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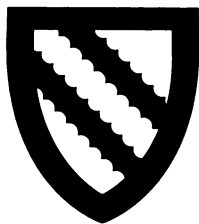


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CONSUELO.



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# CONSUELO:

BY

GEORGE SAND.  
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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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TRANSLATED BY  
FRANCIS G. SHAW.

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THIRD EDITION.

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# CONSUELO.

VOL. III.

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## CHAPTER LXXVI.

THE weather was calm and serene, the full moon shone in the celestial ether, and nine in the evening had just sounded with a clear and grave tone from the clock of an ancient priory, when Joseph and Consuelo, having sought in vain for a bell at the grate of the enclosure, made the circuit of that silent habitation, in the hope of being heard by some hospitable inmate. But in vain: all the gates were locked; not a dog bayed, nor could the least light be seen at the windows of that gloomy edifice.

"This is the palace of silence," said Haydn, laughing, "and if that clock had not twice repeated, with its slow and solemn voice, the four quarters in *ut* and in *si*, and the nine strokes of the hour in *sol* below, I should think the place abandoned to owls and ghosts."

The surrounding country was a desert; Consuelo felt much fatigued, and moreover, this mysterious priory had an attraction for her poetic imagination. "If we have to sleep in some chapel," said she to Beppo, "I wish to pass the night here. Let us try to get in at any rate, even over the wall, which is not very hard to scale."

"Come," said Joseph, "I will make a short ladder for you, and when you are on the top, I will pass quickly to the other side to serve you as steps in descending."

No sooner said than done. The wall was very low. Two minutes afterwards our young profaners were walking with an audacious tranquillity within the sacred precincts. It was a beautiful kitchen garden cultivated with the most minute attention. The fruit trees, trained fan-shape, opened to every comer their long arms loaded with rosy apples and golden pears. The arbors of vines coquettishly rounded in arches,

bore, like so many chandeliers, enormous bunches of juicy grapes. The great beds of vegetables had likewise their peculiar beauty. The asparagus, with its graceful stalks and silky foliage brilliant with the evening dew, resembled forests of lilliputian firs, covered with a silvery gauze. The peas spread in light garlands upon their branches, and formed long alleys, narrow and mysterious lanes, in which the little tomtits, hardly asleep, murmured with low quivering voices. The *giraumons*, proud leviathans of this sea of verdure, displayed heavily their great orange centres upon their broad and dark foliage. The young artichokes, like so many little crowned heads, pressed around the principal individual, centre of the royal family. The melons showed themselves under their glass bells, like so many stout Chinese mandarins under their palanquins, and from each of those domes of crystal the reflection of the moon produced the glitter of a great blue diamond, against which the deceived night-butterflies came to strike their heads with a humming sound.

A hedge of rose-bushes formed the line of demarcation between the vegetables and the flower-garden, which reached to the buildings and encircled them with a band of flowers. This reserved garden was a kind of elysium. Magnificent flowering shrubs there shaded rare plants of exquisite odor. The sanded walks were as soft to the feet as a carpet; and you would have said the grass had been combed out blade by blade, so even and smooth was it. The flowers were so close that you could not see the ground, and each rounded border resembled an immense bouquet.

Singular influence of external objects upon the disposition of the mind and body! Consuelo had no sooner breathed that soft air and seen that sanctuary of easy comfort, than she felt rested, as if she had already slept the sleep of monks. "This is wonderful," said she to Beppo; "I look at this garden, and think no more of the stones of the road, or of my poor bruised feet. It seems as if I rested myself with my eyes. I always had a horror of gardens well kept, well guarded, and of all places enclosed by walls; and yet this,

after so many days of dust, after so many steps upon the dry and trodden earth, appears to me like a paradise. I was dying with thirst a moment since, and now, only from seeing these happy plants which open themselves to the evening dew, I seem to drink with them, and to be already refreshed. Look, Joseph ; is there anything more charming than flowers blooming in the moonlight ? Look, I say, and do not laugh, at that bunch of great white stars there, right in the middle of the turf. I do not know what they are called ; ‘ beauties of the night,’ I believe. Oh ! they are rightly named ! They are beautiful and pure as the stars of heaven. They bow and raise themselves in unison at the breath of the gentle breeze, and seem to laugh and frolic like a troop of little girls dressed in white. They remind me of my companions of the *scuola*, when, on Sundays, all dressed like novices, they ran along the great walls of the church. Now see them stand in the still air, and all look towards the moon. Now one would say that they were contemplating and admiring her. The moon also seems to look at them, to hover over and descend upon them like a great bird of the night. Can you believe, Beppo, that those beings are insensible ? I think that a beautiful flower does not vegetate stupidly, without experiencing delicious sensations. Allow that it be so, for those poor little thistles which we see along the ditches, and which drag out their lives there, dusty, diseased, browsed by all the cattle that pass ! They seem like poor beggars, sighing for a drop of water which does not come to them ; the parched and thirsty earth drinks it greedily without giving any to their roots. But these flowers of the garden, of which so much care is taken, they are happy and proud like queens. They pass their time in balancing coquettishly upon their stems, and when the moon comes, their good friend, there they are all open, plunged in a half sleep, and visited by sweet dreams. Perhaps they ask themselves if there are flowers in the moon, as we ask ourselves if there are men. Now, Joseph, you are laughing at me, and yet the well-being I experience on looking at these white stars is no illusion.

There is something sovereign in the air purified and refreshed by their presence, and I feel a kind of relation between my life and that of all which lives around me."

"How could I laugh?" replied Joseph, sighing. "I feel your impressions pass into me at this very instant, and your slightest words reverberate in my soul, like the sound upon the strings of an instrument. But look at that habitation, Consuelo, and explain the sweet but profound sadness with which it fills me."

Consuelo looked at the priory: it was a little edifice of the twelfth century, formerly fortified with battlements which had been replaced by pointed roofs of greyish slate. The turrets, surmounted by their narrow loop-holes, which had been allowed to remain as ornaments, resembled great baskets. Great masses of ivy gracefully relieved the monotony of the walls, and upon the naked portions of the front, illumined by the moon, the breath of the night waved the slender and indistinct shadows of the young poplars. Great festoons of vines and jasmines enframed the doors and caught upon the windows.

"That dwelling is calm and melancholy," replied Consuelo, "but it does not inspire me with so much sympathy as does the garden. Plants are made to vegetate in one spot, but men to move about and intermingle. If I were a flower I could wish to grow in this garden; I should be well placed there; but being a woman, I would not wish to live in a cell, and shut myself up in a mass of stones. Would you like to be a monk then, Beppo?"

"Not so; God deliver me! But I should like to labor without feeling care for my board and lodging. I should like to lead a quiet, retired life, easy in my circumstances, that I need not have the anxieties of poverty; in fine, I should like to vegetate in a state of passive regularity, even in a kind of dependence, provided my intelligence was free, and I had no other care, no other duty, no other anxiety than to make music."

“ Well! my comrade, you would make tranquil music, from the very fact of making it tranquilly.”

“ Eh! why should it be bad? What more beautiful than calmness! The skies are calm; the moon is calm; these very flowers, whose peaceful attitude you delight in——.”

“ Their immobility affects me only because it follows the undulations which the breeze had just impressed upon them. The purity of the sky strikes us only because we have often seen it furrowed by storms. In fine, the moon is never more sublime than when she shines in the midst of the dark clouds which crowd about her. Can repose without fatigue have any true delight? It is not so much repose, as a state of permanent immobility. It is nothingness; it is death! Ah! if you had lived whole months in Giant's castle, as I did, you would know that tranquillity is not life!”

“ But what do you call tranquil music?”

“ Music which is too correct and too cold. Beware lest you make such, if you fly from the fatigues and the troubles of this world.”

While talking thus, they had advanced to the foot of the priory walls. A crystal water gushed from a marble globe surmounted by a gilded cross, and fell from level to level until it reached a great granite shell, in which sported a number of those pretty little gold-fishes with which children are so amused. Consuelo and Beppo, quite children themselves, were seriously amused in throwing them little grains of sand to deceive their gluttony and in following with the eye their rapid movements, when they saw coming directly towards them a great white figure, which carried a pitcher, and which, approaching the fountain, did not badly resemble one of those *washers of the night*, fantastic personages, the tradition of whom is diffused in almost all superstitious countries. The preoccupation or indifference with which she filled her pitcher, without testifying either surprise or fear, had in it truly at first something solemn and strange. But soon a loud cry which she uttered as she let her vessel fall to the bottom of the basin, proved to them that there was nothing supernatural in

her person. The good woman simply had her sight somewhat dimmed by age, and as soon as she perceived them was seized with a horrible fear, and fled towards the house invoking the Virgin Mary and all the saints. "What is the matter, dame Bridget?" cried a man's voice from inside. "Have you seen some evil spirit?"

"Two devils, or rather two robbers, are standing there close to the fountain," replied dame Bridget, hurrying up to her questioner, who appeared on the threshold of the door, and remained there, uncertain and incredulous, for some moments. "This must be another of your panics! would robbers come to attack us at this hour?" "I swear to you by my eternal salvation that there are two black figures there, motionless as statues; can't you see them from here? See, there they are still, and they do not stir. Holy virgin! I will go and hide myself in the cellar." "I do see something, indeed," returned the man, affecting to swell his voice. "I will ring for the gardener, and with his two boys we shall soon find what the rascals want; they must have climbed the wall, for I shut all the doors myself." "In the mean while, let us lock this one," said the old woman, "and then we will ring the alarm-bell."

The door closed, and our two children remained undecided as to the course they had better pursue. If they fled, it would confirm the opinion entertained of them; if they remained, they might be exposed to a rude attack. While they were consulting, they saw a ray of light pierce the blind of a window on the first floor. The ray enlarged, and a curtain of scarlet damask, behind which gently glowed the brightness of a lamp, was slowly raised; a hand, which the full light of the moon made appear white and dimpled, showed itself on the border of the curtain, the fringe of which it carefully held up, while an invisible eye probably examined outward objects.

"Sing," said Consuelo to her companion; "that is what we have to do. Follow me; let me give the words. But no; take your violin, and play me an accompaniment in the

first tune you think of." Joseph having obeyed, Consuelo began to sing in full voice, improvising music and words, a kind of discourse in German, rhymed and interspersed with recitative. "We are two poor children fifteen years old, very small, and no stronger nor more wicked than the nightingales whose sweet warblings we imitate."

"Come Joseph, a strain to support the recitative," said she, in a low voice. Then she resumed :

"Overpowered by fatigue and saddened by the gloomy solitude of the night, we saw this house, which seemed to us deserted, and we passed one leg and then the other over the wall."

("A strain in *la* minor, Joseph.")

"We found ourselves in an enchanted garden, in the midst of fruits worthy of the promised land : We were dying with thirst, we were dying with hunger. Still if one lady's apple is wanting on the espaliers ; if we have taken one grape from the trellis, may we be driven away and dishonored as criminals."

("A modulation to return in *ut* major, Joseph.")

"And yet we are suspected, we are menaced, and we do not wish to fly ; we do not seek to hide ourselves, for we have done no harm—unless it be in entering the house of the good God over the walls ; but when we scale paradise, all roads are good, and the shortest is the best."

Consuelo wound up her recitative with one of those pretty canticles in vulgar Latin, which is called in Venice, *latino di frate*, and which the people sing in the evening before the madonnas. When she had ended, the two white hands, showing themselves a little, applauded her with transport, and a voice which did not seem entirely strange to her ear, cried from the window : "Disciples of the muses, you are welcome ! Enter, enter ; hospitality invites and awaits you."

The two children approached, and an instant after, a domestic in red and violet livery courteously opened the door for them. "I took you for robbers, and I ask your pardon, my little friends," said he, laughing ; "it is all your own fault ;



why did you not sing sooner? With a passport like your voice and your violin, you could not fail of being well received by my master. Come then; it seems he knows you already."

While speaking thus, the affable servitor had already ascended before them the twelve steps of a very easy staircase covered with a beautiful Turkey carpet. Before Joseph had time to ask his master's name, he had opened a folding door which closed behind them without noise; and after having crossed a comfortable ante-room, he ushered them into the dining hall, where the gracious master of this happy dwelling, seated in front of a roasted pheasant, between two flasks of old gold-colored wine, was beginning to digest his first course, while he attacked the second with a paternal and majestic air. On returning from his morning's promenade he had been again dressed by his valet de chambre in order to refresh his complexion. He was powdered and shaved anew. The grizzled curls of his respectable head waved gently below an *eye* of iris powder of an exquisite perfume; his beautiful hands rested upon his knees, which were covered by breeches of black satin with silver buckles. His well made leg, of which he was a little vain, clothed in a violet stocking tightly drawn and very transparent, rested upon a cushion of velvet, and his noble corpulence enveloped in an excellent gown of puce colored silk, wadded and quilted, reposed deliciously in a great arm-chair of tapestry, in no part of which did his elbow run the risk of meeting an angle, so well was it stuffed and rounded on every side. Seated near the fire, which blazed and sparkled behind her master's arm-chair, dame Bridget, the housekeeper, was preparing his coffee with a religious earnestness; and a second valet, not less correct in his bearing nor less good-natured in his manners than the first, standing beside the table, delicately detached the wing of the bird, which the holy man expected without impatience and without anxiety. Joseph and Consuelo made low reverences on recognizing in their benevolent host, the major and jubilar canon of the cathedral chapter of Saint Stephen's, the same before whom they had sung the mass that very morning.

## CHAPTER LXXVII.

THE canon was certainly the most comfortably established man in the world. From the age of seven, thanks to the royal protection which had never failed him, he had been declared at the age of reason, conformably to the canons of the church, which admitted that if he had not much reason at that age, he was at least capable of having virtually enough to receive and consume the revenues of a benefice. In consequence of this decision the young shaveling had been invested with the canonicate, although he was the illegitimate son of a king; still in virtue of the canons of the church, which accepted presumptively the legitimacy of a child presented to the benefice and patronized by sovereigns; although on the other hand, the same canonical decisions require that all pretenders to ecclesiastical livings shall be the issue of a true and legitimate marriage, in default of which they may be declared *incapacitated*, that is, *unworthy* and *infamous* in case of need. But there are so many accommodations with Heaven, that, under certain circumstances, the canonical law establishes that a foundling may be considered as legitimate, for the reason, which is moreover quite Christian, that in the case of mysterious parentage, the good should always be supposed rather than the evil.

The little canon entered therefore into possession of a superb prebend, with the title of canon major; and when arrived nearly at his fiftieth year, after forty years of services which were assumed to have been effective in the chapter, he was thenceforth recognized as canon jubiliary, that is, canon in retreat, free to reside where he pleased, and no longer to perform any chapitular function, even while fully enjoying all the advantages, revenues and privileges of his canonicate. It is true that the worthy canon had rendered very important

services to the chapter in his younger days. He had caused himself to be declared *absent*, which, by the terms of the canonical law, signifies a permission to reside away from his chapter, in virtue of sundry pretexts more or less specious, without losing the fruits attached to the active exercise of his benefice. The occurrence of plague in a residence is a case of admissible *absence*. There are also reasons of delicate or injured health which may occasion the *absence*. But the most honorable and the most certain of the rights of absence is that which has for its motive the case of studies. A great work is undertaken and announced on questions of conscience, upon the fathers of the church, upon the sacraments, or still better, upon the constitution of the chapter to which one belongs, upon the principles of its foundation, upon the honorary and active advantages which appertain to it; upon the pretensions which may be brought forward in opposition to other chapters, upon a suit in which it is engaged or which it wishes to bring against a rival community, respecting an estate, a right of patronage or a beneficiary mansion; and these kinds of wrangling and financial subtleties, being much more interesting to ecclesiastical bodies than commentaries on doctrines, or illustrations of dogmas, as soon as a distinguished member of the chapter proposes to make researches, to examine parchments, to scribble records of suits or claims, that is libels, against rich adversaries, they grant him the lucrative and agreeable right of reëntering into private life and spending his revenue in travels, or in his beneficiary mansion by the side of his fire. Thus did our canon.

A man of wit, a fine talker, an eloquent writer, he had promised, and was to promise all his life, to make a book upon the rights, immunities and privileges of his chapter. Surrounded by dusty quartos which he had never opened, he had never written his own, he was not writing it, he was never to write it. The two secretaries whom he had engaged at the expense of the chapter, were busied in perfuming his person and preparing his repasts. They talked much of that famous book; they expected it, they built upon the strength

of its arguments a thousand dreams of glory, of vengeance and of money. That book, which did not exist, had already made for its author a reputation of perseverance, of learning and of eloquence, the proof of which he was in no haste to produce; not that he was incapable of justifying the favorable opinion entertained of him by his brotherhood, but because life is short, repasts long, the toilette indispensable, the *far niente* delicious. And then our canon had two innocent but insatiable passions: he loved horticulture and music. With so many affairs and occupations, where could he have found time to write his book? Besides, it is so agreeable to talk of a book which one is not writing, and so disagreeable to hear others talk of that which one has written!

The benefice of this holy personage consisted in an estate which yielded well, annexed to the secularized priory in which he lived eight or nine months of the year, attending to the cultivation of his flowers and his stomach. The habitation was spacious and romantic. He had made it comfortable and even luxurious. Abandoning to a slow decay the main building which the ancient monks had inhabited, he preserved with care and adorned with taste the part most favorable for his accommodation. New arrangements had made of the old monastery a real little chateau in which he led the life of a gentleman. He had an excellent natural disposition for a man of the church: tolerant, witty on occasion, orthodox and fluent with those of his order, cheerful, full of anecdote, and easy with those of the world, affable, cordial and generous with artists. His domestics, sharing the good living which he knew how to provide, aided him with all their power. His housekeeper was rather fractious, but she made good sweetmeats, and understood so well how to preserve his fruits, that he bore with her bad temper, and endured the storm with calmness, saying that a man must know how to put up with the defects of others, but could not dispense with a nice dessert and good coffee.

Our young artists were received by him with the most gracious affability. "You are children full of wit and inven-

tion," said he to them, "and I love you with all my heart. Besides, you have an infinite talent; and one of you two, I can no longer tell which, has the sweetest, the most sympathetic, the most affecting voice I have ever heard in my life. That voice is a prodigy, a treasure; and I was quite sad this evening, at your having left the curate's so hurriedly, thinking that perhaps I should never see you again, that I should never hear you more. Truly, I had no appetite, I was gloomy, absent. That beautiful voice, that beautiful music would not leave my mind, my ears. But Providence, who wishes me well, has brought you back to me, and perhaps also your good hearts, my children; for you must have divined that I could comprehend and appreciate you—"

"We are compelled to confess, sir canon," replied Joseph, "that chance alone has conducted us here, and that we were far from expecting this good fortune."

"The good fortune is on my side," returned the amiable canon; "and you shall sing to me. But no, that would be too selfish on my part; you are fatigued, fasting perhaps—you shall have your supper first, then you shall pass a good night in my house, and to-morrow we will have music; oh! music the whole day! Andrew, you will take these young people to the kitchen and pay every attention to them. But no, let them remain; place two covers at the end of my table, and let them sup with me."

Andrew obeyed with haste and even with a kind of benevolent satisfaction. But dame Bridget showed an entirely opposite disposition; she shook her head, shrugged her shoulders, and grumbled between her teeth: "What proper persons to eat on your cloth, and what strange companions for a man of your rank!"

"Hold your tongue, Bridget," replied the canon calmly, "you are never satisfied with anything or anybody; and when you see another taking a little pleasure, you are quite furious."

"You do not know what to imagine for pastime," returned she, without noticing the reproaches addressed to her.

“With flatteries, idle stories and fim-flams you can be led like a little child.”

“Be silent then,” said the canon, raising his voice a little, but without losing his cheerful smile, “your voice is as harsh as a rattle, and if you keep on scolding, you will lose your senses and spoil my coffee.”

“Fine pleasure! and great honor, truly,” said the old woman, “to prepare coffee for such guests!”

“Oh! you require eminent personages; you like grandeur; you prefer to entertain only bishops, princes and canonesses of sixteen quarterings! I do not care for all that so much as for the well sung couplet of a ballad.”

Consuelo heard with astonishment this personage of so noble an appearance disputing with his maid with a kind of childish pleasure; and during the whole supper, she wondered at the puerile direction of his thoughts. Every instant, he said a world of nothings to pass the time and keep himself in good humor. He addressed his domestics continually, at one time seriously discussing the sauce of a fish, at another the arrangement of a piece of furniture, giving contradictory orders, questioning his people respecting the most idle details of his household, reflecting upon these trifles with a solemnity worthy of serious subjects, listening to one, reproving the other, maintaining his ground against dame Bridget, who contradicted him in everything, and never failing to introduce some pleasant word into his questions and his answers. One would have said, that reduced by the isolation and want of excitement of his life to the society of his servants, he sought to keep his wit alive, and to facilitate the work of digestion by a hygienic exercise of thought, neither too grave nor too light.

The supper was exquisite and of a wonderful abundance. At the entremets, the cook was called before the canon, and affectionately praised by him for the preparation of certain dishes, gently reprimanded and learnedly instructed respecting certain others which had not attained the highest degree of perfection. The two travellers fell from the clouds and looked at each other, believing themselves in a laughable

dream, so incomprehensible did these refinements seem to them. "Well! well! it is not bad after all," said the canon, dismissing the culinary artist; "I shall make something of you yet, if you have a ready will and continue to love your duty."

"Would it not seem," thought Consuelo, "that this was a piece of paternal instruction, or a religious exhortation?"

At the dessert, after the canon had given to the housekeeper also her share of praises and reprimands, he at last forgot these grave matters to speak of music, and showed himself under a better light to his young guests. He had a good musical education, a fund of solid studies, just ideas and an enlightened taste. He was quite a good organist; and being seated at the harpsichord after dinner, he played for them some fragments of the old German masters, with much purity, and according to the good traditions of the olden time. This was not without interest for Consuelo; and soon having found upon the harpsichord a book of that ancient music, she began to turn over its leaves, and forgot her fatigue and the lateness of the hour, to ask the canon to play for her in his good clear and free manner, several of the pieces which had struck her mind and her eyes. The canon experienced an extreme pleasure at being thus listened to. The music which he knew being no longer in fashion, he seldom found amateurs to his heart. He therefore conceived an extraordinary liking for Consuelo particularly, Joseph, overcome by fatigue, having fallen asleep in a great arm-chair which was treacherously delicious. "Truly!" cried the canon in a moment of enthusiasm, "you are a most happily endowed child, and your precocious judgment announces an extraordinary career. For the first time in my life I regret the celibacy my profession imposes upon me." This compliment made Consuelo blush and tremble, for she thought her sex was discovered; but she was very soon reassured, when the canon added artlessly: "Yes, I regret not having children, for Heaven might perhaps have given me a son like you, and that would have been the happiness of my life—even if Bridget were the mother. But tell me, my friend, what do

you think of that Sebastian Bach, with whose compositions our professors are so enraptured now-a-days? Do you also think him a wonderful genius? There is a large book of his works which I collected and had bound, because one must have everything. And besides, they may be beautiful in fact—but there is great difficulty in reading them, and I confess to you that the first attempt having repelled me, I have been so lazy as not to renew it—moreover, I have so little time to myself! I can only think of music at rare times, snatched from more serious cares. Though you have seen me much occupied by the government of my household, you must not conclude from that, that I am a free and happy man. I am, on the contrary, enslaved to an enormous, frightful task, which I have imposed upon myself. I am writing a book, on which I have been at work for thirty years, and which another would not have done in sixty; a book which requires incredible studies, watchings, an indomitable patience and the deepest reflections. Therefore I think that book will make some noise in the world!”

“But will it be soon finished?” asked Consuelo.

“Not yet, not yet!” replied the canon, desirous to conceal from himself that he had not commenced it. “But we were saying that the music of Bach is terribly difficult, and that, as to myself, I consider it peculiar.”

“Still I think that if you should overcome your repugnance, you would perceive that his is a genius which embraces, unites and vivifies all the science of the past and the present.”

“Well!” returned the canon, “if it be so, we three will try to-morrow to decipher something together. It is now the hour for you to take some rest and for me to give myself up to study. But to-morrow you will pass the day with me; it is so understood, is it not?”

“The whole day! that is saying too much, sir; we must hasten to reach Vienna; but for the morning we are at your commands.”

The canon protested, insisted, and Consuelo pretended to



yield, promising herself that she would hurry the adagios of the great Bach a little, and leave the priory about eleven o'clock or noon. When they spoke of going to their chambers, an earnest discussion arose on the staircase between dame Bridget and the first valet de chambre. The zealous Joseph, desirous of pleasing his master, had prepared for the young musicians two pretty cells situated in the newly repaired building occupied by the canon and his suite. Bridget, on the contrary, persisted in sending them to sleep in the abandoned cells of the old priory, because that part of the building was separated from the new one by good doors and solid bolts. "What," said she, raising her sharp voice on the resounding staircase, "do you mean to lodge these vagabonds close to us? and do you not see from their faces, their manners and their profession, that they are Bohemians, adventurers, wicked little bandits, who will run off before day and carry away our plate? Who knows that they will not assassinate us?"

"Assassinate us! those children!" returned Joseph, laughing; "you are crazy, Bridget; old and worn out as you are, you would still put them to flight, only by showing your teeth."

"Old and worn out yourself, do you hear!" cried the old woman in a fury. "I tell you they shall not sleep here; I will not have them. Yes indeed! I should not close my eyes the whole night!"

"You would be very foolish; I am sure that those children have no more desire than I have to disturb your respectable slumbers. Come, let's put an end to this! My master told me to treat his guests well, and I am not going to shut them up in that old building, full of rats and open to every wind. Would you have them sleep in the court yard?"

"I would have had the gardener make up two good beds of straw for them there; do you believe that those barefooted urchins are accustomed to beds of down?"

"They shall have them to-night at least, since my master so wishes; I know only his orders, dame Bridget! Let me

do my duty, and remember that yours as well as mine is to obey and not to command."

"Well spoken, Joseph!" said the canon, who from the half open door of the antichamber had laughingly heard the whole dispute. "Go and get my slippers, Bridget, and no longer split our ears. Good night, my little friends! follow Joseph and sleep well. Long live music, and the beautiful day of to-morrow!"

Long after our travellers had taken possession of their pretty cells, they heard the scolding of the housekeeper afar off, like a wintry wind whistling through the corridors. When the movement which announced the solemn retiring of the canon had entirely ceased, dame Bridget came on tip-toe to the doors of his young guests and quickly turned the key in each lock to shut them in. Joseph, buried in the best bed he had ever met with in his life, had already fallen fast asleep, and Consuelo did the same on her part, after having laughed heartily to herself at Bridget's terrors. She who had trembled nearly all the nights of her journey, now made others tremble in her turn. She might have applied to herself the fable of the hare and the frogs; but I cannot affirm to you that Consuelo was acquainted with La Fontaine's fables. Their merit was disputed at that epoch by the most noted wits of the universe: Voltaire laughed at them, and the great Frederick, to ape his philosopher, profoundly despised them.

## CHAPTER LXXVIII.

At the dawn of day, Consuelo, seeing the sun shine and feeling invited to a walk by the joyous warblings of a thousand birds which were already making good cheer in the garden, tried to leave her chamber. But the embargo was not yet raised, and dame Bridget still had her prisoners under lock and key. Consuelo at first thought that it was perhaps an ingenious idea of the canon, who wished to be certain of the musical enjoyments of the day, and had judged best first of all to assure himself of the persons of the musicians. The young girl, rendered hardy and agile by her masculine costume, examined the window, saw that the scaling was facilitated by a large vine supported by a solid trellis which covered the whole wall; and descending slowly and carefully, not to injure the fine grapes of the priory, she reached the ground and buried herself in the garden, inwardly laughing at the surprise and disappointment of Bridget when she should find her precautions frustrated. Consuelo now saw under another aspect the superb flowers and magnificent fruits which she had admired by moonlight. The breath of the morning and the oblique coloring of the rosy and smiling sun, invested with a new poetry those beautiful productions of the earth. A robe of velvety satin enveloped the fruits, the dew hung in pearls of crystal from all the branches, and the turf, frosted with silver, exhaled that light vapor which seems the aspiring breath of earth endeavoring to regain heaven and unite with it in a refined effusion of love. But nothing equalled the freshness and beauty of the flowers, still all laden with the moisture of the night, at that mysterious hour of the dawn when they open themselves as if to disclose treasures of purity and to shed abroad exquisite perfumes, which only the earliest and the purest of the sun's rays are worthy to perceive

and possess for an instant. The canon's flower garden was a region of delights for an amateur of horticulture. To the eyes of Consuelo, it was too symmetrical and too well kept. But the fifty kinds of roses, the purple sages, the infinitely varied geraniums, the balmy daturas, deep cups of opal impregnated with the ambrosia of the gods; the elegant asclepiads, subtle poisons in which the insect finds death in delight; the splendid cactuses, displaying their dazzling flowers upon rough stalks strangely shaped; a thousand curious and superb plants, which Consuelo had never before seen, and of which she knew neither the names nor the country, occupied her attention for a long time.

On examining their various attitudes and the expression of the sentiment which each of their physiognomies seemed to convey, she sought in her mind for the correspondence between music and flowers, and endeavored to account for the association of those two instincts in the organization of her host. A long while since, the harmony of sounds had seemed to her to respond in a certain manner to the harmony of colors; but the harmony of these harmonies, it seemed to her must be perfume. At that instant, plunged in a vague and sweet revery, she imagined she heard a voice issue from each of those charming corollas, and relate to her the mysteries of poetry in a language hitherto unknown. The rose spoke of its ardent love, the lily of its celestial chastity; the superb magnolia conversed on the pure delights of a holy pride, and the little hepatica related in a low voice the enjoyments of a simple and hidden life. Certain flowers had strong voices which said with a broad and powerful accent: "I am beautiful and I reign." Others murmured with sounds hardly perceptible, but of an infinite tenderness and a penetrating charm: "I am little and am beloved," said they; and all balanced themselves together in the morning breeze, uniting their voices in an aërial choir which was lost little by little in the deeply moved herbage and under the leaves, greedy to gather its mysterious meaning.

Suddenly, in the midst of these ideal harmonies and this

delicious contemplation, Consuelo heard sharp, horrible and sadly human cries issue from behind the plantations of trees which concealed the enclosing wall. To those cries, which were lost in the silence of the fields, succeeded the rolling of a carriage, then the carriage seemed to stop, and some one knocked with heavy strokes on the iron grating which closed the garden on that side. But whether all were asleep in the house, or no one wished to answer, they knocked in vain several times, and the piercing cries of a woman's voice, interrupted by the energetic oaths of a man's calling for help, struck upon the priory and awakened no more echoes in those insensible walls than they did in the hearts of those who inhabited them. All the windows on that side were so well caulked to protect the slumbers of the canon, that no external sound could pierce their shutters of solid oak, lined with leather and stuffed with hair. The servants, busy on the green behind the building, did not hear the cries; and there were no dogs in the priory. The canon did not like those troublesome guardians, who, under pretext of driving away robbers, disturb the repose of their masters. Consuelo tried to enter the dwelling to announce the approach of travellers in distress; but all was so well closed, that she gave up the attempt, and following her impulse, ran to the grate whence the noise came.

A travelling carriage, laden with trunks and whitened by the dust of a long journey, had stopped before the principal alley of the garden. The postillions had dismounted from their horses and were trying to shake that inhospitable gate, while groans and lamentations issued from the carriage. "Open," cried they to Consuelo, "if you are Christians! There is a lady dying here."

"Open," cried, stretching from the door, a woman whose features were unknown to Consuelo, but whose Venetian accent impressed her vividly. "My mistress will die if you do not grant her hospitality at once. Open if you are men!"

Consuelo, without reflecting on the results of her first

impulse, tried to open the grate; but it was closed by an enormous padlock, the key of which was probably in dame Bridget's pocket. The bell also was fastened by a secret spring. In that quiet and honest country, such precautions had not been taken against evil doers, but truly against the noise and inconvenience of too late or too early visitors. It was impossible for Consuelo to satisfy the desire of her heart, and she sadly endured the reproaches of the maid, who, speaking Venetian to her mistress, cried with impatience: "The stupid! the little awkward fellow! he does not know how to open a gate." The German postillions, more patient and more calm, tried to help Consuelo, but without success, when the suffering lady, appearing in her turn at the window of the carriage, cried with a strong voice in bad German: "Eh, by the devil's blood, go and find somebody to open, you miserable little beast!"

This energetic apostrophe reassured Consuelo respecting the imminent danger of the lady. "If she be near dying," thought she, "it is at least by a violent death;" and addressing herself in Venetian to the traveller, whose accent was no more doubtful than the maid's:

"I do not belong to this house," said she; "I received hospitality here last night; I will go and try to awaken the hosts, which will be neither a quick nor an easy matter. Are you in such danger, madam, that you cannot wait here a little while without despairing?"

"I am in labor, stupid!" cried the traveller: "I have not long to wait: run, shout, break everything, bring somebody and get me in here; you shall be well paid for your trouble."

She again began to utter loud cries, and Consuelo felt her knees tremble—that face, that voice were not unknown to her. "The name of your mistress?" cried she to the maid.

"Eh! what is that to you? Run quick, miserable!" said the agitated maid. "Ah! if you lose time, you shall have nothing from us!"

