the fourth several allegorical and critical couplets, concluding with the complaint of the author against them for laughing at me. This pleasantry was approved of; and thus I took my revenge in my own way.

I quitted the company of Bagnoli about the end of the month of September, and returned home, to be present at the opening of my theatre. The first novelty we gave was "Il Cavaliere Giocondo" (The Merry Gentleman), a piece which I should perhaps have forgotten, if I had not seen it printed against my will in the edition of Turin: it was not damned outright at its first representation; it was in verse, and displeased nobody, but I myself was disgusted with it. After this

piece in verse, I gave one which, notwithstanding the disadvantage of prose, pleased very much, and was eminently successful.

I gave three other pieces on the same subject; and the following are their titles: "Le Smanie della Villeggiatura" (The Country Mania); "Le Avventure della Campagna" (The Adventures of the Country); and "Il Ritorno della Campagna" (The Return from the Country). In Italy, and at Venice in a particular manner, this mania, these adventures and regrets, furnish an abundance of ridiculous matter worthy of comedy. It is hardly possible in France to have any idea of the extent of this fanaticism, which converts the country into a display of luxury rather than a scene of rural enjoyment. Since I have been at Paris, however, I have seen people who, without having an inch of ground to cultivate, kept up country-houses at a great expense, in which they ruined themselves as well as the Italians; and my piece, in giving an idea of the folly of my countrymen, may admit of this incidental deduction, that in every country where people of moderate fortunes attempt to vie with the opulent, they will infallibly be ruined.

IX.

I WAS called to Parma in the month of March, 1756, by order of his royal highness the Infante Don Philip. This prince, who maintained a very numerous and able French company, was also desirous of having an Italian comic opera. He did me the honor to employ me in the composition of three pieces for the opening of this new entertainment. On arriving at Parma I was conducted to Colorno, where the court then was,

and introduced to M. du Tillot, intendant-general of the house of his royal highness, who was afterwards a minister of state, and advanced to the title of Marquis de Felino. This worthy Frenchman, full of intellect, talents, and probity, received me with kindness; gave me a very pretty apartment; destined me a seat at his table, and directed me to M. Jacobi, then intrusted with the management of the entertainments, for my instructions. The same day I went to the court-comedy, and saw, for the first time, French actors. I was enchanted with their acting, and astonished at the silence which prevailed in the theatre. I do not recollect the name of the comedy which was that day represented; but on seeing, in one of the scenes, a lover warmly embrace his mistress, this action, which is natural and allowable to the French, but prohibited to the Italians, pleased me so much that I called out, "Bravo!" as loud as I could. My indiscreet and unknown voice shocked the silent assembly. The prince wished to know whence it came; I was named, and the surprise of an Italian author was considered pardonable. This sally was the means of my general introduction to the public. I went behind the scenes after the conclusion of the performance, where I was soon surrounded with people, and I thus formed a number of acquaintances, who made my residence in Parma very agreeable to me, and whom I regretted at parting. I had the honor, some days afterwards, of kissing the hands of the infante, infanta, and the princess-royal, their daughter. I enjoyed for some time the pleasures of Colorno, and then retired to Parma, to labor without interruption.

I was liberally recompensed for my time and my trouble; and I left Parma with letters-patent of poet,

and actual servant of his royal highness, and with an annual pension which the reigning duke had the goodness to continue to me.

X.

MY journey to Parma, and the pension and diploma conferred on me, excited the envy and rage of my adversaries. They had reported at Venice, during my absence, that I was dead; and there was a monk who had even the temerity to say he had been at my funeral. On arriving home safe and sound, the evil-disposed began to display their irritation at my good fortune. It was not the authors, my antagonists, who tormented me, but the partisans of the different theatres of Venice.

I was defended by literary men, who entertained a favorable opinion of me; and this gave rise to a warfare in which I was very innocently the victim of the irritation which had been excited. Every day witnessed some new composition for or against me; but I had this advantage, that those who interested themselves for me, from their manners, their talents, and their reputation, were among the most prudent and distinguished men in Italy. One of the articles for which I was most keenly attacked, was a violation of the purity of the language. I was a Venetian, and I had had the disadvantage of sucking in with my mother's milk the use of a very agreeable and seductive patois, which, however, was not Tuscan. I learned by principle, and cultivated by reading, the language of the good Italian authors; but first impressions will return at times, notwithstanding every attention used in avoiding them. I had undertaken a journey into

Tuscany, where I remained for four years, with the view of becoming familiar with the language; and I printed the first edition of my works at Florence, under the eyes and the criticism of the learned of that place, that I might purify them from errors of language. All my precautions were insufficient to satisfy the rigorists: I always failed in one thing or other; and I was perpetually reproached with the original sin of Venetianism.

Amidst all this tedious trifling I recollected, one day, that Tasso had been worried his whole lifetime by the academicians della Crusca, who maintained that his "Jerusalem Delivered" had not passed through the sieve, which is the emblem of their society. I was then in my closet, and I turned my eyes towards the twelve quarto volumes of the works of that author, and exclaimed, "O heavens! must no one write in the Italian language, who has not been born in Tuscany?" I turned up mechanically the five volumes of the dictionary de la Crusca, where I found more than six hundred words, and a number of expressions, approved of by the academy, and rejected by the world: I ran over several ancient authors considered as classical, which it would be impossible to imitate in the present day without censure; and I came to this conclusion, that we must write in good Italian, but write at the same time so as to be understood in every corner of Italy. Tasso was therefore wrong in reforming his poem to please the academicians de la Crusca: his "Jerusalem Delivered" is read by everybody, while nobody thinks of reading his "Jerusalem Conquered."

In the ensuing carnival, I received a letter from Rome. Count —, having engaged to uphold the Tordinona theatre in that capital, fixed his eyes on me.

He demanded from me pieces for his comedians, and invited me to repair to Rome to direct them.

I had never yet visited Rome; and the conditions proposed to me were highly honorable. Could I refuse so favorable and advantageous an opportunity?

I could not engage myself, however, without an avowal to the patrician who confided to me the interests of his theatre at Venice. I imparted the project to him, and assured him that I would not fail to supply his comedians with novelties. He readily gave his consent, and even displayed great satisfaction on the occasion.

I accepted the invitation accordingly, and demanded information respecting the construction of the Tordinona theatre, and the actors who were to perform in it.

The person who corresponded with me gave me no information on these two points, which appeared to me of some importance: he supposed that, on arriving at Rome, I could blow comedies as glasses are blown in a manufactory; and he merely informed me that he had taken care to have handsome apartments for me in the best quarter of Rome, in the house of a very polite and very worthy abbé, who, from his knowledge, would be able to render my residence in Rome highly agreeable and interesting.

I accepted the proposition; and being precluded from laboring for the Roman actors, of whom I knew nothing, I employed my time for the comedians of Venice.

XI.

I KNEW that for some years my comedies had been represented at the Capranica theatre, and that they were applauded there as well as at Venice. I was, therefore, about to combat against myself, and I was desirous of acting in such a manner that my presence, and the care bestowed by me, should incline the public in favor of the new theatre, which was to open under my direction. I had never hazarded my works without knowing the actors by whom they were to be represented; and I wrote again for instruction respecting the character and the aptitude of the comedians who were destined for me.

I was informed, in answer, that Count — was himself unacquainted with the actors, the greatest part of whom were Neapolitans, who would not make their appearance in Rome till the latter end of the month of November. In the same letter I learned that the count did not demand new pieces from me, that I might bring with me those which I had lately composed for Venice; that I should see and examine the company myself, and that in the space of a month the theatre might be opened.

I embarked in the beginning of October with my wife: I did not wish to go alone, and I could not have company more to my liking. We first went to Bologna, whence we may go to Rome either by the way of Florence or Loretto; I preferred the latter road, as I was anxious to satisfy at once both my devotion and my curiosity. The small town of Loretto has the appearance of a perpetual fair of chaplets, medals, and images. It seems that all those who traverse this

country are bound to purchase these holy commodities to regale strangers with them. In purchasing my store of them, like other people, I amused myself with interrogating my merchant on the profit of his trade. "Alas, sir," said he to me, "there was a time when, through the grace of the good Virgin Mary, those in our situation made rapid fortunes; but for several years the Mother of God, irritated at our sins, has abandoned us; the sale diminishes every day; all that we can do is to keep soul and body together: and if it were not for the Venetians, we should be obliged to shut up shop." When all my purchases were well assorted and tied up, my merchant presented me what he called a conscientious bill. I paid him without much haggling: the good man made the sign of the cross with the money which I gave him, and I went away very much edified. I showed my purchase to the Abbé Toni of Loretto, from whom I learned that the merchant, having perceived I was a Venetian, had made me pay for my goods a third more than the ordinary price. It was late, and I was in haste to continue my journey, so that I had no time to go and tell my religious friend that he was a knave.

I continued my route for Rome, and on my arrival in that capital I wrote to Count —. He sent his valet-de-chambre next day to me, and invited me to dine with him. A coach was in waiting at my door to take me, and I dressed, set out, and found all the comedians assembled at his house. After the usual ceremonies I applied to the person nearest me to learn from him his employment. "Sir," said he with an air of importance, "I play Punch." "What, sir," said I to him, "Punch! in the Neapolitan language?" "Yes, sir," he replied, "in the same way as your Harlequins

speaking in Bergamask or Venetian. I have been, I may say without boasting, the delight of Rome for upwards of ten years. M. Franciseo here plays *la Popa* (the waiting-maid), and M. Petrillo acts the mothers and sober-minded women, and for ten years we have been the support of the theatre of Tordinona."

My countenance fell immediately, and I looked at the count, who was as embarrassed as myself. "I perceive, now that it is too late, the inconveniences of our situation," said he to me; "but we must endeavor to remedy matters as far as possible." I gave the Neapolitan and Roman actors to understand that, for some time, masks had not been employed in my pieces. "Never mind; do not let that alarm you," said the celebrated Punch; "we are not puppets; we neither want judgment nor memory; let us see what you want with us."

I drew from my pocket the comedy which I had destined for them, and offered to read it. Everybody prepared to hear me; and I read "*La Vedova Spiritosa*." The comedy gave infinite pleasure to the count; and the comedians, not daring perhaps to say what they thought of it, acquiesced in the determination of the person who had the power of selecting the pieces. The parts were instantly ordered to be copied out, and the comedians withdrew. When seated at table I did not conceal from the count my fear that we had both of us committed a piece of imprudence, he in sending for me to Rome and myself in coming.

Whilst the comedians were learning their parts I thought only of seeing and examining everything in Rome, and visiting those to whom I had letters of recommendation. I had a letter from the minister of Parma for Cardinal Porto-Carrero, the Spanish am-

bassador, and another from Prince Rezzonico, the nephew of the reigning pope, for Cardinal Charles Rezzonico, his brother.

I began by presenting this last letter to the Cardinal Padrone, who received me with kindness and the same familiarity with which I was honored by his illustrious relations of Venice. He was not long in procuring me an opportunity to visit his holiness, and I was presented a few days afterwards alone and in a private closet; a favor which is very unusual. This Venetian pontiff, whom I had the honor of knowing in his episcopal city of Padua, and whose exaltation had been celebrated by my Muse, gave me the most gracious reception. He conversed with me for three quarters of an hour, always speaking to me of his nephews and nieces, and charmed with the news which I communicated to him.

His holiness touched a bell on his table, which was the signal for my departure. I took my leave with many bows and expressions of thanks; but the holy father did not seem satisfied: he moved his feet and hands, coughed, and looked at me, yet said nothing. What a blunder I had committed! Enchanted and overpowered with the honor conferred on me, I had forgotten to kiss the foot of the successor of St. Peter. I recovered at length from my absence, and prostrated myself. Clement XIII. loaded me with benedictions, and I departed mortified at my stupidity and edified by his indulgence. I continued my visits for several days. Cardinal Porto Carrero made me an offer of his table and the use of his coach. The same offer was made me by the chevalier Carrero, the Venetian ambassador, and I availed myself of the offers, and particularly of the carriages, which are as

necessary at Rome as at Paris. I saw every day cardinals, princes, princesses, and foreign ministers; and immediately after my reception I was visited, next day, by valets who came to compliment me on my arrival, and to whom it was necessary to give from three to ten paoli according to the rank of their masters, and to those of the Pope three sequins. This is the custom of the country; the sum is fixed, and there is no abatement.

In the course of my visits I did not fail to examine the precious monuments of that city, formerly the capital of the world, and now the principal seat of the Catholic religion. I shall not dwell on the *chef-d'œuvres* known to everybody, but shall confine myself to an expression of the effect produced on my mind and senses by the view of St. Peter's of Rome.

I was fifty-two when I first saw this temple; from the age of reason to that time, I had heard it spoken of with enthusiasm; I had read the historians and travellers by whom it is described in a suitable manner. I imagined, therefore, that on seeing it myself my surprise would be diminished by anticipation; but it so happened that all the descriptions fell below the actual impression it made on me; and that everything which, when at a distance, appeared to me described with exaggeration, rose in grandeur when I actually viewed it. I am no connoisseur in architecture, and I shall not attempt to make a display of terms of art to explain the cause of the delight which I felt; but I am certain that it was the effect of the accuracy of proportion displayed throughout such an immense extent. If the objects of construction and ornament excite our admiration, the sanctuary of that church is in an equal degree productive of devotion. - The bodies of

St. Peter and St. Paul repose in the vaults of the chief altar; and the Romans, who are everything but devout, never fail to appear there frequently in testimony of their veneration for the princes of the apostles.

My landlord, for example, would not have failed, for all the gold in the world, to attend prayers every day in the cathedral. He was fond of pleasure, and on returning home, as late as midnight, he would recollect that he had not visited his patrons. He lived in a quarter of the town at a great distance from St. Peter's; but that did not signify: he always went, and after prayers at the door returned home satisfied.

I must introduce this man to my readers, who possessed some singularities, but who had an excellent heart and was unequalled in sincerity. He was the Abbé ——, the correspondent of several German bishops on datary business; he furnished me with a suite of apartments consisting of four rooms with eight windows in front looking into the Corso, the finest street in Rome, where everybody assembled to see the races of Barbary horses, and to enjoy the masks in Shrovetide. The Abbé —— had a wife and a charming daughter; he was not rich, but he kept good cheer, and I boarded with him. There was every day on his table a dish made by himself, and which he never failed to announce to his guests as a dish for the advocate Goldoni, dressed by the hands of his servant ——; adding, that nobody should touch it without the advocate's permission. He gave concerts: Miss —— sung delightfully, and she was seconded by voices and instruments of the first merit, which in Rome may be found in abundance in all classes and all ranks.

These parties of pleasure were always, according to

the account of my dear abbé, ordered for the advocate Goldoni, and I could not vex him more than by dining out or passing the evening in any other house. One day, when I came home to tell him that I had engaged to dine out, he wished himself at the devil and scolded my wife. "Nobody shall eat," said he, "of the dish which I prepared for the advocate Goldoni." He then entered his kitchen, and, looking with a distressed air at the delicious dish which he had taken so much pleasure in preparing, he was at last seized with a fit of rage and threw the stewpan into the court. On my return home in the evening the abbé was in bed and refused to see me. Everybody laughed, but I felt very uneasy; however, the servant at that instant having delivered me an invitation to go next day to the rehearsal of my piece, and that interesting me considerably more than the other circumstance, I soon forgot the abbé, and slept very tranquilly.

I repaired to Count ——'s to be present at the rehearsal of my piece. The comedians were there: they had studied their parts, and got them by heart. I was flattered by their attention, and I resolved to second their zeal and give them all the assistance in my power. They began; Donna Placida and Donna Luigia; these female parts were acted by two young Romans, a journeyman barber and a journeyman carpenter. Good Heaven! what extravagant declamation! what awkward gestures! No truth, — no intelligence. I ventured to speak in general terms of the bad taste of their mode of declamation. Punch, who was always the orator of this company, replied very briskly, "Every one has his manner, sir, and this happens to be ours." I formed my resolution in silence: I merely observed to them that the piece ap-

peared to me to be too long, and this was the only point in which we were agreed. I abridged it at least a good third, to spare me the trouble of hearing it; and, tiresome as the task was, I was present at every one of the rehearsals, even at the last one in the theatre.

All the theatres are opened in Rome on the same day, the 26th of December. I was tempted not to go, but the count had destined me a place in his box and I could not decently refuse to be present. I went accordingly, and found the house fully lighted and the curtain about to be drawn. There were, at most, not more than a hundred persons in the boxes and thirty in the pit. I had been informed beforehand that the Tordinona theatre was the resort of coal-heavers and sailors, and that, without Punch, none of the lovers of farce would attend. Still, however, I was inclined to believe that an author sent for expressly from Venice would excite curiosity and attract spectators from the centre of the town; but my actors were sufficiently known in Rome. When the curtain was drawn the actors made their appearance, and played in the same manner as they had rehearsed. The public became impatient and asked for Punch, and the piece went on worse and worse. I could bear it no longer; I began to feel myself growing unwell, and I asked the count's permission to withdraw, which he readily granted me, and even made me an offer of his coach. I quitted the theatre of Tordinona and went to join my wife, who was in that of Aliberti.

My wife, foreseeing the failure of my piece as well as myself, had gone to the opera with the daughter of my landlord. On my entering their box they per-

ceived, by my countenance, the chagrin which I felt, without my having spoken to them. "Console yourself," said the young lady to me, laughing, "things are not better here: the music does not please at all,—there is not one agreeable air, recitative, or ritornello; Buranello has sadly forgot himself this time." She was skilled in music and capable of judging for herself; and I saw that everybody there was of her opinion.

The pit of Rome is dreadful; the abbés decide in a vigorous and noisy manner; there are no guards or police; and hisses, cries, laughter, and invectives resound from all quarters of the house. But it must be owned that he who pleases the churchmen may deem himself fortunate. I was at the first representation of the "Ciccio of Mayo" in the same theatre, and the applauses were as violent as the censures had formerly been. A part of the pit went out at the close of the entertainment, to conduct the musician home in triumph, and the remainder of the audience stayed in the theatre, calling out without intermission, "Viva Mayo!" till every candle was burnt to the socket. What would have become of me, had I remained at Tordinona till the conclusion of my piece! I trembled when I thought of this. I called on Count — next day, fully determined never to expose myself again to a similar danger. Fortunately I had to do with a just and reasonable man, who himself saw the impossibility of deriving any advantage from his comedians without allowing them to proceed in their own way. I shall state, in a few words, the arrangement to which we were obliged to have recourse.