"Well! neither do I want anything from you," replied Consuelo quickly; "but I want to know who you are. If

your mistress is a musician, you will be received here at once ; and if I am not mistaken, she is a celebrated singer."

"Go, my child," said the lady in labor, who in the interval between each sharp pain, recovered much sang-froid and energy ; "you are not deceived ; go tell the inhabitants of this house that the famous Corilla is ready to die if some Christian or artistic soul does not take pity on her situation. I will pay,—say that I will pay largely. Alas ! Sophia," said she to her servant, "have me put upon the ground ; I shall suffer less stretched out on the road, than in this infernal carriage !"

Consuelo was already running towards the priory, resolved to make a horrible noise and reach the canon at every risk. She no longer thought of being astonished and affected at the strange chance which had brought to that spot her rival, the cause of all her misfortunes ; she was only occupied with the desire of obtaining assistance for her. She had not the trouble of knocking ; she found Bridget, who, at last attracted by the cries, was leaving the house, escorted by the gardener and the valet de chambre.

"A fine story indeed !" replied she harshly, when Consuelo had stated the fact to her. "Do not go, Andrew ; do not move from here, master gardener ! Do you not see that it is a trick got up by these bandits to rob and assassinate us ? I expected it ! An alarm, a pretext ; a band of villains prowling round the house, while those to whom we had given an asylum strove to introduce them under an honest excuse ! Go and get your muskets, gentlemen, and be ready to shoot this pretended lady in labor who has moustaches and pantaloons. Yes indeed ! a woman in labor ! and even if it were so, does she take our house for a hospital ? We have no midwife here. I understand nothing of such matters, and the canon does not like squallings. Why should a lady have undertaken a journey when she was near her time ? And if she did so, whose fault is it ? Can we prevent her suffering ? Let her have her child in the carriage ; she will be quite as well off there as in our house, where we have nothing ready for such a job !"

This speech, begun for Consuelo and growled out the whole length of the alley, was finished at the grate for Corilla's chamber-maid. While the travellers, after having parleyed in vain, were exchanging reproaches, invectives and even insults with the intractable house-keeper, Consuelo, trusting in the canon's goodness and dilettantism, had entered the house. She searched in vain for the master's chamber; she only lost herself in that vast habitation, with the windings of which she was unacquainted. At last she met Haydn who was looking for her, and who told her he had seen the canon enter his orangery. They went thither, and saw that worthy personage coming to meet them under an arbor of jessamine, with a face as fresh and smiling as the beautiful autumn morning he was then enjoying. On beholding that good-natured man in his nice wadded gown, walking upon paths where his delicate foot ran no risk of meeting a stone in the fine and freshly raked sand, Consuelo could not doubt that a being so happy, so serene in his conscience and so satisfied in all his wishes, would be charmed to perform a good action. She began to mention poor Corilla's request to him, when Bridget suddenly appeared, interrupted her, and spoke in these words: "There is a vagabond down there at your gate, a singer of the theatre, who calls herself famous, and has the air and manner of a brazen-face. She says she is in labor, cries and swears like thirty demons; she wishes to lie in at your house; see if that is agreeable to you!"

The canon made a gesture of disgust and refusal. "Sir canon," said Consuelo, "whoever this woman may be, she is in suffering; her life is perhaps in danger, as well as that of the innocent creature whom God calls into this world, and whom religion commands you to receive here in a Christian and paternal manner. You will not abandon that unfortunate, you will not leave her to groan and die at your gate?"

"Is she married?" asked the canon coldly after a moment's reflection.

"I do not know; it is possible she may be. But what



matters that? God grants her the happiness of becoming a mother; He alone has the right of judging—”

“She mentioned her name, sir canon,” returned Bridget forcibly; “and you must know her, you who visit all the actors at Vienna. She calls herself Corilla.”

“Corilla!” cried the canon, “she has been at Vienna before; I have heard a good deal of her. She has a fine voice, they say.”

“In favor of her fine voice, have the gate opened for her; she is on the ground, stretched upon the sand of the road,” said Consuelo.

“But she is a woman of bad life,” returned the canon; “she caused much scandal at Vienna, two years ago.”

“And there are many people envious of your benefice, sir canon,” interposed Bridget. “You understand me! To have a common woman brought to bed in your house—that would not be taken as a chance, still less an act of charity. You know that the canon Herbert has pretensions to the jubiliat, and that he has already had a young brother dispossessed, under pretence that he neglected his duties for a lady who always confessed to him at such times. Sir canon, a benefice like yours is more easily lost than won.”

These words made a sudden and decisive impression on the canon. He treasured them in the sanctuary of his prudence, though he pretended hardly to have heard them. “There is,” said he, “an inn two hundred steps from here: let the lady be carried there. She will there find everything she requires, and will be lodged much more comfortably and properly than in the house of a bachelor. Go and tell her so, Bridget, politely, very politely, I beseech you. Show the postillions which the inn is. Do you, my children,” said he to Consuelo and Joseph, “come and try a fugue of Bach with me while breakfast is getting ready.”

“Sir canon,” said Consuelo, much affected, “will you abandon—”

“Ah!” said the canon, stopping with an air of consternation, “there is my most beautiful volkameria dried up. I

told the gardener that he did not water it often enough! the most rare and the most admirable plant in my garden! It is a fatality, Bridget! only look there! send the gardener to me that I may scold him."

"I am first going to chase the famous Corilla from your gate," replied Bridget as she withdrew.

"And you consent to this, you command it, sir canon?" cried Consuelo, indignant.

"It is impossible for me to do otherwise," replied he in a gentle voice, but with a tone which announced an immovable resolution. "I desire that I may not again be spoken to about it. Come then, I am waiting for you to play me some music."

"There is no more music for us here," returned Consuelo with energy. "You would not be capable of comprehending Bach, you who have not human feelings. Ah! perish your flowers and your fruits! may the frost dry up your jessamines, and split your most beautiful trees! This fruitful earth, which gives you everything in profusion, ought to bear for you only brambles; for you have no heart, and you steal the gifts of Heaven, which you know not how to employ in hospitality!"

Saying this, Consuelo left the stupefied canon gazing about him, as if he feared to see the celestial malediction invoked by that burning soul fall upon his precious volkamerias and his beloved anemones. She ran to the grate which had remained locked, and scaled it to go out, in order to follow Corilla's carriage, which slowly directed its course towards the miserable wine shop, gratuitously dignified by the canon with the name of inn.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

**JOSEPH HAYDN**, accustomed as he was to be guided by the sudden resolutions of his friend, but endowed with more forethought and a calmer character, joined her after having secured the travelling bag, the music, and especially the violin, the bread-gainer, the consoler and joyous companion of their journey. Corilla was deposited upon one of those bad beds of the German inns, in which you must choose, so scant are they, whether your head or your feet shall hang over. Unfortunately there was no woman in that paltry place; the mistress having gone on a pilgrimage six leagues off, and the maid to drive the cow to pasture. An old man and a boy were keeping house; and, more frightened than pleased at lodging so rich a traveller, they allowed their household gods to be pillaged, without thinking of the recompense they might receive. The old man was deaf, and the boy ran off to find the midwife of the neighboring village, which was not less than a league distant. The postillions were much more anxious about their horses, which had nothing to eat, than about their traveller; and the latter, abandoned to the care of her maid, who had lost her wits and cried almost as loud as her mistress, filled the air with her groans, which resembled rather those of a lioness, than those of a woman.

Consuelo, seized with terror and pity, resolved not to abandon that unfortunate creature.

“Joseph,” said she to her comrade, “return to the priory, even if you should be badly received; we must not be proud when we ask for others. Tell the canon that he must send here linen, soap, old wine, mattresses, bed-coverings, in fine, all that is necessary for a sick person. Speak to him with gentleness, with force, and promise him, if necessary, that we

will go and play for him, provided he sends relief to this woman.

Joseph went, and poor Consuelo witnessed the repulsive scene of a woman without faith and without heart undergoing, in the midst of imprecations and blasphemies, the august martyrdom of maternity. The chaste and pious child shuddered at the sight of those tortures which nothing could soften, since, instead of a holy joy and a religious hope, displeasure and anger filled the heart of Corilla. She did not cease cursing her destiny, her journey, the canon and his housekeeper, and even the child she was about to bring into the world. She abused her servant, and thus finally incapacitated her for any intelligent service. At last she got so angry with the poor girl as to say to her, "Go; I will take the same care of you when you pass through the same trial; for you are with child too, as I know very well, and I will send you to lie in at the hospital. Take yourself away from before my eyes. You trouble and irritate me."

Sophia, disheartened and despairing, went to cry outside; and Consuelo remaining alone with the mistress of Anzoletto and of Zustiniani, strove to tranquillize and to help her. In the midst of her torments and her rage, Corilla preserved a kind of brutal courage and savage strength, which unveiled all the impiety of her fiery and unfeeling nature. When she experienced a moment's respite, she became stoical and even cheerful.

"In good faith!" said she suddenly to Consuelo, whom she did not recognize at all, having never seen her except at a distance, or upon the stage in very different costumes from that which she wore at this moment, "this is a fine adventure, and few people would believe me if I told them that I was brought to bed in a wine-shop, with a doctor like you; for you have the air of a Zingaro to me, you have, with your brown skin and your great black eyes. Who are you? where do you come from? why are you here, and why do you help me? Ah! don't tell me, I could not hear you, I suffer too much. Ah! *misera me!* If I don't die under it! Oh, no!

I will not die! Zingaro, you will not abandon me? Stay by me, stay by me, do not let me die, do you understand?"

And the cries recommenced, interrupted by fresh blasphemies. "Cursed child!" said she, "I wish I could tear you from my side and throw you far away!"

"Oh! do not say so!" cried Consuelo frozen with horror; "you are going to be a mother, you are going to be happy at the sight of your child, you will not regret having suffered."

"I?" said Corilla, with a cynical sang-froid, "do you think I shall love that child? Ah! you are deceived. Great pleasure indeed to be a mother, as if I did not know what it was! To suffer in bringing forth, to labor for the support of those unfortunates whom their fathers deny, to see them suffer themselves, not to know what to do with them, to suffer in abandoning them—for after all we do love them—but I will not love this one. Oh! I swear to God that I will not love it! I will hate it as I hate its father!"—And Corilla, whose cold and bitter manner concealed an increasing delirium, cried out in one of those exasperated impulses which intense suffering occasions in some women: "Ah! cursed, thrice cursed be the father of that child!" Inarticulate cries suffocated her. She rent in pieces the neckerchief which covered her large bosom, panting with pain and rage; and seizing Consuelo's arm, upon which she imprinted the marks of her nails crisped by the torture. "Cursed, cursed, cursed, be the vile, the infamous Anzoleta!"

Sophia returned at this moment, and a quarter of an hour afterwards, having succeeded in delivering her mistress, she threw upon Consuelo's knees the first piece of stuff which she snatched by chance from a hastily opened trunk. It was a theatrical mantle of faded satin, edged with a fringe of tinsel. It was in this impromptu swaddling cloth that Albert's noble and pure betrothed received and enveloped the child of Anzoleta and Corilla.

"Come, madam, be consoled," said the poor abigail, with an accent of simple and sincere goodness; "you are happily delivered, and you have a beautiful little girl."

"Girl or boy, I no longer suffer," replied Corilla, raising herself on her elbow; "give me a good glass of wine."

Joseph had just brought some from the priory, and it was of the best. The canon had behaved generously, and the patient soon had freely all that her situation required. Corilla raised with a firm hand the silver goblet which was presented to her, and emptied it with the steadiness of a sutler; then, throwing herself back upon the canon's good cushions, she immediately fell asleep with that nonchalance which is given by a body of iron and a soul of ice. During her slumber, the child was properly swaddled, and Consuelo went to the neighboring field for a ewe which served as its first nurse. When the mother woke, she caused herself to be raised by Sophia; and having swallowed another glass of wine, she collected herself for an instant; Consuelo holding the child in her arms, expected the awakening of maternal tenderness; but Corilla had quite a different thought in her head. She pitched her voice in *ut* major, and gravely went through a gammut of two octaves. Then she clapped her hands and cried, "*Brava*, Corilla, you have lost nothing of your voice, and can have as many children as you please!" Then she burst into a shout of laughter, embraced Sophia, and put upon her finger a diamond which she took from her own, saying, "That is to console you for the insults I heaped upon you. Where is my little monkey? Ah! my God!" cried she, looking at her child, "it is blond, it resembles him! So much the worse for him; woe to him! Do not unpack so many trunks, Sophia. What are you thinking of? Do you imagine I want to stay here? Come, come, you are foolish and do not yet know what life is. To-morrow I mean to be on the road again. Ah! Zingaro, you hold babies like a real woman. How much do you want for your care and your trouble? Do you know, Sophia, that I have never been better nursed and served? So you are from Venice, my little friend? did you ever hear me sing?"

Consuelo answered nothing to these questions, and her answers would not have been listened to. Corilla horrified her.

She committed the child to the servant of the house who had just reëntered, and who appeared a good creature; then she called Joseph, and returned with him to the priory.

"I did not agree," said he to his companion, as they walked along, "to bring you back to the canon. He appeared ashamed of his conduct, though he affected much graciousness and cheerfulness; notwithstanding his selfishness, he is not an ill-disposed man. He showed himself truly happy to send Corilla all that could be useful to her."

"There are some souls so hard and so horrible," replied Consuelo, "that weak ones ought to cause us more of pity than of horror. I wish to make amends for my anger against the poor canon; and since Corilla is not dead; since, as the saying is, both mother and child are as well as can be expected; since our canon has contributed thereto as much as he could without risking the possession of his dear benefice, I wish to thank him. Besides, I have my reasons for remaining at the priory until after Corilla's departure. To-morrow I will tell you what they are."

Bridget had gone to visit a neighboring farm, and Consuelo, who had expected to confront that Cerberus, had the pleasure of being received by the gentle and prepossessing Andrew. "Eh! come then, my little friends," cried he, opening for them the passage to the canon's apartments; "my master is horribly melancholy. He has eaten hardly anything for breakfast, and has interrupted his siesta three times. He has had two great troubles to-day; he has lost his most beautiful volkammeria, and the hope of hearing music. Happily you have returned, and one of his sufferings will be relieved."

"Is he laughing at his master or at us?" said Consuelo to Joseph.

"At both," replied Haydn. "If the canon is not vexed with us, we shall have some amusement."

Far from being vexed, the canon received them with open arms, forced them to eat some breakfast, and afterwards seated himself at the piano with them. Consuelo made him understand and admire the beautiful preludes of the great Bach,

and, to complete the work of restoring him to good humor, sang to him the finest airs of her repertory, without seeking to disguise her voice, and without being much troubled at allowing him to guess her sex and her age. The canon was determined to guess nothing, and to enjoy with delight all that he heard. He was really a passionate amateur of music, and his transports evinced a sincerity and openness with which Consuelo could not avoid being touched. "Ah! dear child! noble child! happy child!" cried the good man, with tears in his eyes, "you make this day the most beautiful of my life. But what will become of me hereafter? No! I cannot bear the loss of such enjoyment, and ennui will consume me; I shall no longer be able to make music; I shall have my soul filled with an ideal, which everything will make me regret; I shall no longer love anything, not even my flowers——."

"And you would do very wrong, sir canon," replied Consuelo; "for your flowers sing better than I do."

"What do you say? my flowers sing! I have never heard them."

"That is because you have never listened to them. I heard them this morning. I have discovered their mystery; I have understood their melody."

"You are a strange child; a child of genius!" cried the canon, caressing Consuelo's brown head with a paternal chastity; "you wear the livery of indigence, and you ought to be borne in triumph. But who are you, tell me; and where have you learned what you know?"

"Chance, nature, sir canon."

"Ah! you deceive me," said the canon sportively; he was always facetious; "you are some son of Caffariello, or Fari-nelli! But listen, my children," said he, with a serious and earnest air: "I do not wish you to leave me again. I will take care of you: remain with me; I have some fortune; you shall share it. I will be for you what Gravina has been for Metastasio. That will be my happiness, my glory. Attach yourselves to me; you need only enter the minor orders. I will get you some pretty benefices; and after my death you



will find some good little economies, which I do not mean to leave to that harpy of a Bridget."

As the canon said this, Bridget entered quickly and heard his last words. "And I," cried she, with a squeaking voice and tears of rage, "do not mean to serve you any more. I have too long sacrificed my youth and my reputation to an ungrateful master."

"Your reputation? your youth?" interrupted the canon, mockingly, without being disconcerted. "Eh! you flatter yourself, my poor girl; what you are pleased to call the one protects the other."

"Yes, yes, laugh away," replied she, "but prepare yourself not to see me again. I will at once quit this house, in which I cannot establish any order or decency. I wished to hinder you from playing the fool, from squandering your property, from degrading your rank; but I see it is in vain. Your weak character and your evil star hurry you to your ruin; and the first mountebanks you meet turn your head so completely, that you are all ready to permit yourself to be robbed by them. Come! for a long time canon Herbert has asked me to serve him, and offers me much better advantages than you give me. I am tired of everything I see here. Make out my account. I will not pass the night under your roof."

"Are we there?" said the canon, calmly. "Well, Bridget, you do me a great favor, and I hope you will not change your mind! I have never dismissed any one, and I believe I should have the devil himself in my service without dismissing him, so good-natured am I; but if the devil should leave me, I should wish him a good journey and would sing a *Magnificat* at his departure. Go and pack up, Bridget; and as to your account, make it yourself, my child. Everything that you wish, everything that I have, if you will, provided you go very quickly."

"Eh! sir canon," said Haydn, quite moved at this domestic scene, "you will regret an old servant who appears much attached——."

"She is attached to my benefice," replied the canon, "and I shall regret only her coffee."

"You will accustom yourself to do without good coffee, sir canon," said the austere Consuelo with firmness, "and you will do well. Be silent, Joseph, and do not speak for her; I wish to say it before her, because it is the truth. She is wicked, and she injures her master. He is good; nature has made him noble and generous. But this girl renders him selfish. She represses the good impulses of his soul; and if he keeps her, he will become hard and inhuman like her. Pardon me, sir canon, if I speak thus. You have made me sing so much, you have raised me to such a state of exaltation by manifesting your own, that I am perhaps a little beside myself. If I experience a kind of intoxication, it is your fault; but be sure that truth speaks in such intoxications, because they are noble, and develop what is best in us. They bring the heart to the lips, and it is my heart which speaks to you at this moment. When I am calm, I shall be more respectful and not more sincere. Believe me, I want none of your fortune; I have no desire for it, no need of it. If I wished, I could have more than you; and the life of an artist is pledged to such hazards, that perhaps you will survive me. It will be for me, possibly, to remember you in my will, in gratitude for your being willing to make yours in my favor. To-morrow we shall leave you, perhaps never to see you again; but we shall go with hearts full of joy, of respect, of esteem and gratitude towards you, if you dismiss madam Bridget, whose pardon I ask for my style of thinking."

Consuelo spoke with so much fervor, and the frankness of her character was so vividly depicted in her features, that the canon was struck with it as by lightning. "Go, Bridget," said he to his housekeeper, with a dignified and firm manner. "Truth speaks by the mouth of children, and that child has something great in his spirit. Go, for you caused me to commit an evil action this morning, and you would cause me to commit others, because I am weak and sometimes timid. Go, because you make me unhappy, and

that cannot secure your salvation. Go," added he, smiling, "because you begin to burn my coffee too much, and to turn all the cream into which you put your nose."

Bridget was much more sensitive to this last reproach than to all the others, and her pride, wounded in its most irritable spot, completely closed her mouth. She straightened herself up, threw upon the canon a look of pity—almost of contempt, and went out with a theatrical air. Two hours afterwards, this dethroned queen left the priory, after having pillaged it a little. The canon did not wish to perceive this; and from the air of beatitude which spread over his countenance, Haydn was satisfied that Consuelo had rendered him a real service. At dinner, the latter, to prevent his experiencing the least regret, made coffee for him in the Venetian manner, which is indeed the best manner in the world. Andrew immediately applied himself to the study under her direction, and the canon declared that he had never tasted better coffee in his life. In the evening they again had music, after having sent to inquire about Corilla, who was already seated, they were informed, in the arm-chair which the canon had sent her. They walked by moonlight in the garden, with a magnificent evening. The canon, leaning upon Consuelo's arm, did not cease requesting her to enter the minor orders, and attach herself to him as an adopted son.

"Take care," said Joseph to her, as they were entering their chambers; "this good canon is getting rather too seriously in love with you."

"We must be troubled by nothing that happens on a journey," replied she. "Mr. Mayer, count Hoditz and the canon, have all reckoned without the morrow."

## CHAPTER LXXX.

STILL Consuelo bade Joseph good-night and retired to her chamber, without having given him, as he expected, the signal for departure at dawn of day. She had her reasons not to hurry, and Joseph waited until she should confide them to him, enchanted to pass some hours more with her in that pretty house, while leading this good life of a canon which did not displease him. Consuelo allowed herself to sleep late in the morning, and not to appear until the canon's second breakfast. The latter had the habit of rising early, taking a light and delicate repast, walking in his gardens and hot houses to examine his plants, breviary in hand, and then of taking a second nap while waiting for the *dejeuner à la fourchette*. "Our neighbor, the traveller, is doing nicely," said he to his young guests, as soon as they made their appearance. "I have sent Andrew to prepare her breakfast. She has expressed much gratitude for our attentions, and as she intends leaving this day for Vienna,—contrary to all prudence I confess,—she requests you to go and see her, in order to recompense you for the charitable zeal you displayed towards her. Therefore, my children, breakfast quickly and betake yourselves to the house where she is; doubtless she means to make you some pretty present."

"We will breakfast as leisurely as you please, sir canon," replied Consuelo, "and we shall not go to see the patient; she has no further need of us, and we shall never need her presents."

"Strange child!" said the astonished canon. "Your romantic disinterestedness, your enthusiastic generosity gain my heart to such a degree, that I feel I can never consent to be separated from you."

Consuelo smiled, and they placed themselves at table. The repast was exquisite and lasted two hours; but the desert was very different from what the canon expected.

"Reverend sir," said Andrew, appearing at the door, "here is mother Bertha, the woman of the neighboring wine-shop, who brings you a great basket from the lying-in lady."

"It is the plate I lent her," replied the canon. "Receive it, Andrew, that is your business. She goes then decidedly?"

"Reverend sir, she has gone."

"Already, she is crazy! That she-devil wishes to kill herself."

"No, sir canon," said Consuelo, "she does not wish to kill herself, and she will not kill herself."

"Well Andrew, what are you doing there with so much ceremony?"

"Reverend sir, mother Bertha refuses to give me the basket; she says she must put it into your own hands, and that she has something to say to you."

"Well, it is the scrupulousness or the affectation of a depositary. Let her come in and say what she has to say."

The old woman was introduced, and after having made very deep reverences, deposited upon the table a great basket covered with a veil. Consuelo hurriedly stretched out her hand to it, while the canon turned his head towards Bertha; and having drawn back the veil a little, she covered it again, saying in a low voice to Joseph: "This is what I expected; this is why I remained. Oh! yes, I was sure Corilla must act thus."

Joseph, who had not had time to perceive the contents of the basket, looked at his companion with an astonished air.

"Well, mother Bertha," said the canon, "you have brought back the articles which I lent to your guest? That is right, that is right. I was not anxious about them, and I have no need of looking to be sure that nothing is missing."

"Reverend sir," replied the old woman, "my servant has brought everything; I have delivered everything to *your officers*. There is nothing missing in fact, and I am quite

easy on that score. But this basket, I was made to swear not to deliver it to any one but yourself, and as to what it contains you know as well as I."

"I wish I may be hanged if I do know," said the canon, carelessly reaching out his hand to the basket. But his hand remained as if struck with catalepsy, and his mouth half open with surprise, when the veil being moved and pushed back as of itself, a little child's hand, rosy and pretty, appeared making a vague motion as if it strove to seize hold of the canon's finger.

"Yes, reverend sir," resumed the old woman, with a smile of confiding satisfaction; "there it is safe and sound, very pretty, very smart, and with a strong inclination to live."

The stupefied canon had lost all power of speech; the old woman continued: "To be sure your reverence requested it of its mother that you might raise and adopt it! The poor woman had some difficulty in deciding; but at last we told her that her child could not be in better hands, and she recommended it to Providence when she entrusted it to us to bring to you: 'You must say to that worthy canon, to that holy man,' exclaimed she, as she got into her carriage, 'that I will not long abuse his charitable zeal. I will soon return to seek my daughter and repay the expenses he may have incurred for her. Since he absolutely insists upon taking the trouble to find a good nurse for her, give him from me this purse, which I request him to divide between the nurse and that little musician, who took such good care of me yesterday, if he be still at his house.' As to me, reverend sir, she paid me well, I ask nothing, I am quite satisfied."

"Ah! you are quite satisfied!" cried the canon, in a tragicomic tone. "Well, I am glad of that! but have the goodness to carry back the purse and that little monkey. Spend the money, bring up the child, I have nothing to do with it."

"Bring up the child, I? Oh! no, no, reverend sir! I am too old to take charge of a new-born baby. They cry all night, and my poor man, though he is deaf, would not be pleased with such company."

“And I then! I must be pleased? Many thanks! Ah! you are sure of that, are you?”

“Since your reverence requested her of her mother!”

“I! I requested her? Where the deuce did you learn that?”

“But since your reverence wrote this morning—”

“I! I write? Where is my letter, if you please? bring me my letter!”

“Ah! bless me, I did not see your letter, and besides, nobody in our house knows how to read; but Mr. Andrew came this morning from your reverence to see the lady, and she told us that he had given her a letter. We believed her, honest folks as we are! Who would not have believed her?”

“It is an abominable lie—it’s a gipsy trick!” cried the canon, “and you are the accomplices of that sorceress. Come, come, carry off the little monkey, give it back to its mother, keep it, do what you please, I wash my hands of the whole business. If it be money that you want to get out of me, I agree to give it to you. I never refuse charity, even to scoundrels and cheats; it is the only way to get rid of them; but take a child into my house! mercy on me! Go to the devil, all of you!”

“Oh! as to that I shall not do it, may it please your reverence,” retorted the old woman in a very decided tone. “I did not consent to take charge of the child on my own account. I know how all these stories finish. To begin with, they give you a little gold that glitters, and promise mountains and wonders; and then you hear no more of them, but the child is on your hands. Those children are never good for anything; they are lazy and proud by nature. If they are boys, they become highwaymen; if girls, a great deal worse! Ah! by my faith, no! neither I, nor my old man, want the child. We were told that your reverence requested it; we believed so; there it is. There is the money, and we are quits. As to being accomplices, we do not understand such tricks, and I ask pardon of your reverence: you jest when you accuse us of imposing upon you. I am indeed the servant of

your reverence, and I go back to my house. We have pilgrims there who are returning from the *vow*, and who are very thirsty."

The old woman made several salutations as she went out; then returning: "I had almost forgotten," said she; "the child must be called Angela in Italian. Ah! by my faith, I don't recollect how it was they said that word."

"Angiolina, Anzoleta?" said Consuelo.

"That 's it, precisely," said the old woman, and again saluting the canon, she retired tranquilly.

"Well, what do you think of this trick?" said the stupefied canon, turning towards his guests.

"I think it worthy of her who imagined it," replied Consuelo, taking from the basket the child, which began to be uneasy, and gently making it swallow some spoonfuls of the remainder of the breakfast's milk, which was still warm in the japan cup of the canon.

"Then this Corilla is a demon?" resumed the canon; "do you know her?"

"Only by reputation; but now I know her perfectly, and so do you, sir canon."

"It is an acquaintance I could very well have dispensed with! But what shall we do with this poor little deserted one?" added he, casting a look of pity on the child.

"I will carry it," replied Consuelo, "to your gardener's wife, whom I yesterday saw nursing a fine boy five or six months old."

"Go then!" said the canon, "or rather ring for her to come here and receive it. She will tell us of a nurse on some neighboring farm—not too near though; for God knows the injury that might be done to a man of the church by the least mark of decided interest towards a child fallen thus from the clouds into his house."

"In your place, sir canon, I would raise myself above such trifles. I would neither imagine nor apprehend the absurd suppositions of calumny. I would live in the midst of foolish reports as if they did not exist. I would always act as if they



were impossible. Of what use then would be a life of innocence and dignity, if it did not secure calmness of conscience and the liberty of good actions? See, this child is confided to you, my reverend friend. If it suffers for want of care far from your sight, if it languishes, if it dies, you will reproach yourself eternally."

"What do you say? that this infant is confided to me? have I accepted the trust? and can the caprice or craftiness of another impose upon us such duties? You are excited, my child, and you reason falsely."

"No, my dear sir canon," returned Consuelo, becoming more and more animated; "I do not reason falsely. The wicked mother who abandons her infant here, has no right and can impose nothing upon you. But he who has the right to command you, he who decrees the destinies of the new-born babe, he to whom you will be eternally responsible, is God. Yes, it is God, who has had especial views of mercy towards this innocent little creature, by inspiring its mother with the bold thought of entrusting it to you. It is he, who, by a strange concurrence of circumstances, causes it to enter your house, and casts it into your arms in spite of your prudence. Ah! sir canon, remember the example of Saint Vincent de Paul, who went about collecting poor deserted orphans upon the steps of houses, and do not reject this one which Providence brings to your bosom. I do indeed believe, that were you to do so, it would bring you misfortune; and the world, which has a kind of instinct of justice even in its wickedness, would say, with an appearance of truth, that you had good reasons for removing it from you. Instead of which, if you keep it, no others can be supposed than the true ones, your pity and your charity."

"You do not know," said the canon shaken and undecided, "what the world is! you are a child, austere in rectitude and virtue. Especially you do not know what the clergy is, and Bridget, the wicked Bridget, knew well what she said yesterday, when she pretended that certain people were jealous of my position and were striving to ruin me. I hold my bene-

fices from the protection of the late emperor Charles, who was pleased to act as my patron in order to enable me to obtain them. The empress Maria-Theresa has also protected me that I might pass as jubiliary before I reached the age. Well! what we think we hold from the church is never assured to us absolutely. Above us, above the sovereigns who favor us, we have always a master, which is the church. As she declares us *capable* when she pleases, even when we are not, so she declares us *incapable* when it suits her, even when we have rendered her the greatest services. The *ordinary*, that is to say, the diocesan bishop and his council, if they are made unfriendly or irritated towards us, can accuse us, bring us to their bar, judge and deprive us, under pretext of misconduct, of irregularity of morals or scandalous example, in order to confer upon new creatures the gifts which had been obtained from them by us. Heaven is my witness that my life has been as pure as that of this child born yesterday. Well! without an extreme prudence in all my proceedings, my virtue would not have been sufficient to defend me from evil interpretations. I am not much of a courtier towards the prelates; my indolence, and perhaps a little pride of birth, have always prevented me. There are those in the chapter who envy me — ”

“ But you have for you Maria-Theresa, who is a great soul, a noble woman, and a tender mother,” returned Consuelo. “ If she were there to judge you, and you should say to her with the accent of truth, which truth alone can have : ‘ Queen, I hesitated an instant between the fear of giving arms to my enemies, and the necessity of practising the first virtue of my calling, charity ; I saw on one side calumnies, intrigues, under which I might fall, on the other, a poor being abandoned by Heaven and by men, who had no refuge but in my pity, no protection but in my care ; and I chose to risk my reputation, my repose and my fortune, to do the works of faith and mercy.’ Ah ! I do not doubt, if you said that to Maria-Theresa, Maria-Theresa who is all powerful, instead of a priory would give you a palace, instead of a canonicate, a bishoprick.

Has she not covered the abbé Metastasio with honors and riches for having made rhymes? What would she not do for virtue, if she thus rewards talent? Come, my reverend friend, you will keep this poor Angiolina in your house; your gardener's wife will nurse her, and afterwards you will educate her in religion and virtue. Her mother would have made her a demon for hell, you will make her an angel for heaven."

"You do with me as you will," said the canon, moved and much affected, letting his favorite deposit the child on his knees; "come, we will baptize Angela to-morrow, and you shall be god-father. If Bridget were still here, she should be god-mother with you, and her rage would amuse us. Ring to have the nurse brought, and may God's will be done! As to the purse which Corilla left us—(what! fifty Venetian sequins!)—we have nothing to do with it here. I take upon myself the present expenses of the infant, and her future lot, if she be not claimed. Take, therefore, this gold; it is indeed your due for the singular virtue and the great heart you have manifested in all this!"

"Gold to pay for my virtue and the goodness of my heart!" cried Consuelo, rejecting the purse with disgust. "And the gold of Corilla! the price of falsehood, of prostitution perhaps! Ah! sir canon, it soils even the sight! Distribute it to the poor; that will bring luck to our poor Angela."

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

For the first time in his life perhaps, the canon hardly slept. He felt agitated by a strange emotion. His head was full of chords, of melodies and modulations, which a light slumber broke every instant, and which, in every interval of awakening, he strove, in spite of himself and even with a kind of vexation, to recall and connect without being able to succeed. He had retained by heart the most prominent phrases of the pieces which Consuelo had sung to him; he heard them still resounding in his brain, in his diaphragm; and then suddenly, the thread of the musical idea was broken in his memory at the most beautiful place, and he recommenced it mentally a hundred times in succession, without being able to go a single note further. In vain, fatigued by this imaginary audition, did he try to drive it away; it returned always to place itself in his ear, and it seemed to him that the light of his fire danced in measure upon the crimson satin of his curtains. The little hissings which issued from the lighted sticks had the air also of singing those cursed phrases, the termination of which remained in the fatigued imagination of the canon like an impenetrable arcanum. If he could have found one complete, it seemed to him that he would have been delivered from this siege of reminiscences. But the musical memory is so constituted, that it torments and persecutes us, until we have satisfied it with that for which it is greedy and anxious.

Never had music made such an impression upon the brain of the canon, although he had been a remarkable dilettante all his life. Never had human voice so completely taken possession of his heart as had that of Consuelo. Never had physiognomy, never had language and manners exercised upon his soul a fascination to be compared with that which

the features, the countenance, and the words of Consuelo had exercised upon him during the last thirty-six hours. Did the canon divine, or did he not divine, the sex of the pretended Bertoni? Yes and no. How shall I explain this to you? You must know that at fifty the canon's mind was as chaste as his habits, and his habits as pure as those of a young girl. In this respect, our canon was indeed a holy man; he had always been so, and the most remarkable thing is, that though the illegitimate son of the most debauched king of whom history makes mention, it had hardly cost him any trouble to keep his vow of chastity. Born with a phlegmatic temperament, (now-a-days we say lymphatic,) he had been so well educated in the idea of the canonicate, he had always so loved comfort and tranquillity, he was so little fitted for the secret struggles with which brutal passions contend against ecclesiastical ambition; in a word, he so much desired repose and happiness, that he had proposed, as the first and only principle of life, to sacrifice all for the tranquil possession of a benefice: love, friendship, vanity, enthusiasm, even virtue, in case of need. He was early prepared and long accustomed to immolate all without effort and almost without regret. Notwithstanding this shocking theory of selfishness, he had remained good, humane, affectionate, and enthusiastic in many respects, because his nature was good, and because the necessity of repressing his best instincts had almost never presented itself. His independent position had allowed him to cultivate friendship, tolerance, and the arts; but love was forbidden him, and he had killed love, as the most dangerous enemy of his repose and his fortune. Still, as love is of a divine nature, that is to say immortal, when we believe we have killed it, we have done nothing else than bury it alive in our heart. It may sleep there silently for long years, until the day when it is pleased to be reanimated. Consuelo appeared in the autumn of the canon's life, and that long apathy of soul was changed into a tender languor, profound and more tenacious than could have been foreseen. That apathetic heart knew not how to sound and palpitate for a beloved object; but it could melt as

ice before the sun, give itself up, know the abandonment of self, submission, and that kind of patient self-denial which one is sometimes surprised to find in the most selfish, when love has taken possession of their fortress.

He loved then, this poor canon; at fifty, he loved for the first time, and he loved one who could never respond to his love. He was only too sensible of this, and that was why he wished to persuade himself, in spite of all probability, that it was not love he experienced, since it was not a woman who inspired it.

In this respect he deceived himself completely, and in all the simplicity of his heart he took Consuelo for a boy. While performing canonical duties at the cathedral of Vienna, he had seen many young and handsome boys at the foundation; he had heard voices, clear, silvery, and almost female in their purity and flexibility; Bertoni's was more pure and flexible a thousand times. But it was an Italian voice, thought he, and then Bertoni was an exceptional nature, one of those precocious children, whose faculties, genius and aptitude are prodigies. And quite proud, quite enthusiastic at having discovered this treasure on the high-way, the canon already dreamed of making him known to the world, of bringing him forward, of contributing to his fortune and his glory. He abandoned himself to all the transports of a paternal affection, of a benevolent pride, and his conscience had no reason for taking alarm: for the idea of a vicious and impure love, like that which had been attributed to Gravina for *Metastasio*, the canon did not even know what it was. He did not think of it, he did not even believe in such a thing, and that order of ideas appeared to his chaste and upright mind an abominable and strange supposition of evil tongues.

No one would have believed in such infantile purity in the imagination of the canon, a man of rather a satirical wit, very facetious, full of finesse and penetration in all that related to social life. There was nevertheless a whole world of ideas, of instincts and feelings which was unknown to him. He had fallen asleep in the joy of his heart, making a thousand

projects for his young protégé, promising himself that he would pass his life in the most holy musical delights, and being quite affected at the idea of cultivating, while he tempered them a little, the virtues which shone in that generous and ardent soul; but awakened every hour of the night by a singular emotion, pursued by the image of that wonderful child, now uneasy and affrighted at the idea of seeing him escape from his tenderness already a little jealous, now impatient for the morrow to reiterate seriously the offers, promises and prayers, which he had appeared to hear laughingly, the canon, astonished at what passed within himself, imagined a thousand things other than the truth. "I was then destined by nature to have many children, and to love them passionately," asked he of himself with an honest simplicity, "since the sole thought of adopting one throws me now into such an agitation? Still it is the first time in my life that this feeling has been revealed to my heart, and here in a single day, admiration attaches me to one, sympathy to another, pity to a third! Bertoni, Beppo, Angiolina! Here I have a family all of a sudden, I who pitied the troubles of parents, and who thanked God for being obliged by my calling to the repose of solitude! Can it be the quantity and excellence of the music I have heard to-day which gives me so new an exaltation of ideas?—It is rather that delicious coffee à la Venitienne of which I took two cups instead of one, from pure gluttony!—I have had my head so excited all day, that I have hardly thought of my volkameria, dried up by Peter's carelessness!

*' Il mio cor si divide—'*

"There now, there's that cursed phrase which returns to me! plague take my memory!—What shall I do to sleep?—Four o'clock in the morning—it is unheard of!—I shall make myself ill!"

A bright thought came at last to the rescue of the good canon; he rose, took his writing-desk and resolved to work on that famous book, so long since undertaken, but not yet begun.

He was obliged to consult the dictionary of canonical law, in order to refresh his memory on the subject; he had not read two pages before his ideas became confused, his eyes closed, the book slid gently from the eider-down to the floor, the taper was extinguished by a sigh of sleepy beatitude exhaled from the strong breast of the holy man, and he at last slept the sleep of the just until ten o'clock in the morning.

Alas! how bitter was his awakening, when with a nerveless and careless hand, he opened the following billet, deposited by Andrew upon the taper stand, at the same time with his cup of chocolate!

“We depart, sir and reverend canon; an imperious duty calls us to Vienna, and we feared that we could not resist your generous entreaties. We fly as if we were ungrateful; but we are not so, and never shall we lose the remembrance of your hospitality towards us, of your sublime charity for the deserted infant. We will come to thank you. Before a week, you will see us again; please defer till then the baptism of Angela, and depend upon the respectful and tender devotedness of your humble protégés.

“BERTONI, BEPPO.”

The canon became pale, sighed and rang his bell. “They have gone?” said he to Andrew.

“Before day, sir canon.”

“And what did they say on departing? They breakfasted at least? Did they mention the day on which they would return?”

“Nobody saw them go, sir canon. They went as they came, over the walls. When I woke, I found their chambers empty; the billet which you hold was on their table, and all the doors of the house and enclosure locked as I left them last evening. They have not taken a pin, they have not touched a fruit, poor children!”

“I believe it!” cried the canon, and his eyes filled with tears. To dissipate his melancholy, Andrew tried to make



him furnish the bill of fare for his dinner. "Give me what you will, Andrew!" replied the canon in a heart-rending voice, and fell back groaning on his pillow.

On the evening of that day Consuelo and Joseph entered Vienna under cover of the darkness. The honest hair-dresser Keller was admitted to their confidence, received them with open arms and lodged the noble traveller as well as he could. Consuelo manifested a thousand friendships for Joseph's betrothed, though secretly disappointed at finding her neither graceful nor handsome. On the morrow, Keller braided Consuelo's flowing tresses; his daughter assisted her to resume the garments of her sex, and served her as a guide to the house which Porpora inhabited.

Was her hair red? ?

## CHAPTER LXXXII.

To the joy which Consuelo experienced at pressing in her arms her master and benefactor, succeeded a painful feeling which she had some difficulty in concealing. A year had not passed since she left Porpora, and that year of uncertainties, of vexations and sorrows, had imprinted on the gloomy brow of the maestro the deep traces of suffering and of old age. He had acquired that unhealthy embonpoint into which inaction and languor of soul cast a failing organization. His look had still the fire which formerly animated it, and a certain puffy coloring of his features betrayed fatal attempts to seek in wine the forgetfulness of his misfortunes, or the renewal of his inspiration chilled by age and discouragement. The unfortunate composer had flattered himself that he should find at Vienna some new chances of success and fortune. He had been received there with a cold esteem, and he found his rivals, more happy, in possession of the imperial favor and the fondness of the public. Metastasio had written dramas and oratorios for Caldera, for Predieri, for Fuchs, for Reuter and for Hasse; Metastasio, the poet of the court, (*poeta Cesareo*), the writer in fashion, the *new Albano*, the favorite of the muses and the ladies, the charming, the precious, the harmonious, the flowing, the divine Metastasio; in a word, he of all the dramatic cooks whose dishes had the most agreeable taste and the most easy digestion, had not written anything for Porpora, and had not been willing to promise him anything. The maestro had still perhaps ideas; he had at least his science, his admirable understanding of the voice, his good Neapolitan traditions, his severe taste, his broad style, and his bold and masculine recitatives, the grand beauty of which had never been equalled. But he had no public, and he asked in vain for a poem. He

was neither a flatterer, nor an intriguer; his rough frankness made him enemies, and his bad humor repulsed everybody.

He carried this feeling even into the affectionate and paternal welcome which he gave to Consuelo. "And why did you leave Bohemia so soon?" said he, after having embraced her with emotion. "Why do you come here, unfortunate child? There are no ears here to listen to you, no hearts to comprehend you; this is no place for you, my daughter. Your old master has fallen into public contempt, and if you wish to succeed, you will do well to imitate others and pretend not to know him, or to despise him, as do all those who owe to him their talent, their fortune and their glory."

"Alas! then you doubt me also?" said Consuelo, whose eyes filled with tears. "You wish to refuse my affection and my devotedness, and to turn against me the suspicion and disdain which others have excited in your soul! O my master! you shall see that I do not deserve this insult. You shall see! that is all I can say to you."

Porpora contracted his eyebrows, turned his back, made several steps in his chamber, returned towards Consuelo, and seeing that she wept, but finding nothing gentle and tender to say to her, he took her handkerchief from her hands and passed it over her eyes with a paternal roughness, saying; "Come, come!" Consuelo saw that he was pale, and that he smothered deep sighs in his broad chest; but he restrained his emotion, and drawing a chair to her side: "Come," resumed he, "give me an account of your residence at Bohemia, and tell me why you returned from there so suddenly. Speak then," added he, with a little impatience. "Have n't you a thousand things to tell me? Did you get tired there? or did the Rudolstadt's behave ill to you? Yes, they also are capable of having wounded and tormented you! God knows, they were the only persons in the universe in whom I still had faith; but God knows also that all men are capable of all that is evil."

"Do not say that, my friend," replied Consuelo. "The Rudolstadt's are angels, and I ought to speak of them only on

my knees ; but I was obliged to leave them, I was obliged to fly from them, and even without giving them notice, without saying good-bye."

"What does that mean? Is it that you have any fault towards them to reproach yourself with? Shall I be obliged to blush for you, and regret having sent you to those honest people?"

"Oh! no, no, thank God, master! I have nothing with which to reproach myself, and you have not to blush for me."

"What is it then?"

Consuelo, who knew how necessary it was to make short and quick answers to Porpora when he gave his attention to the acquisition of a fact or an idea, announced to him in a few words, that count Albert had wished to marry her, and that she could not make up her mind to promise him anything before having consulted her adopted father.

Porpora made a face of anger and irony. "Count Albert!" cried he, "the heir of the Rudolstadt, the descendant of the kings of Bohemia, the lord of Riesenburg! he has wished to marry you? you, a little gypsy? you, the fright of the scuola, the girl without a father, the actress without money and without an engagement? you, who have asked charity, barefoot, upon the squares of Venice?"

"Me! your pupil! me, your adopted daughter! yes; me, the Porporina!" replied Consuelo, with a quiet and gentle pride.

"A beautiful distinction and a brilliant condition! In fact," returned the maestro bitterly, "I had forgotten those in the catalogue. The last and only pupil of a master without a school, the future heiress of his rags and his shame, the continuer of a name which is already effaced from the memory of men! That is something to be proud of, and something to turn the heads of the sons of the most illustrious families!"

"Apparently, master," said Consuelo, with a melancholy and caressing smile, "we have not yet fallen so low in the estimation of good men as you are pleased to believe; for it is certain that the count wishes to marry me, and that I come

here to ask your approbation to consent, or your assistance to refuse."

"Consuelo," replied old Porpora, in a cold and severe tone, "I do not like these follies. You should have known that I hate the romances of school-girls and the adventures of coquettes. I never should have thought you capable of getting such nonsense into your head, and I am really ashamed of you when I hear such stories. It is possible that the young count of Rudolstadt may have taken a fancy to you, and that, in the ennui of solitude, or in the enthusiasm of music, he may have paid you some trifling attentions; but how have you been so impertinent as to take the matter in a serious light, and to give yourself, by this ridiculous pretence, the airs of a princess of romance? You excite my pity, and if the old count, if the canoness, if the baroness Amelia, are informed of your pretensions, I am ashamed of you; I tell you once again, I blush for you."

Consuelo knew that it would not do to contradict Porpora when he was inclined to declaim, nor to interrupt him in the middle of a lecture. She let him breathe out his indignation, and when he had said to her all he could imagine most wounding and most unjust, she related to him, point by point, with the accent of truth and the most scrupulous exactness, all that had passed at Giant's castle, between herself, count Albert, count Christian, Amelia, the canoness and Anzoletto. Porpora, who, after having given free scope to his necessity of indignation and invectives, knew, likewise, how to listen and comprehend, gave the most serious attention to her recital; and when she had finished, asked her many additional questions, in order to possess himself of new details, and penetrate completely into the domestic life and sentiments of the whole family.

"Then"—said he at last, "you have done well, Consuelo. You have been wise, you have been dignified, you have been strong, as I ought to have expected. It is well. Heaven has protected you, and will recompense you by delivering you once for all from that infamous Anzoletto. As to the young

count, you must not think of him. I forbid you. Such a lot is not fitted for you. Never would count Christian permit you again to become an artist. I know better than you do the unconquerable pride of the nobles. Therefore, unless you entertain in this respect illusions which I should consider puerile and foolish, I do not think that you will hesitate an instant between the fortunes of the great and those of the children of art. What do you think? Answer me, then! By the body of Bacchus! one would say you did not understand me!"

"I understand you very well, my master, and I see that you have comprehended nothing of all that I have said to you."

"How, I have comprehended nothing! I comprehend nothing now, is it so?" And the little black eyes of the maestro sparkled again with the fire of anger. Consuelo, who knew her Porpora to his fingers' ends, saw that she must stand her ground if she wished to be heard anew.

"No, you have not comprehended me," replied she with assurance; "for you suppose in me ambitious desires very different from those which I have. I do not envy the fortune of the great, be persuaded, and do not ever tell me, my master, that I allow it any way to affect my determination. I despise the advantages which are not acquired by one's own merit; you have educated me in this principle, and I shall never depart from it. But there is surely something in life other than money and vanity, and that something is sufficiently precious to counterbalance the intoxications of glory and the joys of an artist's life. I mean the love of a man like Albert; I mean domestic happiness and family joys. The public is a capricious master, ungrateful, tyrannical. A noble spouse is a friend, a support, another self. If I should ever love Albert as he loves me, I should think no more of glory, and probably I should be more happy."

"What foolish talk is this?" cried the maestro. "Have you become crazed? Have you given in to the German sentimentality? Good God! into what a contempt of art have

you fallen, madam the countess! You have just told me that your Albert, as you allow yourself to call him, excited in you rather fear than inclination; that you felt yourself dying of cold and dread by his side; and a thousand other things, which I have very well understood and comprehended, if it please you; and now, when you are delivered from his pursuits; now, when you are restored to liberty, the only good, the only condition of development in an artist; you come to ask me if you must not again place the stone about your neck, and throw yourself to the bottom of the well inhabited by your visionary lover? Eh! go then! do as you think best; I will not interfere any more with you, and have nothing more to say to you. I will not lose my time in talking with a person who neither knows what she says nor what she wants. You have not common sense, and I am your humble servant."

On saying this Porpora seated himself at his harpsichord, and improvised with a firm and dry manner, several skilful modulations, during which Consuelo, in despair of leading him that day to examine the fundamental question, reflected upon the means of at least restoring him to better humor. She succeeded by singing to him the national airs which she had learned in Bohemia, the originality of which transported the old master. Then she gently led him to show her the last compositions he had attempted. She sang them to him at sight with such perfection that he recovered all his enthusiasm, all his tenderness for her. The unfortunate man, having no skilful pupil by his side, and distrusting every one who approached him, no longer enjoyed the pleasure of having his thoughts rendered by a beautiful voice, and understood by a beautiful soul. He was so touched at hearing himself expressed according to his heart, by his great and always docile Porporina, that he shed tears of joy, and pressed her to his bosom, as he cried: "Ah! you are the first cantatrice in the world! Your voice has doubled in volume and extent, and you have made as much progress as if I had been giving you lessons every day during the past year. Once more, once more, my daughter, sing that theme again. You give

me the first instant of happiness I have tasted for many months!"

They dined together, very meagrely, at a little table near the window. Porpora was poorly lodged; his chamber, dull, gloomy, and always in disorder, looked upon a narrow and deserted corner of the street. Consuelo, seeing him well-disposed, ventured to speak of Joseph Haydn. The only thing she had hidden from him was her long pedestrian journey with that young man, and the strange events which had established between them so sweet and so loyal an intimacy. She knew that her master would take a prejudice, according to his custom, against every aspirer to his lessons who should be introduced to him with a eulogium. She therefore mentioned, with an air of indifference, that as she approached Vienna, she had encountered in a carriage a poor little devil, who had spoken of the school of Porpora with so much respect and enthusiasm, that she had almost promised to intercede in his favor with Porpora himself.

"Eh! what is he, that young man?" asked the maestro; "and to what does he destine himself? To become an artist, without doubt, since he is a poor devil! Oh! I thank him for his patronage. I mean to teach singing henceforth only to sons of families. They pay, learn nothing, and are proud of our lessons, because they flatter themselves they know something on leaving our hands. But artists, all mean, all ungrateful, all traitors and liars! Do not speak to me of them. I never wish to see one pass the threshold of this chamber. If it should happen, look you, I would throw him from the window on the very instant."

Consuelo tried to overcome his prejudices; but she found him so obstinate that she gave up the attempt, and leaning a little from the window, at a moment when her master had his back turned, she made one sign with her fingers, and then another. Joseph, who was prowling about the street expecting this agreed signal, understood that the first movement of the fingers told him to renounce all hope of being admitted by Por-



pora as a pupil ; the second gave him notice not to appear for half an hour.

Consuelo talked of something else to make Porpora forget what she had just said, and when the half hour had passed, Joseph knocked at the door. Consuelo went to open it, pretended not to know him, and returned to announce to the maestro that it was a valet who presented himself to enter his service.

"Let me see your face!" cried Porpora to the trembling young man ; "approach ! who told you that I wanted a servant ? I do not want one."

"If you have no need of a servant," answered Joseph, confused, but keeping a good countenance, as Consuelo had recommended, "it is very unfortunate for me, sir ; for I have great need of a master."

"One would say that nobody but I could give you the means of earning your livelihood !" replied Porpora. "Here, look at my apartment and my furniture ; do you think I require a lacquey to arrange all that ?"

"Eh ! certainly, yes sir, you must require one," returned Haydn, affecting a confiding simplicity ; "for all that is in very bad order."

Saying this, he went immediately to work, and began to arrange the chamber with an earnestness and apparent sangfroid which gave Porpora an inclination to laugh. Joseph risked all for all ; for if his zeal had not diverted the master, he ran the risk of being paid by blows of his cane. "This is a queer chap, who wishes to serve me in spite of myself," said Porpora, as he saw him doing thus. "I tell you, idiot, I have no means of paying a servant. Will you continue to be so zealous ?"

"No matter for that, sir, provided you gave me your old clothes and a bit of bread every day, I would be satisfied. I am so poor, that I should consider myself happy not to be obliged to beg my bread."

"But why do you not enter some rich house ?"

"Impossible, sir ; they consider me too little and too ugly. Besides, I know nothing about music ; and you know that all

the great lords now-a-days wish their lacqueys to know how to play a little on the violin or the flute, for chamber concerts. As for me, I have never been able to beat a note of music into my head."

"Ah ha! you know nothing of music. Well, you are the man to suit me. If you are satisfied with your food and my old clothes, I will take you; for, now I think of it, here is my daughter who will require a faithful lad to run her errands. Let us see! What can you do? Brush clothes, black shoes, sweep, open and shut the door?"

"Yes sir, I know how to do all that."

"Well! begin. Get ready for me the coat you see lying on my bed, for I am going in an hour to the ambassador's. You will accompany me, Consuelo. I wish to present you to monsignor Corner, whom you know already, and who has just arrived from the Springs with the signora. There is a little chamber below, which I give up to you; go and make some little toilet, while I also prepare."

Consuelo obeyed, crossed the anti-chamber, and entering the little gloomy cabinet which was to be her apartment, dressed herself in her eternal black gown and her faithful white neckerchief, which had made the journey on Joseph's shoulder. "This is not a very beautiful equipment to go to the embassy in," thought she; "but they saw me commence thus at Venice, and it did not prevent my singing well, and being heard with pleasure."

When she was ready, she again passed into the anti-chamber, and there found Haydn gravely curling Porpora's wig, hung upon a stick. On looking at each other, they both stifled a great burst of laughter. "Eh! how do you manage to arrange that beautiful wig?" said she to him in a low voice, so as not to be heard by Porpora, who was dressing in the next chamber.

"Bah!" replied Joseph, "that is easy enough. I have often seen Keller at work! And besides, he gave me a lesson this morning, and will give me more, that I may reach the perfection of the *lissé* and the *crêpé*."

“ Ah ! take courage, my poor lad,” said Consuelo, clasping his hand ; “ the master will finally allow himself to be disarmed. The paths of art are strewn with thorns, but one succeeds in gathering beautiful flowers therein.”

“ Thanks for the metaphor, dear sister Consuelo. Be sure that I shall not be discouraged ; and if, in passing me on the stairs, or in the kitchen, you will say a little word of encouragement and friendship to me from time to time, I shall bear all with pleasure.”

“ I will assist you to fulfil your duties,” returned Consuelo, smiling. “ Do you believe then that I also did not commence as you do ? When I was little, I was often Porpora’s servant, I have more than once run his errands, beaten his chocolate, and ironed his bands. Here now, to begin, I will show you how to brush this coat, for you know nothing about it ; you break the buttons and spoil the facing.” She took the brush from his hands, and gave him the example with address and dexterity ; but, hearing Porpora approach, she repassed the brush to him precipitately, and resumed a grave air to say to him in presence of the master : “ Well, boy, despatch !”

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

It was not to the embassy of Venice, but to the ambassador's, that is to say, to the house of his mistress, that Porpora conducted Consuelo. Wilhelmina was a beautiful creature, infatuated with music, and whose whole pleasure, whose whole ambition was to assemble at her house in a small circle those artists and dilettanti whom she could attract there, without compromising by too much ostentation the diplomatic dignity of monsignor Corner. At the appearance of Consuelo, there was a moment of surprise, of doubt, then a cry of joy and an effusion of cordiality, as soon as it was certain that it was indeed the Zingarella, the wonder of the preceding year at Saint Samuel. Wilhelmina, who had seen her quite a child come to her house behind Porpora, carrying his music and following him like a little dog, had cooled much with regard to her, on seeing her afterwards receive so much applause and homage in the saloons of the nobility, and so many crowns upon the stage. It was not that this beautiful person was wicked, or that she deigned to be jealous of a girl so long considered ugly enough to frighten one. But Wilhelmina liked to play the great lady, as do all who are not so. She had sung great pieces with Porpora, (who, treating her as an amateur of talent, had let her try everything,) while poor Consuelo was still studying that famous little manuscript in which the master had concentrated all his method of singing, and to which he kept his serious pupils for five or six years. Wilhelmina, therefore, did not imagine that she could have for the Zingarella any other feeling than a charitable interest. But from having formerly given her some sugar-plums, or having put into her hands a picture-book to prevent her being wearied with waiting in her anti-chamber, she concluded that she had been one of the most

efficient protectresses of that young talent. She had therefore considered it very extraordinary and very improper that Consuelo, arrived at once at the height of triumph, had not shown herself humble, zealous and full of gratitude towards her. She had expected that whenever she might have a little reünion of select men, Consuelo would graciously and gratuitously provide the entertainment of the evening, by singing for her and with her as often and as long as she desired, and that she could present her to her friends, assuming the air of having assisted her débuts, and almost formed her to the intelligence of music. Matters had passed otherwise: Porpora, who had much more at heart the wish of immediately raising his pupil Consuelo to the rank which belonged to her in the hierarchy of art, than that of pleasing his protectress Wilhelmina, had laughed in his sleeve at the pretensions of the latter; and had forbidden Consuelo to accept the invitations, rather too familiar at first, rather too imperious afterwards, of madam the embassadress *of the left hand*. He had found a thousand pretexts to excuse him from carrying her there; and Wilhelmina had thereat taken a strange spite against the débutante, even so far as to say that she was not handsome enough ever to have undisputed success; that her voice, agreeable in a saloon in truth, wanted sonorousness at the theatre; that she did not fulfil upon the stage all the promises of her childhood, and a thousand other malices of the same kind, known in every age and country. But the enthusiastic clamor of the public had soon smothered these little insinuations, and Wilhelmina, who piqued herself on being a good judge, a skilful pupil of Porpora, and a generous soul, had not dared to pursue this underhand war against the most brilliant pupil of the maestro, and against the idol of the public. She had joined her voice to those of the true dilettanti to exalt Consuelo, and if she did still slander her a little for the pride and ambition she had manifested in not placing her voice at the disposal of *madam the embassadress*, it was in quite a low voice, and in the ear indeed of some few, that *madam the embassadress* allowed herself to blame her.

This time, when she saw Consuelo come to her in her modest toilet of former days, and when Porpora presented her officially, which he had never done before, vain and frivolous as she was, Wilhelmina forgave all, and attributed to herself a part of generous greatness as she kissed the Zingarella on both cheeks. "She is ruined," thought she; "she has committed some folly, or lost her voice, perhaps; for nothing has been heard of her for a long while. She returns to us without conditions. Now is the true moment to pity her, to protect her, and to put her talents to the proof or to profit."

Consuelo had so gentle and so conciliating an air, that Wilhelmina, not finding in her that tone of haughty prosperity which she supposed her to have assumed at Venice, felt herself quite at ease with her and paid her great attentions. Some Italians, friends of the ambassador, who were there, united with her in overwhelming Consuelo with praises and questions, which she was able to elude with address and cheerfulness. But suddenly her countenance became serious, and a certain emotion betrayed itself, when, in the midst of a group of Germans who were looking at her with curiosity from the extremity of the saloon, she recognized a face which had already troubled her elsewhere; that of the unknown, the friend of the canon, who had so much examined and interrogated her, three days before, at the curate's of the village in which she had sung the mass with Joseph Haydn. This unknown again examined her with an extreme curiosity, and it was easy to see that he was questioning his neighbors respecting her. Wilhelmina noticed Consuelo's preoccupation: "You are looking at Mr. Holzbäuer?" said she to her. "Do you know him?"

"I do not know him," replied Consuelo, "and I am ignorant if it be he whom I am looking at."

"He is the first on the right of the mantel-piece," returned the embassadress. "He is at present the director of the court theatre, and his wife is first cantatrice at the same theatre. He abuses his position," added she in a low voice, "to treat the court and city with his operas, which, between our-

selves, are good for nothing. Do you wish me to make you acquainted with him? He is a very agreeable man."

"A thousand thanks, signora," replied Consuelo; "I am of too little consequence here to be presented to such a personage, and I am certain beforehand that he will not engage me for his theatre."

"And why so, dear heart? Can that beautiful voice, which had not its equal in all Italy, have suffered by your residence in Bohemia? for you have lived all this time in Bohemia, they say; in the coldest and dullest country in the world! It is very bad for the chest, and I am not astonished that you have experienced its effects. But that is nothing, you will recover your voice under our beautiful sun of Venice."

Consuelo, seeing that Wilhelmina was quite in a hurry to decide upon the alteration in her voice, abstained from contradicting this opinion, especially as her companion had herself made the question and the answer. She was not troubled at this charitable supposition, but at the antipathy she had a right to expect in Holzbäuer in consequence of a somewhat rude and sincere answer respecting his music which had escaped her at the breakfast in the presbytery. The maestro of the court would not fail to revenge himself by relating in what an equipment and in what company he had met her on the road, and Consuelo feared that this adventure, reaching the ears of Porpora, might prejudice him against her, and especially against poor Joseph.

It happened otherwise: Holzbäuer said not a word of the adventure for reasons which will be known hereafter; and far from showing the least animosity to Consuelo, he approached her and directed at her glances, the merry malice of which seemed only benevolent. She pretended not to understand them. She would have feared to appear to ask his secrecy, and whatever might be the consequences of this meeting, she was too proud not to brave them tranquilly.

Her attention was distracted from this incident by the face of an old man, who had a hard and haughty expression, but

who still showed much desire to engage in conversation with Porpora; but the latter, faithful to his crusty humor, hardly answered him, and every moment made an effort, or sought a pretext to get rid of him. "That," said Wilhelmina, who was not displeased at making for Consuelo a list of the celebrities who adorned her saloon, "is an illustrious master, Buononcini. He has just arrived from Paris, where he himself played the violoncello in an anthem of his own composition before the king; you know that it is he who excited enthusiasm so long in London, and who, after an obstinate contest between theatre and theatre against Hændel, finished by vanquishing the latter in the opera."

"Do not say that, signora," sharply ejaculated Porpora, who had freed himself from Buononcini, and who, approaching the two ladies, had heard the last words of Wilhelmina; "oh! do not utter such a blasphemy! no one has vanquished Hændel, no one will vanquish him. I know my Hændel, and you do not yet know him. He is the first among us, and I confess it, though I also had the audacity to contend against him in the days of foolish youth; I was crushed, that ought to be, that is just. Buononcini, more lucky, but not more modest or more skilful than I, has triumphed in the eyes of fools and in the ears of barbarians. Do not therefore believe those who speak to you of that triumph; it will be the eternal ridicule of my brother Buononcini, and England will one day blush at having preferred his operas to those of a genius, of a giant such as Hændel. Mode, fashion as they call it there, bad taste, the favorable construction of the theatre, a clique, intrigues, and, more than all, the talent of the wonderful singers whom Buononcini had for interpreters, gave him the advantage in appearance. But in sacred music Hændel takes a formidable revenge—and, as to Mr. Buononcini, I do not think much of him. I do not like pilferers, and I say that he has pilfered his success in the opera quite as legitimately as in the cantata."

Porpora alluded to a scandalous theft which had excited all the musical world; Buononcini having attributed to himself



in England the glory of a composition which Lotti had made thirty years before, and which the latter had succeeded in proving to be his in a signal manner, after a long debate with the brazen-faced maestro. Wilhelmina tried to defend Buononcini; and this contradiction having excited Porpora's bile; "I tell you, I maintain," cried he, without caring for being heard by Buononcini, "that Hændel is superior, even in the opera, to all men of the past and present. I will prove it to you on the instant. Consuelo, place yourself at the piano, and sing to us the air I shall designate."

"I die with anxiety to hear the admirable Porporina," returned Wilhelmina: "but I beseech you that she do not make her *début* here, in presence of Buononcini and Mr. Holzbäuer with Hændel's music. They might not feel flattered by such a choice —"

"I believe you," said Porpora, "it is their living condemnation, their sentence of death!"

"Well! in that case," replied she, "let her sing something of your own, master."

"You know, without doubt, that would not excite anybody's jealousy! but I, I wish her to sing Hændel's! I wish it!"

"Master, do not require me to sing to-day," said Consuelo, "I have just arrived from a long journey —"

"Certainly, that would be abusing her willingness to oblige, and I do not ask her, for one," returned Wilhelmina. "In presence of the judges who are here, and of Mr. Holzbäuer especially, who has the direction of the imperial theatre, you must not compromise your pupil; be careful."

"Compromise her! what are you thinking of?" said Porpora rudely, shrugging his shoulders; "I have heard her this morning, and I know if she risks compromising herself before your Germans!"

This discussion was fortunately interrupted by the arrival of a new personage. Everybody hastened to welcome him, and Consuelo, who, in her childhood, had seen and heard at Venice, that thin man, effeminate in face, with haughty man-

ners and a swaggering air, though she now saw him again, grown old, faded, ugly, ridiculously frizzed and dressed with the bad taste of a superannuated Celadon, recognized on the instant, so strong a recollection had she preserved of him, the incomparable, the inimitable sopranist Majorano, surnamed Caffarelli, or rather Caffariello, as he was called everywhere, except in France.