It was agreed that the Neapolitans should give their usual sketches diversified with musical interludes, the subjects of which I should arrange from parodied airs;

and this project was in a few days carried into execution. We found the best scores of my comic operas in the music shops. Rome is a nursery of singers. We procured two good and six tolerable ones. The first interlude we gave was "Arcifanfano Re di Pazzi," the music by Buranello. This little spectacle afforded great pleasure, and the theatre of Tordinona succeeded in a way that prevented the count from being a great loser. I had failed in Tordinona, and this was a mortifying chagrin for me; but I was indemnified by the actors of Capranica. This theatre, which for several years had devoted itself to my pieces, was then acting the comedy of "Pamela." The play was so well acted and afforded such pleasure, that it alone supported the theatre from its opening to the close, that is, from the 26th of December to Shrove Tuesday.

Every time that I went was a new triumph for me. The actors of Capranica, whom I had extolled to the skies because they were deserving of it, entreated me to have the goodness to compose a piece for their theatre. They were in no want of a comedy from me, because they had all those which I printed every year to choose from; but it was a kindness they wished to show me by way of gratitude, for the profits which they had derived from my works. I consented to gratify their desire without appearing to have any idea of their intention. I asked them if they had any subject to give me which might be agreeable to them. They proposed the continuation of "Pamela." I promised to furnish them with it before my departure: I kept my word and they were satisfied; I was not less so with the noble and generous manner in which they recompensed me for my trouble. This comedy appears in the collection of my works under the title of "Pamela

Maritata." I did not witness the representation of this piece; I learned, however, that its success was less brilliant than that of the preceding part of "Pamela," and this did not astonish me. There was more study and refinement in the second, and more interest and action in the first. The one was adapted for the theatre and the other for the closet. I beg pardon of those who commissioned it, if I disappointed them in their views. I gave them the choice of their subject, and I cannot reproach myself with having neglected it.

XII.

THE carnival begins almost universally throughout all Italy, toward the end of December or beginning of January. At Rome the time of gayety or folly, distinguished for the liberties of the masks, does not commence till Shrovetide; the mask is only tolerated from two to five o'clock in the afternoon. At night-fall every person ought to appear without a mask; and it may be said that the carnival of Rome lasts only twenty-four hours, but this short time is admirably well employed. It is impossible to form an idea of the brilliancy and magnificence of these eight days. Throughout the whole length of the Corso four rows of richly decorated carriages are to be seen; the two lateral rows are merely spectators of the two which pass up and down in the middle. A number of masks on foot, by no means of the lower orders, run about along the pavement singing and uttering every sort of drollery and buffoonery, and throwing profusion of sweetmeats into the carriages, which return the volleys with interest; so that in the evening the streets are covered with brayed sugar. In the same place and during the same

days the horse-racing takes place for a prize of a piece of stuff, of gold or silver. The horses are free, and without guides ; but, trained to the course, irritated by the points of steel which goad them, and animated by the shouts and clapping of hands of the multitude, they start of their own accord from the palace of St. Mark, and run to the gates of the city, where they are stopped, when the prize is adjudged to the foremost.

I was fortunate enough to enjoy this delightful sight without leaving my room ; my landlord destined a balcony for me in the hall of his apartments, and fixed a label in large letters over it containing these words : " Balcony for the Advocate Goldoni." There were but eight windows, and the Abbe — had invited sixty individuals. Those who entered paid no attention to the placard ; every one endeavored to get the first seat, and my poor abbé was very much embarrassed to keep a place for me. I could have gone into my own room, with his wife and my own, but he would not hear of such a thing, and insisted on my coming to the hall. On entering I found every corner full, but, after some arrangement, I got a place. On the appearance of ladies afterwards we were obliged to give them the preference ; and I made way as well as the rest, and remained without a place. The abbé, quite in a fury, took me by the hand and dragged me into the room, displaced his wife and daughter, and pushed me, whether I would or not, to the front of the balcony, where he seated himself beside me and continued to point out, from time to time, the carriages of princes, princesses, and cardinals, whose coachmen he knew, and to name the horses whose device he was enabled to distinguish.

When all was over, the abbé's embarrassment became serious; for none of the company thought of going away. He had asked a number of them to supper, and he did not recollect either the names or the number of those whom he had invited. Among the company were several musical amateurs; and a vocal and instrumental concert was struck up. Everything went on well, but still nobody thought of going away. What was to be done? The poor abbé came to me in the utmost consternation, and consulted with me on the subject of his embarrassment. "This is nothing, my friend," said I to him; "you have committed a piece of folly, and you must pay for it." "But then, forty or fifty—" "Courage, my dear abbé," said I, "courage; send for violins; cover a little sideboard with all expedition: set the company a dancing and extricate yourself the best way you can." He approved of my proposal; the ball was given; the refreshments were found sufficient; the night was spent brilliantly, and everybody went away well pleased.

We were near the close of the carnival, and we spent these last days of gayety with one another in the most agreeable manner. On the arrival of Lent we changed decorations, but we did not amuse ourselves the less. Everywhere music and card-tables were to be found. The most common game was *mouche*, called the Beast. I remarked there a degree of politeness towards women which I have never elsewhere observed. If a lady is in danger of being the beast, a small card is played to save her from this disagreeable predicament.

I quitted Rome on the 2d of August, to the great regret of my host, from whom I experienced the greatest kindness. He never ceased to write to me, and he sent me every year Roman almanacs to the day

of his death. In returning to my country I took the road through Tuscany, and I felt an infinite pleasure in seeing again that delightful country, where for four years I had been so agreeably occupied. I saw nearly all my old friends. I turned off a little from my road to revisit Pisa, Leghorn, and Lucca. I began to bid adieu to Italy, without knowing that I was to quit it forever.

I had scarcely time to breathe when I was again summoned to labor. I arrived on the first day of September, and the theatre was to be opened on the 4th of the following month. I had done nothing yet. I was too agreeably occupied at Rome to find leisure to write. I was laborious; but I have always been fond of pleasure, and, without losing sight of my engagements, I availed myself of my moments of liberty. I knew that I possessed great facility, and I always labored with more ardor when I was limited in point of time.

It must also be owned that time, experience, and habit had so familiarized me with the art of comedy, that, after inventing the subjects and selecting the characters, all the rest was mere routine for me. At first I went through four operations before finishing the composition and correction of a piece. First operation: the plan, with the division, three principal parts, the exposition, the intrigue, and the winding-up. Second operation: the division of the action into acts and scenes. Third: the dialogue of the most interesting scenes. Fourth: the general dialogue of the whole of the piece. It frequently happened that, in this last operation, I changed all that I had done in my second and third; for ideas succeed one another; one scene produces another; one chance expression furnishes a

new thought. After some time I became enabled to reduce the four operations to one alone; having the plan and the three divisions in my head, I began at once, Act the First, Scene the First, and proceeded straight on to the conclusion, with this maxim always in view, that all the lines ought to terminate in a fixed point, that is, in the winding-up of the action, which is the principal part for which all the machines are put in motion. I have rarely been disappointed in my catastrophies. This I may boldly say, as it has been universally allowed, and the matter seems to me by no means attended with difficulty. It is very easy to have a fortunate winding-up, when it has been well prepared in the beginning of the piece, and never lost sight of in the course of the work.

I began then, and finished in fifteen days, a comedy of three acts, in prose, entitled "Gl' innamorati" (The Lovers). The title promised nothing new, for there are few plays without love; but I knew none where the lovers resemble those which I drew in this. Love would be the most dreadful scourge on the face of the earth, were all lovers as impassioned and miserable as the two principal characters of my comedy. I knew the originals, however, and had seen them at Rome, where I was the confidant of both. I was the witness of their passion and affection, and frequently of their fits of raving and ridiculous transports. I had more than once witnessed their quarrels, cries, and desperation, with torn handkerchiefs, broken glasses, and knives drawn. My lovers are extravagant, but they are not the less true. I am willing to allow that there is more truth than probability in this work; but, from the certainty of the fact, I imagined it possible to represent a picture which should dispose some to laugh,

and inspire others with fear. Such a subject in France would not have been supportable. In Italy it was considered somewhat exaggerated, and I heard several persons of my acquaintance boast of having been nearly in the same situation. I was not wrong then in painting, in strong colors, the follies of love in a country where the heart and the head are more than anywhere else heated by the power of the climate.

XIII.

WITH "La Donna Stravagante" (The Capricious Woman) we opened the carnival of 1760. The principal character of the piece was so wicked, that the women would not have allowed it to be natural, and I was obliged, therefore, to say that it was pure invention. This piece was pretty successful, and would have been more so, but Madame Bresciani, whose natural disposition was a little capricious, imagined herself portrayed in it, and the work suffered from her ill humor. I soon made reparation for my injuries towards this excellent actress. I composed a Venetian piece, entitled "Le Baruffe Chiozzote" (The Disputes of the People of Chiozza). This low comedy produced an admirable effect. Madame Bresciani, notwithstanding her Tuscan accent, had acquired the Venetian manners and pronunciation so well, that she afforded as much pleasure in low as in genteel comedy. I had been coadjutor of the criminal chancellor at Chiozza in my youth; an office corresponding with that of substitute of the lieutenant-criminel. My situation brought me in contact with that numerous and tumultuous population of fishermen, sailors, and low women, whose only place of assemblage was the open

street. I knew their manners, their singular language, their gayety, and their malice; I was enabled to paint them accurately; and the capital, which is only eight leagues distant from that town, was perfectly well acquainted with my originals. The piece had the most brilliant success; and with it we closed the carnival.

On the Ash-Wednesday following, I was at one of those spare suppers with which our Venetian epicures commence their Lent collations. We had every fish which the Adriatic Sea or the Lake di Garda could supply. The conversation turned on plays, and the modesty of the author, who was one of the guests, was not spared. Wearied with hearing the same thing over and over again, and by way of putting a stop to compliments and eulogies without end, I imparted to the society a project which I had just conceived. The wine and other liquors had elevated the minds of the company; but they became instantly silent, and listened attentively to me. It was a new edition of my "Theatre" which I wished to speak to them about. I endeavored to be as brief as possible; but I said enough to make my meaning understood. I was applauded and encouraged, and paper and ink were sent for. The party was composed of eighteen individuals, without including myself; a subscription-paper was immediately drawn up; each individual subscribed for ten copies; and by this manœuvre I procured a hundred and eighty subscriptions. This was the origin of my Pasquali edition, of which I have spoken enough in the Preface to these Memoirs. I will not exhaust the reader's patience further at present, but proceed to communicate a letter which I received some days afterwards from Ferney.

Perhaps you may imagine it was from M. de Voltaire. In that case you are mistaken. I have received several letters from that great and wonderful man; but at that time I had not the honor to correspond with him.

The letter of which I am speaking was signed Poin-sinet. I knew nothing of him, but he announced himself as an author. He spoke of several pieces composed by him for the comic opera at Paris: he said he was on a visit to his friend, at Ferney, from whom he had instructions to mention a number of things; and he requested me to return an answer to him at Paris.

He wrote to me on the subject of a translation of all my theatrical works into French, which he had in contemplation. He asked me bluntly, and without any ceremony, for the manuscripts of my pieces not yet printed, and for the communication of any anecdotes respecting myself. I was at first induced to believe myself honored in the wish expressed by a French author, to enter upon a translation of my works; but I could not help thinking his demands a little premature: and, being personally unacquainted with him, I returned an answer, couched in respectful terms, but sufficient to dissuade him from his undertaking.

I informed M. Poin-sinet, that I was engaged in a new edition, with corrections and alterations, and that my pieces were, besides, full of the different Italian dialects, which rendered it almost impossible for a stranger to execute a translation of my "Theatre."

I thought this sufficient: by no means; for I received a second letter from the same author, dated from Paris: "I shall expect from you, sir, the changes and corrections which you propose to make in your new

edition. With respect to the different Italian dialects, do not alarm yourself; I have a servant who has gone over all Italy, and can explain them to me to your satisfaction." I was very highly offended at this proposal, and supposed that the French author was laughing at me. I went instantly to Count de Baschi, the French ambassador at Venice, and communicated to him the two letters of M. de Poinset, requesting him to inform me what sort of a man he was.

I do not recollect what his excellency told me with respect to M. Poinset, but he delivered me a letter which he had received with the despatches from his court. This was a very agreeable piece of news for me, and I shall proceed to give an account of it.

The letter delivered to me by the French ambassador was from M. Zanuzzi, the principal actor of the Italian theatre at Paris. This man, equally respectable for his character and his talents, had carried with him, into France, the manuscript of my comedy, entitled "Harlequin's Child Lost and Found." This piece he had presented to his companions, by whom it was approved of and acted. It had given great pleasure, he told me, and had confirmed the reputation long enjoyed by my works in that country, where a desire was felt to have me.

M. Zanuzzi, after this introduction, informed me that he was empowered by the principal gentlemen of the king's bedchamber, intrusted with the regulation of theatrical entertainments, to offer me an engagement for two years, with an honorable salary.

Count Baschi described to me, at the same time, the eagerness which the Duke d'Aumont, the first gentleman of the chamber on duty, displayed to procure me; and he added, that, in case of any difficulty, he

would make a demand in form to the government of the republic.

For a long time I had been desirous of seeing Paris, and I was at first tempted to answer in the affirmative; but I did not feel myself exactly at liberty to follow my own inclination exclusively, and I demanded some time for consideration.

I was in the receipt of a pension from the Duke of Parma, and I had an engagement at Venice. I was, therefore, under the necessity of asking the prince's permission, and obtaining the consent of the noble Venetian who was the proprietor of the theatre of St. Luke. Neither of these I considered as difficult to obtain; but I loved my country, where I was cherished, caressed, and applauded. The criticisms against me had ceased, and I was in the enjoyment of a delightful tranquillity.

The engagement in France was only for two years; but I could easily see, that when once expatriated, I should find it very difficult to return. My situation was precarious, and required the exertion of painful and assiduous labors, and I trembled at the dreary days of old age, when our powers diminish and our wants increase.

I spoke to my friends and protectors at Venice. I explained to them that I did not look upon my journey to France in the light of a journey of mere pleasure, but that I was prompted to accept of it from the necessity of securing to myself an establishment.

I added, to those who seemed desirous of retaining me at Venice, that, as an advocate, I could pretend to every sort of employment, and even to a place in the magistracy; and I concluded my harangue with a sincere and decisive declaration, that, if they would

undertake to secure me an establishment at Venice, either under the title of office or pension, I should prefer my country to the whole universe.

I was listened to with attention and interest. My reflections were approved of as just, and my behavior considered respectful. Every one undertook to endeavor to satisfy me. Many meetings were held on my account; and the following is the result of them.

In a republican state favors are only granted by a majority of votes. Those who demand them must wait a long time before they can be balloted; and with respect to pensions, when there is any competition, the useful arts are always preferred to agreeable talents. This was enough to determine me to renounce all expectations from this quarter.

I wrote to Parma, and obtained the desired permission. With a little effort I overcame the opposition of the proprietor of the theatre of St. Luke; and when I was at full liberty, I engaged with the French ambassador, and wrote in consequence to M. Zanuzzi at Paris. It was but just, however, that I should allow my actors and their master time to provide themselves with an author, and I fixed my departure from Venice for the month of April, 1761.

I then set out from Venice with my wife and nephew. On arriving at Bologna, I fell sick. I was forced to compose a comic opera, which partook strongly of my fever. Fortunately, the opera only was buried. On recovering my health, I continued my journey. I passed through Modena, where I merely renewed my power of attorney to my notary on account of the assignment to my nephew, and next day I set off for Parma. I passed eight days in that town very agreeably. I had dedicated my new edition to the

Infante Don Philip: I had the honor to present him with the two first volumes; and I kissed their royal highnesses' hands. I then saw, for the first time, the Infante Don Fernando, at that time hereditary prince, and now reigning duke. He did me the honor to converse with me, and to congratulate me on my journey to France. "You are very fortunate," said he; "you will see the king my grandfather." I augured, from his gentleness, that this prince would one day turn out the delight of his subjects; and I have not been mistaken. The Infante Don Fernando is adored by his people, and the august archduchess, his spouse, has carried the public felicity and the glory of this government to their utmost height.

I had volumes with me to present to her highness the Princess Henrietta of Modena, Duchess Dowager of Parma, and latterly Landgravine of D'Armstadt. The princess, who resided at Borgo San Domino, between Parma and Piacenza, was then at Corte Maggiore, her country-house. I went several miles out of my road to pay my court to her. I met with a very favorable reception, and was honored with comfortable lodgings for myself and people. We passed three days there very delightfully. The ladies and gentlemen of the court, who were in the habit of acting my plays on the theatre of the landgravine, were anxious to treat me with an entertainment; but the heat was excessive, and I was desirous of reaching Piacenza. On arriving in that city, we were overpowered with kind attentions and new pleasures. The Marquis Casati, who was one of my subscribers, expected me with impatience. We found everything which we could wish for in his house; excellent lodgings, good cheer, and delightful company. The marchioness and

her daughter-in-law were studious in the extreme to please us; we remained there four days, and we could hardly prevail on them to allow us to proceed; but we had lost too much time already, and we had spent no less than three months since leaving Venice. Notwithstanding, therefore, the insupportable heat, we were obliged to set out again.