It was impossible to imagine a more impertinent fop than this good Caffariello. The women had spoilt him by their flatteries, the acclamations of the public had turned his head. He had been so handsome, or, to speak better, so pretty in his youth, that he had made his débuts in Italy in the parts of women; now that he was nearly fifty, (he appeared much older even than his age, as do most sopranists,) it was difficult to think of him in Dido, or in Galatea, without having a strong inclination to laugh. To retrieve what there was strange in his person, he assumed the air of a great bully, and on every occasion elevated his clear and sweet voice, without being able to change its nature. With all these affectations, with all this exuberance of vanity, he had a good side nevertheless. Caffariello felt the superiority of his talent too much to be amiable; but he also felt too much the dignity of his character as an artist to be a courtier. He foolishly and obstinately contradicted the most important personages, even sovereigns, and on that account he was not liked by the mean flatterers whom his impertinence criticised too strongly. The true friends of art forgave him all, on account of his genius as a virtuoso, and, spite of all the meannesses with which he was reproached as a man, they were compelled to recognize in his life traits of courage and of generosity as an artist.

It was not voluntarily and with a deliberate purpose, that he had testified negligence and a kind of ingratitude towards Porpora. He recollected very well that he had studied eight years with him, and that he had learnt from him all he knew; but he recollected still better the day on which his master had said to him: "Now I have nothing more to teach you; *Va, figlio mio, tu sei il primo musico del mondo.*" And from that

day, Caffariello, who was in fact, (after Farinelli,) the first singer in the world, had ceased to interest himself about anything which was not himself. "Since I am the first," he had said to himself, "apparently I am the only one. The world was created for me; Heaven has given genius to poets and composers only to make Caffariello sing. Porpora has been the first master of vocal music in the universe, only because he was destined to form Caffariello. Now the work of Porpora is finished, his mission is accomplished, and for the glory, for the happiness, for the immortality of Porpora, it is enough that Caffariello lives and sings." Caffariello had lived and sung, he was rich and triumphant, Porpora was poor and neglected; but Caffariello was very easy, and said to himself that he had amassed sufficient gold and celebrity to pay his master well for having launched into the world such a prodigy as he.

## CHAPTER LXXXIV.

**CAFFARIELLO**, on entering, made a very slight salutation to everybody, but went and kissed Wilhelmina's hand tenderly and respectfully: after which he accosted his director Holz-bäuer with a patronizing air, and shook the hand of his master Porpora with a careless familiarity. Divided between the indignation which his manners caused him, and the necessity of keeping well with him, (for by asking an opera from him for the theatre, and taking upon himself the first part, Caffariello could retrieve the maestro's circumstances,) Porpora began to compliment and to question him upon the triumphs he had just achieved in France, in a tone of irony too delicate for his foppishness to perceive.

"France?" replied Caffariello; "don't talk to me of France! it is the country of small music, of small musicians, of small amateurs, and of small great lords. Imagine a varlet like Louis XV., sending me by one of his first gentlemen, after having heard me in half a dozen delightful concerts, guess what? a poor snuff-box!"

"But in gold, and ornamented with diamonds of value, doubtless?" said Porpora, ostentatiously taking out his own, which was only of wood of the fig-tree.

"Eh! doubtless," returned the soprano; "but see what impertinence! no portrait. To me, a simple snuff-box, as if I needed a box to keep my snuff in! Fye! what a royal shop-keeper! I was indignant at it."

"And I hope," said Porpora, filling his malicious nose with tobacco, "that you gave a good lesson to that little king?"

"I did not fail, *corpo di Dio!* 'Sir,' said I to the first gentleman, opening a drawer before his dazzled eyes; 'there are thirty snuff-boxes, of which the poorest is worth thirty

times as much as that which you offer me; and you see, moreover, that the other sovereigns have not disdained to honor me with their miniatures. Tell that to the king your master. Caffariello is not short of snuff-boxes, thank God!"

"By the blood of Bacchus! that king must have been well abashed!" returned Porpora.

"Wait! that was not all. The gentleman had the insolence to answer me that as regarded strangers, his majesty gave his portrait only to ambassadors."

"Oh ho! the clown! and what did you reply to that?"

"'Listen, sir,' said I, 'learn that with all the ambassadors in the world you cannot make one Caffariello!'"

"A fine and good reply! Ah! there I recognize my Caffariello! And you did not accept his snuff-box?"

"No, Dio Santo!" replied Caffariello drawing from his pocket, with an absent air, a gold snuff-box enriched with brilliants.

"That is not it, by chance?" said Porpora looking at the box indifferently. "But tell me, did you see our young princess of Saxony? she whose fingers I placed upon the harpsichord for the first time, at Dresden, when the queen of Poland, her mother, honored me with her protection? She was an amiable little princess!"

"Maria Josephine?"

"Yes, the great dauphiness of France."

"Did I see her? intimately! she is a very good person. Ah! the good woman! 'Pon honor, we are the best friends in the world. Here! she gave me that!" And he showed an enormous diamond which he had on his finger.

"But they say too that she laughed heartily at your answer to the king about his present."

"Without doubt, she thought I answered very well, and that the king her brother-in-law had acted with me like a pedant."

"She told you so, truly?"

"She gave me to understand so, and sent me a passport which she had made the king himself sign."

All who heard this dialogue turned away to laugh in their sleeves. Buononcini, speaking of Caffariello's bragadocio doings in France, had related an hour before, that the dauphiness, on sending him that passport adorned with the master's signature, had made him remark that it was available for ten days only, which was clearly equivalent to an order to leave the kingdom with the least possible delay.

Caffariello, perhaps fearing lest he should be interrogated respecting this circumstance, changed the conversation. "Well, master!" said he to Porpora, "have you educated many pupils at Venice in these latter times? Have you produced any which give you hopes?"

"Do not speak to me of them!" replied Porpora. "Since yourself, Heaven has been avaricious, and my school sterile. When God had created man he rested. Since Porpora has made Caffariello, he crosses his arms and is wearied."

"Good master!" returned Caffariello, charmed by the compliment which he took entirely in good part, "you have too much indulgence for me. But still you had some pupils of promise, when I saw you at the *scuola dei Mendicanti*? You had already formed there the little Corilla, who was approved by the public; a beautiful creature, by my faith!"

"A beautiful creature, nothing more."

"Nothing more, in truth?" asked Mr. Holzbäuer, who had his ears open.

"Nothing more, I assure you," replied Porpora, authoritatively.

"It is well to know that," said Holzbäuer speaking in his ear. "She arrived here last evening, quite ill from what I am told: and yet, this very morning I received propositions on her part to enter the court theatre."

"She is not what you want," returned Porpora. "Your wife sings ten times—better than she does!" He had almost said "less badly," but was able to recover himself in time.

"I thank you for your information," replied the manager.

"What! no other pupil than the fat Corilla?" resumed

Caffariello. "Is Venice dry? I have a great desire to go there next spring with madam Tesi."

"Why should you not?"

"But the Tesi is infatuated with Dresden. Can't I find a cat to mew at Venice? I am not very difficult, nor is the public, when it has a primo uomo of my quality to *carry* the whole opera. A pretty voice, docile and intelligent, would satisfy me for the duets. Ah! by the bye, master! what have you done with a little Moorish looking body I saw with you?"

"I have taught many Moorish looking bodies."

"Oh! that one had a prodigious voice, and I remember that I said to you when I heard her: 'There is a little fright who will make a stir in the world!' I even amused myself by singing something to her. Poor child! she shed tears of admiration."

"Ah ha!" said Porpora looking at Consuelo, who turned as red as the nose of the maestro.

"What the devil was she called?" resumed Caffariello. "A strange name—come, you must recollect her, maestro; she was ugly as all the devils."

"It was I," replied Consuelo, who, overcoming her embarrassment with frankness and cheerfulness, went and saluted Caffariello gaily and respectfully.

Caffariello was not to be disconcerted by such a trifle.

"You?" said he quickly, taking her hand. "You lie; for you are a very handsome girl, and she of whom I speak—"

"Oh! it was I truly!" returned Consuelo. "Look at me well! You will recognize me. It is indeed the same Consuelo."

"Consuelo! yes, that was her devil of a name. But I do not recognize you at all, and I fear much that they have changed you. My child, if in acquiring beauty, you have lost the voice and talent you gave promise of, you would have done better to have remained ugly."

"I want you to hear her!" said Porpora, who burned with

the desire of bringing out his pupil before Holzbäuer. And he pushed Consuelo to the harpsichord, a little against her will; for it was a long while since she had encountered a skillful audience, and she was by no means prepared to sing that evening.

"You are mystifying me," said Caffariello. "This is not the same person whom I saw at Venice."

"You shall judge," replied Porpora.

"Indeed, master, it is cruel to make me sing, when I still have fifty leagues of dust in my throat," said Consuelo timidly.

"No matter, sing!" replied the maestro.

"Be not afraid of me, my child," said Caffariello; "I know what indulgence we must have, and to encourage you, I will sing with you, if you wish."

"On that condition, I will obey," replied she; "and the happiness I shall have in hearing you will prevent my thinking of myself."

"What can we sing together?" asked Caffariello of Porpora. "Do you choose a duet?"

"Choose one yourself. There is nothing she cannot sing with you."

"Well then! something of your style; I wish to give you pleasure to day, maestro: and besides, I know that the signora Wilhelmina has all your music here, bound and gilt with an oriental luxury."

"Yes," grumbled Porpora between his teeth, "my works are more richly dressed than I."

Caffariello took the books, turned over their leaves and chose a duet from the *Eumene*, an opera which the maestro had written at Rome for Farinelli. He sang the first solo with that grandeur, that perfection, that *maestria*, which made his hearers forget in an instant all his ridiculousness, and left room only for admiration and enthusiasm. Consuelo felt herself reanimated and vivified with all the power of that extraordinary man, and sang, in her turn, the woman's solo better perhaps than she had ever sung in her life.

Caffariello did not wait till she had finished to interrupt



her by explosions of applause. "Ah! *cara!*" cried he several times; "now I recognize you. It is indeed the wonderful child I noticed at Venice: but now, *figlia mia*, you are a prodigy (*un portento*), it is Caffariello who declares it to you."

Wilhelmina was a little surprised, a little put out of countenance, at finding Consuelo more powerful than she had been at Venice. Spite of the pleasure of having the débuts of such a talent in her saloon at Vienna, she could not see herself, without some fear and vexation, reduced to the condition of not daring to sing any more before her accustomed guests after such a virtuoso. She made nevertheless a great noise with her admiration. Holzbäuer, always smiling in his cravat, but fearing that he could not find money enough in his chest to pay so great a cantatrice, maintained, in the midst of his praises, a diplomatic reserve; Buononcini declared that Consuelo surpassed even madam Hasse and madam Cuzzoni. The ambassador was so transported, that Wilhelmina was terrified, especially when she saw him take a great sapphire from his finger, to put it upon that of Consuelo, who dared neither accept nor refuse it. The duet was asked for again with enthusiasm; but the door opened, and the lacquey, with a respectful solemnity, announced his lordship the count Hoditz: everybody rose with that movement of instinctive respect which is yielded, not to the most illustrious, nor to the most worthy, but to the most rich.

"I must be very unfortunate," thought Consuelo, "to meet here all at once, and without having time to parley, two persons who have seen me on my journey with Joseph, and who have doubtless received a false idea of my morals and of my connection with him. No matter, good and honest Joseph, in spite of all the calumnies which our friendship may give rise to, I will never disavow it in my heart, or in my words."

Count Hoditz, covered all over with gold and embroidery, advanced toward Wilhelmina, and by the manner in which he kissed the hand of that kept woman, Consuelo understood the difference that was made between such a mistress of the house and the proud patrician ladies whom she had seen

at Venice. The guests were more gallant, more amiable, and more gay at Wilhelmina's; but they spoke more quickly, walked less lightly, crossed their legs higher, put their backs to the chimney; in fine, they were quite other men than in the official world. They seemed better pleased with this freedom from ceremony; but there was at bottom a something wounding and contemptuous, which Consuelo perceived at once, though that something, masked by the habits of the fashionable world and the respect due to the ambassador, was almost imperceptible.

Count Hoditz was, above all, remarkable for that fine shade of *laissez-aller* which, far from shocking Wilhelmina, seemed to her an additional homage. Consuelo suffered only for that poor person whose satisfied thirst of glory appeared to her so miserable. As for herself, she was not offended; Zingarella, she had no pretensions, and not even requiring a look, she did not by any means care if she were saluted two or three lines higher or lower.

"I come here to perform my part of singer," said she to herself, "and provided they approve me when I have done, I only ask to keep myself unnoticed in a corner; but this woman, who mingles her vanity with her love, (if indeed she does mingle a little love with so much vanity,) how would she blush if she could see the contempt and irony hidden under manners so gallant and so complimentary!"

They made her sing again, they applauded her to the skies, and she literally shared with Caffariello the honors of the evening. Every instant she expected to be approached by count Hoditz, and to be obliged to endure some malicious eulogium. But, strange to say! count Hoditz did not approach the harpsichord, towards which she kept herself turned that he might not see her features, and when he had enquired her name and her age, he did not appear ever to have heard of her. The fact is that he had not received the imprudent billet which, in her traveller's boldness, Consuelo had addressed to him by the wife of the deserter. Moreover, he was quite near-sighted, and as it was not then the fashion to use an eye-

glass in company, he only very vaguely distinguished the pale face of the cantatrice. One might perhaps be astonished that, music-mad as he piqued himself on being, he had not the curiosity to see more nearly so remarkable a virtuoso. It must be remembered, however, that the Moravian lord liked only his own music, his own method, and his own singers. Great talents inspired him with neither interest nor sympathy; he delighted in diminishing in his own esteem their requirements and pretensions. And when he was told that the Faustina Bordoni earned fifty thousand francs per year at London, and Farinelli a hundred and fifty thousand, he shrugged his shoulders and said that he had in his theatre at Roswald, in Moravia, for five hundred francs wages, singers formed by himself who were worth quite as much as Farinelli, Faustina, and M. Caffariello to boot.

The grand airs of the latter were particularly distasteful and insupportable to him, for the reason that, in his sphere, count Hoditz had the same hobby and the same foppishness. If boasters are unpleasant to modest and wise persons, it is boasters above all whom they inspire with the most aversion and disgust. Every vain man detests those who are like him, and banter in them the vice he cherishes in himself. While listening to Caffariello's singing, nobody thought of the riches and dilettantism of count Hoditz. While Caffariello was detailing his small-talk, count Hoditz could find no place for his; in fine, they were in each other's way. No saloon was vast enough, no audience attentive enough, to contain and content two men devoured by such *approbation*, (the phrenological style of our day.)

A third reason prevented the count from going to look at and recognize his Bertoni of Passaw; it was that he had hardly looked at him at Passaw, and would hardly have recognized him thus transformed. He had seen a little girl *well enough made*, as they said then, to express a passable person; he had heard a pretty, fresh, and easy voice; he had perceived an intelligence which was quite plastic; he had perceived and divined nothing more, and he required nothing

more for his theatre at Roswald. Rich, he was accustomed to buy without too much examination or too much parsimonious debate whatever suited his convenience. He had wished to buy the talent and the person of Consuelo as we buy a knife at Châtellerault, and glass-ware at Venice. The bargain was not concluded, and as he had not felt a moment's love for her, he did not feel a moment's regret. Disappointment had a little disturbed the serenity of his awakening at Passaw; but people who esteem themselves highly do not suffer long from a check of this kind. They forget it soon; is not the world their own, especially when they are rich? "One adventure missed, a hundred found!" the noble count had said to himself. He whispered with Wilhelmina throughout the last piece which Consuelo sang, and perceiving that Porpora was darting furious glances at him, he soon went away without having experienced any pleasure among those pedantic and badly taught musicians.

## CHAPTER LXXXV.

CONSUELO's first impulse on returning to her chamber, was to write to Albert; but she soon perceived that this was not so easy as she had imagined. In a first rough copy she began to relate to him all the adventures of her journey, when she was seized with the fear of agitating him too violently by the picture of the fatigues and dangers she would place before his eyes. She recalled the kind of delirious frenzy which had taken possession of him, when she described to him in the subterranean passage the terrors she had braved to reach him. She therefore destroyed that letter, and thinking that to so profound a soul and so impressible an organization, there was needed the manifestation of a dominant idea and of a single sentiment, she resolved to spare him all the exciting details of the reality, and only express to him, in a few words, the affection she had promised and the fidelity she had sworn. But those few words must not be vague; if they were not entirely affirmative, they would produce horrible fears and anguish. How could she affirm that she had at last recognized in herself the existence of that absolute love and of that unshakeable resolution which Albert needed as the support of his life while waiting for her? Consuelo's sincerity, her honor could not condescend to a half truth. On questioning her heart and her conscience severely, she found there indeed the strength and calmness of the victory gained over Anzoletto. She found there also indeed, from the point of view of love and enthusiasm, the most complete indifference for every other man but Albert; but that kind of love, that serious enthusiasm which she felt for him alone, was still the same feeling she had experienced when by his side. It was not enough that the remembrance of Anzoletto was conquered, that his presence was dispelled, to cause count Albert to become the

object of a violent passion in the heart of this young girl. It did not depend upon herself to recall without affright the mental malady of poor Albert, the sad solemnity of Giant's castle, the aristocratic repugnances of the canoness, the murder of Zdenko, the gloomy grotto of the Schreckenstein, in fine, all that sombre and strange life which she had, as it were, dreamed in Bohemia; for, after having inhaled the free air of a wandering life on the summits of the Boehmer-wald, and finding herself in full flow of music by the side of Porpora, Consuelo no longer thought of Bohemia but as a nightmare. Although she had resisted the savage artistic aphorisms of Porpora, she found herself again in the midst of an existence so appropriate to her education, to her faculties, to her habits of mind, that she could not even conceive the possibility of being transformed into the chatelaine of Riesenburg.

What then could she say to Albert? what could she promise and affirm to him that would be new? Was she not in the same state of irresolution, in the same fear as when she left the chateau? If she had come to take refuge at Vienna rather than elsewhere, it was that she was there under the protection of the only legitimate authority she had to recognize in her life. Porpora was her benefactor, her father, her support and her master, in the most religious acceptance of the word. Near him, she no longer felt herself an orphan, and she no longer recognized the right of disposing of herself according to the sole inspiration of her heart or of her bosom. Now Porpora blamed, ridiculed, and repelled with energy the idea of a marriage which he considered as the murder of a genius, as the immolation of a great destiny to the fancy of a romantic devotedness. At Riesenburg also, there was a generous, noble, and tender old man, who offered himself as a father to Consuelo; but can we change fathers according to the necessities of our position? And when Porpora said *no*, could Consuelo accept the *yes* of count Christian?

That neither could nor ought to be, and it was necessary to wait for the decision of Porpora when he had better examined the facts and the feelings. But while waiting for this

confirmation or transformation of his judgment, what could be said to the unhappy Albert, to enable him to have patience by leaving him hope? To confess the first storm of Porpora's dissatisfaction, would be to overthrow all Albert's security; to conceal it, was to deceive him, and Consuelo did not wish to dissimulate with him. Had the life of that noble young man depended on a falsehood, Consuelo would not have spoken that falsehood. There are some beings whom we respect too much to deceive, even in saving them.

She therefore began again and destroyed twenty commencements of letters, without being able to decide on continuing a single one. In whatever manner she undertook it, at the third word she always fell into a rash assertion or a dubitation which might have evil effects. She went to bed, overpowered by lassitude, sorrow and anxiety, and lay there, suffering a long time with cold and sleeplessness, without being able to determine upon any resolution, upon any clear conception of her future lot and her destiny. At last she fell asleep, and remained in bed so late, that Porpora, who was an early riser, had already departed on his rounds. She found Haydn busied, as the day before, in brushing the clothes and arranging the furniture of his new master. "Welcome, beautiful sleeper," cried he on seeing his friend appear at last, "I die of ennui, of sadness, and especially of fear, when I do not see you, like a guardian angel, between that terrible professor and me. It seems to me that he is always about to penetrate my intentions, to discover the plot and shut me up in his old harpsichord, that I may perish there of harmonic suffocation. He makes my hair stand on end, your Porpora; and I cannot persuade myself that he is not an old Italian devil, the satan of that country being known as much more wicked and crafty than our own."

"Be reassured, friend," replied Consuelo; "our master is only unhappy, he is not wicked. Let us begin by giving all our cares to procure him a little happiness, and we shall see him soften and return to his true character. In my childhood, I have seen him cordial and cheerful; he was cited for the

wit and gaiety of his repartees: then he was successful, had friends and hope. If you had known him at the time when his *Polyphemus* was sung at the Saint Moses theatre, when he took me on the stage with him and placed me in the wing, whence I could see the back scenes and the head of the giant! How beautiful and terrible all that seemed to me from my little corner! Crouching behind a rock of paste-board, or clambering upon a lamp-ladder, I hardly breathed; and involuntarily, I imitated with my head and my little arms, all the gestures, all the motions, which I saw the actors make. And when the master was recalled upon the stage and compelled, by the cries of the pit, to pass seven times before the curtain, the whole length of the barrier, I imagined that he was a god. He was grand, he was beautiful with pride and effusion of heart in those moments! Alas! he is not very old now, and yet so changed, so cast down! Come, Beppo, let us to work, in order that on his return he may find his poor lodging a little more agreeable than when he left it. First, I will make an inspection of his clothes, in order to see what he wants."

"What he wants will be rather long to reckon, and what he has very short to see," replied Joseph: "for I don't know that my wardrobe is any poorer or in a worse condition."

"Well! I shall take care to furnish yours also; for I am your debtor, Joseph; you fed and clothed me the whole journey. Let us first think of Porpora. Open that press. What! only one suit? that which he wore yesterday to the ambassador's?"

"Alas! yes! a maroon suit with cut steel buttons, and that not very fresh! The other suit, which is old and pitifully ragged, he put on to go out; and as to his dressing gown, I don't know if it ever existed; at any rate I have hunted an hour for it in vain."

Consuelo and Joseph having ferreted everywhere, ascertained that Porpora's dressing gown was a chimera of their imagination, as well as his overcoat and muff. Taking an account of the shirts, there were but three in tatters, the



ruffles in rags, and so of all the rest. "Joseph," said Consuelo, "here is a beautiful ring which was given me last evening in payment for my songs; I do not wish to sell it, that would draw attention to me, and perhaps prejudice against my cupidity those who presented it to me. But I can pawn it, and borrow on it the money which is necessary for us. Keller is honest and intelligent; he will know the value of this jewel, and must certainly be acquainted with some usurer who, taking it on deposit, will advance me a good sum. Go quickly and return."

"That will not take long," replied Joseph. "There is a sort of Israelitish jeweller in Keller's house, and the latter being in such matters the factotum of more than one fine lady, he will have the money counted to you here within an hour; but I want nothing for myself, you understand, Consuelo! you, yourself, whose equipment made the whole journey on my shoulder, have great need of a new toilet, and you will be obliged to appear to-morrow, perhaps this very evening, with a dress a little less rumbled than that is."

"We will settle our accounts by-and-by, and as I please, Beppo. Not having refused your services, I have the right to require that you do not refuse mine. Now run to Keller's."

At the end of an hour, in fact, Haydn returned with Keller and fifteen hundred florins; Consuelo having explained her intentions, Keller went out again and soon came back with one of his friends, a skilful and expeditious tailor, who, having taken the measure of Porpora's coat and other parts of his dress, engaged to bring in a few days two other complete suits, a good wadded dressing gown, also linen and other articles necessary for the toilet, which he agreed to order from work-women whom he could recommend.

"Now," said Consuelo to Keller, when the tailor had gone, "I must have the greatest secrecy respecting all this. My master is as proud as he is poor, and he would certainly throw my poor gifts out of the window, if he ever suspected they came from me."

"How will you manage then, signora," observed Joseph,

“to make him put on his new clothes and abandon his old ones without noticing the change?”

“Oh I understand him, and I promise you that he will not perceive it. I know how he must be managed.”

“And now, signora,” resumed Joseph, who, except when tête-a-tête, had the good taste to speak very ceremoniously to his friend, in order not to give a false opinion of the nature of their friendship, “will you not think also of yourself? You brought hardly anything with you from Bohemia, and your dresses, moreover, are not in fashion in this country.”

“I had almost forgotten that important affair. Good Mr. Keller must be my counsellor and guide.”

“Oh ho!” returned Keller, “I understand, and if I do not have a toilet of the best taste arranged for you, you may say that I am ignorant and presumptuous.”

“I will trust to you, good Keller, and will only observe in general, that my taste is simple, and that very gay things and decided colors do not agree with my habitual paleness and quiet manners.”

“You do me injustice, signora, by presuming that I require that warning. Do I not know, from my calling, the colors which must correspond to physiognomies, and do I not see in yours, the expression of your native character? Be easy, you shall be satisfied with me, and soon you can appear at the court if you please, without ceasing to be modest and simple as you now are. To adorn the person and not to change it, such is the art of the hair-dresser and of the milliner.”

“Yet a word in your ear, dear Mr. Keller,” said Consuelo, drawing the hair-dresser away from Joseph. “You will also have master Haydn dressed anew from head to foot, and with the rest of the money, you will offer to your daughter, from me, a beautiful silk dress for the day of her wedding with him. I hope it will not long be delayed; for if I am successful here, I can be useful to our friend, and help him to make himself known. He has talent, great talent, be sure of that.”

“Has he really, signora? I am happy to hear you say

so. I have always thought so. What do I say?—I was sure of it from the first day I noticed him, quite a little boy in the choir, at the foundation.”

“He is a noble youth,” returned Consuelo, “and you will be rewarded by his gratitude and loyalty for all that you have done for him; for you also, Keller, as I know, are a worthy man and a noble heart.—Now, tell us,” added she, approaching Joseph with Keller, “if you have already done what we agreed upon respecting Joseph’s protectors. The idea came from you: have you put it in execution?”

“Have I done so, signora?” replied Keller, “to say and to do are one and the same thing with your humble servant. On going to dress my customers this morning, I first informed monsignor the Venetian ambassador, (I have not the honor to dress his own hair, but I frizzle the gentleman his secretary,) then the abbé of Metastasio, whom I shave every morning, and miss Mariana Martinez, his ward, whose head is also in my hands. She lives, as does he, in my house—that is to say, I live in their house: no matter! In fine I have seen two or three other persons who likewise know Joseph’s face, and whom he is exposed to meet at master Porpora’s. Those who were not my customers, I visited under some pretext: ‘I have been told that madam the baroness has sent to some of my neighbors for genuine bear’s grease for the hair, and I have hastened to bring her some which I can warrant. I offer it gratis as a specimen to persons of the fashionable world, and only ask their custom for the article if they are pleased with it,’ or else: ‘Here is a church book which was found at Saint Stephen’s last Sunday, and as I dress the hair of the cathedral, (that is to say of the foundation of the cathedral,) I have been requested to ask your excellency if this book does not belong to you.’ It was an old worm-eaten concern of gilt and blazoned leather, which I had taken from the stall of some canon to present, knowing that no one would claim it. In fine, when I had succeeded in making myself listened to under one pretext or another, I began to chat with that ease and spirit which is tolerated in persons of my profession. I said, for

example: 'I have often heard your lordship spoken of by one of my friends who is a skilful musician, Joseph Haydn. It was this that gave me the assurance to present myself in the respectable mansion of your lordship.' 'What,' they said to me, 'little Joseph? a charming talent, a young man of great promise.' 'Ah! truly!' replied I, quite content to come to the point, 'your lordship must be amused by the singular and advantageous position in which he is at this moment.' 'What has happened to him then? I have heard nothing of it.' 'Oh! there can be nothing more comical and more interesting at the same time. He has become a valet-de-chambre.' 'How, he a valet? Fie! what a degradation, what a misfortune for so much talent! Then he is very poor? I wish to aid him.' 'It is not on that account, your lordship,' replied I; 'it is the love of art which has made him take this singular resolution. He wished by all means to receive the lessons of the illustrious master Porpora.' 'Ah! yes, I know that, and Porpora refused to hear him and admit him. He is a very fanciful and a very morose man of genius.' 'He is a great man, a great heart,' replied I, according to the instructions of the signora Consuelo, who does not wish her master to be blamed or ridiculed in all this. 'Be sure,' added I, 'that he will soon recognize little Haydn's great genius, and will bestow on him all his cares: but, not to irritate his melancholy, and to introduce himself without exciting his anger, Joseph has found nothing more ingenious than to enter his service as valet, and to pretend the most complete ignorance of music.' 'The idea is touching, charming,' replied they, quite moved; 'it is the heroism of a real artist; but he must hasten to obtain the good graces of Porpora before he is recognized and mentioned to the latter as an already well-known artist; for young Haydn is liked and protected by some persons who frequently visit Porpora.' 'Those persons,' said I then with an insinuating air, 'are too generous, too great, not to keep Joseph's little secret for him, and even to feign a little with Porpora in order to preserve his confidence in him.' 'Oh,' cried they then, 'I certainly will not be the one to betray

the good and skilful Joseph, and my people shall be forbidden to let an imprudent word escape near the ears of the maestro.' Then they sent me away with a little present, or an order for bear's grease, and as to the gentleman secretary of the embassy, he was greatly interested in the adventure, and promised to regale monsignor Corner with it at his breakfast, in order that he, who loves Joseph particularly, may first of all be on his guard with Porpora. Thus my diplomatic mission has been fulfilled. Are you satisfied, signora?"

"If I were a queen, I would appoint you ambassador on the spot," replied Consuelo. "But I see the master returning in the street. Escape, dear Keller, do not let him see you!"

"And why should I escape, signora? I will begin to dress your hair, and it will be supposed you sent for the nearest hair-dresser by your valet Joseph."

"He has more wit a hundred times than we," said Consuelo to Joseph; and she abandoned her black tresses to the skilful hands of Keller, while Joseph resumed his duster and apron, and Porpora heavily ascended the staircase humming a phrase of his future opera.

## CHAPTER LXXXVI.

As he was naturally very absent, Porpora, on kissing the forehead of his adopted daughter, did not even remark Keller who had her by the hair, and began to search in his music for the written fragment of the phrase which was running through his brain. On seeing his papers, usually scattered upon the harpsichord in an incomparable disorder, ranged in symmetrical piles, he roused himself from his revery crying out :

“ Villanous scamp ! He has had the impertinence to touch my manuscripts ! These valets are all alike ! They think they arrange when they pile up ! I had great need, by my faith, to take a valet. This is the beginning of my punishment.”

“ Forgive him, master,” replied Consuelo, “ your music was in such a chaos — ”

“ I knew my way in that chaos ! I could get up at night and find any passage of my opera by feeling in the dark ; now I know nothing about it, I am lost, it will cost me a month’s work to put it to rights again.”

“ No, master, you will find your way at once. Besides, it was I who committed the fault, and though the pages were not numbered, I believe I have put every sheet in its place. Look ! I am sure you will read more easily in the book I have made of it, than in all those loose sheets which a gust of wind might carry out of the window.”

“ A gust of wind ! Do you take my chamber for the Fusina lagunes ? ”

“ If not a gust of wind, at least a stroke of the duster, or a brush of the broom.”

“ Eh ! what need was there to sweep and dust my cham-

ber? I have lived here a fortnight and have never let any one enter it."

"I perceived that, indeed," thought Joseph.

"Well, master, you must allow me to change that habit. It is unhealthy to sleep in a chamber which is not aired and cleaned every day. I will take upon myself to reëstablish each day the disorder which you like, after Beppo has swept and arranged."

"Beppo! Beppo! who is Beppo? I know no Beppo."

"He is Beppo," said Consuelo, pointing at Joseph. "He had a name so difficult to pronounce that you would have been shocked by it every instant. I have given him the first Venetian name I thought of. Beppo is well; it is short and can be sung."

"As you will!" replied Porpora, who began to soften on turning over the leaves of his opera and finding it perfectly arranged and stitched in a single book.

"Agree, master," said Consuelo, seeing him smile, "that it is more convenient so."

"Ah! you wish to be always in the right," returned the maestro. "You will be obstinate all your days."

"Master, have you breakfasted?" resumed Consuelo, whom Keller had restored to liberty.

"Have you breakfasted yourself?" replied Porpora with a mixture of impatience and solicitude.

"I have breakfasted. And you, master?"

"And this boy, this—Beppo, has he eaten anything?"

"He has breakfasted. And you, master?"

"Then you found something here? I did not remember that I had any provisions."

"We have breakfasted very well. And you, master?"

"And you, master! And you, master! Go to the devil with your questions. What is it to you?"

"Master, thou hast not breakfasted!" replied Consuelo, who sometimes permitted herself to thee-and-thou Porpora with Venetian familiarity.

"Ah! I see well that the devil has entered my house. She

will not let me be quiet! Come here now, and sing this phrase to me. Attention, I beseech you."

Consuelo approached the harpsichord and sang the phrase, while Keller, who was a decided dilettante, remained at the other end of the chamber, with comb in hand and mouth half open. The maestro, who was not satisfied with his phrase, made her repeat it thirty times in succession, sometimes making her emphasize upon certain notes, sometimes upon certain others, seeking for the shade he dreamed of, with an obstinacy that could only be equalled by Consuelo's patience and docility.

In the mean while, Joseph, upon a sign of the latter, had gone to get the chocolate which she herself had prepared during Keller's absence. He brought it, and guessing the intentions of his friend, placed it softly upon the music desk without attracting the notice of the master, who, an instant after, took it mechanically, poured it into the cup, and swallowed it with great appetite. A second cup was brought and swallowed in the same manner with a supply of bread and butter; and Consuelo, who was a little mischievous, said to him, on seeing him eat with pleasure:

"I knew, master, that you had not breakfasted."