When at Piacenza, it became necessary to choose by what road I should proceed to France. My wife was desirous of seeing her relations before we quitted Italy; and I therefore preferred the road by Genoa to that of Turin, for her sake. We passed eight days in a very gay manner in the native place of my wife; but the period of separation was attended with many sighs and tears. It was the more distressing, as our relations never expected to see us again. I promised to return in two years, but they did not believe me. At last, amidst adieus, embraces, tears, and cries, we embarked in the felucca of the French courier, and set sail for Antibes, steering along the shore which the Italians call La Riviera di Genova. We were driven from the roads by a hurricane, and almost cast away in doubling Cape Noli. The unfavorable state of the weather prevented us from proceeding on our voyage. The courier, who durst not delay his journey, took a horse, and went on by land, and exposed himself to the difficulty of crossing mountains still more dangerous than the sea. For forty-eight hours every idea of re-embarking was out of the question. The sea still continuing boisterous, I went down to Nice, where the roads were practicable. I quitted the felucca, and sought for a carriage. We found one by chance, which had arrived the day before. It was the berlin which conveyed to Nice the famous Mademoiselle Deschamps, on her escape from

the prison of Lyons. I was told a part of her story. I slept in the room destined for her, and which she refused to accept on account of a bug which she discovered on entering it. I found the carriage very comfortable; and I bargained for my fare to Lyons, on condition of being allowed to go by Marseilles, and to stay there a few days. The driver belonged to that country; so that we had little difficulty in coming to an agreement. I set out from Nice next day, and crossed the Var, which separates France from Italy. Here I reiterated my adieu to my own country, and invoked the shade of Molière to be my guide in that of his.





PART THE THIRD.

I.

QUEN entering the kingdom of France, I was soon struck with the French politeness. I had experienced several disagreeable circumstances at the Italian custom-houses; but I was visited in two minutes at the barrier of St. Laurent, near the Var, and my trunks were not rummaged. On arriving at Antibes, I received unspeakable attention from the commandant of that frontier place. I wished to show him my passport. "I can dispense with that, sir," said he; "you are anxiously expected at Paris, and you must quicken your journey." I proceeded onwards, and slept the first night at Vidauban. Supper was brought in. We had no soup on the table; my wife required some, and my nephew was also desirous of having it. On calling for it, we found that no person takes soup in France in the evening. My nephew maintained that supper took its name from soup, and that consequently there ought to be soup at every supper. The landlord, who understood nothing of these distinctions, made his bow, and went out.

My young man was correct in the main, and I amused myself in entering on a short dissertation respecting the etymology of supper and the suppression of soup. "The ancients," said I, "made only one meal a day,

the *cæna*, which was served up in the evening ; and as this repast always began with soup, the French changed the word *cæna* into supper. In progress of time luxury and gluttony multiplied the number of meals ; soup was taken from the supper, and added to the dinner, and the *cæna* is now in France merely a supper without soup." My nephew, who kept a little journal of our travels, did not fail to enter in his memorandum-book this piece of erudition of mine, which, however whimsical it may appear, is not destitute of truth.

We set out next day from Vidauban at an early hour, and arrived in the evening at Marseilles. M. Cornet, the Venetian consul in this town, waited on us without delay ; he offered us apartments in his house, which, from a sense of delicacy, we were induced to refuse ; but, being tormented in the course of the night by the insupportable vermin which sting and infect at the same time, we were obliged to accept of the generous offer of the brother of our good friends of Venice.

We enjoyed the sight of Marseilles for six days. Its situation is agreeable ; it carries on a rich commerce ; its inhabitants are very amiable, and the port is a masterpiece of nature and art.

Continuing our journey, we passed through Aix. We merely passed in a carriage on the superb promenade called the Cours ; and we arrived at an early hour at Avignon.

I had been now four months from Venice. Part of the time I was confined to my bed at Bologna, but I had taken a great deal of amusement since my recovery, and I began to be afraid lest the slowness of my journey should injure me in the minds of those who were expecting me at Paris. On arriving at Lyons, I found a letter from M. Zanuzzi lying there for me ; it was

full of reproaches, somewhat keen I must own, but not so sharp as I deserved. Man is an inconceivable and indefinable being. I cannot explain to myself the motives which sometimes induce me to act against my principles and against my interest. With the best intentions in the world to give myself entirely up to whatever I am interested in, I am stopped or turned from my road by the merest trifles. An innocent pleasure, a piece of respectful complaisance, a feeling of curiosity, a friendly advice, an engagement of little moment, are none of them to be considered as vicious; but there are cases and circumstances in which whatever withdraws the mind from what it is employed on may be considered dangerous; and I have never been able to shut my mind against yielding to these seductions. I ought to have set out from Lyons the instant after I received that letter; but how could I possibly quit one of the most beautiful cities in France without viewing it? Could I omit visiting those manufactories which supply Europe with their stuffs and their designs? I lodged in the royal park, and remained there ten days; did it require ten days, I may be asked, to examine what was worth observation in Lyons? No; but that time was hardly sufficient to allow me to accept all the dinners and suppers which those rich manufacturers vied with each other in giving me. Besides, I injured no person. My salary was not to commence till my arrival in Paris; and supposing the Italian comedians to be in want of me, I was certain that by activity I should be enabled to indemnify them on my arrival. But this want was at an end; for, during my journey, the comic opera had been united to the Italian comedy; the new branch gained ground on the old; and the Italians, who were before the support

of this theatre, became only the accessories of the entertainment. I was informed of this innovation at Lyons, though not so minutely as to enable me to form an idea of all the unpleasant circumstances with which the change would affect me. I even imagined that my countrymen would consider their honor at stake, would vie in emulation with their new comrades, and I supposed them perfectly enabled to sustain the conflict. Animated by this confidence, with my usual gayety and courage I took the road to the capital; and the beauty of the journey, and the fertility of the plains through which I passed, filled my mind with the most cheerful ideas and flattering hopes.

On arriving at Villejuif, I found M. Zanuzzi, and Madame Savi, the principal actress of the Italian comedy. They made my wife and myself take a place in their carriage; my nephew followed in mine; and we alighted at the Faubourg St. Denis, where they both lodged in the same house. My arrival was celebrated the same day by a very gallant and gay supper, to which part of the Italian comedians were invited. We were fatigued, but we partook with pleasure of the delights of a brilliant society, in which were blended the French sallies with the noise of Italian conversation.

Restored after the fatigues of the journey by that delicious nectar which may well gain for Burgundy the name of the Land of Promise, I passed a sweet and tranquil night. On awaking, my mind was in as agreeable a state as it had been in during my dreams. I was in Paris; I was happy; but I had yet seen nothing, and I was dying to view the place. I spoke to my friend and host. "We must begin," said he, "with paying visits; we must wait for the carriage." "By no means," said I; "I shall see nothing in a

coach; let us set out on foot." "But the distance is great." "Never mind it." "It is hot." "That cannot be helped." In fact, the heat was this year equal to that of Italy; but it was a circumstance of little moment for me. I was then only fifty-three; I was strong, healthy, and vigorous, and curiosity and impatience lent me wings.

In crossing the Boulevards, I had a glimpse of that vast promenade which surrounds the city, and affords to passengers the coolness of the shade in summer, and the heat of the sun in winter. I entered the Palais Royal. What crowds! what an assemblage of people of every description! what a charming rendezvous! what a delightful promenade! But with what a surprising view my senses and mind were struck on approaching the Tuileries! I saw the whole extent of that immense garden, which has nothing to be compared with it in the universe; and my eyes were unable to measure the length of it. I hastily ran through its alleys, its thickets, its terraces, basins, and borders. I have seen very rich gardens, superb buildings, and precious monuments; but nothing can equal the magnificence of the Tuileries. On leaving this enchanting place I was struck with another spectacle, — a majestic river, numerous and convenient bridges, vast quays, crowds of carriages, a perpetual throng of people. I was stunned by the noise, fatigued with the distance, and overpowered by the excessive heat. I was bathed in perspiration without being aware of it.

We crossed the Pont Royal, and entered the Hôtel d'Aumont. The duke was at home. This principal gentleman of the king's bedchamber, who was in his year of duty, had sent for me to Paris; and he received

me with kindness, and has always continued to honor me with his favor. It was late, and we had not sufficient time to pay all the visits which we projected. We called a coach and drove to Mademoiselle Camilla Veronese's, where we were expected to dinner. It was impossible to be more gay and amiable than Mademoiselle Camilla. She acted waiting-maids in the Italian theatre, and she was the delight of Paris on the stage, and of every society which had the felicity of enjoying her company. We sat down to dinner. The guests were numerous, the dinner delicious, and the company amusing. We took coffee at table, and did not quit it till we went to the theatre.

The Italian theatre was then in the street Mauconseil. It was the old Hôtel de Bourgogne, where Molière displayed his talents and skill. That I might have a better opportunity of knowing my Italian actors, I took apartments near the theatre; and in that house I had the good fortune to possess a charming neighbor whose company has always been highly useful and agreeable to me. This was Madame Riccoboni, who, having renounced the theatre, delighted Paris with her novels, which for purity of style, delicacy of images, truth of passion, and the art of interesting and amusing her readers at the same time, raised her to a level with whatever was most valuable in French literature. I applied to Madame Riccoboni to give me some preliminary account of my Italian actors. She knew them thoroughly, and favored me with a description which I afterwards discovered to be perfectly correct and worthy of her candor and discretion.

On the comic-opera days I observed an astonishing crowd of people, and on other days the house almost

empty. This, however, did not alarm me. My dear countrymen only gave well-known pieces, and outlines of an indifferent description, such as I had reformed in Italy. "I shall give," said I to myself, "character, sentiment, plot, management, and style." I communicated my ideas to my comedians. Some of them encouraged me to follow my plan, and others asked only for farces. The first were lovers who were desirous of written pieces; the second, comic actors who, unaccustomed to learn anything by heart, were ambitious of shining without taking the pains of studying. I proposed to wait a little before commencing my task. I demanded four months' time to examine the public taste, to ascertain the mode of pleasing Paris; and during that time I did nothing but run about, pry into everything, and enjoy myself.

Paris is a world of itself: everything there is on a large scale, the good and bad both in abundance. Whether you go to theatres, promenades, or places of pleasure, you find every corner full. Even the churches are crowded. In a town of eight hundred thousand souls there must necessarily be more of both good and bad people than anywhere else; and it rests with ourselves to make our choice. The debauchee will find it easy to gratify his passions, and the virtuous man will meet with encouragement in the exercise of his virtues. I was neither so fortunate as to rank with the latter, nor so wretched as to give myself up to irregularity. I continued to live at Paris in my usual manner, fond of decent pleasures, and esteeming worthy and honorable men. Every day I felt myself more and more confounded in the ranks, the classes, the manners of living, and the different modes of thinking. I no longer knew what I was, what I wished for, or what I

was becoming. I was quite absorbed in the vortex. I saw the necessity of returning to myself, but I could find no means of doing so, or rather, I did not attempt it. Fortunately for me, the court went to Fontainebleau, whither the different actors were obliged to repair. I followed them with my little family, and I found, in this delightful abode, the repose and tranquillity which I had sacrificed to the amusement of the capital. I saw every day the royal family, the princes of the blood, the grandees of the kingdom, the French and foreign ministers, all assembled at the castle, and was present at the royal dinners; they followed the court to mass, to the theatre, to hunting-parties, without embarrassment, constraint, or confusion.

In the course of this visit the Italians gave "Harlequin's Child Lost and Found." This piece, which was very successful at Paris, did not meet with the like success at Fontainebleau. It was an outline; the comedians thought proper to incorporate some of the jokes of the "Cocu Imaginaire," which displeased the court, and ruined the piece. This is the great inconvenience of comedies of this description. The actor who plays from his own head speaks sometimes at random, spoils a scene, and damns a piece. I was not attached to this work; on the contrary, I have said enough in the first part of these Memoirs, to prove in how little estimation I held it; but still I was sorry to see the first piece of mine ever given at court unsuccessful. This troublesome event proved still more strongly the necessity of giving pieces fully written. I returned to Paris with a firm and determined mind; but I had not to do with my comedians of Italy; I was no longer the master at Paris, as I had been in my own country.

II.

ON returning to Paris I looked with another eye on that immense city, its population, its amusements, and its seductions. I had had time for reflection, and to learn that the confusion in which everything appeared at first to me proceeded neither from the nature nor manners of the people, but from the curiosity and impatience to which my giddiness was attributable. I was obliged frankly to own that it is impossible to enjoy Paris, and be amused in it, without a sacrifice of either time or tranquillity. I had formed, on my arrival, too many acquaintances; I proposed to preserve them, but to enjoy them in moderation; and I destined my mornings to labor and the rest of the day to company. I took apartments at the Palais Royal; my study looked into the garden, which was very different then from what the late improvements have made it, but which possessed peculiar beauties which some people still regret. Notwithstanding my occupation, I could not avoid bestowing a look every now and then at that delightful alley which was animated every hour by so many different objects. The breakfasts at the Café de Foi (the Faith Coffee-House) were taken under my window. People of every description resorted there to repose and refresh themselves. I overlooked also the famous chestnut-tree, called the Tree of Cracow, round which the newsmongers used to flock with their news, and to trace trenches, camps, military positions, and divide Europe as their fancy led them, with their canes on the sand. These voluntary abstractions were sometimes useful to me. They afforded an agreeable repose to my mind, and I returned to my labor with more vigor and more gayety.

I was now preparing for my débüt; and it was incumbent on me to make my first appearance on the French stage with some new production which might correspond with the opinion of me previously entertained by the public. My actors were still divided in opinion. Some persisted in their preference of written pieces, while others approved of outlines. A meeting was called on my account, and at which I was present. I showed them the indecency of introducing an author without dialogue; and it was agreed that I should begin with a finished piece. I was now satisfied; but I still foresaw that the actors, who had lost the habit of getting their characters by heart, without any malice or improper intention on their part, would second my views very imperfectly. I found myself, therefore, under the necessity of confining my ideas, and limiting myself to a subject of no great boldness of conception, that I might not hazard a work which should require too great accuracy in the execution, flattering myself with the idea of bringing them gradually to the reform which I had carried into effect in Italy. With this view, I composed a comedy in three acts, entitled "Paternal Love; or, The Grateful Waiting-Maid." It had only four representations. I wished to take my departure immediately; but how could I leave Paris, which had so fascinated me? My engagement was for two years, and I was tempted to remain the whole of the period. The most of the Italian actors asked only for outlines; the public were accustomed to them, the court suffered them, and why should I have refused to comply with the established practice? "Well then," said I, "let us compose outlines, if they will have them; every sacrifice seems nothing, every pain seems supportable for the pleasure of remaining two years in Paris."

It cannot be said, however, that my amusements prevented me from discharging my duty. In the space of these two years I produced twenty-four pieces, the titles of which, and their fate, are to be found in the "Theatrical Almanac" (*Almanach des Spectacles*). Eight of these pieces were successful, and they cost me more labor than if I had written them entirely out. I could only please by interesting situations, and a comic humor artfully prepared and secured from the caprices of the actors. I was more successful than I could have expected; but whatever was the success of my pieces, I seldom went to see them. I preferred good comedy, and frequented the French theatre for the sake of amusement and instruction. I had a free admission to the theatre; an honor conferred on me on my arrival in Paris. This was the more flattering for me, as nobody could then have foreseen that I would one day be enrolled in the catalogue of their authors. I found this national spectacle equally well supplied with tragic and comic actors. The Parisians spoke with enthusiasm of their departed actors of celebrity. It was said that Nature had destroyed the moulds in which she cast these great men; but in this they were mistaken. Nature produces the mould, the model, and the original at the same time, and renews them at pleasure. This is the way in all ages: we always regret the past, and complain of the present, — such is human nature.

The first time I went to the French theatre "The Misanthrope" was acted, and the part of Alceste was performed by M. Grandval. This very able and very popular and esteemed actor, having served out his time, had retired on a pension. After a few years, he was seized with a desire of making his appearance again on

the stage, and this was the day when that event took place. He was excessively applauded at his first entrance; and it was easy to see the estimation in which he was held by the public. But at a certain age “*spiritus promptus est, caro autem infirma*”; and this is the reason why I did not mention him before. For my part, I thought him excellent, and I preferred him to a number of others on account of his excellent voice; my ear was not yet familiarized with the French language; I lost a great deal in company, and still more at the theatre. Fortunately, I was acquainted with “*The Misanthrope*.” It was the piece I esteemed the most in the works of Molière, a piece of unequalled perfection, and which, independently of the regularity of the plot and the beauties of the composition, possesses the merit of invention and novelty of character. The comic authors, ancient and modern, before his time, brought the vices and defects of humanity, in general, on the stage; Molière was the first to ridicule the manners of his own age and country. I saw with infinite pleasure the representation at Paris of this comedy, which I had so often read and admired in the closet. I did not understand all that the comedians uttered, and especially those who displayed a volubility which, however much applauded, was very painful to me; but I understood enough to admire the precision, the dignity, and the spirited action of those incomparable actors. “*Ah!*” said I then to myself, “if I could only see one of my pieces acted by such performers; the best of my pieces is not equal to the worst of Molière; but the zeal and activity of the French actors would do more for it than I could expect from the Italians.” This is the school of declamation: there is nothing forced in the action or expression; feet, arms, and eyes, and mute scenes; all

is study, but the study is concealed by art under the appearance of nature. I left the theatre quite enchanted. I wished anxiously for two things, either to be able to compose pieces for French actors, or to see my countrymen capable of imitating them. Which would be the most difficult to realize? Time alone could determine this difficulty.

In the mean time I was assiduous in my attendance at the French theatre. They had given the year before, "The Father of a Family," by M. Diderot; a new and successful comedy. It was generally said at Paris that this was an imitation of the piece composed by me under the same title, which was printed in my works. I went to the theatre to see it, but I could perceive no resemblance to my play. The public were unjust when they accused this poet and philosopher of plagiarism, and this suspicion was infused into them by a criticism in the "Literary Year" (*Année Littéraire*). Diderot produced some years before a comedy entitled "The Natural Son"; and Freron, in speaking of it in his periodical work, stated that there was a great resemblance between the French piece and "The True Friend" of M. Goldoni. Freron contrasted the French and Italian scenes, and both seemed to be derived from the same source. In concluding this article the journalist observed that the author of "The Natural Son" promised to give "A Father of a Family"; that Goldoni had also given a play with that title: and that it would be seen whether they would by chance turn out the same. M. Diderot was far from being under the necessity of crossing the Alps for comic subjects to relieve his mind with after his scientific occupations. Three years afterwards he gave "The Father of a Family," which had no resemblance whatever to mine. My protagonist was a

mild, wise, and prudent man, whose character and conduct were equally instructive and exemplary. That of M. Diderot, on the other hand, was a harsh and severe father, who pardoned nothing, and gave his malediction to his son. He was one of those wretched beings who exist in nature, but whom I should never have dared to bring on the stage. I did M. Diderot justice: I endeavored to undeceive those who supposed his "Father of a Family" to be taken from mine; but I said nothing respecting his "Natural Son." The author was displeased with Freron and me; he wished to give vent to his rage, and to let it fall on one or other of us. The preference was given to me. He printed a "Discourse on Dramatic Poetry," in which he treated me somewhat harshly. "Charles Goldoni," he said, "has written in Italian a comedy, or rather a farce, in three acts." In another place he said, "Charles Goldoni has composed some sixty farces." It was easy to see that this light way of treating me and my works was expressive of the consideration in which he held them, and that he called me Charles Goldoni as we name Pierre le Roux in *Rose and Colas*. He is the only French writer who did not honor me with his kindness.