"It is true!" replied he, without temper; "I think I must have forgotten it; that often happens to me when I am composing, and I do not recollect it till later in the day when I have gnawings at my stomach and spasms."

"And then, you drink brandy, master?"

"Who told you so, you little fool?"

"I found the bottle."

"Well! what is it to you? You're not going to forbid me brandy?"

"Yes, I shall. You were temperate at Venice and you were well."

"That is the truth," said Porpora sadly. "It seemed to me that everything went badly there, and that here it would be better. Still everything goes on from bad to worse with me."



Fortune, health, ideas; everything!" And he bowed his head on his hands.

"Do you wish me to tell you why you find a difficulty in working here?" returned Consuelo, who wished to distract him, by matters of detail, from the idea of discouragement that weighed him down. "It is because you have not your good Venetian coffee, which gives so much strength and gaiety. You wish to excite yourself after the manner of the Germans, with beer and liquors; that does not agree with you."

"Ah! that again is the truth; my good coffee of Venice! it was an inexhaustible source of bon-mots and great ideas. It was genius, it was wit, which flowed through my veins with a gentle warmth. Everything that is drank here makes me sad or crazy."

"Well, master, have your coffee!"

"Coffee? here? I won't have it. It makes too much trouble. You need a fire, a maid-servant, a coffee-pot which has to be washed and moved about, and gets broken with a discordant noise in the midst of a harmonious combination! No, none of that! My bottle on the floor, between my legs; that is more convenient, and sooner done."

"That gets broken too. I broke it this morning, when I was going to put it into the wardrobe."

"You have broken my bottle! I don't know what hinders me, you little fright, from breaking my cane over your shoulders."

"Bah! you've been saying that to me for fifteen years, and you have never given me a slap! I am not at all afraid."

"Chatter-box! will you sing? will you get me out of this cursed phrase. I bet you do not know it yet, you are so absent this morning."

"You shall see if I don't know it by heart," said Consuelo, quickly shutting the book. And she sang it as she conceived it, that is to say, otherwise than Porpora. Knowing his temper, although she had understood, from the first attempt, that he had become confused in his idea, and that in consequence of laboring it, he had denaturalized the sentiment, she had

not allowed herself to give him any advice. He would have rejected it from the spirit of contradiction : but by singing the phrase in her own manner, even while pretending to make a mistake of memory, she was very sure he would be struck by it. Hardly had he heard it, than he bounded from his chair, clapping his hands and crying :

“ There it is ! there it is ! that is what I wanted, and what I could not find ! How the devil did it come to you ? ”

“ Is it not what you have written ? or can I by chance ?— Certainly, that is your phrase. ”

“ No, it is yours, you cheat ! ” cried Porpora, who was candor itself, and who, notwithstanding his diseased and immoderate love of glory, would never have appropriated anything from vanity ; “ it was you who found it ! repeat it to me, and I will profit by it. ”

Consuelo recommenced several times, and Porpora wrote from her dictation ; then he pressed his pupil to his heart saying, “ You are the devil ! I always thought you were the devil ! ”

“ A good devil, believe me, master, ” replied Consuelo smiling.

Porpora, transported with joy at having his phrase, after a whole morning of sterile agitations and musical tortures, sought mechanically on the floor for the neck of his bottle, and not finding it, began to feel upon the desk, and drank at random what was there. It was exquisite coffee, which Consuelo had skilfully and patiently prepared for him at the same time with the chocolate, and which Joseph had just brought boiling hot, at a fresh sign from his friend.

“ O nectar of the gods ! O friend of musicians ! ” cried Porpora on tasting it : “ what angel, what fairy has brought you from Venice under her wing ? ”

“ It was the devil, ” replied Consuelo.

“ You are an angel, and a fairy, my poor child, ” said Porpora with gentleness, falling again upon his desk. “ I see well that you love me, that you take care of me, that you wish to make me happy ! Even that poor boy, who is interested

in my lot!"—added he, perceiving Joseph, who, standing on the threshold of the antechamber, looked at him with moist and glistening eyes. "Ah! my poor children! you wish to soften a life which is very deplorable! Imprudents! you know not what you do. I am vowed to desolation, and some days of sympathy and of comfort will make me feel only more vividly the horror of my destiny, when those beautiful days shall have flown!"

"I will never leave you; I will always be your daughter and your servant," said Consuelo, throwing her arms around his neck. Porpora buried his bald head in the music-book and burst into tears. Consuelo and Joseph wept also, and Keller, whom his passion for music had retained until then, and who, to give a reason for his presence, had busied himself in dressing the master's wig in the antechamber, seeing, through the half open door, the respectable and heart-rending picture of his grief, the filial piety of Consuelo, and the enthusiasm which began to make Joseph's heart beat for the illustrious old man, let fall his comb, and taking Porpora's wig for a handkerchief, carried it to his eyes, plunged as he was in a holy distraction.

For several days, Consuelo was kept in the house by a cold. She had braved, during that long and adventurous journey, all the inclemencies of the weather, all the caprices of the autumn, now burning, now wet and cold, according to the various regions through which she had passed. Thinly clad, with a straw hat on her head, having neither a cloak nor a change of garments when she was wet; still she had not had the slightest hoarseness. Hardly was she shut up within the walls of that sombre, damp, and badly aired lodging of Porpora, before she felt the cold and want of comfort paralyze her energies, her voice. Porpora was much vexed by this mischance. He knew that he must hasten if he wished to procure an engagement for his pupil at the Italian theatre; for madam Tesi, who had wished to go to Dresden, appeared to hesitate, tempted by the earnest requests of Caffariello, and by the brilliant offers of Holzbäuer, who was desirous to attach

so celebrated a cantatrice to the imperial theatre. On another side, Corilla, still kept in bed by the consequences of her confinement, was intriguing with the directors by means of those friends whom she had found at Vienna, and agreed to make her *début* in a week if necessary. Porpora ardently desired that Consuelo should be engaged, both for her own sake and for the success of the opera which he hoped to have accepted with her.

Consuelo, on her part, knew not what to resolve. To take an engagement, would be to put off the possible moment of her union with Albert; it would cause fear and consternation to the Rudolstadts, who certainly did not expect her to reappear upon the stage; it would be in their opinion a renunciation of the honor of belonging to them, and a notification to the young count that she preferred glory and liberty to him. On the other side, to refuse an engagement was to destroy the last hopes of Porpora; it was to show to him, in her turn, that ingratitude which had caused the despair and unhappiness of his life; it would, in fine, be giving him the stroke of a poniard. Consuelo, terrified at finding herself reduced to this alternative, and seeing that she would strike a mortal blow, whichever course she might adopt, fell into a dull melancholy. Her strong constitution saved her from a serious indisposition; but during those few days of anguish and terror, suffering from feverish shiverings, from a painful languor, drawn up over a scanty fire, or dragging herself from one chamber to another, to attend to the cares of housekeeping, she desired and sadly hoped that a severe illness would come to withdraw her from the duties and anxieties of her situation.

Porpora's temper, which had cleared for an instant, again became gloomy, quarrelsome and unjust, as soon as he saw Consuelo, the source of his hope and the seat of his strength, fall suddenly into depression and irresolution. Instead of sustaining and reanimating her by enthusiasm and tenderness, he displayed a diseased impatience which completed the work of terrifying her. By turns weak and violent, the tender and irascible old man, devoured by spleen, (which was soon to

consume Jean-Jacques Rousseau,) saw everywhere enemies, persecutors, and ingrates, without perceiving that his suspicions, his extravagancies and his injustice, provoked and occasioned the evil intentions and evil acts which he attributed to them. The first impulse of those whom he wounded was to consider him crazy; the second, to believe him wicked; the third, to avoid him, to preserve themselves, or to be avenged on him. Between a mean complaisance and a ferocious misanthropy, there is a medium which Porpora did not conceive, and to which he never attained.

Consuelo, after many useless attempts, seeing that he was less disposed than ever to allow her either love or marriage, resigned herself no longer to provoke explanations which embittered more and more the prejudices of her unfortunate master. She no longer pronounced the name of Albert, and held herself ready to sign any engagement which might be imposed on her by Porpora. When she found herself alone with Joseph, she experienced some consolation in opening her heart to him.

“What a strange destiny is mine!” would she often say to him. “Heaven has given me faculties and a soul for art, the need of liberty, the love of a proud and chaste independence; but at the same time, instead of giving me that cold and ferocious selfishness which insures to artists the strength necessary to clear their way through the difficulties and temptations of life, that celestial Will has placed in my bosom a tender and sensitive heart, which beats only for others, and cannot live except in affection and devotedness. Thus divided between two opposing forces, my life is wasted, and my aim constantly fails to be realized. If I was born to practise devotedness, I pray that God would take from my mind, the love of art, of poetry, and the instinct of liberty, which make of my devotedness a suffering and an agony; if I was born for art and for liberty, that he would take from my heart pity, friendship, solicitude, and the fear of causing others to suffer, which continually poison my triumphs and impede my career!”

“If I had any advice to give you, poor Consuelo,” replied Haydn, “it would be to listen to the voice of your genius, and to stifle the cry of your heart. But I know you too well now, and I know that you cannot do it.”

“No, I cannot do it, Joseph, and it seems to me that I never shall be able. But see my misfortune, see the complication of my strange and unhappy lot! Even in the path of devotedness I am so hindered and drawn in different directions, that I cannot go where my heart impels me, without breaking that heart which would do good on the left hand as well as on the right. If I consecrate myself to this one, I abandon and leave to perish that one. I have in the world an adopted husband, whose wife I cannot be without killing my adopted father, and reciprocally, if I fulfil my duties as a daughter, I kill my husband. It is written that the woman shall leave her father and mother to follow her husband; but I am not, in reality, either wife or daughter. The law has determined nothing about me, society has not interested itself in my fate. My heart must choose. The passions of man do not govern him, and in the alternative in which I am, the passion of duty and of devotedness cannot enlighten my choice. Albert and Porpora are alike unhappy, alike threatened with the loss of reason or of life. I am as necessary to the one as to the other. I must sacrifice one of the two.”

“And why so? If you were to marry the count, would not Porpora go and live with you both? You would thus snatch him from misery, you would restore him by your cares, you would accomplish both of your duties at once.”

“If it could be so, I swear to you, Joseph, that I would renounce art and liberty; but you do not know Porpora; it is of glory and not of comfort and ease that he is greedy. He is in misery, and he does not perceive it; he suffers from it without knowing whence his suffering comes. Besides, dreaming always of triumphs and of the admiration of men, he could not condescend to accept their pity. Be sure that his distress is, in great part, the work of his own carelessness and pride. If he said one word, he has still some friends,

who would fly to his relief; but, besides his never having looked to see if his purse were empty or full, (and you have seen that he knows no more about his stomach,) he would rather die of hunger shut up in his chamber, than seek the charity of a dinner at his best friend's. He would believe he degraded music if he allowed it to be suspected that the Porpora needed anything else than his genius, his harpsichord, and his pen. Thus the ambassador and his mistress, who love and revere him, do not in any manner imagine the destitution in which he now is. If they see him inhabit a scanty and ruinous chamber, they think it is because he loves obscurity and disorder. Does not he himself tell them that he could not compose otherwise? I know better; I have seen him climb the roofs at Venice, to seek inspiration from the sounds of the sea and the sight of the sky. If they receive him with his un-neat dress, his worn wig, and his shoes full of holes, they think they are obliging to him. 'He loves dirt,' they say to themselves; 'it is the whim of old men and artists. His rags are pleasant to him. He could not walk in new shoes.' He himself affirms it; but I have seen him in my childhood, neat, well-dressed, always perfumed, shaved, and coquettishly shaking the lace of his sleeve ruffles upon the keys of the harpsichord and the organ; the reason is, that in those times, he could do thus without being indebted to any one. Never would Porpora be resigned to live idle and unknown in the depths of Bohemia at the expense of his friends. He would not remain there three months without cursing and insulting everybody, believing that they conspired for his ruin, and that his enemies had caused him to be shut up, in order to prevent his publishing his works and having them performed. He would depart some fine morning, shaking the dust from his feet, and would return to seek his garret, his worm-eaten harpsichord, his fatal bottle, and his dear manuscripts."

"And you see no possibility of inducing your count Albert to come to Vienna, or to Venice, or to Dresden, or to Prague, to some musical town, in fine? Rich, you could establish yourselves anywhere, be surrounded by musicians, cultivate

the art in a certain manner, and leave a free field to Porpora's ambition, without ceasing to watch over him."

"After what I have told to you of Albert's character and health, how can you ask me such a question? He, who cannot endure the face of an indifferent person, how could he meet that crowd of knaves and fools which is called the world? And what irony, what dislike, what contempt, would not the world bestow upon that holy fanatic, who knows nothing of its laws, its manners and its customs? There is as much risk in attempting that with Albert, as in my present endeavor to make myself forgotten by him."

"You may nevertheless be certain, that all evils will appear more trifling to him than your absence. If he really loves you, he will endure all; and if he does not love you enough to endure and accept all, he will forget you."

"Therefore I wait and decide nothing. Give me courage, Beppo, and remain with me, that I may have at least one heart to which I can confess my suffering, and which I can ask to seek for hope with me."

"O my sister! be tranquil," cried Joseph; "if I am so happy as to give you that slight consolation, I will quietly endure all Porpora's storms; I will even let him beat me, if that can distract him from the necessity of tormenting and afflicting you."

While conversing thus with Joseph, Consuelo worked incessantly; now preparing with him their common meals, now mending Porpora's clothes. She introduced, piece by piece, into his apartment, the furniture necessary for her master. A good arm-chair, quite broad and well stuffed with hair, replaced the straw one in which he rested his limbs, now failing with age; and when he had enjoyed in it the pleasures of a siesta, he was astonished, and asked, contracting his brow, "Whence came that good seat?" "The mistress of the house had it brought up here," replied Consuelo; "this old piece of furniture was in her way, and I consented to place it in a corner until she should want it again." Porpora's mattresses were changed; and he made no other remark upon the goodness of



his bed than to say that he had recovered his sleep for some nights. Consuelo answered him that he must attribute this amelioration to the coffee and his abstinence from brandy. One morning, Porpora, having put on an excellent dressing-gown, asked Joseph, with an anxious air, where he had found it. Joseph, who had his cue, replied that in arranging an old trunk he had found it at the bottom. "I did not know I had brought it here," returned Porpora. "Still it is that I had at Venice; it is the same color at least."

"And what other could it be?" said Consuelo, who had taken care to match the color of the defunct dressing-gown of Venice.

"Well! I thought it more worn than this!" said the maestro, looking at his elbows.

"I believe so!" returned she; "I have put new sleeves to it."

"And with what?"

"With a piece of the lining."

"Ah! it is astonishing how women turn everything to use!"

When the new coat was introduced, and Porpora had worn it two days, though it was of the same color as the old one, he was astonished to find it so fresh, and the buttons especially, which were very handsome, drew his attention. "This is not my coat," said he in a grumbling tone.

"I told Beppo to carry it to the cleanser," replied Consuelo; "you stained it last evening. It has been re-dressed, and that is why you find it more fresh."

"I tell you it is not mine," cried the maestro, beside himself. "It has been changed at the cleanser's. Your Beppo is a fool!"

"It has not been changed; I made a mark on it."

"And these buttons? Do you think you can make me swallow these buttons?"

"It was I who changed the trimming and sewed it on myself. The old one was entirely spoilt."

"You may say so if you please! it was still quite present-

able. This is a fine piece of folly! Am I a Celadon to rig myself up thus and pay twelve sequins at least, for a trimming?"

"It did not cost twelve florins," replied Consuelo, "I bought it by chance."

"Even that is too much!" murmured the maestro.

All the pieces of his dress were slyly conveyed to him in the same manner, by the help of adroit falsehoods which made Joseph and Consuelo laugh like two children. Some articles passed unperceived, thanks to Porpora's absence of mind: the laces and linen were discreetly introduced into his wardrobe by small portions, and when he seemed to look at them on himself with some attention, Consuelo attributed to herself the honor of having carefully repaired them. To give more likelihood to the fact, she mended, under his eyes, some of his old clothes, and mixed them with the others.

"Ah, indeed!" said Porpora to her one day, snatching from her hands a frill on which she was sewing; "enough of this nonsense! An artist must not be a housekeeper, and I don't wish to see you all day thus bent double, with a needle in your hand. Shut up all that, or I will throw it into the fire. Neither do I wish to see you any more over the fire cooking and swallowing the vapor of charcoal. Do you want to lose your voice? Do you want to make yourself a scullion? Do you want to make me damn myself?"

"Do not damn yourself," replied Consuelo; "your clothes are in good order now, and my voice has returned."

"Well and good," answered the maestro; "in that case you will sing to-morrow at the house of the countess Hoditz, the dowager margravine of Bareith."

## CHAPTER LXXXVII.

THE dowager margravine of Bareith, widow of the margrave George-William, born princess of Saxe-Weissenfeld, and lastly countess Hoditz, "had been beautiful as an angel, so people said. But she was so changed, that it was necessary to study her face in order to discover any trace of her charms. She was large and appeared to have had a fine form; she had killed several of her children, by producing abortions, in order to preserve that fine form; her face was very long as well as her nose, which disfigured her much, having been frozen, which gave it a very disagreeable beet-root color; her eyes, accustomed to give the law, were large, well cut and brown, but so sunken, that their vivacity was much diminished; for want of natural eye-brows, she wore false ones, very thick, and black as ink; her mouth, though large, was well shaped and quite pleasant; her teeth, white as ivory, were very regular; her complexion, though clear, was yellowish, leaden and wrinkled; she had good manners, but rather affected. She was the *Lais* of her age. She had never pleased but by her face, for as to wit, she had not the shadow of it."

If you think that this portrait is drawn by a somewhat severe and cynical hand, do not blame me, dear reader. It is word for word from the own hand of a princess, celebrated for her misfortunes, her domestic virtues, her pride and her malice, the princess Wilhelmina of Prussia, sister of Frederick-the-Great, married to the hereditary prince of the margraviat of Bareith, the nephew of our countess Hoditz. She had indeed the most sarcastic tongue that royal blood has ever produced. But her portraits are, in general, drawn with the

hand of a master, and it is difficult, on reading them, not to believe them exact.

When Consuelo, her hair dressed by Keller, and clothed, thanks to his care and zeal, with an elegant simplicity, was introduced by Porpora into the saloon of the margravine, she seated herself with him behind the harpsichord, which had been placed across a corner, in order not to inconvenience the company. No one had yet arrived, so punctual was Porpora, and the valets were just finishing the lighting of the candles. The maestro began to try the instrument, and hardly had he drawn a few sounds from it when a very beautiful lady entered and came towards him with a graceful affability. As Porpora saluted her with the greatest respect, and called her princess, Consuelo took her for the margravine, and according to custom, kissed her hand. That cold and colorless hand pressed that of the young girl with a cordiality which is rarely found among the great, and which immediately gained Consuelo's heart. The princess appeared about thirty years old; her form was elegant without being correct; indeed, there could be remarked in it certain deviations which seemed the result of great physical sufferings. Her face was admirable, but of a frightful paleness, and the expression of a profound sorrow had prematurely worn and ravaged it. Her toilet was exquisite, but simple and decent even to severity. An air of goodness, of sadness and of timid modesty was diffused over this beautiful person, and the sound of her voice had something humble and affecting, by which Consuelo felt herself penetrated. Before the latter had time to understand that this was not the margravine, the true margravine appeared. She was then more than fifty, and if the portrait which has been read at the beginning of this chapter, and which was made ten years before, was then a little overcharged, it certainly was no longer so at the moment when Consuelo saw her. It even required much good nature to perceive that the countess Hoditz had been one of the beauties of Germany, though she was painted and adorned with the skill of an exquisite coquetry. The embonpoint of riper years had

destroyed the form respecting which the margravine persisted in being strangely deluded; for her bare shoulders and bosom braved the eyes with a pride which only antique statuary could equal. She wore flowers, diamonds and feathers in her hair, like a young lady, and her dress rustled with precious stones.

"Mamma," said the princess who had caused Consuelo's error, "this is the young person whom master Porpora has announced to us, and who will give us the pleasure of hearing some of the fine music of his new opera."

"That is no reason," replied the margravine, measuring Consuelo from head to foot, "why you should hold her by the hand in that manner. Go and seat yourself by the harpsichord, mademoiselle. I am pleased to see you; you will sing when the company has assembled. Master Porpora, I salute you. I ask your pardon if I do not attend to you. I perceive that something is amiss in my toilet. My daughter, converse a little with master Porpora. He is a man of talent whom I esteem."

Having thus spoken in a voice rougher than that of a soldier, the stout margravine turned heavily on her heels, and reëntered her apartment.

Hardly had she disappeared when the princess her daughter, approaching Consuelo, again took her hand with a delicate and touching benevolence, as if to say to her that she protested against her mother's impertinence; then she engaged in conversation with her and Porpora, and testified to them an interest full of grace and simplicity. Consuelo was still more sensible to this kind proceeding when, several persons having been introduced, she remarked in the habitual manners of the princess a coldness, a reserve at once timid and proud, to which she evidently made an exception for the maestro and herself.

When the saloon was almost full, count Hoditz, who had dined abroad, entered in full dress, and, as if he had been a stranger in his own house, went respectfully to kiss the hand and inform himself of the health of his noble spouse. The margravine pretended to be of a very delicate temperament;

she reclined upon a couch, inhaling every instant the perfume of a smelling-bottle, and receiving the homage of her guests with an air which she thought languishing, and which was only disdainful; in fine, she was so completely ridiculous, that Consuelo, at first irritated and indignant at her insolence, finished by being inwardly amused, and promised herself that she would have a hearty laugh at her on making her portrait to friend Beppo.

The princess had again approached the harpsichord, and did not miss an opportunity to address either a word or a smile to Consuelo, when her mother was not observing her. This situation allowed Consuelo to surprise a little family scene, which gave her the key of the house. Count Hoditz approached his daughter-in-law, took her hand, carried it to his lips, and kept it there some instants with a very expressive look. The princess withdrew her hand, and addressed to him a few words in a cold and deferential manner. The count did not listen to them, and continuing to gaze upon her: "What! my beautiful angel," said he, "always sad, always austere, always cuirassed to the chin? One would say that you wished to become a nun." "It is quite possible I shall come to that," replied the princess in a low voice. "The world has not treated me in such a manner as to inspire me with much attachment to its pleasures." "The world would adore you, and would be at your feet, if you did not affect by your severity to keep it at a distance; and as to the cloister, could you endure its horrors at your age, and beautiful as you are?"

"In a more gladsome age, and when beautiful as I no longer am," replied she, "I endured the horrors of a more rigorous captivity: have you forgotten it? But do not talk to me any longer, sir count; mamma is looking at you."

Immediately the count, as if pushed by a spring, quitted his daughter-in-law, and approached Consuelo, whom he saluted very gravely; then, having addressed to her some words as an amateur, respecting music in general, he opened the book which Porpora had placed upon the harpsichord, and pretend-

ing to seek therein something which he wished her to explain to him, he leaned upon the stand, and spoke thus to her in a low voice: "I saw the deserter yesterday morning, and his wife gave me a note. I ask the beautiful Consuelo to forget a certain meeting; and in return for her silence, I will forget a certain Joseph whom I have just now seen in my ante-chamber."

"That certain Joseph," replied Consuelo, whom the discovery of the conjugal jealousy and constraint had made quite easy respecting the consequences of the adventure at Passaw, "is an artist of talent who will not long remain in the ante-chambers. He is my brother, my comrade, and my friend. I have no reason to blush for my sentiments towards him; I have nothing to conceal in that respect, and I have nothing to request of the generosity of your lordship, but a little indulgence for my voice, and a little protection for the future débuts of Joseph in his musical career."

"My interest is assured for the said Joseph as my admiration is already for your beautiful voice; but I flatter myself that a certain jesting on my part was never taken as serious."

"I was not so stupid, sir count; and besides, I know that a woman has never any occasion to boast of having been made the subject of a jest of that nature."

"It is enough, signora," said the count, from whom the dowager did not remove her eyes, and who was in a hurry to change his position in order not to excite her suspicion: "the celebrated Consuelo must know how to pardon something to the merriment of a journey, and she may depend in future upon the respect and devotedness of count Hoditz."

He replaced the book upon the harpsichord, and went to receive obsequiously a personage who had just been announced with much pomp. It was a little man who might have been taken for a woman in disguise, so rosy was he, curled, trink- etted, delicate, genteel, and perfumed; it was of him that Maria-Theresa said she wished she could have him set in a ring; it was of him also that she said she had made a diplomatist, because she could make nothing better. It was the

plenipotentiary of Austria, the first minister, the favorite, some even said the lover of the empress; it was no less, in fine, than the celebrated Kaunitz, that man of state who held in his white hand, ornamented with rings of a thousand colors, all the skilful strings of European diplomacy.

He appeared to listen with a grave air to the self-styled grave personages who were supposed to converse with him on grave matters. But suddenly he interrupted himself to ask count Hoditz: "Who is that young person I see there at the harpsichord? Is it the little girl I have heard of, Porpora's protégée? Poor devil of a Porpora! I wish I could do something for him; but he is so exacting and so fanciful, that all the artists fear or hate him. When I speak to them of him, it is as if I showed them a Medusa's head. He tells one that he sings false, another that his music is good for nothing, and a third that he owes his success to intrigue. And he expects, with this wild Indian talk, that people will listen to him and do him justice! What the devil! We don't live in the woods. Frankness is no longer in fashion, and we cannot lead men by truth. That little one is not bad; I rather like that face. She is quite young, is she not? They say she had great success at Venice. Porpora must bring her to me to-morrow."

"He wishes," said the princess, "that you will let her be heard by the empress, and I hope that you will not refuse him this favor. I ask it of you on my own account."

"There is nothing so easy as to have her heard by the empress, and it is sufficient that your highness desires it to cause me to be anxious to forward the matter. But there is one more powerful at the theatre than the empress. That is madam Tesi; and even if her majesty should take this girl under her protection, I doubt if the engagement would be signed without the supreme approval of the Tesi."

"They say it is you who spoil those ladies horribly, sir count, and that without your indulgence they would not have so much power."

"How will you have it, princess? Every one is master in



his own house. Her majesty understands very well that if she should interfere by an imperial decree in the affairs of the opera, the opera would go all wrong. Now her majesty wishes that the opera should go on well, and that people should be amused there. How would that be if the prima-donna takes cold on the day she is to make her *début*? or if the tenor, in the very middle of a scene of reconciliation, instead of throwing himself into the arms of the bass, gives him a smart cuff on the ear? We have quite enough to do to satisfy the caprices of M. Caffariello. We are happy since madam Tesi and madam Holzbäuer have a good understanding with each other. If you throw an apple of discord upon the boards, our cards will be in a worse confusion than ever."

"But a third woman is absolutely necessary," said the Venetian ambassador, who warmly protected Porpora and his pupil, "and here is an admirable one who presents herself."

"If she be admirable, so much the worse for her. She would excite the jealousy of madam Tesi, who is admirable, and wishes to be so alone; she would put in a fury madam Holzbäuer, who wishes to be admirable also——"

"And who is not," retorted the ambassador.

"She is very well born, she is a person of good family," diplomatically replied M. de Kaunitz.

"She cannot sing two parts at a time. She must needs let the mezzo-soprano take her part in the operas."

"We have a Corilla who offers herself, and who is certainly the most beautiful creature on earth."

"Your excellency has already seen her?"

"The first day she arrived. But I have not heard her. She is ill."

"You will hear this one, and you will not hesitate to give her the preference."

"It is possible. I even confess to you that her face, less beautiful than that of the other, seems to me more agreeable. She has a gentle and modest manner. But my preference will do her no good, poor child! She must please madam Tesi, without displeasing madam Holzbäuer; and hitherto,

notwithstanding the sweet friendship that unites those two ladies, everything that has been approved by the one has always had the lot to be strongly disapproved by the other."

"This is a rude crisis, and a very grave affair," said the princess, with a little malice, on seeing the importance which these two men of state gave to matters of the green-room. "Here is our poor little protegé in the balance with madam Corilla, and it is Mr. Caffariello, I wager, who will put his sword into one of the scales."

When Consuelo had sung, there was but one voice to declare that, since madam Hasse, they had heard nothing like it; and M. de Kaunitz, approaching, said to her with a solemn air, "Young lady, you sing better than madam Tesi; but let this be said to you by all of us here in confidence, for if such a judgment pass the door, you are lost, and will not appear this season at Vienna. Be prudent, therefore, very prudent," added he, lowering his voice, and seating himself beside her. "You have to struggle against great obstacles, and you will not triumph except by address." Thereupon, entering into the thousand windings of theatrical intrigue, and acquainting her minutely with all the little passions of the company, the great Kaunitz gave her a complete treatise on diplomatic science with reference to the stage.

Consuelo listened to him, her great eyes wide open with astonishment, and when he had finished, as he had repeated twenty times in his discourse: "My last opera, the opera which I had played last month," she imagined that she had been deceived on hearing him announced, and that this personage, so well versed in all the mysteries of the dramatic career, could only be a director of the opera, or a maestro in fashion. She therefore felt quite at ease with him, and talked to him as she would have done to a man of her own profession. This freedom from constraint rendered her more naïve and more merry than the respect due to the all-powerful name of the first minister would have permitted her to be; M. de Kaunitz found her charming. He attended to no one else for an hour. The margravine was highly offended at

such a breach of propriety. She hated the liberty of great courts, accustomed as she was to the solemn formalities of little ones. But she could no longer act the margravine; she was no longer one. She was tolerated and quite well treated by the empress, because she had abjured the Lutheran faith to become a catholic. Thanks to this act of hypocrisy, one could be pardoned all mis-alliances, all crimes even, at the court of Austria; and Maria-Theresa followed therein the example which her father and mother had given her, of welcoming whomsoever wished to escape from the rebuffs and disdain of protestant Germany, by finding a refuge within the pale of the Romish church. But princess and catholic though she was, the margravine was nothing at Vienna, and M. de Kaunitz was everything.

As soon as Consuelo had sung her third piece, Porpora, who knew the custom, made her a sign, rolled up his music, and retired with her through a little side door, without inconveniencing by his exit those noble persons who had been pleased to open their ears to her divine accents.

"All goes well," said he to her, rubbing his hands, as soon as they were in the street, escorted by Joseph who lighted them with a torch. "Kaunitz is an old fool who understands matters, and will push you along."

"And who is Kaunitz? I did not see him," said Consuelo.

"You did not see him, blockhead! He talked with you for more than an hour."

"But it cannot be that little gentleman in a rose and silver vest, who retailed so much gossip to me that I took him for an old box-opener?"

"He himself. What is there surprising about that?"

"It is very surprising to me," replied Consuelo, "and such was not the idea I had formed of a man of state."

"That is because you do not know how states are managed. If you did, you would consider it very surprising that men of state should be anything else than old gossips. Come, let us keep silence on that point, and play our part in this masquerade of the world."

“Alas! my master,” said the young girl, who had become pensive in traversing the vast esplanade of the rampart to reach the suburb in which their modest dwelling was situated “I ask myself at this moment what does our vocation become in the midst of these masks so cold or so deceitful?”

“And what do you wish it should become?” returned Porpora in his rough and jerking tone; “it has not to become this or that. Happy or unhappy, triumphant or despised, it remains what it is: the most beautiful, the most noble vocation on the earth.”

“Oh, yes!” said Consuelo, retarding the always rapid pace of her master and clinging to his arm, “I understand that the grandeur and dignity of our art cannot be lowered or raised at the will of the frivolous caprice, or of the bad taste which govern the world; but why should we allow our persons to be debased? Why should we go and expose ourselves to the contempt, to the sometimes even more humiliating encouragements, of the profane? If art be sacred, are not we so also, we who are her priests and her levites? Why do we not live retired in our garrets, happy to understand and to feel music, and what business have we in those saloons, where they listen to us with whispering, where they applaud us while thinking of other things, and where they would blush to retain us a minute like human beings after we have done exhibiting like actors?”

“Eh! eh!” growled Porpora, stopping and striking his cane on the pavement, “what foolish vanities and what false ideas are coursing through our brain to-day? What are we, and what need we be other than actors? They call us so contemptuously! And of what consequence is it if we be actors by taste, by vocation, by the choice of Heaven, as they are great lords by chance, by constraint, or by the suffrages of fools? Ha! ha! actors! all cannot be who wish! Let them try to be so, and we shall see how they make out, those myrmidons, who think themselves so fine! Let the dowager margravine of Bareith put on the tragic mantle, case her great ugly leg in the buskin, and let her make three steps upon the

stage, we shall see a strange princess! And what do you think she did at her little court of Erlangen, at the time she thought she reigned? She tried to dress herself as queen, and she sweated blood and water to play a part above her powers. She was born to make a suttler, and by a strange mistake, destiny has made a highness of her. Therefore she deserved a thousand hisses when she preposterously undertook the part. And you, foolish child, God made you a queen; he has placed upon your brow a diadem of beauty, of intelligence, of power. Let you be carried into the midst of a free, intelligent, and sensible nation, (I suppose that such exist!) and you are at once a queen, because you have only to show yourself and sing, in order to prove that you are queen by divine right. Well! it is not so! the world goes otherwise. It is as it is; what do you wish to do with it? Chance, caprice, error, and folly govern it. What change can we make in it? Its masters are counterfeit, slovenly, foolish and ignorant for the most part. We are here, we must kill ourselves or follow in their train. Then, not able to be monarchs, we are artists, and we still reign. We sing the language of Heaven, which is forbidden to vulgar mortals; we dress ourselves as kings and great men, we ascend the stage, we seat ourselves upon a fictitious throne, we play a farce, we are actors! *Corpo Santo!* The world sees that and understands not a jot! It does not see that we are the true powers of the earth, and that our reign is the only true one, while their reign, their power, their activity, their majesty, are a parody, at which the angels laugh above, and which the people hate and curse here below. And the greatest princes of the earth come to look at us, to take lessons at our school; and admiring us in their own hearts, as models of true greatness, they strive to resemble us when they exhibit themselves before their subjects. Go to, the world is turned topsy turvy; and they know it well, they who govern it, and if they do not entirely feel it, if they do not confess it, it is easy to see, from the contempt they display for our persons and our vocation, that they experience an instinctive jealousy of our real superiority. Oh! when I am

at the theatre, I see clearly myself! The spirit of music unseals my eyes, and I see behind the foot-lights a true court, real heroes, inspirations of good stamp; while those are really actors and miserable idiots who flaunt in the boxes upon sofas of velvet. The world is a comedy, that is certain, and that is why I said to you just now: 'Let us pass with gravity, my noble daughter, through this wicked masquerade which is called the world.'—Plague take the blockhead!" cried the maestro, pushing away Joseph, who, greedy to hear his excited words, had insensibly approached even to elbow him; "he treads on my toes, and covers me with the pitch of his torch! Would not you say that he understands what we are talking about, and wishes to honor us with his approbation?"

"Pass to my right, Beppo," said the young girl, making him a sign of intelligence, "you trouble the master with your awkwardness." Then addressing herself to Porpora: "All that you have said is but the effect of a noble delirium, my friend," resumed she; "but it does not respond to my thought, and the intoxications of pride cannot soothe the smallest wound of the heart. Little do I care about being born queen and not reigning. The more I see of the great, the more does their lot inspire me with compassion—"

"Well! is not that what I said?"

"Yes, but that is not what I asked you. They are greedy of show and dominion. That is their folly and their misery. But we, if we be greater, and better, and wiser than they, why do we strive, pride against pride, royalty against royalty, with them? If we possess more solid advantages, if we enjoy more desirable and more precious treasures, what means this little struggle in which we engage with them, and which, subjecting our worth and our strength to the mercy of their caprices, reduces us even to their level?"

"The dignity, the holiness of art require it," cried the maestro. "They have made the world a battle-ground, and our life a martyrdom. We must fight, we must shed our blood at every pore, to prove to them, even when dying of

miserer, even when sinking under their hisses and their contempt, that we are gods, legitimate kings at least, and that they are vile mortals, shameless and mean usurpers!"

"O my master! how you do hate them!" said Consuelo, shuddering with surprise and fear: "and yet you bow before them, you flatter them, you condescend to them, and you go out by the side-door of the saloon after having respectfully served up to them two or three dishes of your genius!"

"Yes! yes!" replied the maestro, rubbing his hands with a bitter laugh; "I laugh at them, I salute their diamonds and their orders, I overwhelm with three harmonies of my style, and I turn my back upon them, well satisfied to get away, in a great hurry to deliver myself from their stupid faces."

"Thus," returned Consuelo, "the apostleship of art is a combat?"

"Yes, it is a combat; honor to the brave!"

"It is a sneer against fools?"

"Yes, it is a sneer; honor to the man of wit, who knows how to make it bitter!"

"It is a concentrated anger, a rage of every moment?"

"Yes, it is an anger and a rage; honor to the energetic man, who is not wearied, and who never forgives!"

"And it is nothing more?"

"It is nothing more in this life. The glory of coronation seldom comes until after death for real genius."

"It is nothing more in this life? Master, are you very sure?"

"I have said it!"

"In that case, it is very little!" said Consuelo, sighing and raising her eyes towards the stars burning in the pure and deep heaven.

"It is very little? Do you dare to say, miserable heart, that it is very little?" cried Porpora, stopping anew and forcibly shaking his pupil's arm, while Joseph, terrified, let fall his torch.

"Yes, I say that it is very little," replied Consuelo, calmly and firmly; "I told you so at Venice, in a very cruel and

decisive circumstance of my life. I have not changed my opinion. My heart is not formed for strife, and it could not bear the burden of hate and of anger; there is not a corner of my soul, in which rancor and vengeance could find a lodging. Pass! evil passions, burning fevers, pass far from me! If it be only on condition of surrendering my heart to you that I can have glory and genius, farewell forever, genius and glory! Go and crown other brows and inflame other bosoms; you shall not draw even a regret from me!"

Joseph expected to see Porpora break forth into one of those passions, at once terrible and comic, which prolonged contradiction excited in him. Already he held Consuelo's arm with one hand in order to withdraw her from the master, and remove her from one of those furious gestures with which he frequently threatened her, and which still never led to anything but a smile or a tear. It happened with this storm as with the others; Porpora stamped his foot, growled hollowly like an old lion in his cage, and clenched his hand as he raised it to heaven with vehemence; then almost immediately he let his arms fall, uttered a deep sigh, bent his head upon his breast, and kept an obstinate silence until they reached the house. Consuelo's generous serenity, her energetic good faith, had struck him with an involuntary respect. Perhaps he made bitter reflections on himself; but he did not confess them, and he was too old, too much embittered, and too hardened in his artist's pride to amend. Only, at the moment when Consuelo gave him her good-night kiss, he looked at her with an air profoundly sad, and said to her in a smothered voice: "It is done then! You are no longer an artist, because the margravine of Bareith is an old wretch, and the minister Kaunitz an old gossip!"

"No, my master, I did not say that," replied Consuelo, laughing. "I shall know how to take gaily the impertinences and the follies of the world; for that I need neither hatred nor spite, but my good conscience and my good temper. I am still an artist and shall always be one. I conceive another end, another destiny for art than the rivalry of pride and the



vengeance of debasement. I have another motive, and it will sustain me."

"And what, what?" cried Porpora, placing upon the table of the ante-chamber his candlestick, which Joseph had just handed him. "I wish to know what."

"I have for a motive to make art understood, and to make it loved, without making the person of the artist feared and hated."

Porpora shrugged his shoulders. "Dreams of childhood," said he, "I had you likewise!"

"Well, if it be a dream," returned Consuelo, "the triumph of pride is one also. Dream for dream; I like mine better. Besides, I have a second motive, master; the desire of obeying and pleasing you."

"I believe nothing of it, nothing!" cried Porpora, taking his candle with temper and turning his back; but as soon as he had his hand upon the latch of the door, he returned and kissed Consuelo, who smilingly awaited this reaction of sensibility.

There was in the kitchen, adjoining Consuelo's chamber, a little ladder stair-case which led to a kind of terrace, six feet square, on the back of the roof. It was there she dried Porpora's bands and ruffles after she had washed them. It was there she sometimes climbed in the evening to chat with Beppo, when the master fell asleep at too early an hour for her to be inclined to sleep likewise. Not able to employ herself in her own chamber, which was too narrow and too low for a table, and fearing to wake her old friend if she installed herself in the ante-chamber, she mounted to the terrace, sometimes to dream there alone while looking at the stars, sometimes to relate to her companion in devotedness and servitude the little incidents of the day. This evening they had a thousand things to say to each other on both sides. Consuelo wrapped herself in a pelisse, the hood of which she drew over her head, so as not to take cold, and went to join Beppo, who impatiently expected her. These nocturnal conversations upon the roofs recalled to her the interviews of her childhood

with Anzoletto ; it was not the moon of Venice, the picturesque roofs of Venice, the nights warmed by love and hope ; it was the German night, more dreamy and more cold, the German moon, more vapory and more severe ; in fine, it was friendship with its sweetness and delights, without the dangers and troubles of passion.

When Consuelo had related all that had interested, wounded, or amused her at the margravine's, it was Joseph's turn to speak : "You have seen the outside of the court, the envelopes and armorial seals," said he ; "but as the lacqueys have the custom of reading their master's letters, it is in the ante-chamber that I have learnt the contents of the lives of the great. I will not relate to you one half the remarks of which the dowager margravine is the subject. You would shudder with horror and disgust. Ah ! if the people of the world knew how their servants speak of them ! If, from those beautiful saloons in which they parade with so much dignity, they could hear what is said of their morals and their characters on the other side the partition ! When Porpora, a short time since, on the ramparts, was developing his theory of hatred and strife against the powerful of the earth, he was not truly dignified. Bitterness deprived him of judgment. Ah ! you had good reason to tell him, that he brought himself down to the level of the great lords, in pretending to overpower them with his contempt. Well, he had not heard the remarks of the valets in the ante-chamber, and if he had, he would have understood that personal pride and the contempt of others, concealed under the appearances of respect and the forms of submission, belong only to low and perverted souls. Thus Porpora was very beautiful, very original, very powerful just then, when, striking his cane on the ground, he said ; 'Courage, enmity, bitter irony, eternal vengeance !' But your wisdom was more beautiful than his delirium, and I was the more struck by it because I had just seen the servants, timid victims, depraved slaves, who, they too, said in my ears with a hollow and deep-seated rage : 'Vengeance, craft, perfidy, eternal ruin, eternal enmity to the masters, who think them-

selves our superiors, and whose turpitudes we betray!' I had never been a lacquey, Consuelo, and since I am one now, as you were a boy during our journey, I have made my reflections upon the duties of my present condition, as you see."

"You have done well, Beppo," replied Porporina; "life is a great enigma, and we must not let a single fact pass, without commenting upon and comprehending it. It is always so much divined. But tell me then if you learnt anything there of that princess, the daughter of the margravine, who alone, among all those stiff, painted and frivolous personages, appeared to me natural, good, and serious."

"Did I hear of her? oh! certainly! not only this evening, but often before from Keller, who dresses her house-keeper's hair, and who is well acquainted with the facts. What I am going to tell you is therefore not a story of the ante-chamber, a lacquey's tale: it is a veritable history, and of public notoriety. But it is a horrible history; will you have the courage to hear it?"

"Yes, for I am interested in that creature, who bears upon her brow the seal of misfortune. I caught two or three words from her mouth which made me see in her a victim of the world, a prey of injustice."

"Say a victim of wickedness and the prey of atrocious perversity. The princess of Culmbach (that is the title she bears) was educated at Dresden, by the queen of Poland, her aunt, and it was there that Porpora knew her, and he, I believe, gave some lessons to her as well as to the great dauphiness of France, her cousin. The young princess of Culmbach was beautiful and chaste; educated by an austere queen, far from her debauched mother, it seemed as if she ought to be happy and honored all her life. But the dowager margravine, now countess Hoditz, did not wish her to be so. She recalled her to her side, and pretended to wish to marry her, now with one of her relations, a margrave also of Bareith, now with another, also prince of Culmbach, for that principality of Bareith-Culmbach counts more princes and margraves than it has villages and chateaux to endow them. The beauty

and modesty of the princess excited a mortal jealousy in her mother ; she wished to degrade her, to deprive her of the tenderness and esteem of her father the margrave George-William (third margrave ; ) it is not my fault if there are so many margraves in this story ; but in all those margraves, there was not a single one for the princess of Culmbach. Her mother promised to one of her husband's gentlemen of the chamber, named Vobser, a reward of four thousand ducats if he would dishonor her daughter ; and she introduced that wretch by night into the chamber of the princess. Her servants were bribed and gained, the palace was deaf to the cries of the young girl, the mother held the door. O Consuelo ! you shudder, and yet this is not all. The princess of Culmbach became the mother of twins : the margravine took them in her arms, carried them to her husband, displayed them in her palace, showed them to all the servants, crying : ' Here, see the children which that brazen-face has just brought into the world ! ' And in the midst of this horrible scene, the twins perished almost in the very hands of the margravine. Vobser had the imprudence to write to the margrave, to claim the four thousand ducats which the margravine had promised him. He had earned them, he had dishonored the princess. The unhappy father, already half imbecile, became entirely so at this catastrophe, and died shortly afterwards from the shock and from sorrow. Vobser, threatened by the other members of the family, took to flight. The queen of Poland ordered the princess of Culmbach to be confined in the fortress of Plassenbourg. She entered it, hardly recovered from her confinement, and passed several years in a rigorous captivity, and would be there still, if some catholic priests, having obtained admittance to her prison, had not promised her the protection of the empress Amelia, on condition she abjured the Lutheran faith. She yielded to their insinuations and the necessity of recovering her liberty ; but she was not released until the death of the queen of Poland ; the first use she made of her independence was to return to the religion of her fathers. The young margravine of Bareith, Wilhelmina of Prussia,

welcomed her with kindness to her little court. She has made herself beloved and respected there by her virtues, her gentleness and her modesty. It is a broken soul, but still a beautiful soul, and though she is not favorably received at the court of Vienna on account of her Lutheranism, no one dares insult her misfortunes; no one can say an evil word of her life, not even a lacquey. She is here in passing, on I know not what business; she resides usually at Bareith."

"That is why," returned Consuelo, "she spoke to me so much of that country, pressed me so much to go there. Oh! what a history, Joseph! what a woman is that countess Hoditz! Never, never again shall Porpora carry me to her house: never again will I sing for her!"

"And still you might meet there the purest and most respectable ladies of the court. So the world goes, they say. Titles and riches cover all, and provided one goes to the church, one finds here an admirable tolerance."

"This court of Vienna is very hypocritical then?" said Consuelo.

"I fear, between ourselves be it said," replied Joseph, lowering his voice, "that our great Maria-Theresa may be a little so."

## CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

A FEW days afterwards, Porpora having made a great stir and manœuvred a great deal after his fashion, that is to say, by threatening, scolding or sneering right and left, Consuelo, conducted to the imperial chapel by master Reuter, (young Haydn's former master and ancient enemy,) sang, before Maria-Theresa, the part of Judith, in the *oratorio: Betulia liberata*, poem by Metastasio, music by that same Reuter. Consuelo was magnificent, and Maria-Theresa deigned to be satisfied. When the sacred concert was concluded, Consuelo was invited, with the other musicians, (Caffariello was of the number,) to pass into one of the halls of the palace, and partake of a collation presided over by Reuter. She was hardly seated between that master and Porpora, when a sound, at once rapid and solemn, proceeding from the neighboring gallery, made all the guests start up, excepting Consuelo and Caffariello, who were engaged in an animated discussion upon the movement of a certain chorus, which one wished to be more quick and the other more slow.

"No one but the master himself can decide the question," said Consuelo, turning towards Reuter. But she found neither Reuter on her right, nor Porpora on her left. All had risen from table and were ranged in line with an enraptured air. Consuelo found herself face to face with a woman of about thirty, beautiful with freshness and energy, dressed in black, (chapel costume,) and accompanied by seven children, one of whom she held by the hand. That one was the heir to the throne, the young Cesar Joseph II. ; and that beautiful woman, with a free gait, an affable and penetrating air, was Maria-Theresa. "*Ecco la Giuditta?*" asked the empress, addressing Reuter: "I am well satisfied with you, my child," added she, looking at Consuelo from head to foot; "you have

really given me pleasure, and never have I better felt the sublimity of our admirable poet's verses than from your harmonious lips. You pronounce perfectly well, and I lay more stress on that than on anything else. What is your age mademoiselle? You are a Venetian? Pupil of the celebrated Porpora, whom I see here with interest? You wish to enter the theatre of the court? You are made to shine there; and M. de Kaunitz protects you."

Having thus questioned Consuelo, without waiting for her answers, and looking by turns at Metastasio and Kaunitz who accompanied her, Maria-Theresa made a sign to her chancellor, who presented quite a rich bracelet to Consuelo. Before the latter had thought of thanking her, the empress had already crossed the hall; she had already withdrawn from Consuelo's eyes the splendor of the imperial brow. She departed with her royal brood of princes and archduchesses, addressing a favorable and gracious word to each of the musicians within her reach, and leaving behind her as it were a luminous trace in all those eyes dazzled by her glory and her power.

Caffariello was the only one who preserved, or who pretended to preserve his sang-froid; he resumed the discussion exactly where he had left it; and Consuelo, putting the bracelet into her pocket, without thinking to look at it, began to answer him, to the great astonishment and great scandal of the other musicians, who, bowed before the fascination of the imperial apparition, did not conceive how one could think of anything else for the rest of the day. We must needs say that Porpora alone made an exception in his soul, both by instinct and by system, to this fury of prostration. He knew how to incline himself properly before sovereigns; but, in the depths of his heart, he mocked and despised the slaves. Master Reuter, called upon by Caffariello to decide which was the true movement of the chorus in liturgy, closed his lips with a hypocritical air; and after having allowed himself to be questioned several times, he replied at last with a very cold manner: "I confess to you, sir, that I have not been attending to your

conversation. When Maria-Theresa is before my eyes, I forget the whole world; and long after she has disappeared, I remain under the influence of an emotion which prevents my thinking of myself."

"The young lady does not appear overpowered by the distinguished honor she has drawn upon us," said Mr. Holzbäuer, who was there, and whose insipidity had in it somewhat more of restraint than Reuter's. "It is for you, signora, to speak with crowned heads. One would say you had done nothing else all your life."

"I have never spoken with any crowned head," tranquilly replied Consuelo, who did not see the maliciousness of Holzbäuer's insinuations; "and her majesty did not permit me that favor; for she seemed, when questioning me, to forbid me the honor, or to spare me the trouble, of answering."

"Perhaps you wished to enter into conversation with the empress!" said Porpora, with a bantering air.

"I have never wished it," returned Consuelo, artlessly.

"The young lady is more careless than ambitious, apparently," resumed Reuter, with a freezing disdain.

"Master Reuter," said Consuelo with confidence; "are you dissatisfied with the manner in which I sang your music?" Reuter confessed that no one had sung better, even under the reign of the *august and ever to be regretted* Charles VI. "In that case," said Consuelo, "do not reproach me with carelessness. I have the ambition to satisfy my masters; I have the ambition to fill well my vocation; what other can I have? what other would not be ridiculous and misplaced on my part?"

"You are too modest, signora," returned Holzbäuer. "There is no ambition too vast for a talent like yours."

"I take that for a compliment full of gallantry," replied Consuelo; "but I shall not believe I have satisfied you until the day when you invite me to sing at the court theatre."

Holzbäuer, taken in the trap, spite of his prudence, had a fit of coughing to excuse him from answering, and drew him-



self out by a courteous and respectful inclination of the head. Then bringing back the conversation to its first starting point: "You have truly," said he, "an unexampled calmness and disinterestedness; you have not even looked at the beautiful bracelet of which her majesty made you a present."

"Ah! that is true," said Consuelo, taking it from her pocket, and passing it to her neighbors, who were curious to see it and calculate its value. "It will enable me to buy some wood for my master's stove, if I have no engagement this winter," thought she; "a very small pension is much more necessary for us than ornaments and knick-knacks."

"What a celestial beauty is her majesty!" said Reuter, casting an oblique and hard glance at Consuelo.

"Yes, she seemed to me very beautiful," replied the young girl, who understood nothing from Porpora's elbowings.

"She *seemed* to you?" returned Reuter. "You are difficult!"

"I had hardly time to see her, she passed so quickly!"

"But her dazzling wit, her genius which reveals itself at every syllable that falls from her lips —"

"I had hardly time to hear her; she said so little!"

"In fine, signora, you are either of brass or diamond. I know not what can move you."

"I was much moved in singing your Judith," replied Consuelo, who could be malicious on occasion, and who began to comprehend the ill-will of the Viennese masters towards her.

"That girl has wit under her air of simplicity," said Holzbäuer in a low voice to master Reuter. "It is the school of Porpora, disdain and mockery," replied the other. "If we don't take care, the old recitative and the *osservato* style will invade us worse than ever," returned Holzbäuer; "but be easy; I have the means of hindering this *Porporinaillerie* from raising her voice."

When they rose from table, Caffariello said in Consuelo's ear: "Do you see, my child, all these people are of the arrant vulgar. You will hardly be able to do anything here. They

are all against you. They would be all against me, if they dared."

"And what have we done to them then?" said Consuelo astonished.

"We are pupils of the greatest master of vocal music in the world. They and their creatures are our natural enemies. They will prejudice Maria-Theresa against you, and all that you say here will be repeated to her with malicious comments. They will tell her that you did not consider her handsome, and that you thought her present mean. I understand all those managings. Take courage, however; I will protect you through and against all, and I believe that Caffariello's opinion in music is worth quite as much as Maria-Theresa's."

"Between the wickedness of some and the folly of others, I am well compromised," thought Consuelo, as she departed. "O Porpora!" said she in her heart, "I will do my best to return to the stage. O Albert! I hope I shall not succeed."

On the morrow, master Porpora having business in the city the whole day, and finding Consuelo rather pale, requested her to take a promenade without the city to the *Spinnerin am Kreutz*, with Keller's wife, who had offered to accompany her whenever she wished. As soon as the maestro had gone out:

"Beppo," said the young girl, "go quickly and hire a small carriage, and we will both go and see Angela and thank the canon. We promised to do it sooner; but my cold must be our excuse."

"And in what costume will you present yourself to the canon?" said Beppo.

"In this," replied she. "The canon must know and receive me under my real form."

"Excellent canon! it will give me joy to see him again."

"And me too."

"Poor good canon! it troubles me to think —"

"What?"

"That his head will be completely turned."

"And why so? Am I a goddess? I did not think so."

“Consuelo, remember he was three quarters crazy when we left him!”

“And I tell you that it will be enough for him to know that I am a woman, and to see me as I am, in order to recover the empire over his will, and again become what God made him, a reasonable man.”

“It is true that the dress does something. So, when I again saw you here transformed into a young lady, after having been accustomed for a fortnight to treat you as a boy, I experienced I know not what terror, I know not what constraint, for which I cannot account; and it is certain that during our journey, if it had been permitted me to fall in love with you—but you will say I talk nonsense.”

“Certainly, Joseph, it is nonsense; and besides, you lose time in chatting. It is ten leagues to the priory and back. It is now eight o'clock in the morning, and we must be here again by seven in the evening, in time for the master's supper.”

Three hours after, Beppo and his companion alighted at the priory gate. The day was beautiful; and the canon was contemplating his flowers with a melancholy air. When he saw Joseph, he uttered a cry of joy and rushed to meet him; but he remained stupefied on recognizing his dear Bertoni in the dress of a woman. “Bertoni, my well beloved child,” cried he, with a holy naïveté, “what means this masquerade, and why do you come to me disguised in this manner? We are not in the carnival.”

“My respectable friend,” replied Consuelo, kissing his hand, “your reverence must forgive me for having deceived you. I have never been a boy; Bertoni has never existed; and when I had the happiness to become acquainted with you I was really disguised.”

“We thought,” said Joseph, who feared to see the canon's consternation turn into dissatisfaction, “that your reverence was not the dupe of an innocent artifice. That pretence was not imagined to deceive you; it was a necessity imposed by circumstances, and we have always thought that sir canon had the generosity and the delicacy to favor it.”

“You thought so?” resumed the canon, astonished and terrified: “and you, Bertoni,—I should say, young lady,—did you think so too?”

“No, sir canon, replied Consuelo, “I did not think so for an instant. I saw perfectly that your reverence had not the least suspicion of the truth.”

“And you did me justice,” said the canon, in a tone somewhat severe, but profoundly sad; “I cannot tamper with my good faith, and if I had guessed your sex, I never should have thought of insisting, as I did, on persuading you to remain with me. There has indeed been circulated in the neighboring village and even among my people, a vague report, a suspicion which made me smile, so determined was I to be mistaken respecting you. It has been said that one of the two little musicians who sang the mass on the day of the patronal fête, was a woman in disguise. And then it was pretended that this report was a malice of the shoemaker Gottlieb, to trouble and vex the curate. In fine, I myself contradicted it with boldness. You see that I was completely your dupe, and that no one could be more so.”

“There has been a great mistake,” replied Consuelo with the assurance of dignity; “but there has been no dupe, sir canon. I do not think I departed for a single instant from the respect due to you, nor from the proprieties which loyalty imposes. I was at night without shelter on the road, overcome by thirst and fatigue, after a long journey on foot. You would not have refused hospitality to a beggar-woman. You granted it to me in the name of music, and I paid my scot in music. If I did not go the next day in spite of you, it was owing to unforeseen circumstances which dictated to me a duty above all others. My enemy, my rival, my persecutor, fell from the clouds at your gate, and, deprived of care and assistance, had a right to my assistance and my care. Your reverence must well remember the rest; you know that if I profited by your benevolence, it was not on my own account. You know also that I departed as soon as my duty was accomplished; and if I return to-day to thank you in person

for the kindness you have bestowed upon me, the reason is, that loyalty made it a duty to undeceive you myself, and to give you the explanations necessary to our mutual dignity."

"In all this," said the canon, half conquered, "there is something mysterious and very extraordinary. You say that the unfortunate, whose child I have adopted, was your enemy, your rival. Who are you then yourself, Bertoni?—Forgive me if that name continually recurs to my lips, and tell me how I must call you hereafter."

"I am called the Porporina," replied Consuelo; "I am the pupil of Porpora; I am a cantatrice. I belong to the stage."

"Ah well!" said the canon with a deep sigh. "I ought to have guessed that from the manner in which you played your part; and as to your prodigious talent for music, I can no longer be astonished at it; you have been at a good school. May I ask you if Mr. Beppo is your brother, or your husband?"

"Neither the one nor the other. He is my brother by the heart, nothing but my brother, sir canon; and if my soul had not felt itself as chaste as your own, I should not have stained by my presence the holiness of your abode."

Consuelo had, to say the truth, a manner which was irresistible, and the canon yielded to its power as pure and correct souls always do to that of sincerity. He felt as if relieved from an enormous weight, and, while walking slowly between his two young protégés, he questioned Consuelo with a gentleness and a return of sympathetic affection, which, little by little, he forgot to combat in himself. She related to him rapidly, and without naming any one, the principal circumstances of her life; her betrothal at the death-bed of her mother with Anzoleto; the latter's infidelity; the hatred of Corilla; Zustiniani's outrageous designs; Porpora's advice; her departure from Venice; the attachment which Albert had conceived for her; the offers of the Rudolstadt family; her own hesitations and scruples; her flight from Giant's castle; her meeting with Joseph Haydn; her journey; her terror and compassion at Corilla's bed of suffering; her gratitude for the

protection granted by the canon to Anzoletto's child ; finally, her arrival at Vienna, and even the interview she had had the day before with Maria-Theresa. Joseph had not until then known all Consuelo's history ; she had never spoken to him of Anzoletto, and the few words she had just said of her past affection for that wretch did not strike him forcibly ; but her generosity towards Corilla, and her solicitude for the child, made such a deep impression on him, that he turned away to hide his tears. The canon did not restrain his. Consuelo's recital, concise, energetic and sincere, produced the same effect upon him as if he had read a beautiful romance, and in fact he had never read a single one, and this was the first time in his life that he had been initiated into the vivid emotions of the lives of others. He had seated himself upon a bench in order to listen better ; and when the young girl had said all, he cried out : " If all that is the truth, as I believe, as it seems to me I feel in my heart, by the will of Heaven you are a sainted virgin !—You are saint Cecilia revisiting the earth ! I confess to you frankly that I never had any prejudice against the stage," added he, after an instant of silence and reflection, " and you prove to me that one's salvation can be secured there as well as elsewhere. Certainly, if you continue to be as pure and as generous as you have been hitherto, you will have deserved Heaven, my dear Bertoni !—I speak my thoughts to you, my dear Porporina !"

" Now, sir canon," said Consuelo, rising, " give me some news of Angela, before I take leave of your reverence."

" Angela is very well, and thrives wonderfully," replied the canon. " My gardener's wife takes the greatest care of her, and I see her every moment as she carries her about in my garden. She will grow in the midst of flowers, as another flower under my eyes, and when the time to make a Christian soul of her shall have come, I will not spare her education. Trust me for that care, my children. What I have promised in the face of Heaven, I will religiously perform. It seems that madam her mother will not dispute this

care with me ; for though she is at Vienna, she has not once sent to ask tidings of her daughter."

"She may have done so indirectly, and without your knowing it," replied Consuelo ; "I do not believe a mother can be indifferent to that extent. But Corilla is soliciting an engagement at the court theatre. She knows that her majesty is very severe, and does not grant her protection to persons of a blemished reputation. She has an interest in concealing her faults, at least until her engagement is signed. Let us keep her secret."

"And yet she is opposing you !" cried Joseph ; "and they say that she will succeed by her intrigues ; that she has already defamed you in the city ; that she has reported you as count Zustiniani's mistress. It was spoken of at the embassy, so Keller told me. They were indignant at it ; but they feared lest she should persuade M. de Kaunitz, who willingly listens to that kind of stories, and who cannot say enough in praise of Corilla's beauty."

"She has said such things !" said Consuelo, blushing with indignation ; then she added calmly : "To be sure, I ought to have expected it."

"But there needs only one word to counteract her calumnies," returned Joseph ; "and that word I will say myself ! I will say that——"

"You will say nothing, Beppo ; it would be mean and barbarous. You will not say it either, sir canon, and if I had a desire to say it, you would prevent me, would you not ?"

"Soul truly evangelical !" cried the canon. "But reflect that this secret cannot be one a long while. There are servants and peasants enough who have known and can report the fact, to inform the world in a fortnight that the chaste Corilla was brought to bed of a fatherless child, which she deserted into the bargain."

"Before a fortnight Corilla or myself will be engaged. I should not wish to carry the day by an act of vengeance. Until then, Beppo, silence, or I withdraw from you my esteem and my friendship. And now, farewell, sir canon.

Tell me that you forgive me ; extend to me again your paternal hand ; and I retire, before your people have seen me under this dress."

"My people may say what they please, and my benefice may go to the devil, if so it please Heaven ! I have just received an inheritance which gives me courage to brave the thunders of the *Ordinary*. So, my children, do not take me for a saint ; I am tired of obeying and restraining myself ; I wish to live honestly and without weak fears. Since I am no longer under Bridget's sceptre, and since especially I see myself at the head of an independent fortune, I feel as brave as a lion. Now then, come and breakfast with me ; we will baptize Angela afterwards, and then have music until dinner."

He led them to the priory. "Here, Andrew, Joseph !" cried he to his servants on entering ; "come and see the signor Bertoni metamorphosed into a lady. You did not expect that ? nor I either ! Well, hasten to share my surprise, and serve up quickly."

The repast was exquisite, and our young people saw that if serious modifications had taken place in the mind of the canon, it was not on his habit of good cheer that they had operated. Afterwards the child was carried to the chapel of the priory. The canon put off his wadded gown, arrayed himself in cassock and surplice, and performed the ceremony. Joseph and Consuelo assumed the office of godfather and godmother, and the name of Angela was confirmed to the little girl. The rest of the afternoon was consecrated to music, and then followed the leave-takings. The canon regretted that he could not retain his friends to dinner ; but he yielded to their reasons, and consoled himself with the idea of seeing them again at Vienna, whither he was soon to go to spend a part of the winter. While their carriage was getting ready, he led them to his green-house, that they might admire several new plants with which he had enriched his collection. The day was declining, but the canon, whose sense of smell was very exquisite, had no sooner made a few steps under the sashes of his transparent palace than he cried out ; "I per-



ceive here an extraordinary perfume! Can the *glaiëul vanilla* have flowered? But no; that is not the odor of my *glaiëul*. The *strelitza* is not fragrant—the *cyclamens* have a less pure and less penetrating aroma. What can have happened here? If my *volkameria* were not dead, alas! I should think it was that I inhaled! Poor plant! I do not wish to think of it again.”

But suddenly the canon uttered a cry of surprise and admiration on seeing stand before him in a box, the most magnificent *volkameria* he had ever seen in his life, all covered with its clusters of little white roses tinged with rose color, the sweet perfume of which filled the green-house and overpowered all the vulgar scents scattered around. “Is this a miracle? Whence comes to me this foretaste of Paradise, this flower of the garden of Beatrice?” cried he, in a poetic rapture.

“We brought it in our carriage with all possible care,” replied Consuelo; “permit us to offer it to you as some reparation for a horrible imprecation which fell from my lips on a certain day, and of which I shall repent all my life.”

“Oh! my dear daughter! what a gift, and with what delicacy is it offered!” said the canon, much affected. “O dear *volkameria*! you shall have a particular name, as I am accustomed to give one to all the most splendid individuals of my collection; you shall be called Bertoni, in order to consecrate the remembrance of a being who is no longer and whom I loved with the heart of a father.”

“My good father,” said Consuelo, clasping his hand, “you must accustom yourself to love your daughters as well as your sons. Angela is not a boy—”

“And Porporina is my daughter also!” said the canon; “yes, my daughter, yes, yes, my daughter!” repeated he, looking alternately at Consuelo and the *volkameria-Bertoni*, while his eyes filled with tears.