I was vexed to see a man possessed of such distinguished merit prejudiced against me. I did what I could to have an opportunity of meeting him, not with the view of complaining of his treatment of me, but to convince him that I did not deserve his indignation. I endeavored to procure an introduction to those houses which he was in the habit of frequenting; but I was never so fortunate as to fall in with him. At length, tired of waiting, I called upon him at his own house. I entered one day, escorted by M. Duni, who was one of his friends. After being announced and received,

the Italian musician presented me as a literary man of his country, desirous of forming an acquaintance with those who were at the head of French literature. M. Diderot vainly endeavored to conceal the embarrassment into which he was thrown by my introducer. He could not, however, shrink from what the rules of politeness and society prescribed in such a case. We spoke of different matters, and at last the conversation fell on dramatic works. Diderot honestly owned to me that some of my pieces had caused him a deal of chagrin; I courageously answered him that I perceived this. "You know, sir," said he, "what it is for a man to be wounded in his most delicate part." "Yes, sir," replied I, "I am aware of that; I understand you; but I have nothing to reproach myself with." "Come, come," said M. Duni, interrupting us, "these literary bickerings ought not to be carried any further; both of you ought to follow Tasso's advice: —

‘Ogni trista memoria omai si faccia;
E pongansi in obbligo le andate cose.’

‘Let no disagreeable remembrances be recalled; and let everything past be buried in oblivion.’”

M. Diderot, who understood Italian sufficiently, seemed to subscribe with a good grace to the advice of the Italian poet: we finished our conversation with reciprocal expressions of friendship, and both M. Duni and myself parted from him very well satisfied with what had taken place.

I have all my life endeavored to make up to those who had either good or bad reasons for avoiding me; and whenever I have succeeded in gaining the esteem of a man prepossessed against me, I have considered that day as a day of triumph.

On parting from M. Diderot, I also took leave of M. Duni, and repaired to a literary assembly, of which I was an associate, and where I was that day to dine. This society was not numerous, as there were but nine of us: M. de la Place, who edited the "Mercure de France"; M. de la Garde, who had the department of theatrical criticism in the same work; M. Saurin, of the French Academy; M. Louis, perpetual secretary of the Royal Chirurgical Academy; the Abbé de la Porte, author of several literary works; M. Crebillon, the younger; M. Favart, and M. Jouen. The last-mentioned was not distinguished for his talents, but famous for the delicacies of his table. Each member of the society received in turn the whole of the others in his house, and gave a dinner to them; and as the sittings were held on Sundays, they were called Dominical meetings, and we were called Dominicals. We had no other regulations among us than those of good company; but it was agreed that no women should enter our meetings. We were aware of their charms, and we dreaded the soft enticements of the fair sex. Our Dominical meeting was held one day at the hotel of the Marchioness de Pompadour, of whom M. de la Garde was the secretary. We were just sitting down to dinner, when a carriage entered the court, in which we perceived a female. We recognized in her an actress of the opera, in high estimation for her talents, and distinguished for her wit and amiable behavior in company.

Two of the members went down stairs and escorted her up to us. On entering, she asked, in a jocular manner, to be permitted to dine with us. Could we refuse her a plate? Each of us would have given up his own, and I should not have been the last to do this. This lady was irresistibly engaging. In the

course of the dinner she demanded to be admitted into the society; and she arranged her peroration in so new and singular a manner that she was received with acclamation. During the dessert we looked at the clock; it was half past four. Our new associate did not act that day, but she was desirous of going to the opera; and the society were almost all disposed to accompany her. The only one who displayed no eagerness to go was myself.

“Ah, M. Italian,” said the lady, laughing, “you are not fond of French music then?” “I possess no great knowledge of it,” said I; “I have never been at the opera; but I hear a deal of singing wherever I go, and all the airs only serve to disgust me.” “Let us see,” said she, “if I can overcome any of your prejudices against our music.” She immediately began to sing, and I felt myself delighted and enchanted. What a charming voice! It was not powerful, but just, touching, and delightful. I was in ecstacy. “Come,” said she, “embrace me, and follow me to the opera.” I embraced her, and went to the opera accordingly. I was at length present at this entertainment, which several persons could have wished me to see before everything else, and which I should not, perhaps, have seen so soon, if it had not been for this circumstance. The actress whom we had received into our society took three of our brethren with her into her box, and I seated myself with two others in the amphitheatre. This part, which takes up a part of the theatres in France, is in front of the stage, in the form of a semicircle, and the seats, which are well furnished and commodious, are raised in gradations above one another. This is the best place in the house for seeing and hearing. I was contented with my situ-

ation, and I pitied the audience in the pit, who were on their feet, and closely crowded, and who were not to blame for their impatience. The orchestra began, and I found the harmony of the instruments of a superior kind, and very accurate in point of execution. But the overture appeared to me cold and languid: I was sure it was not Rameau's; for I had heard his overtures and ballet airs in Italy. The action commenced; and, notwithstanding my favorable situation, I could not hear a word. However, I patiently waited for the airs, in the expectation that I should at least be amused with the music. The dancers made their appearance, and I imagined the act finished, but heard not a single air. I spoke of this to my neighbor, who laughed at me, and assured me that we had had six in the different scenes which I had heard. "What!" said I, "I am not deaf; the instruments never ceased accompanying the voices, sometimes more loudly, and sometimes more slowly than usual, but I took the whole for recitative." "Look, look, there is Vestris," said he, "the most elegant, able, and accomplished dancer in Europe." I saw in reality, in a country-dance, this shepherd of the Arno triumphing over the shepherds of the Seine; but two minutes afterwards three characters sang all at the same time. This was a trio, which I confounded, perhaps, in the same manner with the recitative. The first act then closed.

As nothing takes place between the acts of the French opera, they soon began the second act. I heard the same music, and felt the same weariness. I gave up altogether the drama and its accompaniments, and began to examine the entertainment taken as a whole, which I thought surprising. The principal male and female dancers had arrived at an astonish-

ing pitch of perfection, and their suite was very numerous and very elegant. The music of the choruses appeared to me more agreeable than that of the drama. I recognized the psalms of Corelli, Biffi, and Clari. The decorations were superb, the machines well contrived, and admirably executed. The dresses were very rich, and the stage was always well filled with people. Everything was beautiful, grand, and magnificent, except the music. At the end of the drama there was a sort of *chacone* sung by an actress who did not appear among the characters of the drama, and seconded by the music of the choruses and by dancing. This agreeable surprise might have enlivened the piece; but it was a hymn rather than an air. When the curtain fell, I was asked by all my acquaintances how I liked the opera. My answer flew from my lips like lightning, "It is a paradise for the eyes, and a hell for the ears." This insolent and inconsiderate reply made some laugh, and others turn up their noses. Two gentlemen belonging to the king's chapel thought it excellent. The author of the music was not far from me, and perhaps overheard what I said. I was very much concerned, for he was a worthy man. *Requiescat in pace!* I was present some days afterwards at the representation of "Castor and Pollux"; and the drama, which was perfectly well written, and acted with superior decorations, reconciled me a little with the French opera. I soon perceived the difference between the music of Rameau and that which had given me so much displeasure. I was very intimate with that celebrated composer, for whose talents and science I had the highest consideration; but we must be sincere. Rameau distinguished himself, and produced a great revolution in France in instrumental music; but he made no essential changes in vocal music.

It was supposed that the French language was not adapted to the new taste which it was wished to introduce in singing. This was believed by Jean Jacques Rousseau, as well as others; and he was astonished to see this error refuted in the music of the Chevalier Glück. But this learned German musician merely paved the way for the introduction of Italian music, and it was reserved for M. Piccini and M. Sacchini to complete the reform which the French seem to enjoy more and more every day. I have lengthened out this digression without perceiving what I was about. I am not a musician, but I am fond of impassioned music; if an air affect or amuse me, I listen to it with delight, and never examine whether it is French or Italian. There is but one music in my opinion.

III.

I BECAME every day more and more acquainted with the advantages of Paris, and every day my attachment to it increased. The two years of my engagement, however, were drawing to a close, and I considered the necessity of again changing my country as indispensable. The Portuguese ambassador had employed me for his court, and made me a present of a thousand crowns for a small work which had been successful at Lisbon. I had every reason for supposing that I should not be refused in a country where theatrical entertainments were then in vogue, and where talents were rewarded. The Chevalier Tiepolo, the Venetian ambassador, on the other hand, perpetually urged me to return to my country, where I was beloved, and where my return was warmly desired. His embassy was at an end, and he would have taken me along with him, and

maintained and protected me ; but he was dangerously ill : he took his leave of the court, sinking under the pressure of his illness, and went to Geneva to consult the famous Tronchin, where he finished his days, to the great regret of the republic and the French court, by both of whom he was held in the highest estimation.

During this state of indecision a lucky star flew to my assistance. I became acquainted with Mademoiselle Sylvestre, reader to the late dauphiness, mother of Louis XVI. This lady, the daughter of the principal painter of Augustus, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, had been employed at Dresden in the education of her august mistress, and enjoyed in France all the credit to which her talents and good conduct so properly entitled her. Mademoiselle Sylvestre, who knew Italian thoroughly, was well acquainted with my works, and being of a kind and obliging disposition, took an interest in my welfare. I had spoken to her of my attachment to Paris, and the regret with which I should abandon it ; and she engaged to mention me at court, where my name was not unknown. Eight days afterwards she sent for me to Versailles, whither I repaired without delay. I alighted at the king's small stables (*petites écuries*), where Mademoiselle Sylvestre lived in family with her relations, who were all in the service of the royal family. After a most gracious, kind, and hearty reception, our first conversation terminated in the following result ; and in this way an affair of great importance for me was begun and ended on this fortunate day. The dauphiness was acquainted with me ; she had seen my pieces represented at Dresden ; she caused them to be read to her, and her reader did not fail to embellish them, and to throw in now and then something or other in favor of

the author. She succeeded so well with her mistress, that this princess promised to honor me with her protection, and to attach me to the court.

The dauphiness could have wished to employ me in the instruction of her children, but they were too young to attempt a foreign language. The daughters of Louis XV. had been taught the principles of the Italian language by M. Hardion, the king's librarian at Versailles. They had a relish for Italian literature, and the dauphiness, availing herself of this fortunate circumstance, sent me to the Duchess of Narbonne, whom she had prepossessed in my favor, that I might be introduced to Madame Adelaide of France. The Duchess of Narbonne then attended on her, and is at present a lady of honor. I had the honor of being acquainted with the Duchess of Narbonne at the court of Parma. She received me kindly, and presented me the same day to her august mistress; and I was instantly received into the service of the French princesses. No salary was mentioned, and I asked none. I was proud of so honorable an employment, and sure of the kindness of my august scholars. I took my departure, therefore, very well pleased with what had taken place, and communicated the adventure to my wife, who knew the value of it as well as myself. I bade adieu to the Italian theatre, which was not, perhaps, sorry at getting rid of me, and I received with sincere pleasure the compliments of all those who took an interest in my welfare.

The Chevalier Gradenigo, who succeeded M. Tiepolo as Venetian ambassador, knew better than any other person the consequence to which such a fortunate event might lead. This illustrious patrician was the intimate friend of the Duke de Choiseul: he recommended me to that minister, who was at the head of two of the

most considerable departments, foreign affairs and war, and who enjoyed, with great justice, the highest credit at the court of France, and the utmost consideration throughout the rest of Europe. With such an honorable employment and such powerful protection, I ought to have made a brilliant fortune in France. If I have only acquired a very moderate fortune, it has been my own fault. I was at court, but I was not a courtier.

Madame Adelaide was the first who took lessons in the Italian language. I had not yet lodgings at Versailles; she sent a post-chaise for me; and it was in one of those vehicles that I nearly lost my sight. I was foolish enough to read in the chaise; the book I was then engaged with was Jean Jacques Rousseau's letters from the Mountain, and I felt considerably interested in it. One day I lost all at once the use of my eyes; the book fell out of my hands, and I could not even see to pick it up. I gave myself up for lost. I still possessed, however, enough of the visual faculty to enable me to distinguish the light; I got out of my chaise, and proceeded to the apartments of Madame Adelaide, which I entered quite disconcerted and in the utmost agitation. The princess perceived my distress, and was kind enough to inquire the cause of it. I durst not tell her of my situation; I hoped I should be able to discharge my duty in some way or other. I found my seat in its place, and I seated myself as usual. Having discovered the book I was to read, I opened it, when, O heavens! everything appeared white to me. I was thus at last forced to own my misfortune. It is impossible to paint the goodness, sensibility, and compassion of this great princess. She sent to her chamber for eye-water; she allowed me to bathe my eyes; she

drew the curtains in such a way that a sufficiency of light to distinguish different objects was all that remained. My sight gradually returned: I saw but little, though I was enabled to see sufficiently for my purpose at that time. It was not the eye-water which performed the miracle, but the kindness of the princess, which imparted strength to my mind and senses.

I resumed the book, which I found myself enabled to read; but Madame Adelaide would not allow me to do so. She gave me leave to depart, and recommended me to her physician. In a few days I recovered the complete use of my right eye, but I have lost the other forever. I am thus blind of one eye, a slight inconvenience which does not give me much uneasiness; but there are cases in which it heightens my defects and adds to my awkwardness. It is at the gaming-table that I am most troublesome to others. The candle must be placed on my right side, and if there happen to be a lady in company in the same predicament with myself, she dares not own it, but she considers my pretension ridiculous. At *brelan*, where the candles are placed in the middle of the table, I can see nothing. At *whist* or *tresset*, where partners are changed, I must carry the candle with me. Independently of my defective sight, I possess other singularities; I dread heat in winter, and cold in summer — I must have screens to secure me from the fire, and an open window in the evening gives me a cold during the most violent heats. I know not how the ladies whom I have the honor of knowing can suffer me, and allow me to draw a card, to be of their party. It is because they are good and kind, and because I play at all games; refuse no match; am not frightened at deep play, and not less amused when I play for small

sums ; because I am not a bad player, and, notwithstanding my defects, am one of the best-natured men in company.

After six months' service, I got lodgings in the castle of Versailles. I received the apartments destined for the accoucheur of the dauphiness, whom that princess could dispense with, on account of the ill-health of the dauphin. In the month of May, of the same year, 1765, the court made a short excursion to Marly. I accompanied the princesses, and enjoyed the delightful situation of that place. After seeing the garden of the Tuileries and the park of Versailles, I thought that nothing would surprise me ; but the position and beauties of the garden of Marly made such an impression on me, that I should have given the preference to that enchanting spot, if the remembrance of the richness and extent of the others had not regulated my comparisons. Those who have seen this castle, its garden, its immense parterre, its compartments, its designs, its jets-d'eau, and its cascades. will do me justice ; and the accurate descriptions which we have of it confirm the judgment of it formed by me.

What adds to the pleasures and delights of this rural abode is the gaming-house. Every person who is known may enter ; and there are corners for those who cannot, or are not disposed to penetrate into the circle. I preferred one of these by-corners, to see for the first time the arrival of the king and his attendants. It was a striking sight. The king entered, accompanied by the queen, the princes, princesses, and the whole court, and took his seat at the great table, surrounded by all that was distinguished in the kingdom. The queen made a party that day at cavagnol. The dauphiness and princesses had different gaming-tables.

They discovered me in my corner, and requested me to come forward, and I saw myself confounded amid the crowd of nobles, ministers, and magistrates. They played lansquenet at the king's table, where every one by turns held the hand. It was said that Louis XV. was fortunate at play; I waited till he held the bank; I ventured six louis-d'ors on my account in favor of the bank, and I gained. The king went out, and the royal family followed him. The rest of the company remained and played in any way and for any sum they chose. One lady remained a day and two nights at the same table, ordering chocolate and biscuits, that she might nourish at the same time her body and her passion.

Although pleasure was the primary object of this agreeable excursion, I had my regular hours for laboring with the princesses. One day I was met by one of my august scholars in the passage, as she was going to dinner. She looked at me and said, "By and by" (*à tantôt*). *Tantosto*, in Italian, means "immediately"; I thought the princess meant to take her lesson on rising from table; I remained in waiting with as much patience as my appetite would permit. At length the principal lady in waiting made me enter at four o'clock in the afternoon. On opening her book, the princess put a question to me, which she was in the daily habit of doing, where I had dined that day. "Nowhere, madam," said I. "What! you have not dined?" "No, madam." "Are you unwell?" "No, madam." "Why have you not dined, then?" "Because, madam, you did me the honor of saying *à tantôt* to me." "Does not this expression, when used at two o'clock, mean about four o'clock in the afternoon?" "Perhaps it may, madam; but this term in Italian signifies immediately." The princess smiled, shut her

book, and sent me to dine. There are both French and Italian terms which bear a resemblance to one another, and yet have quite a different meaning. I still fell into some of these *qui pro quos*, and I may say that the little French I know was acquired by me during the three years I was employed in the service of the princesses. They read the Italian poets and prose writers; I stammered out a bad translation into French; they repeated it gracefully and elegantly, and in this exercise the master learned more than the scholar.

On returning to Versailles, the health of the dauphin seemed to be on the recovery. He was fond of music, and the dauphiness took care to provide some for his amusement. I composed an Italian cantata, which I got set to music by an Italian composer, and I presented it to that princess, who, in accepting it, had the goodness to invite me to hear it executed in her room after supper.

I learned on this occasion a piece of etiquette of which I was before ignorant. I entered the apartments of the princess at ten o'clock at night, and presented myself at the door of the closet of the nobility. The doorkeeper did not prevent me from entering. The dauphin and dauphiness were at table, and I took a convenient station to see them sup. A lady in waiting came up to me, and asked if I was entitled to admission in the evening. "I do not know, madam," said I, "the difference between admission by day and in the evening; the princess herself commanded me to repair to her room after her supper, — I have come too soon, perhaps; I did not know the etiquette." "Sir," replied the lady, "there is none for you, you may remain." I own that my self-love was not a little grati-

fied on this occasion. I remained. When the prince and princess had finished supper, I was called, and my cantata was performed. The dauphiness played the harpsichord, Madame Adelaide accompanied her on the violin, and Mademoiselle Hardy (afterwards Madame de la Brusse) sang. The music gave pleasure, and compliments were paid to the author of the words, which I received very modestly. On my preparing to go away, the dauphin had the goodness to detain me. He sang himself, and I had the good fortune to hear him. But what did he sing? A pathetic air from an oratorio called "The Pilgrim at the Sepulchre."

This prince was declining every day, but he was possessed of fortitude; and the desire of quieting the minds of the court respecting his situation made him conceal his sufferings, and assume a cheerful look in public.

The king passed six weeks regularly every summer at Compiègne, and as many in autumn at Fontainebleau. These rural excursions were called the great journeys, because all the departments and all the offices of the ministry were removed there, and the foreign ministers also accompanied the court.

Both took place this year, 1765, after the short excursion to Marly, and the journey to Compiègne was brilliant and magnificent in the highest degree. The Compiègne journey began with an appearance of gaiety, but it terminated with a circumstance of great distress. The dauphin's health grew worse and worse every day. He thought exercise would do him good, but the fatigue completely exhausted him. I had lost one protector, and I saw myself on the point of losing another. I became melancholy, and I could find nothing in the situation where I was to enliven me. The forest of Compiègne is superb; but it seemed to me too much

trimmed, too uniform, and too remote from the town. There was a want of society, but everybody was gloomy like myself. I began even to be alarmed for my health. My melancholy was gaining ground on me.

IV.

THE court had scarcely returned to Versailles before they began to talk of the journey to Fontainebleau. It was fixed for the 4th of October; but the ill-health of the dauphin rendered it a matter of uncertainty. This amiable and complaisant prince was grieved to think that the king should be deprived of any of his pleasures, and that the inhabitants of Fontainebleau should lose the profits which they were in the habit of deriving from the presence of the court and the influx of strangers. Whenever Fontainebleau was mentioned, notwithstanding his illness, he endeavored to assume a gayety, and to appear in good health. But I was not deceived by this, and there were numbers more who thought as I did. The journey, however, was determined on, and carried into effect accordingly. It would be unjust and unreasonable to suppose that the king and royal family were less interested than others in the health and tranquillity of this prince, in whom their happiness was centred; but it is natural that those who are most concerned about the preservation of any object should not see the whole of the danger, and they might have flattered themselves that a change of air and amusement might contribute to the health of the patient.

They set out, then, for this castle in the beginning of October. The situation, and the pleasures with which it abounds, rendered this journey delightful for

some days. The different theatrical amusements at Paris were also exhibited by turns, and the authors brought out their new productions there in preference. We had theatrical entertainments four times a week, and we entered by means of tickets of admission issued by the captain of the guards on duty.

In the midst of our gayety, our pleasures and amusements, everything changed its appearance before our visit was half over. The dauphin could no longer support with indifference the fire which was internally consuming him: his courage became useless, his strength abandoned him; he was unable to quit his bed; there was a general consternation; his disease made a most alarming progress, and all the resources of the faculty were exhausted. They then had recourse to prayers, and the Archbishop of Sens, now a cardinal, went every day in procession, followed by an immense crowd, to the chapel of the Virgin, at the extremity of the town. They vowed to elevate a temple there, if the intercession of the Mother of God restored the health of the dying prince; but it was written in the decrees of Providence that he should now finish his career; and he died at Fontainebleau towards the end of December.

I was in the castle at this fatal moment. The loss was great, and the desolation general. A few minutes after this event took place, I heard "The dauphin, gentlemen!" called out throughout the whole length of the apartments. I was thunderstruck; I neither knew what I was nor where I was. This was occasioned by the Duke de Berry, the eldest son of the defunct, who had now become the presumptive heir of the crown, making his appearance, bathed in tears, for the sake of consoling the afflicted people. This visit,

which was to have ended in the middle of November, was prolonged to the end of the year. All were eager to leave the place; I participated in the general feeling; but I gave way to those whose service was more necessary, and set out the last of all. This year was exceedingly inclement. A great deal of snow fell, and the roads were covered with ice. The horses could not keep their footing; and I took two days and one night in performing a journey which in general does not occupy more than seven hours.

On arriving at Versailles, I was instantly visited by a servant of the keeper of the castle, who, in the name of his master, demanded the key of my apartments from me. On the dauphin's death, the office of accoucheur to the dauphiness became necessarily suppressed; that princess had no longer any right to dispose of the apartments; I could not therefore enjoy them, and they were apparently destined for some person of more consequence than myself. I deemed it improper to enter into any conversation on the subject with the man who delivered the message to me, and I sent him away with an answer that I was in want of rest. I turned the subject over in my mind during the night, and, on reflection, I thought, in the present distressing circumstances of the court, it would be indecent in me to prefer complaints or to demand protection. I therefore took lodgings at once in the town, and gave up the key of my apartments. Italian was no longer thought of by the princesses: however, I durst not remove from Versailles; my finances were in a wretched state; I had received an order for a hundred louis-d'ors on the royal treasury; but this was the only thing I had ever received. I was in want of everything, but durst demand nothing.

I saw my august scholars from time to time, and they still looked on me with kindness, but I no longer labored with them. I knew not how to make my situation known to them, and the princesses were too distressed themselves to think of me. My Italian revenues came but slowly in; my friend Sciugliaga lent me a hundred sequins, and I waited patiently for a time when trouble should give place to serenity.

But the distress was not yet at an end; one misfortune succeeded another. The dauphiness fell a victim to her grief, and was buried in the same grave with her husband. The death of the King of Poland, father to the Queen of France, happened some time afterwards, and that of his august daughter filled up the measure of public affliction. Could I approach the princesses to speak of my own situation? No; and though I could have done so, my heart would not have allowed me; I entertained too much respect for their grief, and I had too high a confidence in their goodness, not to bear my sufferings in silence. I measured my desires by my means, and with the exception of the hundred sequins which I owed to a friend, I was in debt to nobody. The dark clouds began at length to dissipate. The mournings were over, and the court gradually resumed its former amenity. The princesses had the goodness to send for me. I received a present of a hundred louis-d'ors in a box of wrought gold, and a settled provision for me was mentioned. The princesses demanded for me the titles and emoluments of Italian instructor for the royal family. The minister of Paris and of the court objected to this, which, he said, would be a new office at court, and a new burden on the state. I could have demanded a thousand things, but I demanded nothing, and continued to

serve, to want, and to hope. Three years elapsed before my august protectresses could procure me an annual income.

They sent for the minister. "We do not want," said they, "to create a new office for a man who has yet to serve, but to recompense a man who has already served." They demanded six thousand livres a year for me. The minister said it was too much. "I dare say," said he, "M. Goldoni will be contented with four thousand francs." The princesses took him at his word, and the affair was instantly concluded. I was satisfied. I went to return my thanks to the princesses, who were still more satisfied than myself; and they had the goodness to assure me, that, in one way or other, I should have all their nephews and nieces for scholars, and that the salary which I had obtained was but the commencement of the favors which they hoped I should one day enjoy. If I have not profited by this favor, it has been my own fault; I was ill skilled in asking; I was at court, but I was not a courtier. The first time my order was paid at the royal treasury, I only received thirty-six hundred livres, four hundred being retained for the tax of the twentieth. On speaking, perhaps, I should have obtained an exception from this duty. I said nothing, however, and things have always remained on their own footing.

My income was not very considerable, but I must be just. What had I done to merit it? I had quitted Italy for France. The Italian theatre did not suit me, and my return to Venice was open to me. I became attached, however, to the French nation; three years of an easy, honorable, and agreeable service procured me the pleasure of remaining there. Had I not reason to believe myself fortunate? And had I not reason to

be satisfied? Besides, the princesses told me I should have their nephews for scholars; there were three princes and two princesses. What happy prospects! What well-founded hopes! Was this not enough to satisfy my ambition? Why should I have solicited for offices or commissions to which the natives had a better right than a stranger? I have never demanded any favors either for myself or my nephew, but under circumstances when an Italian was entitled to be preferred to a Frenchman. As soon as my income was fixed, the princesses gave over the Italian, and employed in other studies the hours formerly destined to me. I was now at liberty to go where I pleased, and I had a wish to return to Paris; but I amused myself tolerably well at Versailles, and I remained there some time longer. It is generally said at Paris that a Versailles life is very dull, that people grow weary there, and know not what to do with themselves. I can prove the contrary; those who are discontented with their situation will find every place wearisome; those who take a delight in their occupation will find themselves as comfortable at Versailles as anywhere else; and those who have nothing to do may employ their mornings usefully or agreeably in the castle, the public offices, and in the park, and may everywhere find interesting objects and variety of pleasure.

I returned to settle at Paris, but I still kept one foot fast at Versailles. It was my interest to pay my court to my august protectresses, and to see whether the Italian literature and language could gain any partisans among the young princes and princesses. The study of foreign languages is not considered one of the necessary branches of education at the court of France, but as an amusement conceded to those who are desirous

of it, and capable of profiting by it. One of the three princes only seemed disposed to learn Italian, and the Abbé de Landonviller, of the French Academy, had the care of him. The abbé employed his mode of teaching languages which he published in 1768; he succeeded admirably, and the prince made an astonishing progress.

I endeavored to translate some scenes of my "Theatre," but I have never been able to relish translations, and labor seems ever disgusting to me, without the charm of imagination. Several persons applied to me for permission to translate my comedies under my eyes, agreeably to my opinions, and on condition of sharing the profit. Since my arrival in France up to the present day, a single year has never passed in which two or more translators have not made such a proposition to me. On my arrival in Paris, I even found one person who had the exclusive privilege of translating me, and had published some of his translations. I endeavored to disgust all of them with an undertaking of which they knew not the difficulties.

V.

ON arriving in Paris, I did not think I should fix my residence there; but having decided on remaining, it became necessary to endeavor to procure some situation for my brother's son, whom I loved as if he were my own. He was kind and docile; he had gone through his studies at Venice; he was fit for some good employment; I was not rich enough to purchase an office for him, and I wished to avoid, if possible, the unpleasant circumstance of entering into competition for favors with the French. There was a pro-

fessor of the Italian language in the Royal Military School; M. Conti, who filled that situation, was my friend; he wished to retire, but he was not entitled to a pension till he had served twenty years, and he could not, therefore, demand it. The employment was good; it was an eligible situation for a young man; I was anxious that my nephew should obtain it, but there were difficulties to be overcome. I implored the protection of Madame Adelaide of France; that princess recommended me to the Duke de Choiseul, and in fifteen days' time M. Conti received his pension, and my nephew his place. By this means I had opportunities of seeing at my ease two establishments worthy of the magnificence of the French monarchs, the Royal Military School and the Hospital for Invalids, the cradle and the grave of the defenders of their country. The nobility destined to the military life are educated in the former, and the aged and wounded in war are relieved in the other; the arts and sciences, and everything that is useful in education, form the young minds in the one; in the other, attention, repose, and all the comforts of life, are enjoyed by the veterans, as a recompense for their past services. This last establishment was founded in the reign of Louis XIV.; the other in the reign of Louis XV. The Hospital for Invalids is decorated with a magnificent temple, which would hold an honorable rank even in Rome; and the four great refectories of the soldiers are as curious as the kitchens in which the food for these worthy persons is cooked.

It afforded me great pleasure to pass a few days in these two royal establishments, which are so close to each other, and of which I knew the governors and principal persons employed; but after my nephew had

been there twenty-two months, considerable changes were made in the Military School ; the humanity classes were transferred to the college of La Flèche, and the Italian class was altogether suppressed. This was not owing to the fault of the professor, who was recompensed with a pension of six hundred francs.

I was told that the Duke de Choiseul was aware of these projected changes when he gave the place to my nephew, and that he conferred on us an employment which would be suppressed, for the sake of procuring us this little favor. This minister, considering me as under the protection of the princesses, manifested great kindness for me ; he did me the honor to tell me, when I called on him to return him my thanks : “ Your nephew’s affairs are now in a good way ; how are your own ? ” I answered him, I enjoyed an income of thirty-six hundred livres per annum. He began to laugh. “ This is no income,” said he ; “ we must have something else for you ; we must take care of you.” I have never, however, had anything further ; but this is my own fault ; I must return to the burden of my song : I was at court, but not a courtier.

My nephew, who was without any employment, labored with me till something else should turn up. The maxim which I had adopted, and with which I had inspired him, never to mix in the herd of competitors, rendered success more difficult. I was intimate at Versailles with M. Genet, the head and director of the office for translation, to which he gave a new form and a solid consistency, and which was placed entirely under his control. This respectable father, who divided his time between the duties of his office and the education of his children, recollecting that I had once done him a slight service, took an opportunity of recom-

pensing me for it. Since the acquisition of Corsica an office had been established at Versailles for the affairs of that island, and an interpreter well acquainted with the two languages was wanted. The gentleman at the head of this office applied to M. Genet to procure one for him; my worthy friend, mindful of me, proposed my nephew, who was accepted and introduced without any difficulty. This young man seemed destined to encounter nothing but reforms and suppressions. The office for Corsica was abolished shortly afterwards; the affairs of finance were given to the comptroller-general, and the civil administration was transferred to the war department. The interpreter was transferred there. This inspection was annexed to the office of M. Campi, principal secretary for controverted affairs. My nephew endeavors to render himself useful: he is fortunate enough to please his superiors, from whom he has received various proofs of kindness. If my journey to France had been productive of no other advantage than that of settling this dear youth, I should still be pleased with having undertaken it.

I was attached to France from inclination, and I became still more strongly so through gratitude. The Chevalier Gradenigo, the Venetian ambassador, notwithstanding his anxiety for my accepting the propositions of his countrymen, could not but approve of my resistance, and undertook to justify me with his friends and my protectors. This minister's commission was nearly at an end; the embassies of the republic last only four years. M. Gradenigo was beloved by the court and ministry of France, who were desirous that he should remain some time longer. The king was even disposed to apply for his stay, and the minister had a courier in readiness to despatch for that purpose.

The ambassador felt the utmost respect and gratitude for these marks of honor, but he could not give his consent; the laws of the republic are immutable; the successor was on his way; M. Gradenigo had therefore no option, and was obliged to set out, and the preparations for his audience of leave were far advanced. The Duke de Choiseul, minister for foreign affairs, deemed this ceremony costly, troublesome, and entirely useless, and the king was of the same opinion. M. Gradenigo was installed a knight or chevalier by his majesty without the usual pomp, and he paid his visits to the royal family and the princes of the blood as a private individual. This is the era of the suppression of public audiences for ordinary ambassadors.

This ambassador was succeeded by the Chevalier Sebastian Mocenigo, who came from Spain, whither he was despatched on his first embassy by the republic of Venice. He was of a very illustrious, ancient, and rich family; he was clever, intelligent, amiable, a good musician, and sang charmingly. But — he experienced some things of an unpleasant nature, which he did not perhaps deserve.

I was invited to London, the only place in Europe which can dispute precedency with Paris, and I should have liked to see it; but I heard great marriages talked of at Versailles, and as I had been at all the funerals of the court, I wished not to be absent in a time of rejoicing. Besides, I was not asked for by the King of England, but by the managers of the opera, who were anxious to attach me to it. I endeavored, however, to turn the favorable opinion which they entertained of me to some account; I assigned good reasons by way of excuse, and I offered them my services on condition of remaining in France. My proposition

was accepted. They asked me for a new comic opera, and employed me to arrange all the old dramas which they had adopted for the current year. They said nothing respecting my recompense, and I did not mention it. I applied myself to the work; the English were satisfied with me; I was highly pleased with their return. This correspondence was continued for several years, and an end was not put to it till the directors were succeeded by others, on which occasion I received an unequivocal mark of their satisfaction, as they paid me for an opera which it was impossible for them then to use. This direction was in the hands of women, and women are amiable in every country. The most agreeable and finished work which I sent to them was, in my opinion, a comic opera, entitled "Victorina"; and I received from London compliments and thanks without end on account of it. M. Piccini, who set it to music, wrote to me from Naples that he never read a comic drama from which he derived so much pleasure. The success, however, did not correspond with the prepossession of the directors or my own.

Sometimes I see bagatelles, seemingly destitute of meaning, extolled to the skies; and at other times well-written pieces fail, because the subject is too melancholy for tears, or not sufficiently gay to elicit laughter. What are the precepts of the comic opera? What are its rules? It has none. All is done by routine: I know from experience, and ought to be believed: *experto crede Roberto*. Shall I be told that the Italian comic operas are mere farces, unworthy of being put in comparison with the poems which go by that name in France? Let those who know the Italian language give themselves the trouble of going

over the six volumes which contain the collection of my works of this nature, and they will see, perhaps, that the subjects and the style are not so contemptible. They are not, it is true, good dramas, but they are capable of being made so. I never thought of composing any from taste or choice, and I never labored on them but from motives of complaisance or interest. When we are possessed of talents, we must turn them to some account; a history painter will not refuse to draw a baboon, if he be well paid for it.

The Italian theatre is as fortunate in actors as authors, and all are well treated and well recompensed. The poets and musicians enjoy the ninth of the receipts for a piece of five or three acts, the twelfth for a piece of two acts, and the eighteenth for a piece of one act; besides, two annual pensions have been established at the Italian theatre, one for the author of the words, and another for the author of the music of the greatest merit. At this theatre authors enjoy another considerable advantage; they never lose the right to their pieces; they always enjoy the fixed share; they give tickets gratis for every representation of their works; and the pieces which have not been refused by the public are placed in the repertory of the week, so that they never fall. In consequence of these advantages, I have been more than once tempted to yield to the solicitations of several musicians, who frequently, very frequently, almost every day indeed, asked me for some work for the comic opera; after much thinking, revising, and thoroughly examining, I imagined I had fallen upon the routine necessary to please the French, and I composed a small piece in two acts, called the "Bouillotte." This word is not to be found in any dictionary, but it is well known at

Paris ; it is a game at cards, a brelan at five, the tricks of which are neither fixed nor marked. He who loses his stake goes out and is succeeded by another ; in these parties of bouillotte there are generally three or four persons, who do not play at first, who wait for the going out of the unfortunate before they begin playing, and all go out successfully. This perpetual movement, and the number of people interested in the same game, occasion a sort of agitation or boiling (*bouillonnement*) which has given rise to the name "bouillotte."