At six o'clock, Joseph and Consuelo had returned to their lodging. The carriage had left them at the entrance of the suburb, and nothing betrayed their innocent escapade. Only

Porpora was a little astonished that Consuelo had not a better appetite after a promenade in the beautiful fields which surround the capital of the empire. The canon's breakfast had perhaps made Consuelo rather dainty that day. But the free air and exercise procured her an excellent sleep, and on the morrow she felt herself in better voice and courage than she had yet been since her arrival at Vienna.

## CHAPTER LXXXIX.

In the uncertainty of her destiny, Consuelo, thinking perhaps to find an excuse or a motive for that of her heart, at last decided to write to count Christian of Rudolstadt, and inform him of her position with respect to Porpora, of the efforts which the latter was making to bring her again upon the stage, and of the hope she still cherished of seeing them fail. She spoke to him sincerely, displayed all the gratitude, devotedness and submission she owed to her old master, and confiding to him the fears she experienced respecting Albert, requested him to dictate to her immediately the letter she ought to write to the latter, in order to maintain in him a state of confidence and calmness. She ended with these words: "I asked time of your lordships to examine my heart and to decide. I am resolved to keep my word, and I can swear before God that I feel strength enough in myself to close my heart and my mind to all opposing fancies, as well as to all new affections. And still, if I reënter upon the stage, I take a step, which is, in appearance, an infraction of my promises, a formal renunciation of the hope of keeping them. Let your lordship judge me, or rather judge the destiny which commands me, and the duty which governs me. I see no means of withdrawing myself from it without sin. I expect from you an advice superior to that of my own reason; but can it be contrary to that of my conscience?"

When this letter was sealed and entrusted to Joseph to despatch, Consuelo felt more easy, as happens in a fatal situation, when we have found a means of gaining time and putting off the moment of the crisis. She therefore prepared to pay with Porpora a visit, considered by him important and decisive, to the very famous and much praised imperial poet, the abbé Metastasio.

This illustrious personage was then about fifty years old; he had a handsome face, a gracious manner, a charming power of conversation, and Consuelo would have felt a vivid sympathy for him, if, while going to the house inhabited at different floors by the imperial poet and the hair-dresser Keller, she had not had the following conversation with Porpora.

"Consuelo," (it is Porpora who speaks,) "you are going to see a man of a good countenance, a quick black eye, a ruddy complexion, a fresh and smiling mouth, who wishes, by force, to be the victim of a slow, cruel and dangerous disease; a man who eats, sleeps, works and fattens like any other, and who pretends to be suffering with sleeplessness, want of appetite, weariness and consumption. Do not make the mistake, when he complains before you of his ills, to tell him that he does not show them, that he looks very well in the face, or any similar stupidity; for he wishes you to pity him, to be anxious about him, to weep for him beforehand. Do not be so unfortunate as to speak to him of death, or of a dead person; he is afraid of death, and does not wish to die. And yet do not commit the exceeding folly of saying to him when you come away: 'I hope your precious health will soon improve;' for he wishes to be considered in a dying state, and, if he could persuade others that he was dead, he would be well satisfied, on condition, always, that he did not believe it himself."

"That is certainly a very foolish mania for a great man," replied Consuelo. "What can be said to him then, if he must not be spoken to either of cure or death?"

"You must talk to him of his malady, ask him a thousand questions, listen to all the details of his sufferings and inconveniences, and to conclude, tell him that he is not careful enough, that he forgets himself, that he does not spare his strength, that he works too much. In this manner, we shall incline him in our favor."

"Still, are we not going to ask him to write a poem and let you set it to music, that I may sing it? How can we in one

breath advise him not to write and at the same time request him to write for us as soon as possible?"

"All that can be arranged in the conversation. The only thing is to bring matters in properly."

The maestro wished his pupil to know how to make herself agreeable to the poet; but, his natural causticity not permitting him to favor the weaknesses of another, he himself committed the mistake of disposing Consuelo to a clear-sighted examination, and to that kind of inward contempt which renders us the opposite of amiable and sympathizing towards those who require to be flattered and admired without reserve. Incapable of adulation and deceit, she suffered at seeing Porpora encourage the vanity of the poet, and cruelly sneer at him under the appearance of a pious commiseration for imaginary ills. She blushed at this several times, and could only keep a painful silence, in spite of the signs made by the maestro for her to second him.

Consuelo's reputation had begun to spread in Vienna: she had sung in several saloons, and her admission to the Italian stage was an hypothesis which somewhat agitated the musical coteries. Metastasio was all powerful; let Consuelo only gain his sympathy by appropriately flattering his self-love, and he might entrust to Porpora the charge of setting to music his *Attilo Regolo*, which he had kept in his portfolio for several years. It was therefore very necessary that the pupil should plead for the master, as the master by no means pleased the imperial poet. Metastasio was not an Italian for nothing, and the Italians do not easily deceive each other. He had too much finesse and penetration not to know that Porpora had but a mediocre admiration for his dramatic genius, and that he had more than once rudely censured (right or wrong) his timid character, his egotism and his false sensibility. Consuelo's freezing reserve, the little interest she seemed to take in his illness, did not appear to him what they really were, the trouble of a respectful pity. He saw in them almost an insult, and if he had not been the slave of politeness and good manners, would have at once refused to hear her

sing; still he consented after some affectation, alleging the excitement of his nerves and the fear he had of being agitated. He had heard Consuelo sing his oratorio of *Judith*; but it was necessary he should form an idea of her in the scenic style, and Porpora insisted earnestly.

"But what can I do, and how can I sing?" said Consuelo to the latter in a low voice, "if I must fear agitating him?"

"You must agitate him, on the contrary," replied the maestro in the same tone. "He likes much to be drawn out of his torpor, because when excited he feels in a vein to write."

Consuelo sang an air from *Achille in Sciro*, Metastasio's best dramatic work, which had been set to music by Caldara in 1736, and performed at Maria-Theresa's wedding fête. Metastasio was as much struck by her voice and method as he had been at first hearing her; but he was resolved to enclose himself in the same cold and constrained silence that she had preserved during the recital of his sufferings. He did not succeed; for he was an artist in spite of all, the worthy man, and when a noble interpreter causes to vibrate in the soul of the poet the accents of his muse and the remembrance of his triumphs, no rancor can hold its ground. The abbé Metastasio strove to defend himself against this all-powerful charm. He coughed frequently, moved himself in his arm-chair like a man distracted by suffering, and then, suddenly recalled to remembrances even more affecting than those of his glory, he hid his face in his handkerchief and began to sob. Porpora, concealed behind his chair, made a sign to Consuelo not to spare him, and rubbed his hands with a malicious pleasure.

Those tears, which flowed abundant and sincere, immediately reconciled the young girl to the pusillanimous abbé. As soon as she had finished her air, she approached to kiss his hand and say to him, this time with a convincing tenderness: "Alas! sir, how happy and proud should I be to have affected you thus, did it not cause me a remorse! The fear of having done you an injury empoisons all my joy!"

"Ah! my dear child," cried the abbé, entirely conquered,

“you do not know, you cannot know, the good and the evil you have done me. Never until now had I heard a woman’s voice which recalled to me that of my dear Marianna! And you have so recalled it to me, as well as her manner and expression, that I thought I heard herself. Ah! you have broken my heart!” And he began to sob again.

“His lordship speaks of a very illustrious person, and one whom you ought to propose to yourself constantly as a model,” said Porpora to his pupil, “the celebrated and incomparable Marianna Bulgarini.”

“The *Romanina*?” cried Consuelo; “ah! I heard her at Venice in my childhood; it is my first great recollection, and I shall never forget it.”

“I see truly that you have heard her, and that she left an ineffaceable impression upon you,” returned Metastasio. “Ah! young girl, imitate her in everything, in her acting as in her singing, in her goodness as in her greatness, in her power as in her devotedness! Ah! how beautiful she was when she represented the divine Venus, in the first opera I wrote at Rome! It was to her I owed my first triumph.”

“And it was to your lordship that she owed her most splendid success,” said Porpora.

“It is true that we contributed to each other’s fortune. But nothing could sufficiently acquit my debt to her. Never did so much affection, never did such heroic perseverance, and such delicate attention inhabit the soul of another mortal. Angel of my life! I shall weep for you eternally, and I have no hope but to rejoin you!” Here the abbé wept again. Consuelo was much moved, Porpora pretended to be; but spite of himself, his physiognomy remained ironical and contemptuous. Consuelo observed it, and determined to reproach him for this mistrust, or this harshness. As to Metastasio, he only saw the effect he wished to produce, the emotion and admiration of the good Consuelo. He was of the true genus of poets; that is, he wept more willingly before others than in the secret of his chamber, and he never felt so strongly his affections and his sorrows as when he related them with elo-

quence. Carried away by the occasion, he made to Consuelo a recital of that portion of his youth, in which the Romanina had played so important a part, the services which that generous friend had rendered him, the filial care she had bestowed on his aged parents, the maternal sacrifice she had accomplished in separating herself from him, to send him to make his fortune at Vienna; and when he was at the farewell scene, when he had told, in the most chosen and the most tender terms, in what manner his dear Marianna, with bursting heart, and breast swollen with sobs, had exhorted him to abandon her and think only of himself, he cried: "Oh! if she had guessed the lot which awaited me far from her, if she had foreseen the sufferings, the conflicts, the terrors, the anguish, and, above all, the horrible malady, which were to be my destiny here, she would indeed have spared herself as well as me, so frightful an immolation! Alas! I was far from believing that we were bidding each other an eternal farewell, and that we were never to meet again upon the earth!"

"What! you have never seen each other since?" said Consuelo, whose eyes were bathed in tears, for Metastasio's words had an extraordinary charm: "she never came to Vienna?"

"She never came here!" replied the abbé with a dejected air.

"After such devotedness, she had not the courage to come and meet you?" returned Consuelo, to whom Porpora in vain made terrible signs with his eyes.

Metastasio answered nothing; he appeared absorbed in his thoughts.

"But she might still come," persuaded Consuelo with candor, "and she will come certainly. That happy event would restore your health."

The abbé became pale, and made a gesture of terror. The maestro coughed with all his might, and Consuelo, suddenly remembering that the Romanina had been dead more than ten years, perceived the enormous mistake she had



committed in recalling the idea of death to that friend, who only hoped, as he said, to rejoin his beloved in the tomb. She bit her lip, and soon retired with the master, who gathered from this visit only vague promises and many civilities, as usual.

"What have you done, scatter-brain?" said he as soon as they were out of the house.

"A great piece of folly, as I well see; I forgot that the Romanina no longer lived; but do you believe, master, that this man, so loving and so afflicted, can be so much attached to life as you are pleased to say? I imagine, on the contrary, that the regret of having lost his friend is the sole cause of his illness, and that if some superstitious terror does make him fear the last hour, he is not the less horribly and sincerely weary of living."

"Child," said Porpora, "one is never weary of life when rich, honored, flattered and in good health; and when a man has never had other cares and other passions than these, he lies and plays a comedy, when he curses his existence."

"Do not say that he has never had other passions. He has loved Marianna, and I can now explain why he has given that dear name to his god-daughter and niece Marianna Martiez"—Consuelo almost said "Joseph's pupil," but she stopped short.

"Finish," said Porpora, "his god-daughter, his niece, or his daughter."

"So report says; but what do I care for that?"

"That would prove, at least, that the dear abbé consoled himself quickly enough for the absence of his beloved; but when you asked him (may God confound your stupidity!) why his dear Marianna did not come and join him here, he did not answer you, and I will answer in his place. The Romanina had, in fact, rendered him the greatest services a man can receive from a woman. She had fed, lodged, clothed, succored and sustained him on every occasion; indeed, she aided him to obtain his title of *poeta Cesareo*. She had made herself the servant, the friend, the nurse, the benefactress of his old parents. All that is exact. The Marianna

had a great heart : I knew her well ; but what is also true is, that she ardently desired to rejoin him, by getting an appointment to the court theatre. And what is more true still is, that sir abbé did not desire it at all, and never permitted it. There was indeed a correspondence between them of the most tender letters in the world. I do not doubt those of the poet were master-pieces. They will be printed : he knew it well. But even while saying to his *diletissima amica* that he sighed for their reünion, and that he was laboring incessantly to make that happy day shine upon their existence, the master fox arranged matters in such a manner that the unfortunate cantatrice could not come and fall into the very midst of his illustrious and lucrative loves with a third Marianna, (for that name is a happy fatality in his life,) the noble and all-powerful countess of Althan, favorite of the last Cesar. They say that a secret marriage was the result ; I therefore consider him very inconsistent in tearing his hair for that poor Romanina, whom he let die of sorrow, while he was making madrigals in the arms of the ladies of the court.”

“ You comment upon and judge all things with a cruel cynicism, my dear master,” returned Consuelo, sadly.

“ I speak as does all the world ; I invent nothing ; the voice of the public affirms all that. Go to, all the comedians are not on the stage ; that is an old proverb.”

“ The voice of the public is not always the most enlightened, and in all cases, is never the most charitable. Now, master, I cannot believe that a man of such renown and such talent can be nothing more than a comedian before the scenes. I have seen him weep real tears, and even if he have to reproach himself with having too soon forgotten his first Marianna, his remorse would only add to the sincerity of his regret at this day. In all this, I would rather believe him weak than mean. He had been made an abbé, he was covered with benefits ; the court was devout ; his loves with an actress would have given great offence. He did not precisely wish to betray and deceive the Bulgarini : he was afraid, he hesitated, he gained time—she died—”

“ And he thanked Providence,” added the pitiless maestro. “ And now the empress sends him boxes and rings with her cipher in diamonds; pens of lapis-lazuli with laurels in diamonds; pots of massive gold filled with Spanish tobacco; seals made of a single great diamond, and all that shines so brightly, that the eyes of the poet are always bathed in tears.”

“ And can all that console him for having broken the Romanina’s heart?”

“ May be not. But the desire of those things decided him to do it.”

“ Sad vanity! For myself, I could hardly help laughing when he showed us his chandelier of gold with its golden shade, and the ingenious device which the empress had engraved on it.

‘ *Perche possa risparmiare i suoi occhi!* ’”

“ In fact, that is very delicate, and made him cry out with emphasis: ‘ *Affettuosa espressione valutabile più assai dell’oro!* ’ O, the poor man!”

“ O, the unhappy man!” said Consuelo, sighing; and she reëntered the house very sad, for she had involuntarily imagined a terrible coincidence between Metastasio’s situation with regard to Marianna and her own with Albert. “ To wait and die!” said she to herself; “ is that then the fate of those who love passionately? To cause to wait and die? is that then the destiny of those who pursue the chimera of glory?”

“ What are you dreaming of?” said the maestro to her; “ it seems to me that all goes well, and that, notwithstanding your awkwardness, you have conquered Metastasio.”

“ The conquest of a weak mind is but a poor one,” replied she, “ and I do not believe that he who wanted courage to have Marianna admitted to the imperial theatre will find any for me.”

“ Metastasio, in point of art, governs the empress entirely.”

“ Metastasio, in point of art, will never advise the empress to anything she does not seem to desire; and people may talk of the favorites and counsellors of her majesty—I have seen

Maria-Theresa's features, and I tell you, my master, that Maria-Theresa is too politic to have lovers, too absolute to have friends."

"Well," said Porpora, thoughtfully, "you must gain the empress herself; you must sing in her apartments some morning; she must talk to you, converse with you. They say that she favors only virtuous persons. If she has that eagle glance they attribute to her, she will judge and prefer you. I will make every effort that she may see you tête-a-tête."

## CHAPTER XC.

ONE morning, Joseph, busied in cleaning Porpora's ante-chamber, forgot that the partition was thin and the slumbers of the maestro light; he mechanically allowed himself to hum a musical phrase which came into his head and which the motion of his brush upon the floor rythmically accompanied. Porpora, vexed at being waked before his accustomed hour, turned over in his bed, and tried to go to sleep again, but, pursued by that fresh and beautiful voice which sang justly and easily a graceful and well turned phrase, he put on his dressing-gown, and went to peep through the key-hole, half charmed by what he heard, half angry with the artist who came so unceremoniously to compose in his house before his rising. But what a surprise! It is Beppo who sings and dreams, and who pursues his idea even while attending with an absent air to his household cares.

"What are you singing there?" said the maestro, in a voice of thunder, suddenly opening the door. Joseph, confused, like a man who is awakened with a start, was almost ready to throw aside broom and duster, and leave the house at full speed; but if he had not entertained, for some time, the hope of becoming Porpora's pupil, he still considered himself quite happy to hear Consuelo work with the master and to receive the lessons of that genertous friend in secret, when the master was absent. On no account in the world therefore did he wish to be dismissed, and he hastened to lie that he might remove his suspicions. "What am I singing!" said he, quite out of countenance; "alas! master, I do not know."

"Can you sing what you do not know? you lie."

"I assure you, master, that I do not know what I was singing. You have frightened me so that you have put it all out of my head. I know well that I did very wrong in singing

so near your chamber. I was absent, I thought myself very far from here, quite alone; I said to myself: Now you can sing; nobody is there to tell you: 'Hold your tongue, ignorant, you sing false. Hold your tongue, brute, you never could learn music!'

"Who has told you that you sing false?"

"Everybody."

"And I, I tell you," cried the maestro in a severe tone, 'that you do not sing false. And who has tried to teach you music?'

"Why—for example, master Reuter, whom my friend Keller shaves, and who drove me from the school, saying that I should always be an ass."

Joseph was already sufficiently acquainted with Porpora's antipathies to know that he did not think much of Reuter, and he had even depended upon the latter to gain for him Porpora's good graces, the first time he tried to injure him in his opinion. But Reuter, in the rare visits he had paid to the maestro, had not deigned even to recognize his former pupil in the ante-chamber.

"Master Reuter is an ass himself," murmured Porpora, between his teeth; "but no matter for that," resumed he aloud, "I want you to tell me where you got this phrase," and he sang that which Joseph had made him hear ten times in succession, by mistake.

"Ah! that?" said Haydn, who began to augur better of the master's dispositions, but who did not yet trust to them; "that is something I have heard the signora sing."

"Consuelo? my daughter? I do not know that. Ah! indeed, then you listen at the doors?"

"Oh no, sir! but music goes from chamber to chamber even to the kitchen, and I hear it in spite of myself."

"I don't like to be served by people who have so good a memory, and who go and sing our unpublished ideas in the street. You will make up your bundle to-day, and will go and find another place this evening."

This decision fell like a thunderbolt upon poor Joseph, and

he went to weep in the kitchen, whither Consuelo soon came to hear the recital of his mis-adventure, and to re-assure him, by promising to arrange the matter.

"How, master," said she to Porpora, on carrying his coffee to him, "you wish to drive away that poor boy, who is industrious and faithful, because he happens to sing true for the first time in his life?"

"I tell you that boy is an intriguer, and a bare-faced liar; that he has been sent to me by some enemy who wishes to steal the secret of my compositions, and appropriate them to himself before they have seen the light. I bet that the scamp already knows my new opera by heart, and that he copies my manuscripts when my back is turned! How many times have I been thus betrayed? How many of my ideas have I not found in those pretty operas which drew all Venice, while people were gaping at mine and saying: 'This dotard of a Porpora gives us as new, strains which are common on the squares!' But now, the fool has betrayed himself; he sang this morning a phrase which can belong to no other than *meinheer* Hasse, and which I have very well retained. I shall take note of it, and, to revenge myself, I will put it into my new opera, in order to return the trick he has played me so often."

"Take care, master! that phrase may not be unpublished. You do not know by heart all the contemporary productions."

"But I have heard them, and I tell you that this phrase is too remarkable not to have struck me before."

"Well, master, many thanks! I am proud of the compliment; for the phrase is mine."

Consuelo lied; the phrase in question was in fact developed that very morning in Haydn's brain; but she had the cue, and had already learnt it by heart, that she might not be taken by surprise by the master's distrustful investigations. Porpora did not fail to ask her for it. She sang it at once, and pretended that the day before she had tried to set to music, in order to please the abbé Metastasio, the first verses of his pretty pastoral:

"Già riede la primavera  
 Col suo fiorito aspetto ;  
 Già il grato zefiretto  
 Scherza fra l'erbe e i fior.  
 Tornan le frondi agli alberi  
 L'erbette al prato tornano ;  
 Sol non ritorna a me  
 La pace del mio cor." \*

" I had repeated my first phrase many times," added she, " when I heard in the ante-chamber master Beppo, who, like a real canary-bird, was making himself hoarse by repeating it all wrong ; that made me impatient, and I asked him to be quiet. But, an hour afterwards, he repeated it on the stair-case, so disfigured, that it took away all desire to continue my air."

" But what can have happened during his sleep that he sings it so well now ? "

" I will explain it to you, my master : I observed that this boy had a fine and even true voice, but that he sang false for want of ear, of reflection and memory. I amused myself by making him pitch his voice, and sing the gammut according to your method, so as to see if that would succeed, even upon a poor musical organization."

" It must succeed upon all organizations," cried Porpora. " There is no such thing as a false voice, and a practised ear——"

" That is what I said to myself," interrupted Consuelo, who was in a hurry to reach her point, " and that is what happened. I succeeded, by the system of your first lesson, in making this stupid fellow understand what Reuter and all the Germans would not have got him to suspect in all his life. After that, I sang my phrase to him, and, for the first time, he understood it perfectly. Immediately he could sing it, and he was so astonished, so wonder-stricken, that he could hardly sleep all night ; it was as a revelation to him. ' Oh ! signora,'

\* Now, with its flowery face, the beauteous Spring returns ;  
 Among the grass and flowers the zephyrs sport with glee.  
 The leaves return to the trees, to the fields the waving grass ;  
 Only the peace of my heart returns not yet to me.



said he to me, 'if I had been taught so, I might have learned as well as anybody. But I confess to you that I have never been able to understand what was taught at the foundation of Saint Stephens.' ”

“ Then he has been at the foundation, really ? ”

“ He was driven from it in disgrace : you have only to speak of him to master Reuter ! he will tell you that he is a bad fellow, and one to whom it is impossible to teach music.”

“ Hallo ! come here, you sir ! ” cried Porpora to Beppo, who was weeping behind the door ; “ place yourself near me. I wish to see if you understood the lesson you received yesterday.”

Then the malicious maestro began to teach the elements of music to Joseph, in the diffuse, pedantic and perplexed method which he ironically attributed to the German masters. If Joseph, who knew too much not to comprehend those elements in spite of the pains he took to render them obscure to him, had let his intelligence be seen, he was lost. But he had tact enough not to fall into the snare, and he resolutely showed a stupidity, which after a long and obstinate trial by the master, completely reassured the latter.

“ I see well that you have a very limited capacity,” said he, rising and continuing a pretence by which the other two were not deceived. “ Return to your broom, and try not to sing any more, if you wish to remain in my service.” But, two hours afterwards, no longer able to restrain himself, and spurred on by the love of a profession which he had neglected after having practised it so long without rivals, Porpora again became a professor of singing, and called Joseph to re-seat himself upon the chair. He explained to him the same principles, but this time with that clearness, that powerful and profound logic which gives a reason for, and classifies all things ; in a word, with that incredible simplicity of method which men of genius only can conceive.

This time, Haydn understood that he might appear to comprehend ; and Porpora was enchanted at his triumph. Although the master taught him things which he had long

studied, and which he knew as well as possible, this lesson had for him a powerful interest, and a very decided utility: he learned by it how to teach; and as, at those hours when Porpora did not require his services, he still went to give lessons in the city so as not to lose his few pupils, he promised himself that he would profit by this excellent demonstration without delay.

“Well and good, sir professor!” said he to Porpora, continuing to play the simpleton to the end of the lesson; “I like that music better than the other, and I believe I can learn it; but as to that of this morning, I would rather return to the foundation than try to master it.”

“And still it is the same which was taught you at the foundation. Can there be two musics, idiot? There is but one music, as there is but one God.”

“Oh! but I ask your pardon, sir! There is the music of master Reuter, which wearies me, and yours, which does not weary me.”

“That is a great honor for me, signor Beppo,” laughingly said Porpora, whom the compliment did not displease.

From that day, Haydn received lessons from Porpora, and soon they arrived at the study of Italian song, and at the fundamental ideas of lyrical composition; this was what the noble young man had hoped with so much ardor, and pursued with so much courage. He made such rapid progress, that the master was at the same time charmed, surprised and sometimes frightened. When Consuelo saw his former distrust about to reawake, she dictated to her young friend the conduct he must pursue in order to dissipate it. A little resistance, a pretended preoccupation were sometimes necessary to excite the genius and passion of teaching in Porpora, as it happens always in the exercise of the higher faculties, which a little opposition and strife render more energetic and more powerful. Joseph was often forced to feign fatigue and disinclination in order to obtain, while pretending to drag himself to them with regret, those precious lessons which he dreaded to see discontinued. The pleasure of contradiction

and the necessity of overcoming them, stirred up the teasing and warlike soul of the old professor; and never did Beppo receive better notions than those which were drawn, clear, eloquent and warm, from the anger or the irony of the master.

While the private life of Porpora was the scene of these events so trifling in appearance, but of which the results played nevertheless so important a part in the history of art, since the genius of one of the most fruitful and celebrated composers of the last century there received its development and its sanction, other events of a more immediate influence upon the romance of Consuelo's life were passing without. Corilla, more active in discussing her own interests, more skilful in promoting them, gained ground every day, and already perfectly recovered from her confinement, was negotiating the conditions of her engagement with the court theatre. A strong virtuoso and mediocre musician, she pleased the manager and his wife much better than did Consuelo. They felt assured that the accomplished Porporina would judge from high ground, were it only in the secret of her thoughts, the operas of master Holzbäuer and the talent of madam his wife. They knew well that great artists, badly supported and reduced to the necessity of interpreting poor ideas, do not always preserve, shocked as they are by this violence done to their taste and their conscience, that every day power, that confident nerve, which mediocrity carries into the performance of the worst pieces, and through the sad dissonances of works badly studied and badly understood by their comrades.

Even when, thanks to miracles of will and power, they succeed in triumphing over their part and their companions, these envious companions give them no credit for it; the composer divines the sufferings of their genius, and trembles incessantly with the fear of seeing this factitious inspiration become suddenly chilled, and compromise his success; the audience themselves, astonished and troubled without knowing why, divine that monstrous anomaly of genius enslaved to a vulgar idea, struggling in the cramping bonds with which it has allowed itself to be bound, and it is almost with sighs

that they applauded its valiant efforts. M. Holzbäuer recollected very well, on his part, the little liking Consuelo had for his music. She had the misfortune to show it to him on the day when, disguised as a boy, and believing that she had to do with one of those faces which one meets on a journey for the first and last time in one's life, she had spoken frankly, without imagining that her destiny as an artist would be, for some time, at the mercy of the unknown friend of the canon. Holzbäuer had not forgotten her, and piqued to the bottom of his soul, under a calm, discreet and courteous air, he had sworn to close the way against her. But as he did not wish that Porpora and his pupil and what he called their clique, should accuse him of a mean revenge and a mawkish susceptibility, he had mentioned to no one but his wife his meeting with Consuelo, and the adventure of the breakfast at the presbytery. That meeting therefore appeared in no way to have struck Mr. manager; he seemed to have forgotten the features of little Bertoni, and not to imagine for a moment that the wandering singer and the Porporina were one and the same person.

Consuelo lost herself in conjectures upon the conduct of Holzbäuer respecting her. "Then I must have been very perfectly disguised on my journey," said she in confidence to Beppo, "and the arrangement of my hair changed my physiognomy very much, if this man who looked at me there with such clear and piercing eyes, does not recognize me at all here?"

"Neither did count Hoditz recognize you the first time he met you at the ambassador's," returned Joseph, "and perhaps would never have recognized you, if he had not received your billet."

"Well! but count Hoditz has a vague and proudly nonchalant manner of looking at people, so that in fact he does not really see them. I am sure he would not have perceived my sex at Passaw, if baron Trenck had not informed him; instead of which, Holzbäuer, as soon as he saw me here, and every time he meets me, looks at me with those same

scrutinizing and curious eyes which troubled me at the presbytery. For what motive does he generously keep my secret respecting a foolish adventure which might have unpleasant results, if he chose to interpret it maliciously, and which might even embroil me with my master, since he believes that I came to Vienna without distress, without inconvenience, and without romantic incidents, while this same Holzbäuer underhandedly disparages my voice and my method, and injures me all he can, to prevent being obliged to engage me? He hates and repels me, and having in his hands the strongest arms against me, does not make use of them! I am lost in conjecture."

The secret of this enigma was soon revealed to Consuelo; but before reading what happened to her, we must recollect that a numerous and powerful coterie was working against her; that Corilla was handsome and gallant; that the great minister Kaunitz saw her frequently; that he liked to mingle in the medley of the green-room, and that Maria-Theresa, as a relief from her graver labors, amused herself by making him chat about these matters, inwardly despising the littlenesses of that great mind, and taking on her own account a certain pleasure in those gossipings which showed in diminutive, but with a frank boldness, a spectacle analogous to that presented at this epoch by the three most important courts of Europe, governed by the intrigues of women; her own, that of the czarina, and that of madame de Pompadour.

## CHAPTER XCI.

It is known that Maria-Theresa gave audience once a week to whomsoever wished to address her; a paternally hypocritical custom which her son, Joseph II. always religiously observed, and which is still in force at the court of Austria. Moreover, Maria-Theresa readily granted particular audiences to those who wished to enter her service, and no sovereign was ever more easy of access.

Porpora had at last obtained permission for that musical audience, in which the empress, seeing Consuelo's honest face near to, might perhaps feel some decided sympathy for her. At least so Porpora hoped; knowing the requirements of her majesty in the matter of good morals and correct conduct, he said to himself that she would certainly be struck with the air of candor and modesty which shone in the whole person of his pupil.

They were introduced into one of the little saloons of the palace, where a harpsichord had been placed and where the empress arrived half an hour afterwards. She came from receiving some persons of importance and was still in her costume of ceremony, such as she is seen on the golden sequins coined with her effigy, in a robe of brocade, imperial mantle, with a crown on her head and a small Hungarian sabre by her side. She was really beautiful thus, not imposing and of an ideal nobleness, as her courtiers affected to depict her; but fresh, cheerful, with an open and happy physiognomy, a confident and enterprising air. It was indeed *the king* Maria-Theresa, whom the magnates of Hungary had proclaimed, sabre in hand, on a day of enthusiasm; but it was, at first sight, rather a good king, than a great one. She had no coquetry, and the familiarity of her manners announced a calm mind and one devoid of feminine craftiness. When

you looked at her a long while, and especially when she pressed you with questions, you could see finesse and even a cold cunning in that physiognomy so smiling and so affable. But it was a masculine cunning, an imperial cunning if you will, never gallantry.

“You shall let me hear your pupil immediately,” said she to Porpora. “I already know that she has great science, a magnificent voice, and I have not forgotten the pleasure she gave me in the oratorio of *Betulia liberata*. But I wish first to converse with her a little in private. I have many questions to ask her, and as I trust in her frankness, I have good hopes of being able to grant her the protection she desires.”

Porpora hastened to go out, reading in the eyes of her majesty that she wished to be entirely alone with Consuelo. He retired into a neighboring gallery where it was very cold, for the court, ruined by the expenses of the war, was governed with great economy, and the character of Maria-Theresa sufficiently seconded the necessities of her situation.

On finding herself tête-a-tête with the daughter and mother of Cesars, the heroine of Germany, and the greatest woman of Europe at that time, Consuelo felt neither confused nor intimidated. Whether her artist's carelessness rendered her indifferent to that armed pomp which glittered about Maria-Theresa and even upon her person, or whether her noble and free soul felt itself at the level of all moral greatness, she waited with a calm attitude and a great serenity of mind until it should please her majesty to question her.

The empress seated herself upon a sofa, pulled a little her bauldric covered with precious stones, which chafed and hurt her round and white shoulder, and began thus :

“I repeat to you, my child, I have a high opinion of your talent, and do not doubt your good studies and your understanding of your profession ; but you must have been told that in my eyes talent is nothing without good conduct, and that I lay more stress upon a pure and pious heart than upon a great genius.”

Consuelo, standing, listened respectfully to this exordium ;

but it seemed to her that there was no occasion to make an eulogium of herself; and as she experienced moreover a mortal repugnance to praising herself for virtues which she practised so simply, she waited in silence for the empress to question her more directly respecting her principles and her resolutions. Yet this was the true moment to address to the sovereign a well turned madrigal upon her angelic piety, her sublime virtues, and the impossibility of conducting badly when one had her example before one's eyes. Poor Consuelo had not even the idea of profiting by this opportunity. Delicate souls fear to insult a great character by giving it insipid praises; but sovereigns, if they are not the dupes of this vulgar incense, have at least such a habit of inhaling it, that they require it as a simple act of submission and etiquette. Maria-Theresa was astonished at the young girl's silence, and assuming a less gentle tone and a less encouraging manner, she continued: "Now I know, my dear child, that your conduct is very frivolous, and that, not being married, you live here in a strange intimacy with a young man of your profession whose name I cannot recall at this moment."

"I can answer your imperial majesty but one thing," said Consuelo at last, excited by the injustice of this sudden accusation; "it is that I have never committed a single fault, the remembrance of which prevents my meeting your majesty's eye with a gentle pride and a grateful joy."