So long as nothing more than dialogue was necessary, I succeeded tolerably well ; and I thought I might venture my prose on a theatre where the public are indulgent to strangers. But in a comic opera airs were necessary, and good music required good poetry. I knew the mechanism of French versification. I had surmounted all the difficulties which a foreign ear must experience, and I had selected good models for imitation. I set myself to work, and composed couplets, quatrains, whole airs ; and after all the pains taken by me, I saw that my Muse in a French dress had not that fire, that grace and facility, which an author acquires in his youth, and brings to perfection in his mature years. I became sensible of my imperfections, and gave up my work ; and I renounced forever the charms of French poetry. I might have confided my subject to some one who would have perhaps taken the charge of the versification ; but then to whom could I apply ? An author of the first rank would have changed my plan, and an inferior author would have spoiled it. Besides, it was a trifle which I did not care much for, and I soon forgot it. I found it in the rummaging among my papers which my Memoirs

occasion me to make; and as I communicate all my productions to my readers, I make it a point of conscience not to conceal this abortion. If any of my readers deem this subject worthy of his attention, I leave him full power to do with it what he pleases; and if he will have the goodness to consult me, I shall tell him sincerely my opinion, even at the risk of displeasing him, which has happened to me more than once under similar circumstances. Beware, my friends, of those young people, those inferior authors, who come to consult you. They do not want your advice, but compliments and applauses. If you endeavor to correct them, you will soon see with what obstinacy they maintain their opinions, and what a coloring they give to their faults; and if you persist, they at last conclude you to be a fool.

VI.

I HAVE already announced that preparations for great marriages were making at court in the year 1770, a time when the Archduchess of Austria, Marie Antoinette of Lorraine, came as a dauphiness to fill this kingdom with joy, glory, and hope. By the qualities of her head and her heart, she gained the esteem of the king, the affection of her husband, the friendship of the royal family, and by her beneficence she merited the public admiration. This virtue, which in our days has become the ruling passion of Frenchmen, seems to have excited an emulation in souls possessed of sensibility from the example set by that august princess.

These nuptials were celebrated with a pomp worthy of the grandson of the French monarch and the daugh-

ter of the Empress of Germany. I saw the richly decorated temple, the majestic view of the royal banquet, the ball in the gallery, and the gaming parties in the apartments. There were illuminations everywhere, and fireworks of the greatest beauty. Torr , an Italian artificer, on this occasion, carried the pyrotechnical art to the highest perfection.

The new court-theatre was opened at the same time. It is a superb building, but the architecture is more majestic than convenient for the spectators. It ought to be seen when dress or masked balls are given. The theatre, on these occasions, is decorated with the same ornaments as the rest of the house, and the whole forms an immense saloon, enriched with columns, looking-glasses, and gildings, which prove the grandeur of the sovereign by whom it was ordered, and the taste of the artist by whom it was executed. In the rejoicings on this august marriage the French poets made court and city resound with their songs. My Muse was desirous of awaking; I endeavored to do something also; and I composed Italian verses, but I did not dare to print them. Among the infinite number of compositions which appeared every day, some were excellent, while others were not so much as read. I was unwilling to augment the number of the latter, and I presented my verses in manuscript. The dauphiness received them with kindness and gave me to understand, in very good Italian, that I was not unknown to her.

It would seem that the happy star which then shed its influence over this kingdom inspired me with zeal, ambition, and courage. I then conceived the project of composing a French comedy; and I had the temerity to offer it to the French theatre. The word

“temerity” is not too strong on this occasion : for must it not be regarded in this light, that I, a stranger, who had never set foot in France till the age of fifty-three, with merely a confused and superficial knowledge of that language, should venture, after a lapse of nine years, to compose a piece for the principal theatre of the nation ? You are aware, I suppose, my reader, that I am speaking of “The Surly Benefactor” (*Bourru Benifaisant*), a fortunate piece, which crowned my labors, and set the seal to my reputation.

It was given for the first time at Paris on the 4th of November, 1771, and next day at Fontainebleau ; and it had the same success at the court and in the city. I received a gratification of one hundred and fifty louis-d’ors from the king, and my right of authorship brought me in a handsome sum at Paris. My bookseller treated me with great liberality, and I was overpowered with honor, pleasure, and joy. I tell the truth, and make no concealment ; false modesty is as odious in my eyes as vanity. I will not attempt any extracts from a comedy which is everywhere acted, and in everybody’s hands.

My comedy could not have been more successful. I had been fortunate enough to find in nature a character every day to be met with, which, however, had escaped the vigilance of ancient and modern authors. They imagined, perhaps, that a rude and surly individual, from the inconvenience which he occasions to society, would be disgusting on the stage ; and, considering the character in this point of view, they have acted wisely in not bringing it forward. I should have followed their example, had other views not inspired me with the hope of turning it to account. The beneficence constitutes the principal object of my

piece ; and the vivacity of the beneficent individual furnishes the comic humor which is inseparable from comedy. Beneficence is a virtue of the soul ; roughness is but a constitutional defect ; both are compatible in the same subject ; on these principles I formed my plan, and the sensibility of my protagonist was what alone rendered him supportable.

On the first representation of my comedy, I concealed myself, as I had always done in Italy, behind the curtain ; I saw nothing, but I heard my actors and the applauses of the public ; I stalked backwards and forwards during the whole time of the play, quickening my steps in passages of interest and passion, satisfied with the actors, and echoing the applauses of the public. At the conclusion of the play I heard clapping of hands and shouts of applause without end. M. Dauberval, who was to conduct me to Fontainebleau, arrived. I imagined he came to urge my departure ; but he came for a very different purpose. "Come, sir," said he, "you must exhibit yourself." "Exhibit myself! to whom?" "To the public, which calls for you." "No, no, friend, let us take our departure with all expedition ; I could not support —" Here M. le Kain and M. Brizard laid hold of me, and dragged me on the stage. I had seen authors undergo a similar ceremony with courage ; but I was not accustomed to it. In Italy poets are not called to appear on the stage for the purpose of being complimented by the audience ; I could not conceive how a man could, as it were, say tacitly to the spectators, "Here I am, gentlemen, ready for your applause."

After supporting for several seconds a situation of the greatest constraint and singularity, I at last retired and crossed the stage, to gain the coach which was

in waiting for me. I met numbers of people who were seeking me. I distinguished no one; I accompanied my guide, and entered the coach, in which my wife and nephew were already seated. At the success of my piece they wept for joy, and at the account of my appearance on the stage they were ready to die of laughter. I was fatigued, and required some repose; I wanted sleep; my soul was satisfied and my mind tranquil; I should have passed a happy night in bed, but in the carriage I closed my eyes and was awaked again every moment by the jostling. In short, after a good deal of dozing, talking, and yawning, I arrived at Fontainebleau, where I immediately went to bed. After dining, and a short walk, I repaired to the castle to witness the representation of my piece, and kept always behind the curtain.

I have spoken of its success at court. It was not allowable at that time to applaud in presence of the king; but it was easy to see, from the movement and the countenances of the spectators, the effect which the piece produced on them. Next day the Marshal de Duras did me the honor to present me privately to the king in his closet. His majesty and all the royal family bestowed on me fresh proofs of their usual liberality. I returned to Paris to witness the second representation of my piece. That day several symptoms of ill-humor were exhibited in the pit. I was in my usual place. M. Feuilli came down and told me not to be uneasy, for it was nothing but a cabal. "What!" said I, "there was nothing of this kind at the first representation." "Those who are now jealous were not then afraid of you," said the actor; "they laughed at the idea of a foreigner attempting to write a French comedy, and the cabal was not then organ-

ized ; but you have nothing to fear," added he, " the blow has taken effect, and your success is certain." In reality, the piece met with increasing success till the twelfth representation, when it was withdrawn by the actors and myself, for the sake of reproducing it in a more advantageous season.

Nobody said anything against my play, but it was the subject of much conversation. Some said it was a piece of my Italian theatre ; others thought I had written it in Italian and translated it into French. The collection of my works may convince the former of the contrary, and I shall now proceed to undeceive the latter, if there still be any who retain that opinion. I not only composed my piece in French, but I thought in the French manner when engaged in it. It has the stamp of its origin in the thoughts, in the imagery, in the manner, and in the style.

I wrote then and conceived this piece in French, but I was not so bold as to produce it without consulting persons capable of affording me both correction and instruction. I even availed myself of their opinions.

Nearly about this time M. Rousseau, of Geneva, returned to Paris. Every person was eager to see him, but he was not visible to all. I knew him only by reputation, but I had a strong desire to converse with him, and would gladly have shown my piece to a man so well acquainted with the French literature and language.

It was necessary to inform him beforehand, to insure a favorable reception ; I therefore adopted the resolution of writing to him, and expressing my desire to form an acquaintance with him. He returned a very polite answer, informing me that he never left his home

or went anywhere, but that, if I would give myself the trouble to climb four pair of stairs in the Hôtel Plâtrière, in the street Plâtrière, it would be doing him a great pleasure. I accepted the invitation, and called on him a few days afterwards.

I will here give an account of my conversation with the citizen of Geneva. The result is not, indeed, very interesting; my piece was only mentioned incidentally, and without alluding to any consequences; but I avail myself of this opportunity of mentioning this extraordinary man, who possessed talents of the very highest order, with incredible prejudices and weaknesses.

I ascended to the fourth story of the house he described. On knocking, the door was opened by a woman who was neither young nor pretty nor prepossessing.

I asked if M. Rousseau was at home. "He is, and he is not," said the woman, whom at most I took for his housekeeper, and who asked my name. On giving it, she said, "You were expected, sir; and I shall instantly announce you to my husband." On entering a moment afterwards, I discovered the author of "Émile" busied in copying music. This I was previously informed of, and I saw it with silent indignation. He received me in a frank and friendly manner, and as he rose he held out some sheets to me, and said, "See, sir, if anybody can copy music like me; I defy any one to show anything from the press divided as beautifully and exactly as I do it; come, let us warm ourselves," he continued, and with one step we were close to the fire.

The fire was low, and he demanded fresh wood, which was brought in by Madame Rousseau. I rose

and offered my chair to her. "Do not disturb yourself," said the husband, "my wife has her concerns to attend to."

My heart was grieved to see a man of letters employed as a copyist, and his wife acting as a servant. It was a painful spectacle for me, and I could neither conceal my astonishment nor my pain, though I said nothing. As he was not wanting in penetration, he perceived that something was passing in my mind; he questioned me, and I was forced to tell him the cause of my silence and astonishment.

"What!" said he, "you pity me because I am employed in copying? You imagine that I should be better employed in composing books for people incapable of reading them, and supplying articles to unprincipled journalists? You are mistaken; I am passionately fond of music; I copy from excellent originals; this enables me to live, and serves to amuse me; and what more should I have? But what are you yourself doing?" continued he. "You came to France to labor for the Italian comedians, who are lazy fellows and do not want your pieces. Return again to your own country; I know that you are wished for, that you are expected —"

"Sir," said I, interrupting him, "you are in the right; I ought to have quitted Paris in consequence of the carelessness of the Italian actors, but other views have detained me. I have been composing a piece in French." "You have composed a piece in French?" said he, with an air of astonishment, "and what do you mean to do with it?" "Give it to the theatre." "To what theatre?" "To the French Theatre." "You were reproaching me just now with losing my time, but you seem to be losing yours without any

benefit whatever." "My piece is received." "Is it possible? I am not, however, astonished at it; the actors are destitute even of common-sense; they receive and reject merely at random; it is received, perhaps, but it will not be acted; and so much the worse for you if it be played." "How can you form any judgment of a piece with which you are unacquainted?" "I know the taste of both the Italians and the French; they are too dissimilar, and, with your permission, your age is not the time to begin to write and to compose in a foreign language." "Your reflections are just, sir, but these difficulties may be surmounted. I confided my work to men of abilities and theatrical experience, who appeared satisfied with it." "They merely flatter and deceive you; you will be their dupe. Show me your piece; I am sincere and honest, and will tell you the truth."

This was precisely what I was aiming at, not for the sake of consulting him, but to see whether he would persist, after reading my piece, in his want of confidence in me. The manuscript was in the hands of the copyist of the French Theatre, and I promised to M. Rousseau that he should have a sight of it as soon as it was returned to me. My intention was to keep my word with him, and I shall explain why I did not do so.

There appeared, about three years ago, a book entitled "The Confessions of J. J. Rousseau, citizen of Geneva, containing anecdotes of his life, written by himself." In this work he does not spare himself; he even advances singularities with respect to himself which might be injurious to him if his celebrity did not elevate him above criticism. But I am acquainted with one circumstance which happened to him in the latter

years of his life, that is not to be found in his "Confessions." The author has perhaps forgotten it, or had not had time to insert it among the rest, as his book is posthumous. This anecdote does not concern me particularly, but I mention it because it prevented me from communicating my comedy to M. Rousseau.

This learned stranger had friends and a number of admirers at Paris. M—— was both a friend and admirer; he loved, esteemed, and pitied him at the same time, being acquainted with his distress as well as his talents. M—— proposed to the Genevese author very elegant and commodious furnished apartments, near the garden of the Tuileries; and that it might not shock the delicacy of his friend, he offered them to him for the same price as that he paid for the lodgings he occupied. M. Rousseau perceived the intention of the generous man, rejected the offer abruptly, and exclaimed that he would not be deceived. M——, who was also a philosopher, and being a Frenchman could unite politeness with his philosophy, did not allow himself to be chagrined at the refusal; he knew the man, and pardoned him his foibles; he continued to call on him, and good-naturedly climbed up to the fourth story to enjoy his conversation.

He had heard of the "Confessions of J. J. Rousseau," and entertained a desire to see the whole or part of them; and having himself, in his portfolio, characters of the age composed by him, in the manner of Theophrastus and La Bruyère, he proposed to his friend the reading of their respective works. M. Rousseau accepted the proposition, but on condition that M—— would be satisfied with a frugal supper at the Hôtel Plâtrière. M—— observed that they would be more comfortable at his house. "That may be," said the

other, but you must sup with me, or the reading shall not take place. 'The only concession I can make,' he added, "is to allow you to bring a bottle of your wine, for they give me very bad wine where I am lodged."

The complaisant Frenchman agreed to everything; but unfortunately he was too kind, too polite, having sent a basket with six bottles of excellent wine and six bottles of Malaga. This surprise put the Genevese in ill-humor. When the Frenchman arrived, he was not backward in perceiving it, and asked some explanation. "We two," said Rousseau, "cannot drink twelve bottles of wine; I have taken one from your basket, which is enough for a moderate supper; send back the remainder instantly, or you shall not sup with me."

The threat was not very alarming, but it was the reading which interested the guest; his servant was at hand, and he gave him the basket to carry back. Rousseau was satisfied, and began first to read. The sending back the wine was attended with much loss of time; they were interrupted by Madame Rousseau, who wanted the table for the supper; they could have read without a table, but the supper was served up instantly. It consisted of a pullet and a salad, and nothing more. When the supper was over, it was M——'s turn to read; he read a chapter, which was applauded as very good; he read a second, and M. Rousseau rose, and walked backwards and forwards with a discontented and displeased air. When interrogated respecting the cause of his anger, he said, "It is unbecoming to insult respectable people in their own house." "What," said the other, "do you complain of?" "You have not a fool to deal with," replied the phi-

losopher; "this is my portrait, which you have been drawing in exaggerated colors, with satirical traits, — it is shocking, it is unworthy!"

"Gently, my good sir," said the Frenchman. "I love and esteem you, and you know me; the person whom I have been portraying is one of those harsh, troublesome, and bitter individuals who are so frequently met with in society." "Yes, yes," replied M. Rousseau, "I am aware that I pass for a character of this kind in the minds of the ignorant; I pity and despise them, but I cannot bear that a man like you, that a friend, real or pretended, should come to laugh at me."

It was in vain for M—— to speak; he could gain nothing; the head of the other was disordered, they quarrelled seriously, and at last a very sharp correspondence took place between them.

I was intimate with the French author. I saw him the day after his rupture with M. Rousseau in a company where we frequently met; he communicated to us what had taken place. Some laughed, and others made observations on it. It furnished me also with food for reflection. Rousseau was blunt; he had even owned it in his dispute with his friend; he had only to appropriate to himself the beneficence also, and then he would have said that I wished to portray him in my play. I carefully, therefore, avoided exposing myself to the effects of ill-humor, and I never saw him again. This man had received the most excellent qualities from nature, and he gave striking proofs of it; but he was of the Protestant Reformed religion, and he composed works which were not orthodox. For this he was obliged to leave France, which he had adopted as his country; and this disaster chagrined

him. He believed he was treated with injustice by mankind, whom he consequently was led to despise, and this feeling could not be of any advantage to him. What a number of generous offers and protections he refused! His garret became dearer in his eyes than a palace. Some discovered grandeur of soul in his conduct, while others saw only pride in it. At all events he was much to be pitied; his weaknesses did injury to nobody, and his talents rendered him respectable. He died as he lived, like a philosopher; and the republic of letters is indebted to the generous individual who honored his ashes.

In the month of May, 1771, the marriage of the Count de Provence, the grandson of Louis XV., and brother of the dauphin, with Maria Louisa of Savoy, eldest daughter of the King of Sardinia, was celebrated at Versailles. This important event redoubled the joy of the French, for the prince in question was beloved by his country, and rendered himself still more interesting by his virtues and talents; and the princess, from her abilities and her information, became the delight of her husband.

In the year 1771, and in the midst of the court rejoicings, Madame Louisa, daughter of Louis XV., quitted the world, and shut herself up for life in a cloister. She selected the most humble and austere of all the orders. This pious princess took the veil of St. Theresa, among the Carmelites of St. Denis. She had no reason to fear that the royal abode would prevent her from exercising her piety and her virtues; but the corruption of our age required an august example to bring timid souls back to the way of perfection, and God made choice of a princess of the blood of the Bourbons for their encouragement.

VII.

I HAD done nothing since the success of my "Surly Benefactor." I said jokingly, that I wished to repose on my laurels; but it was the fear of not succeeding a second time as well as the first, which prevented me from satisfying the desires of my friends and myself. At length I yielded to the solicitations of others and my own self-love. I cast my eyes on the "Ostentatious Miser," a character so frequently to be met with in nature, that I had only to fear the too great number of originals. I took my protagonist from among the class of upstarts, to avoid the danger of coming in contact with the higher classes. This piece, which is very little known, and which many people would wish to know, underwent singular adventures.

The first person to whom I showed it when it was fit to appear, was M. Preville. I had destined the character of the marquis for him, and I was anxious to have his opinion of that character, and of the whole of my comedy. He seemed to me satisfied with both. I observed to him how difficult it would be to represent naturally the character he was going to undertake. "I am acquainted," said he, "with this precious sort of nature." After the encouragement of this valuable actor, I read my piece to the whole of the comedians assembled: it had votes for and against, and was received subject to correction. I was not accustomed to this sort of reception. "However," said I to myself, "no pride, no obstinacy." I retracted one thing here, added another there, corrected, polished, and embellished my work. A second reading took place, and the piece was received and placed in the repertory for the journey to Fontainebleau.

It was to be acted among the first at the Court Theatre. M. Preville fell sick on arriving there: he remained a month confined in bed, but recovered towards the end of the visit, and "The Ostentatious Miser" was destined for the eve of the king's departure. All the ministers, strangers, and people in office had taken their departure; the actors were fatigued; they had no great desire to study, and still less to rehearse. I saw the critical situation of my piece, and very modestly demanded if it were possible to suspend the representation of it. There were no others on the repertory, and I was made to believe that it could not be dispensed with.

I went to the first representation, and took my ordinary position in the bottom of the theatre, behind the curtain. So few people were present, that the favorable or unfavorable impression made by the piece could not be perceived, and it finished without any sign of either approbation or reprobation. I returned home without seeing any one. Everybody packed up for their departure, and I did the same; and we all took our departure accordingly. On the road I had time for reflection: the freezing coldness with which my work was listened to, might proceed from the emptiness of the house, and the circumstances of the moment; but I saw that some of the actors had mistaken their characters. I have nothing to say with respect to M. Preville, as his part was extremely difficult, and he had not sufficient time to familiarize himself with those broken phrases which require a deal of ingenuity to make the audience comprehend what the actor does not pronounce. My great fault was in not remonstrating and using interest to prevent my piece from being acted at Fontainebleau. Thus, in recapitulating my

mistakes, I wrote to the actors on my arrival in Paris, and I instantly withdrew my piece.

My friends were impatiently desirous of seeing my "Ostentatious Miser" on the stage of Paris; and they were all displeas'd to learn that I had withdrawn it. They grumbled, they solicited, they teased me to allow it to be again represented, and I was inform'd, by way of encouragement, of the number of pieces which, though unfortunate at their first representation, afterwards recover'd. They were in the right, perhaps, and I should have follow'd their advice and satisfi'd their wishes, if the actors had given me any reason to think they were desirous of again appearing in it; but they were apparently as much disgust'd with it as myself: it was born under an unfortunate planet, the influence of which I dread'd. I condemn'd it, therefore, to oblivion, and my rigor went so far that I refus'd it to those persons who demand'd a reading of it. I could not, however, resist the demand of one of the principal nobles of the kingdom, whose prayers are commands. I did homage to him with my comedy, the reading of which was undertak'n by a lady. She acquitted herself with the facility and grace which are natural to her; but on the first entrance of the marquis, she was taken by surpris'e at the singularity of the character, of which she had not receiv'd any previous idea.

M. — laid hold of the original, and read this and all the other scenes where this character is introduc'd, with such ease and precision that he might have been taken for the author of the work. I own that I could not contain my joy and my admiration. Every person was satisfi'd with the reading; I was in a house distinguish'd for kin'dness and attention, and I could expect nothing but compliments.

The marriage of the Count d'Artois, the brother of Louis XVI. with Maria Theresa of Savoy, the daughter of the King of Sardinia and the sister of madame, was celebrated in the month of November, 1773, at Versailles. About this time the Chevalier John Mocenigo, the Venetian ambassador, came to succeed the Chevalier Sebastian Mocenigo, his younger brother, whose embassy was expired. This new minister of the republic was one of my old protectors; he had given me the most undoubted proofs of his benevolence; he had lodged me and my family a long time in his house; and with the Balbi, the Quirini, the Berengan, and the Barbarigo families, he protected my first Florence edition, and facilitated its entrance into the city of Venice, notwithstanding the barbarous war carried on against me by the booksellers. I received a fresh mark of his kindness for me on the occasion of his marriage with the niece of the Doge Loredan, when he wrote me the following note:--

“The most serene Doge has permitted me to invite a few of my friends to the nuptials; you are of the number; I request your presence; you will find your place.”

I did not fail. There was a table for a hundred guests in the banqueting-hall, and another for twenty-four, the honors of which were done by the Doge's nephew; I was of the last party; but at the second course we all quitted our place and repaired to the great hall, making the tour of that immense apartment, and seating ourselves behind one another. I in particular enjoyed the kindness which was lavished on an author who had been so fortunate as to give pleasure.

I have always felt a kindness for my countrymen, and welcomed them to my house. I have more than once been deceived, it is true, but unprincipled individ-

uials have never disgusted me with the pleasure of rendering myself useful; and I flatter myself that no Italian ever went away from me dissatisfied. Enchanted with being in France, I love to converse from time to time with the people of my own country, or Frenchmen who can speak Italian.

Our Italian literature is very much relished in France, and our books well received and paid for; the libraries of Paris are stocked with them. The late M. Floncel possessed a library of sixteen thousand volumes, all in the Italian language. M. Molini, an Italian bookseller in the capital, carries on a considerable trade in Italian books. The number of copies of my comedies sold in this country is prodigious; and the eagerness displayed in subscribing to the new and superb edition of the works of Metastasio is still more so.

To the joy diffused by the marriage of the three princes throughout the kingdom, the most gloomy sadness succeeded. Louis XV. fell ill; the small-pox soon broke out; the kind was the most malignant and complicated, and this king, who possessed the most vigorous and excellent constitution, fell a victim to the violence of this scourge to mankind. What an affliction for France, which had conferred on him the title of "Well-beloved"! What a desolation for his family, by whom he was adored! What a loss for his old servants, who were more attached to him through sentiment than duty! He was the most forgiving king, the most tender father, and the kindest master; the qualities of his heart were excellent, and his mental advantages were great. But Providence has given him a successor possessed of numerous virtues. Goodness, justice, clemency, benevolence, are duties imposed on all those whom God has destined for the government

of mankind; it is his personal qualities for which he is chiefly distinguished; his merits, his correct conduct, his zeal for the public good, and for the peace and tranquillity of Europe; his religion and moderation, the probity which he exacts, the example which he gives, — these are rare virtues, and much more essentially useful to the state than the spirit of conquest; they are inexhaustible sources of praise and immortal glory.

Alas! what vicissitudes in human life! Here I am obliged to commemorate a fresh subject of dread and grief. The three daughters of Louis XV., who never quitted their father's bed during his illness, began to display the same symptoms, and incur the same danger. These princesses were too interesting not to excite a general alarm respecting their situation. God preserved them to us; God snatched from the arms of death this heroic example of filial love. The princesses passed the period of their convalescence at Choisi. I participated in the general grief at this melancholy conjuncture, and I went in their train to breathe the salutary air of that delightful place.

On returning to Paris, I heard of a projected marriage between Madame Clotilde, the sister of the King of France, and the Prince of Piedmont, the presumptive heir of the crown of Sardinia. This piece of news was very interesting to me, and I went to Versailles for the sake of being better informed respecting it. The account was verified, but a mysterious silence was observed, and it was not till seven months before the marriage that I received orders to attend on the princess, for the sake of giving her some instruction in the Italian language. I obeyed; but what could she learn in the space of seven months? I took care not to proceed in the common way with her. She was well acquainted

with the French grammar, and I only taught her the auxiliary verbs of the Italian. I made her read a great deal; the remarks and short digressions which I intermixed with this reading were of more use to her, in my opinion, than a long catalogue of rules and scholastic difficulties.

My readings had still a more important and interesting tendency; I made her acquainted with the classical Italian authors by name, related anecdotes respecting them, and mentioned the titles of their works; and I endeavored to instruct her in the Italian manners and customs. This kind and complaisant princess had a wonderful facility in learning, and a very excellent memory. I went every day, and she made an astonishing progress; but our conferences were frequently interrupted by jewellers, dealers in trinkets, painters, and shopkeepers. Sometimes I entered the room to witness the choice of stuffs, the price paid for jewels, and the resemblance of the portraits. I endeavored to derive some advantage from these very inconveniences; I made her repeat in Italian the names of what she had seen, what she had priced, and what she purchased or refused.

We had other circumstances to call off our attention, — a journey to Rheims, for the consecration of the king, and the birth of the Duke d'Angoulême. This prince, son to the Count d'Artois, was the first fruit of the three marriages of the French princes, and, as his birth could not fail to be interesting to the state, the rejoicings were proportionate to the public joy. My august scholar, notwithstanding all these interruptions, contrived to turn her time to considerable profit. She pronounced Italian tolerably well, and read it still better. She could read and understand the epithalamiums

destined for her by the Piedmontese poets. The marriage was celebrated by deputy towards the end of August, 1775, in the chapel of Versailles. The public rejoicings were superb and magnificent. The princess departed, universally adored and regretted. All who had ever served, or approached her presence, received marks of her goodness. It is not extraordinary that in so great a crowd some one should be forgotten; but it was unfortunate that this accident should happen to me.

With respect to my services and expenses, I demanded nothing, and I received nothing, but still I was persuaded that I should not be a loser. I kept myself quiet, therefore, and said nothing. Persons who interested themselves in my affairs grew impatient at my silence, and took steps to know the course I ought to adopt. They had more penetration than myself, and their mediation was of great utility to me. It was believed at court that my pension of thirty-six hundred livres obliged me to serve the whole royal family. They were not aware that it was given me by way of recompense for having taught Italian to the princesses. Those who were intrusted with the outlays for the princess of Piedmont were convinced that I deserved to be recompensed; but the affairs relating to that princess were settled; the only recourse was to wait in patience; I was to be employed for Madame Elizabeth and the sister of the king, and this was the occasion for which I ought to reserve my demands.

I waited long, and still kept my apartments at Versailles. The day at length came when I received orders to wait on the Princess Elizabeth. This young, lively, gay, and amiable princess was of an age much more inclined to amusement than application. I had

been present at the Latin lessons which were given to her, and I perceived that she possessed a great faculty in learning anything, but that she disliked to dwell on minute and trifling difficulties. I followed, with very little variation, the mode adopted by me with the Princess of Piedmont; I did not torment her with declinations and conjugations calculated to disgust her; she wished to make an amusement of her occupation, and I endeavored to make my lessons agreeable conversations. When my comedies were read, in the scenes of two characters, the princess and her maid of honor read and translated each their part; and when there were three characters a lady of the company took the third. I translated the others when there happened to be more. This exercise was useful and amusing; but can we flatter ourselves that young people will long be amused with the same thing? We passed from prose to verse. Metastasio occupied my august scholar for some time. I endeavored to satisfy her, and she was deserving of it; for it was the most gentle and agreeable service in the world.

I was growing old, however; the air of Versailles did not agree with me; the winds which prevail there, and which blow almost without intermission, attacked my nerves, excited my old hypochondria, and subjected me to palpitations. I was forced to quit the court, and return to Paris, where the air we breathe is less keen, and is more suitable to my temperament. My nephew, though employed in the war-office, could succeed me; he had done so with the princesses, and I was certain of the goodness of Madame Elizabeth. This was the time to settle my affairs, and I did not forget myself on the occasion. I presented a bill to the king, which was patronized by the princesses. The queen had even

the goodness to interest herself for me, and the king granted me an extraordinary gratification of six thousand livres, and an annuity of twelve hundred livres during the life of myself and nephew.

VIII.

IN the year 1777 a new comic opera was demanded from me for Venice. I had resolved not to compose any more, but, imagining that the same work might be of utility to me at Paris, I consented to satisfy my friends, and composed a piece calculated to please in an equal degree the two nations. Its title was "I Volpoui" (The Foxes). They were courtiers jealous of a stranger, to whom they showed a vast deal of politeness, by way of amusing him, while they plotted his ruin. This piece contained interest, intrigue, and gayety, and inculcated an important moral lesson.

It was then in agitation to bring to Paris the actors of the Italian comic opera, whom we call I Buffi, and who are here Buffoons (Bouffons). This expression would be considered as insulting in Italy, but it is not so in France. It is merely a bad translation. The music of the good daughter of M. Piccini of the colony of M. Sacchini, and the progress which the taste for Italian singing made every day at Paris, determined the directors of the opera to introduce this foreign entertainment, which was represented on the great theatre of this city. I was intimately flattered with this project, and I had the temerity to believe myself necessary to its execution. Nobody knew more of the Italian comic opera than myself. I was aware that for several years nothing had been given in Italy but farces, of which the music was excellent and the poetry wretched.

I saw what was wanting to render this entertainment agreeable at Paris. New words were wanting, new dramas in the French taste. I had performed this task more than once for London, and I was secure of my purpose. Nobody can be more useful than myself on a similar occasion. I knew from experience how difficult and laborious this work was; but I should have applied to it with infinite pleasure for the sake of the thing itself, and the honor of my nation. Besides, there was every reason to suppose that, if the opera of Paris sent for foreign actors, they would not be contented with their old music, but would employ M. Piccini, who was here, or M. Sacchini, who was at London, in the composition of new.

I kept my comic opera therefore in readiness, and I was almost certain that I should be employed in the composition of others; for I did not think it suitable to the dignity of the principal theatre of this nation to entertain the public for a length of time with the music which had been already sung in the concerts and parties of Paris. I was in expectation, therefore, of being spoken to, consulted, and engaged. Alas! nobody ever said a word to me on the subject. The Italian actors arrived at Paris. I knew some of them, but I did not go to see them. I was not present at their débüt. Some of them were good, and some indifferent; their music was excellent; but the entertainment did not succeed, as I had foreseen, on account of the dramas, which were of a nature to displease the French and to dishonor Italy.

My self-love might have been flattered at seeing my prediction verified, but I was in reality very much distressed at it. I was too great a lover of the comic opera, and I should have been enchanted to have heard

Italian music to Italian words; but then such words were requisite as could be read with pleasure, and translated into French without a blush. Translations of these wretched operas were printed and published. The best translation was the most insupportable; for the more accurately the translators endeavored to render their text, the more the dulness of the originals became evident. I supposed this Italian company would leave the place at the close of the year; but their engagement was probably for two, and they remained all the following year. During this second year they did me the honor to bring me one of their wretched dramas to patch up; but it was too late, the evil was done, and this species of entertainment was cried down. I might have supported it in its beginning, but I did not believe it was in my power to raise it after the crisis which it had experienced.

I must also own that I was piqued at having been forgotten at the proper moment. I do not recollect having for a long time experienced a similar degree of mortification. Some said, by way of consolation, that the directors of the opera thought this employment beneath me. The directors knew nothing of the matter they had in hand; if they had had the goodness to have consulted me, I should have shown them that they wanted an author and not a cobbler. Others told me (perhaps without any foundation for saying so) that it was feared Goldoni would be too dear. I should have labored for the honor of the thing, had they known how to go to work with me; I should have been high-priced had they haggled with me; but my labors would have indemnified them: and I think I may venture to say that this entertainment would have been still in existence at Paris.

In the month of January, 1778, there were rejoicings at court and in the city for the birth of the Duke of Berry, son of the Count d'Artois. But what was the joy of the French when the pregnancy of the queen was declared the same year! She was delivered in the month of December of a princess, who was instantly named Maria Theresa Charlotte of France, with the title of madame, the daughter of the king. This first fruit of the king's marriage was considered as the precursor of the dauphin, who was impatiently expected, and who, after three years, crowned at last the wishes of the French. The rejoicings on this occasion, and on the queen's recovery, corresponded with the circumstances of the times. France was then engaged in a war which she did not provoke, but which she was obliged to continue for the honor of the nation —

Alas! I am seized with a violent palpitation this very moment, — this is an habitual ailment with me, I cannot go on —

I resume the chapter which I left off yesterday. My palpitation has been more vehement and of longer duration this time than usual. It attacked me at four o'clock in the afternoon, and did not leave me till two o'clock in the morning. The palpitation is not periodical; it attacks me several times in the year, in all seasons, and at all times, sometimes when fasting, sometimes at dinner, sometimes after dinner, and very rarely during the night. But what is most singular in its symptoms, I feel when it is coming on a commotion in my bowels, my pulse rises and beats with alarming violence, my muscles are in convulsion, and my breast is oppressed.

I feel when it is going to stop a beating in my head, and my pulse gradually returns to its natural state.

There are no gradations in the attacks or in the cessation. It is an inconceivable phenomenon, which can be explained by a comparison with swooning.

Accustomed to this infirmity, which is more alarming than painful, I learned to bear it without dread, and, by way of drawing my attention from it, I generally continued my dinner if it attacked me at table, or continued my game if taken by surprise in company. Nobody perceived the state I was in, and as at my age we must learn to put up with our enemies, I made no attempts to get cured, lest in endeavoring to avoid the Gulf of Scylla, I should fall into that of Charybdis. But I was seized with a palpitation of thirty-six hours' continuance about four years ago, and this appearing in rather a serious light to me, I had recourse to my physician. M. Guilbert de Preval, the regent of the College of Physicians of Paris, stopped it instantly, and without giving me anything which could at all derange my system; he merely retarded the attacks in future, and diminished the duration of them. M. Preval has made himself enemies in the body to which he belongs. It is said that there is a law among them that no member of their society shall make use of new remedies without communicating them to his brethren. This M. Preval has not done, through fear perhaps lest his remedy should become useless, like so many others in the hands of everybody. He distributes it in his house. The poor are there relieved, and the rich are not subjected to extortion. Happy the man, it is said, whose physician is his friend. M. Preval is the friend of all his patients, as he is the friend of humanity.

IX.

ON leaving Venice I left my niece in a convent there. On attaining the age of twenty, an age when it became necessary to decide whether she chose the cloister or to mix in the world, I interrogated her from time to time in my letters respecting her inclinations. She professed to have no other will than mine. As I had no wish but to satisfy her, I thought there was something mysterious concealed under this semblance of modesty, and I requested one of my protectors to have the goodness to sound her with address.

All that he could draw from her was, that so long as she was in chains she would never communicate her way of thinking. From this I conjectured that she was not fond of the convent. So much the better: I possessed only entailed property, which may be given as a portion, but the nuns take nothing but ready money.

I wrote a letter to the lady at the head of the convent; and the senator to whom I intrusted it went with his lady to the convent and brought her away with them to their house. When there, she did not express herself in the clearest terms; but, however, as much so as her modesty would permit. She did not wish to be married, but she disliked the convent.

My niece could not long remain in a patrician family, and she was boarded in a very prudent and respectable one. M. Chiaruzzi, the landlord of Mademoiselle Goldoni, took care of my affairs at the same time and his wife attended to those of the young woman. In two years his wife died, and the husband demanded my niece in marriage. She seemed satisfied, and I

was completely so: my nephew and myself assigned to him all our Italian property, and we set our hands to the necessary writings before M. Lormeau, a notary at Paris. The signature of a man of his probity was a lucky omen to the new couple; and in reality the marriage turned out very happy.

This event was necessary for my tranquillity. I had taken the charge of the two children of my brother. I saw my nephew in a tolerable situation under myself, and I was glad to see my niece settled. My satisfaction would have been at its height if I could have been present at the marriage; but I was too old for a journey of three hundred leagues.

I am well, thank God; but I require precautions for my strength and health. I read every day, and consult attentively the "Treatise on Old Age," by M. Robert, doctor-regent of the faculty of Paris.

Our physicians in general take care of us when we are unwell, and endeavor to cure us; but they do not embarrass themselves with our regimen when we are in good health. From this book I derived instruction and correction. It showed me the degree of vigor which I might still possess, and the necessity of taking care of it. The work is composed in the form of letters; when I read it, I imagined the author speaking to me; in every page, I fall in with and recognize myself; the advices are salutary without being burdensome: he is not so severe as the school of Salerno, and does not prescribe the regimen of Louis Cornaro, who lived a hundred years as a valetudinary that he might die in good health.

M. Robert is a very wise and intelligent man; he is one of those who have studied Nature with the utmost attention, and best know her course. I became ac-

quainted with him at the house of M. Fagnan, one of the principal secretaries of the royal treasury, where we frequently met one another; and Madame Fagnan, his widow, who is possessed of talents, graces, and good sense, still continues to receive the intimate friends of her husband with the same cordiality.

An interesting discovery was made at this time. M. de Montgolfier was the first who darted a globe into the air. The globe rose higher than the eye could reach, at the mercy of the winds, and supported itself till the extinction of the flame and smoke by which it was fed. This first experiment gave rise to other speculations. M. Charles, a very learned physician, employed inflammable air. The globes filled with this gas require no management to preserve them for a greater length of time, and are secure from catching fire. There were men possessed of sufficient courage to confide their lives to the cords which supported a sort of basket, and who allowed themselves to be fastened to the frail balloon, subject to evident danger and events impossible to be foreseen. The Marquis d'Arlandi and M. Pilastre de Rosier made the first attempt, according to the method of M. de Montgolfier; and M. Charles shortly afterwards took flight himself, by means of his inflammable air.

I could not look at them without trembling. Besides, what was the use of all this risk and courage? If we can only fly at the mercy of the wind, and cannot direct the machine, the discovery, however admirable, will remain of no utility, and a mere plaything.

The rage of discoveries has taken possession of the minds of the Parisians to such a violent degree that they run after everything miraculous. Some time ago there was a belief in the existence of somnambulists,

who spoke sensibly, and to the purpose, with persons awake, and had the faculty of divining the past and foreseeing the future. This illusion did not make any great progress; but there was another almost at the same time which imposed on all Paris.

A letter dated from Lyons announced a man who had found out a way to walk on water dry-footed, and proposed to make the experiment in the capital. He demanded a subscription to indemnify him for his expenses and trouble; the subscription was instantly filled up, and the day fixed on for his crossing the Seine. This man did not make his appearance on the day fixed for that purpose, and pretexts were found for prolonging the farce. It was at length discovered that a wag of Lyons had taken this way of amusing himself with the credulity of the inhabitants of Paris. His intention was not apparently to insult a city of eight hundred thousand inhabitants; and we may suppose he assigned good reasons, by way of excuse, for the joke, as nothing serious happened to him. What induced the Parisians to believe in this invention was the "Journal de Paris," which announced it as a truth confirmed by experiments. The authors of this journal were themselves deceived, and justified themselves amply in publishing the letters by which they were imposed on, with the names of those who wrote and addressed them to their office. Three years afterwards a stranger came to Paris who in reality, in the sight of an immense number of people, crossed the river dry-footed. This man made a mystery of the means employed by him in his experiment. He carefully concealed the shoes used by him in crossing. Probably he wished to sell his secret at a high price; but the small advantages which could be derived from it did

not seem to deserve the trouble. It is not unlikely that he had beneath his two feet something of the shape of a boat or canoe. We may find boats at all rivers where we want to cross them. We seldom require any extraordinary assistance for this purpose; and when we do we cannot always carry about with us these machines, which are neither light nor of easy carriage. This experiment, however, afforded a fresh justification to the authors of the "Journal de Paris," who had foreseen the possibility of this discovery.

X.

I AM now drawing near to the conclusion of my Memoirs, and I support with courage the fatigue of a task which begins to weary me; but a fatal event, which it is now incumbent on me to mention in this place, makes me feel the disagreeable nature of the burden which I have imposed on myself.

In the year 1783 Madame Sophia of France departed this life. What a loss for the court! What an affliction for her affectionate sisters! Her virtues rendered her respectable, and her gentleness of disposition inspired all who knew her with love and confidence. Her benevolent heart anticipated the wants of indigence, and she made incredible efforts to conceal her wit under the veil of piety and modesty. This princess was lamented and regretted by all who had the honor of approaching her, and by myself not less than others. I found some consolation with Madame Tacher and the Marchioness of Chabut, her daughter, who had the same cause for affliction that I had. The conversation of these ladies renewed the memory of my loss, and their kindness for me alleviated my grief.

It is not, however, usual with me to be affected in the keenest manner at the death of my friends or relations. I possess a feeling disposition; and the smallest ailment, the slightest inconvenience which happens to them, affects and grieves me in the extreme; whereas I look coolly on death as the tribute we owe to nature, and against which we must derive consolation in our reason. How happens it then that I am still as much afflicted for the loss of my august scholar as the first day afterwards? In the justice which I render to merit, am I to be suspected of self-love or vanity? Alas! my friends do me the favor to believe that it proceeds rather from gratitude.

In the year 1783 the opera of "Dido," written by M. Marmontel, and set to music by M. Piccini, was represented for the first time. It is, in my opinion, the masterpiece of the one and the triumph of the other. No musical drama approaches nearer to real tragedy than this. M. Marmontel has imitated nobody; he has appropriated the fable to himself, and given it all the probability and regularity of which such a work is susceptible. Some say that Marmontel took his drama from Metastasio, but they are mistaken. "Dido" was the first work of the Italian poet; we discover in it strong marks of a superior genius, but we may remark at the same time the errors of youth; and the French author would not have succeeded had he endeavored to imitate it.

"The Marriage of Figaro" had the greatest success at the French Theatre, because the author put before this title that of "The Frolicsome Day" (*Folle Journée*). Nobody is better acquainted with the defects of his piece than M. Beaumarchais himself; he has given proof of his talents in this department; and had he

wished to make a regular comedy of his "Figaro," he would have succeeded as well as another; but he merely attempted to divert the public; and this object he completely attained. The success of this comedy was extraordinary in every respect. At the comic theatres of Paris two or three pieces are regularly acted every day; but "Figaro" constituted the sole entertainment: the public flocked to it two or three hours before the drawing up of the curtain, and waited three quarters of an hour later than ordinary without being wearied or betraying the slightest symptoms of discontent. It is now at its eighty-sixth representation, and is applauded as much as ever; and what is most singular, those very persons who criticise it at leaving the theatre are the first to return and to amuse themselves with what they have been censuring.

M. de Beaumarchais gave, some years before, a comedy entitled "The Barber of Seville," and the same Spaniard who bore the name of "Figaro," constituted the principal subject of "The Frolicsome Day." The former of these two pieces was highly relished and applauded. The author had been implicated in a lawsuit, and defended his cause himself; the papers written by him were gay, droll, and excellently composed; they were universally read, and the general subject of conversation. He had the address to insert in "The Barber of Seville," under feigned names, anecdotes which recalled the memory of his lawsuit, and covered his adversaries with ridicule; all which contributed very much to the success of his piece. In "The Marriage of Figaro" there were no sarcasms levelled against individuals, but an abundance against all descriptions of people. Nobody, however, could complain, as the criticisms were directed against vice and ridicule which

were everywhere to be met with. Those who find themselves in the predicament which is the object of the general satire, have no right to complain.

The connoisseurs and amateurs of the correct models complained loudly against these two works, which, as they said, had a tendency to degrade the French theatre; they observed their countrymen carried away by a sort of fanatical contagion; and they dreaded lest the disease should become universal. Experience, however, has demonstrated the contrary. There were exhibited at the same time, on the boards of the French Theatre, new plays of a very different description, which met with all the success that could be expected: for example, "The Coriolanus" of M. de la Harpe, "The Seducer" of M. Bievre, "The Difficult Avowals," and "The False Coquette" of M. Vigé. This last author was even encouraged by the public; these first displays of his talents were considered as in the very best taste, tone, and style, and such as to give every reason to hope that he would prove himself the prop of good comedy.

Towards the close of the year 1784, whilst I was engaged in the second part of my Memoirs, one of my friends spoke to me of a business very much connected with that I was employed in.

A literary gentleman whom I have not the honor of knowing sent one of my comedies, translated by him into French, to M. Courcelle of the Italian theatre, requesting the actor to present it to me, and to get it acted if I was pleased with his translation, with the understanding, as he very kindly chose to state, that the honor and profit were to belong to the author. The piece in question was entitled in Italian "Un Curioso Accidente" (A Droll Adventure). The trans-

lation appeared to me exact; the style was not in my manner, but every one has his own. The translator changed the title into that of "The Dupe of Himself," which I do not disapprove. I gave my consent to the representation, the comedians received it at the reading with acclamation; it was given the following year, and completely failed. One part of the piece which occasioned the greatest pleasure in Italy shocked the Parisian public; I know the French delicacy, and I ought to have foreseen the consequence, but as the translation was executed by a Frenchman, and it was applauded by the actors, I allowed myself to be guided by them. Had I been present at the rehearsals, I should have anticipated the danger; but I was unwell, and the comedians were eager to produce it. I had distributed several tickets for the first representation, and nobody came to give me any information respecting it. This did not look well. I went to bed, however, without learning anything of the event; but my barber, with the tears in his eyes, gave me an account of the solemn condemnation of the piece. I instantly withdrew it; and as I felt myself a good deal better that day, I dined with a very good appetite.

Long accustomed both to a favorable and unfavorable reception from the public, I can do that public justice without any sacrifice of my tranquillity. The most disagreeable part of the business was that nobody called on me, or inquired how my recovery was going on. I wrote to my friends to learn whether my piece had incensed them against me. It was, on the contrary, the excess of their friendship and sensibility which prevented them from giving vent to their chagrin before me. When we saw one another again, I was obliged to assume the office of consoler.

The public rejoicings induced me to quit my room, and indemnified me for the illness and the unpleasant circumstances experienced by me. The queen was delivered of another prince; on the 27th of March, 1785, the Duke of Normandy was born. The usual illuminations took place at Paris, but certain rich individuals distinguished themselves on this occasion in a new and noble manner. The fronts of their palaces were adorned from top to bottom with a number of illuminated designs, executed with great skill. It was impossible for decorations to be more striking or splendid. This new taste will, in all probability, be continued at Paris, and every one will wish, in future, to have such a modish illumination as his circumstances can afford.

Fashion has always been the rage of the French. They give the ton to all Europe in whatever relates to theatres, decorations, dress, trinkets, and everything where pleasure is concerned. The French are everywhere imitated. In the beginning of every season there is to be seen, in the Mercery Street at Venice, a dressed figure, which is called the French doll (*poupée da France*). This is the prototype which every woman follows, and whatever resembles this original is considered beautiful. The Venetian women are as fond of changes as the French; the tailors, mantua-makers, and millinery shops take advantage of this; and if France does not supply a sufficiency of modes, the Venetian tradesmen contrive to make some slight change on the doll, and to pass off their own ideas for transalpine. When I gave at Venice my comedy entitled "The Country Mania," I spoke a great deal of a female dress, which was called "the marriage." This was a dress of a plain stuff, with a garniture of two

ribbons of different colors, the model of which was taken from the doll. On my arrival in France I inquired if such a fashion had ever existed. Nobody knew anything of it; there had never been such a fashion; it was pronounced ridiculous, and I was even laughed at for asking. I experienced the same mortification in speaking of the Polish dresses, which were adopted by the women in Italy when I left it. Twelve years afterwards, when I saw the Polish dresses at Paris, I was quite charmed with them. The mode in dress, it is true, experienced a long interregnum in France; but it has again resumed its ancient empire. What a number of changes in a short time! Polish and Jewish dresses, furs, English and Turkish dresses, frocks, pierrots, hats of a hundred shapes, bonnets without number, and head-dresses!—head-dresses!

This part of the female dress, so essential for the setting off their grace and beauty, was some time ago at the highest point of perfection. It is now, I beg pardon of the ladies for saying so, insupportable in my eyes. The tousled hair, and toupees which fall over their eyebrows, disfigure them sadly. Women are wrong, in my opinion, in following any general mode of dressing their heads; every one ought to consult her glass, to examine her features, and adapt the arrangement of her hair to the style of her countenance, and make her hair-dressers follow her orders. But before my Memoirs leave the press, perhaps the female head-dresses, and many other fashions, will have changed; the size of the buckles and the brims of the hats will be diminished, the female dresses will be more noble and dignified, and the breeches of the gentlemen will be made larger.

XI.

I RETURN to my regimen, — you will say here also, perhaps, that I ought to omit it, — you are in the right; but all this is in my head, and I must be delivered of it by degrees; I cannot spare you a single comma. After diuner I am not fond of either working or walking. Sometimes I go to the theatre, but I am most generally in parties till nine o'clock in the evening. I always return before ten o'clock. I take two or three small cakes with a glass of wine and water, and this is the whole of my supper. I converse with my wife till midnight; I very soon fall asleep, and pass the night tranquilly. It sometimes happens to me, as well as every other person, to have my head occupied with something capable of retarding my sleep. In this case I have a certain remedy to lull myself asleep; and it is this: I had long projected a vocabulary of the Venetian dialect, and I had even communicated my intention to the public, who are still in expectation of it. While laboring at this tedious and disgusting work, I soon discovered that it threw me asleep. I laid it therefore aside, and I profited by its narcotic faculty. Whenever I feel my mind agitated by any moral cause, I take at random some word of my national language, and translate it into Tuscan and French. In the same manner I pass in review all the words which follow in the alphabetical order, and I am sure to fall asleep at the third or fourth version. My recipe has never once failed me. It is not difficult to demonstrate the cause and effect of this phenomenon. A painful idea requires to be replaced by an opposite or indifferent idea; and, the agitation of the mind once calmed, the senses become tranquil, and are deadened by sleep.

But this remedy, however excellent, might not be useful to every one. A man of too keen and feeling a disposition would not succeed. The temperament must be such as that with which nature has favored me. My moral qualities bear a resemblance to my physical; I dread neither cold nor heat, and I neither allow myself to be inflamed by rage nor intoxicated by joy.

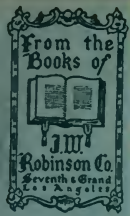
I am now arrived at the year 1787, which is the eightieth of my age, and that to which I have limited the course of my Memoirs. I have completed my eightieth year; my work is also finished. All is over, and I proceed to send my volumes to the press. This last chapter does not, therefore, touch on the events of the current year; but I have still some duties to discharge. I must begin with returning thanks to those persons who have reposed so much confidence in me as to honor me with their subscriptions.

I do not speak of the kindness and favors of the king and court; this is not the place to mention them. I have named in my work some of my friends and even some of my protectors. I beg pardon of them: if I have done so without their permission, it is not through vanity; the occasion has suggested it; their names have dropped from my pen, the heart has seized on the instant, and the hand has not been unwilling. For example, the following is one of the fortunate occasions I allude to. I was unwell a few days ago; the Count Alfieri did me the honor to call on me; I knew his talents, but his conversation impressed on me the wrong which I should have done in omitting him. He is a very intelligent and learned literary man, who principally excels in the art of Sophocles and Euripides, and after these great models he has framed his tragedies. They have gone through two editions in

Italy, and are at present in the press of Didot at Paris. I shall enter into no details respecting them, as they may be seen and judged of by every one.

I have undertaken too long and too laborious a work for my age, and I have employed three years on it, always dreading lest I should not have the pleasure of seeing it finished. However, I am still in life, thanks to God, and I flatter myself that I shall see my volumes printed, distributed, and read. If they be not praised, I hope at least they will not be despised. I shall not be accused of vanity or presumption in daring to hope for some share of favor for my Memoirs; for, had I thought that I should absolutely displease, I would not have taken so much pains; and if in the good and ill which I say of myself, the balance inclines to the favorable side, I owe more to nature than to study. All the application employed by me, in the construction of my pieces, has been that of not disfiguring nature, and all the care taken by me in my Memoirs has been that of telling only the truth. The criticism of my pieces may have the correction and improvement of comedy in view; but the criticism of my Memoirs will be of no advantage to literature. However, if any writer should think proper to employ his time on me for the sole purpose of vexing me, he would lose his labor. I am of a pacific disposition; I have always preserved my coolness of character; at my age I read little, and I read only amusing books.

THE END.



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