Maria-Theresa was struck by the bold and strong expression which Consuelo's countenance displayed at this moment. Five or six years earlier, she would doubtless have remarked it with pleasure and sympathy; but Maria-Theresa was already a queen to the very bottom of her soul, and the exercise of power had given her that kind of reflective intoxication which made her wish to bend and break everything before her. Maria-Theresa wished to be the only strong being that breathed in her dominions, both as sovereign and as woman. She was therefore shocked at the proud smile and free glance of that child who was but a worm before her, and



with whom she thought she could amuse herself an instant, as with a slave whom one makes talk from curiosity.

"I have asked you, mademoiselle, the name of the young man who dwells with you in master Porpora's house," returned she in a freezing tone; "and you have not told me."

"His name is Joseph Haydn," replied Consuelo without emotion.

"Well, he has entered, from inclination for you, into master Porpora's service, in the capacity of valet de chambre, and master Porpora is ignorant of the true motives of this young man's conduct, while you encourage it; you who are not ignorant of them."

"I have been calumniated to your majesty; that young man has never had any inclination for me," (Consuelo thought she spoke the truth,) "and I even know that his affections are placed elsewhere. If there be a little deception used towards my respectable master, the motives are innocent and perhaps estimable. The love of art alone could induce Joseph Haydn to enter Porpora's service; and since your majesty deigns to weigh the conduct of the least of your subjects, as I think it impossible that anything should escape your clear-sighted equity, I am certain you will do justice to my sincerity, whenever you condescend to examine my cause."

Maria-Theresa had too much penetration not to recognize the accent of truth. She had not lost all the heroism of her youth, though she was fast descending that fatal declivity of absolute power, which little by little extinguishes faith in the most generous souls. "Young girl, I believe you true, and I find in you an air of chastity; but I discover in you also a great pride, and a distrust of my maternal goodness, which makes me fear I can do nothing for you."

"If it be with the maternal goodness of Maria-Theresa that I have to do," replied Consuelo, affected by that expression, of which the poor girl, alas! did not know the limited extent, "I am ready to kneel before her and implore her: but if it be —"

"Finish, my child," said Maria-Theresa, who, without

much reflecting upon it, could have wished to bring this strange person to her knees: "say your whole thought."

"If it be with the imperial justice of your majesty, having nothing to confess, as a pure breath does not sully the air which even the gods breathe, I feel in myself all the pride necessary to make me worthy of your protection."

"Porporina," said the empress, "you are a girl of spirit, and your originality, by which another would be offended, is not displeasing to me. I have told you, I believe you frank, and yet I know that you have something to confess to me. Why do you hesitate to do so? You love Joseph Haydn, your connexion is pure, I do not wish to doubt it. But you love him, since solely for the pleasure of seeing him more frequently, (even supposing that it is only from your anxiety for his progress in music with Porpora,) you intrepidly expose your reputation, which is the thing most sacred, most important, in our woman's life. But you fear perhaps, that your master, your adopted father, will not consent to your union with a poor and obscure artist. Perhaps also, for I wish to believe all your assertions, the young man loves elsewhere; and you, proud as I well see you are, conceal your inclination, and generously sacrifice your good name, without receiving any personal satisfaction from that devotedness. Well, my dear child, in your place, if I had the opportunity which presents itself at this moment, and which perhaps will never occur again, I would open my heart to my sovereign and would say to her: 'You who can do everything, and who wish to do good, I confide to you my destiny; remove all obstacles. By a word you can change the dispositions of my guardian and those of my lover. You can render me happy, restore to me the public esteem, and place me in a position so honorable that I can dare pretend to enter the service of the court.' Such is the confidence you ought to have had in the maternal interest of Maria-Theresa, and I am sorry to see that you have not understood it."

"I understand very well," said Consuelo to herself, "that from a strange caprice, from the despotism of a spoilt child,

you wish, great queen, that the Zingarella should embrace your knees, because it seems to you that her knees are stiff before you, and this is for you an unobserved phenomenon. Well, you will not have that amusement, unless you prove clearly to me that you merit my homage."

She had rapidly made these reflections and still others while Maria-Theresa was lecturing her. She said to herself that she was staking Porpora's fortune upon a cast of the die, upon a fancy of the empress, and that the future lot of her master was quite worth the trouble of humbling herself a little. But she did not wish to humble herself in vain. She did not wish to play a comedy with a crowned head, who certainly knew as much as she did upon that score. She waited for Maria-Theresa to become truly great in her eyes, in order that she herself might be sincere in her prostration.

When the empress had concluded her homily, Consuelo replied: "I will answer all your majesty has deigned to say to me, if you are pleased so to command."

"Yes, speak, speak!" said the empress, provoked at that impassible countenance.

"I will say then to your majesty, that, for the first time in my life, I learn, from your imperial mouth, that my reputation is compromised by Joseph Haydn's presence in my master's house. I thought I was of too little consequence to draw upon myself the judgments of public opinion; and if I had been told, when coming to the imperial palace, that the empress herself judged and blamed my situation, I should have thought I was in a dream."

Maria-Theresa interrupted her; she thought she perceived some irony in this observation of Consuelo.

"You must not be astonished," said she in rather an emphatic tone, "that I am interested in the most minute details of the lives of those for whom I am responsible before God."

"One may be astonished at what one admires," replied Consuelo adroitly; "and if great things are the most simple, they are at least rare enough to surprise us at first sight."

"You must understand, moreover," returned the empress, "the especial care which interests me respecting you and all the artists with whom I delight to adorn my court. The theatre is, in all countries, a school of scandal, an abyss of turpitude. I have the pretension, certainly praiseworthy, if not to be realized, of restoring before men, and purifying before God, the class of actors, the object of blind contempt, and even of religious proscription among many nations. While in France, the church closes her doors against them, I wish that the church should open to them her bosom. I have never admitted either to my Italian theatre, or to my French comedy, or again to my national theatre, other than persons of a tried morality, or indeed those resolved in good faith to reform their conduct. You must know that I marry my actors, and that I even hold their infants at the font, resolved to encourage, by all possible favors, the legitimacy of births and the fidelity of wedded couples."

"If we had known that," thought Consuelo, "we would have asked her majesty to be Angela's god-mother in my stead." "Your majesty sows but to reap," returned she aloud; "and if I had a fault upon my conscience, I should be very happy to find in you a confessor as merciful as God himself. But —"

"Continue what you wished to say a short time since," replied Maria-Theresa haughtily.

"I was about to say," returned Consuelo, "that ignorant of the blame attached to me in consequence of Joseph Haydn's presence in the house I inhabit, I had not made a great effort of devotedness for his sake, in exposing myself to it."

"I understand," said the empress, "you deny everything!"

"How can I confess what is not true?" returned Consuelo, "I have neither any inclination for my master's pupil, nor any desire to marry him:" "and if it were otherwise," thought she, "I would not wish to accept his heart by imperial decree."

"Then you wish to remain unmarried?" said the empress, rising. "Well, I declare to you that it is not a position

which offers all the desirable guarantees for my security on the score of honor. It is, besides, improper for a young person to appear in certain characters and to represent certain passions, when she has not the sanction of marriage and the protection of a husband. It depended on yourself alone to prevail in my mind over your competitor, madam Corilla, in whose favor much has been said to me, but who does not pronounce Italian nearly so well as you do. But madam Corilla is married and the mother of a family, which places her in a condition more recommendable to my eyes than that in which you persist in remaining."

"Married!" poor Consuelo could not help murmuring between her teeth, overpowered at hearing what a virtuous person the very virtuous and very clear-sighted empress preferred to her.

"Yes, married," replied the empress, in an absolute tone, and quite angered at the doubt imagined respecting her protégée. "She has lately given birth to a child which she has placed in the hands of a respectable and laborious ecclesiastic, the canon of —, in order that he may give it a Christian education; and doubtless, that worthy personage would not have taken such a burden upon himself, had he not known that the mother had a right to all his esteem."

"I cannot doubt it either," replied the young girl; consoled, in the midst of her indignation, to see that the canon was approved, instead of being censured for that adoption to which she herself had, as it were, compelled him.

"It is thus that history is written, and thus that kings are enlightened," said she to herself, when the empress had left the apartment with a dignified air, giving her as a salutation, a slight sign of the head. "Well! at the bottom of the worst things, there is always some good; and the errors of men have sometimes a good result. His good priory will not be taken from the canon; her good canon will not be taken from Angela; Corilla will be converted, if the empress undertakes it; and I,—I have not gone on my knees to a woman who is no better than myself."

“ Well ! ” cried, in a subdued voice, Porpora, who was waiting for her in the gallery, shivering and wringing his hands with anxiety and expectation ; “ I hope we carry the day ! ”

“ On the contrary, we fail, my good master. ”

“ With what calmness you say that ! The devil take you ! ”

“ You must not say that here, master ! The devil is in bad odor at the court. When we have passed the last gate of the palace, I will tell you all. ”

“ Well, what is it ? ” said Porpora impatiently, as soon as they were on the rampart.

“ Do you remember, master, ” replied Consuelo, “ what we said of the great minister Kaunitz, on leaving the margrave’s ? ”

“ We said he was an old gossip. Well ! he has done us an ill turn ? ”

“ Without doubt ; and I say to you now : her majesty the empress, queen of Hungary, is also an old gossip. ”

## CHAPTER XCII.

CONSUELO related to Porpora only so much as it was necessary for him to know respecting Maria-Theresa's motives for the kind of disgrace to which she had condemned our heroine. The rest would have troubled and vexed the master, and perhaps irritated him against Haydn, without doing any good. Neither did Consuelo tell her young friend those things which she concealed from Porpora. She despised, with reason, some vague accusations which she knew had been forged to the empress by two or three inimical persons, and which had not circulated in public. The ambassador Corner, in whom she thought best to confide, confirmed her in this opinion; and to prevent malice from seizing upon these seeds of calumny, he arranged matters wisely and generously. He induced Porpora to take up his abode at his hotel with Consuelo, and Haydn entered the service of the embassy and was admitted to the table of the private secretaries. In this manner the maestro escaped from the anxieties of poverty, Joseph continued to render to Porpora some personal services which gave him the opportunity of being often near him and taking his lessons; and Consuelo was sheltered from malignant insinuations.

Spite of these precautions, Corilla had the engagement at the imperial theatre instead of Consuelo. Consuelo had not known how to please Maria-Theresa. That great queen, while amusing herself with the green-room intrigues, which Kaunitz and Metastasio related to her by halves and always with a charming wit, wished to sustain the character of an incarnate and crowned Providence in the midst of those strollers, who, before her, played that of repentant sinners and converted demons. It may well be imagined that in the number of those hypocrites who received small pensions and little

presents for their self-proclaimed piety, were not to be found either Caffariello, or Farinelli, or the Tesi, or madam Hasse or any of those great virtuosos who alternately appeared at Vienna, and whose talent and celebrity caused much to be forgiven them. But the inferior situations were sought by persons determined to gratify the devout and moralizing fancies of her majesty; and her majesty, who carried her inclination for political intrigue into everything, made the marriage or conversion of her comedians a diplomatic concern. We can see in the memoirs of Favart, (that interesting real romance, which actually took place in the green-room,) the difficulties he experienced in sending to Vienna the actresses' and opera-singers whom he had been ordered to engage. They were wanted at a cheap rate, and, moreover, chaste as vestals. I believe that this witty contractor employed by Maria-Theresa, after having carefully searched all Paris, did not find a single one; which does more honor to the frankness than to the virtue of our *opera girls*, as they were then called.

Thus Maria-Theresa wished to give to the amusement she took in all this an edifying pretext, and one worthy the beneficent majesty of her character. Monarchs are always attitudinizing, and great monarchs perhaps more than others; Porpora said so continually, and he was not deceived. The great empress, a zealous Catholic, an exemplary mother of a family, had no objection to chat with a prostitute, to catechize her, to excite her to strange confidences, in order that she might have the glory of leading a repentant Magdalen to the Lord's feet. Her majesty's private income, placed on the road between vice and contrition, rendered these miracles of grace numerous and infallible in the hands of the empress. Thus Corilla weeping and prostrate, if not in person, (I doubt if she could have brought her savage character to play this farce,) at least by power of attorney given to M. de Launitz, who became security for her newly acquired virtue, must infallibly win the day against a decided young girl, proud and strong as was the immaculate Consuelo. Maria-Theresa loved, in her dramatic protégés, only those virtues of which



she could call herself the originator. Those virtues which had been formed or preserved by themselves did not interest her much; she did not believe in them as her own virtue should have caused her to believe. In fine, Consuelo's position had piqued her; she found in her a strong and reasoning mind. It was altogether too presumptuous and arrogant in a little Bohemian, to wish to be estimable and chaste without the empress having any part in the matter. When M. de Kaunitz, who pretended to be very impartial, while he depreciated the one to the advantage of the other, asked her majesty if she had granted the petition of *that little one*, Maria-Theresa replied: "I am not satisfied with her principles; speak to me no more of her." And all was said. The voice, the figure, and even the name of the Porporina were entirely forgotten.

Some reason had been necessary and was moreover peremptorily demanded by Porpora, to explain the kind of disgrace to which he found himself subjected. Consuelo had been obliged to tell him that her position as an unmarried woman had appeared inadmissible to the empress. "And Corilla?" cried Porpora, on learning the engagement of the latter, "has her majesty got her married?" "So far as I was able to understand, or to guess from her majesty's words, Corilla passes here for a widow." "Oh! thrice a widow, ten times, an hundred times a widow, in fact," said Porpora, with a bitter laugh. "But what will be said when the truth is known, and she will be seen to proceed here to new and numberless widowhoods? And that child I have heard of, which she has just left in the house of some canon, near Vienna; that child, which she wished to make count Zustiniani acknowledge, and which he advised her to recommend to Anzoletto's paternal tenderness?" "She will jest at all that, with her comrades; she will relate it, according to her custom, in sneering terms, and will laugh, in her boudoir, at the good trick she has played the empress."

"But if the empress learns the truth?"

"The empress will not learn it. Sovereigns are surrounded, I imagine, by ears which serve as porches to their

own. Many things remain without, and nothing enters the sanctuary of the imperial ear but that which the guards are quite willing should pass."

"Moreover," resumed Porpora, "Corilla will always have the resource of going to confession, and M. de Kaunitz will be charged to see that she performs the penance."

The poor maestro gave vent to his bile in these bitter pleasantries; but he was deeply vexed. He lost the hope of obtaining the performance of the opera he had in his portfolio, the more especially because he had written it upon a libretto which was not Metastasio's, and Metastasio had the monopoly of the court poetry. He was not without some suspicion of the little skill Consuelo had displayed in attracting the good graces of the sovereign, and he could not help showing some dissatisfaction towards her. To increase the misfortune, the Venetian ambassador had been so imprudent, one day, when he saw him inflated with joy and pride at the rapid development which Haydn's musical education displayed under his teaching, as to tell him the whole truth about that young man, and to show him his pretty essays at instrumental composition, which began to circulate and to be remarked by amateurs. The maestro cried out that he had been deceived, and was terribly furious. Fortunately, he did not suspect that Consuelo had been an accomplice in the deception, and M. Corner, seeing the storm he had raised, hastened to prevent any mistrust on that score by a good falsehood. But he could not prevent Joseph's being banished for several days from the chamber of the master; and it required all the ascendancy that his protection and his services gave him over the latter, to enable the pupil to recover his favor. Porpora, nevertheless, felt a grudge against him for a long while, and it is even said, took pleasure in making him purchase his lessons by the humiliation of a menial service much more minute and more prolonged than was necessary, since the lacqueys of the ambassador were at his command. Haydn was not rebuffed; and by dint of gentleness, patience and devotedness, always exhorted and encouraged by the good

Consuelo, always studious and attentive to his lessons, he succeeded in disarming the rough professor, and in receiving from him all that he could or wished to appropriate.

But the genius of Haydn panted for a flight far different from what had hitherto been attempted, and the future father of the symphony confided to Consuelo his ideas respecting musical scores developed in gigantic proportions. Those gigantic proportions which now appear to us so simple and so proper, might pass, a hundred years since, for the utopia of a madman, as well as for the revelation of a new era opened to genius. Joseph still distrusted his own powers, and it was not without terror that he confessed to Consuelo the ambition which tormented him. Consuelo, also, was at first somewhat frightened. Until then, instrumental music had performed only a subordinate part, or, when isolated from the human voice, it acted without complicated methods. Still, there was so much calmness and persevering gentleness in her young friend, he testified so much modesty and such a coolly conscientious seeking after truth in all his conduct and all his opinions, that Consuelo, unable to believe him presumptuous, decided to believe him wise and to encourage him in his projects. At this period, Haydn composed a serenade for three instruments, which he executed with two of his friends, under the windows of those *dilettanti* whose attention he wished to attract to his works. He began with Porpora, who, without knowing the name of the author or those of the performers, placed himself at his window, listened with pleasure, and clapped his hands heartily. This time, the ambassador, who also was listening and was in the secret, kept on his guard and did not betray the young composer. Porpora was not willing that any who received singing lessons from him should be distracted by other thoughts.

About this time, Porpora received a letter from the excellent contralto Hubert, his pupil, who was called the Porporino, and was attached to the service of Frederick the Great. This eminent artist was not, like the other pupils of the professor, so infatuated with his own merit, as to forget all he owed to

him. The Porporino had received from his master a kind of talent which he had never sought to modify, and with which he had always been successful: this was, to sing in a broad and pure manner, without introducing ornaments and without departing from the wholesome precepts of the maestro. On this account, Porpora had for him a partiality, which he found it very difficult to conceal in the presence of the enthusiastic admirers of Farinelli and Caffariello. He conceded that the skill, the brilliancy, the flexibility of those great virtuosos produced more effect and must more suddenly enrapture an audience eager for wonderful difficulties: but he said to himself, that his Porporino never sacrificed to bad taste, and that one was never tired of hearing him though he always sang in the same manner. It appears, in fact, that Prussia did not tire of him, for he was a favorite in that kingdom during the whole of his musical career, and died there quite old, after a residence of more than forty years.

Hubert's letter announced to Porpora that his music was much liked at Berlin, and that if he wished to come and join him there, he was certain of having his new compositions admitted and performed. He earnestly advised him to leave Vienna, where artists were constantly exposed to the intrigues of a clique, and to *recruit* for the court of Prussia some distinguished cantatrice who could sing with himself the operas of the maestro. He made a great eulogium on the enlightened taste of his king and the honorable protection which he granted to musicians. "If this project pleases you," said he, at the end of his letter, "answer immediately, and inform me what are your demands, and in three months from this time, I engage to obtain for you conditions which will at last ensure you a peaceful existence. As to glory, my dear master, it will be enough that you write for us to sing so as to have you appreciated, and I hope that the sound thereof will reach even to Dresden."

This last passage made Porpora prick up his ears like an old war-horse. It was an allusion to the triumphs which Hasse and his singers were obtaining at the court of Saxony.

The idea of counterbalancing the fame of his rival in the north of Germany so pleased the maestro, and he experienced at that moment such a spite against Vienna, the Viennese and their court, that he replied without hesitation to the Porporino, authorizing him to make a contract for him at Berlin. He gave his *ultimatum*, and he made it as modest as possible, in order not to fail in his hopes. He spoke to him of the Porporina with the highest praise, telling him that she was his sister, by her education, her genius and her heart, as she was by her surname, and desired him to arrange an engagement for her on the best possible terms; the whole without consulting Consuelo, who was informed of this new resolution after the departure of the letter.

The poor child was quite frightened at the very name of Prussia, and that of the great Frederick made her shudder. Since the adventure of the deserter, she had thought of that famous monarch only as a vampire or an ogre. Porporino scolded her a great deal for her want of satisfaction at the prospect of this new engagement; and as she could not relate Karl's history to him, nor the bold deeds of Mr. Mayer, she bowed her head and suffered herself to be reprimanded.

Still, when she reflected upon this new project, she found in it some alleviation to her position: it was at least a delay in her return to the stage, since the affair might not succeed, and, in any event, the Porporino required three months to conclude it. Until then, she could dream of the love of count Albert and find in her own heart a firm resolution to respond to it. Whether she should at last recognize the possibility of a union with him, or feel herself incapable of deciding upon it, she could keep with frankness and honor the promise she had made of thinking of it, without distraction and without constraint.

She resolved to wait for count Christian's reply to her first letter, before she announced this news to her hosts at Riesenburg; but that reply did not arrive, and Consuelo began to think that the elder Rudolstadt had renounced the idea of such a misalliance and was endeavoring to persuade Albert to do

the same, when she secretly received, from the hand of Keller, a billet which contained these words :

“ You promised to write to me ; you have done so, indirectly, by confiding to my father the embarrassment of your present situation. I see that you have fallen under a yoke from which I cannot withdraw you without a crime ; I see that my good father is frightened for me at the consequences of your submission to Porpora. As to myself, Consuelo, I am frightened at nothing at present, because you testify to my father regret and terror at the part you are desired to assume ; this is, to me, a sufficient proof that you are determined not to pronounce, unreflectingly, the sentence of my eternal despair. No, you will not break your promise, you will endeavor to love me ! What matters it to me where you are, in what you are engaged, or the rank which glory or prejudice assign to you among men, or time, or the obstacles which keep you far from me, if I hope and you tell me to hope ? I suffer much, without doubt, but I can suffer still without fainting, so long as you do not extinguish in me the spark of hope.

“ I wait, I know how to wait ! Do not fear to terrify me by taking time for your reply ; do not write to me under the impression of fear or of pity, to which I wish to owe no favor. Weigh my destiny in your heart and my soul in yours, and as soon as the moment shall have arrived when you are sure of yourself, whether you be in the cell of a nun or upon the boards of a theatre, tell me never to trouble you more, or to come and join you—I shall be at your feet, or silent forever, as your will may decide.

“ ALBERT.”

“ O, noble Albert ! ” cried Consuelo, pressing the paper to her lips, “ I feel that I love you ! It would be impossible not to love you, and I will not delay telling you so ; I wish to reward, by my promise, the constancy and devotedness of your love.”

She began at once to write ; but Porpora’s voice made her

hurriedly hide in her bosom, Albert's letter and the answer she had begun. She could not find an instant of leisure and privacy during all the rest of the day. It seemed as if the crabbed old fellow had guessed her wish to be alone, and had undertaken to thwart her. When night came, Consuelo felt more calm, and understood that so important a decision required a longer trial of her own emotions. Albert must not be exposed to the fatal consequences of a reaction in her; she read the young count's letter over a hundred times, and saw that he equally feared, on her part, the pain of a refusal and the precipitancy of a promise. She resolved to meditate upon her answer several days; Albert himself seemed to desire it.

The life which Consuelo then led at the embassy was very quiet and regular. To avoid giving occasion for wicked suppositions, Corner had the delicacy never to visit her in her apartment and never to invite her, even in company with Porpora, into his own. He met her only at madam Wilhelmina's, where he could converse with her without compromising her, and where she obligingly sang before a small circle. Joseph also was admitted to play there. Caffariello came often, count Hoditz sometimes, the abbé Metastasio seldom. All three regretted Consuelo's failure in obtaining an engagement, but neither had the courage or perseverance to strive for her. Porpora was indignant at this, and with difficulty concealed it. Consuelo endeavored to soften him and to make him accept men with their peculiarities and their weaknesses. She excited him to labor, and thanks to her, he recovered, from time to time, some glimmers of hope and enthusiasm. She encouraged him only in the spite which prevented his carrying her into society in order that her voice might be heard. Happy in being forgotten by those great personages whom she had looked upon with terror and repugnance, she devoted herself to serious studies, to sweet reveries, encouraged the now calm and holy friendship of the good Haydn, and said to herself, each day, as she took care of her old professor, that if nature had not formed her for a passionless and inactive existence, still less was she made for the

emotions of vanity and the activity of ambition. She had often dreamed, and, in spite of herself, she still dreamed of a more animated existence ; of joys of the heart more lively ; of pleasures of the understanding more expansive and more vast ; but the world of art, so pure, so sympathetic and so noble, which she had created for herself, manifesting itself to her view only under a frightful envelope, she preferred an obscure and retired life, gentle affections and a laborious solitude.

Consuelo had no new reflections to make on the offer of the Rudolstadt. She could conceive no doubt respecting their generosity, respecting the unalterable holiness of the son's love, or the father's paternal tenderness. It was not her reason and her conscience that she was to interrogate. Both spoke in favor of Albert. She had triumphed, this time without effort, over the remembrance of Anzoletto. One victory over love gives strength for all others. She therefore no longer feared his allurements ; she felt herself safe from all fascination. Yet, with all this, passion did not speak energetically for Albert in her soul. She still and always had to interrogate her heart, in the depths of which a mysterious calmness received the idea of a complete love. Seated at her window, the artless child often looked at the young people of the city as they passed. Bold students, noble lords, melancholy artists, proud cavaliers, all were the objects of a chaste and seriously childish examination on her part. "Let me see," said she to herself, "is my heart fanciful and frivolous ? Am I capable of loving suddenly, madly and irresistibly at first sight, as many of my own companions of the *scuola* used to boast or confess to each other, before me ? Is love a magic flash which pierces our being, and which turns us violently from our sworn affections, or from our peaceful innocence ? Is there among those men who sometimes raise their eyes towards my window, a glance which confuses and fascinates me ? Does that one with his tall form and proud step, seem to me more noble or more handsome than Albert ? Does that other with his beautiful hair and elegant dress, efface in me the image of my betrothed ? In fine, would I wish to be that



richly dressed lady whom I see pass there in her barouche, with a stately gentleman at her side, who holds her fan and presents her gloves? Is there anything in all this scene to make me tremble, blush, palpitate, or dream? No! truly no! Speak my heart, decide; I consult thee, and give thee free course. I hardly know thee, alas! I have had so little time to think of thee since my birth! I had not accustomed thee to disappointment. I gave up to thee the empire of my life, without examining the prudence of thy impulses. Thou hast been broken, my poor heart, and now that conscience has subdued thee, thou no longer darest to live, thou no longer knowest how to answer. Speak, then; arouse and choose! 'Well! thou remainest tranquil! And thou desirest nothing of all that is there?' 'No!' 'Thou no longer desirest Anzoletto?' 'Again, no!' 'Then it must be Albert whom thou callest?' It seems to me that thou sayest 'yes!'" And Consuelo, each day, retired from her window, with a fresh smile upon her lips and a clear and gentle fire in her eyes.

After a month had passed, she replied to Albert, with a quiet mind, very slowly, and almost counting her pulse at each letter formed by her pen:

"I love none but you, and am almost sure that I love you. Now let me reflect upon the possibility of our union. Do you also reflect upon it; let us together find the means of afflicting neither your father nor my master, and of not becoming selfish when we become happy."

She added to this billet a short letter for count Christian, in which she informed him of the quiet life she was leading, and of the respite which Porpora's new projects had given her. She requested them to seek and to find the means of disarming Porpora, and to inform her within a month. A month would still remain for her to prepare the maestro, before the decision of the negotiation undertaken at Berlin.

Consuelo having sealed these two billets, placed them upon her table and fell asleep. A delicious calmness had descended into her soul, and never, for a long time, had she enjoyed so deep and so pleasant a slumber. She awoke late,

and rose hurriedly to see Keller, who had promised to come for her letter at eight o'clock. It was nine; and as she dressed herself in haste, Consuelo saw, with terror, that the letter was not on the spot where she had placed it. She sought for it everywhere without finding it. She went out to see if Keller was not waiting for her in the antechamber. Neither Keller nor Joseph was there; and as she reëntered her apartment to search again, she saw Porpora approach from his chamber and look at her with a severe air.

"What are you looking for?" said he to her.

"A sheet of music which I have mislaid."

"You lie; you are looking for a letter."

"Master——"

"Hold your tongue, Consuelo. You don't yet know how to lie; do not learn."

"Master, what have you done with that letter?"

"I have given it to Keller."

"And why—why did you give it to Keller, master?"

"Because he came to get it. You told him to, yesterday. You don't know how to dissemble, Consuelo, or else my ear is quicker than you think."

"In fine," said Consuelo, resolutely, "what have you done with my letter?"

"I have told you; why do you ask me again? I thought it very improper that a young girl, virtuous as you are and as I presume you wish always to be, should secretly give letters to her hair-dresser. To prevent that man from having a bad idea of you, I gave him the letter in a calm manner, and ordered him, from you, to send it as addressed. He will not believe, at least, that you hide a guilty secret from your adopted father."

"Master, you are right, you have done well; forgive me!"

"I do forgive you; let us say no more about it."

"And—you read my letter?" added Consuelo, with a timid and caressing air.

"For what do you take me!" replied Porpora in a terrible tone.

"Forgive me that also," said Consuelo, bending her knee before him, and trying to take his hand; "let me open my heart to you——"

"Not a word more," replied the master, repelling her; and he entered his chamber, shutting the door after him with a crash.

Consuelo hoped that when this first storm had passed, she would be able to appease him, and have a decisive explanation with him. She felt strength enough to tell him all her thoughts, and flattered herself that she might thus hasten the result of her projects; but he refused all explanation, and his severity was unshakable and constant on that point. Otherwise, he testified the same friendship to her as usual, and even from that day had more cheerfulness of mind and more courage of soul. Consuelo saw in this a good omen, and awaited with confidence the answer from Riesenburg.

Porpora had not lied. He had burned Consuelo's letters without reading them; but he had preserved the envelopes, and substituted a letter of his own for count Christian. He thought that, by this bold step, he had saved his pupil, and spared old Rudolstadt from a sacrifice beyond his strength. He thought he had fulfilled the part of a faithful friend towards him, and that of an energetic and wise father towards Consuelo. He did not foresee that he might give a death blow to count Albert. He hardly knew him. He believed that Consuelo had exaggerated; that the young man was neither so much in love nor so ill as she had imagined; in fine, he believed, as do all old men, that love has bounds, and that grief never killed any one.

## CHAPTER XCIII.

IN the expectation of an answer which she was not to receive, since Porpora had burned her letter, Consuelo continued the calm and studious course of life she had adopted. Her presence attracted to Wilhelmina's house some very distinguished persons, whom she had great pleasure in meeting there often; among others, the baron Frederick de Trenck, who inspired her with real sympathy. He had the delicacy not to accost her as an old acquaintance the first time he again saw her, but to be presented to her after she had sung, as a deeply affected admirer of what he had just heard. On again meeting that handsome and generous young man who had so bravely rescued her from Mr. Mayer and his band, Consuelo's first impulse was to extend her hand to him. The baron, who did not wish her to commit an imprudence out of gratitude to him, hastened to take her hand respectfully, as if to reconduct her to her seat, and gently pressed it to thank her. She learnt afterwards from Joseph, from whom he took music lessons, that he never failed to ask about her with interest and to speak of her with admiration; but that, from a sentiment of exquisite discretion, he had never addressed to him the least question respecting the motives for her disguise, the cause of their venturesome journey, or the nature of the feelings they might have had, or still had, towards each other. "I know not what he may think," added Joseph, "but I assure you, there is no woman of whom he speaks with more esteem and respect than he does of you." "In that case, friend," replied Consuelo, "I authorize you to tell him all our story, and all mine if you will, but without naming the family of Rudolstadt. I wish to be unreservedly esteemed by that man to whom we owe our lives, and who

has conducted himself in such a noble manner towards me in every respect."

Some weeks afterwards, M. de Trenck, having hardly terminated his mission at Vienna, was suddenly recalled by Frederick, and came one morning to the embassy, to bid a hasty farewell to M. Corner. Consuelo, on descending the staircase to go out, met him under the porch. As they were alone, he came to her and took her hand, which he kissed tenderly. "Allow me," said he to her, "to express to you for the first and perhaps for the last time in my life, the sentiments with which my heart is filled for you: it was not necessary for Beppo to relate your history to me, in order that I might be penetrated with veneration. There are some countenances which do not deceive, and I required but one glance to feel and divine in you a great understanding and a great heart. If I had known at Passaw that our dear Joseph was so little on his guard, I should have protected you against the levity of count Hoditz, which I foresaw only too well, though I had done my best to let him understand that he would make a mistake and render himself ridiculous. Moreover, that good Hoditz has told me how you made a fool of him, and he feels very much obliged to you for having kept his secret; for myself, I shall not forget the romantic adventure which procured me the happiness of knowing you, and even should I pay for it with my fortune and prospects, I should still consider it as among the most beautiful days of my life."

"Do you believe then, sir baron," said Consuelo, "that it can have such consequences?"

"I hope not; but still, everything is possible at the court of Prussia."

"You give me a great fear of Prussia; do you know, sir baron, that it would also be possible for me to have the pleasure of meeting you there before long? There is some talk of an engagement for me at Berlin."

"In truth," cried Trenck, whose face lighted with a sudden joy; "well, may God grant that the project be realized! I can be useful to you at Berlin, and you must count upon me

as upon a brother. Yes, I have for you the affection of a brother, Consuelo—and if I had been free, should perhaps have been unable to defend myself from a warmer feeling still—but neither are you free, and sacred, eternal bonds do not permit me to envy the happy gentleman who seeks your hand. Whoever he may be, depend upon it, madam, he will find in me a friend if he desires one, and if he has ever need of me, a champion against the prejudices of the world. Alas! I also, Consuelo, have in my life a terrible barrier, which rises between me and the object of my love; but he who loves you is a man and can cast down the barrier, while the woman whom I love and who is of a higher rank than I, has neither the power, nor the right, nor the strength, nor the liberty to make me clear it.”

“And can I do nothing for her or for you?” said Consuelo; “for the first time I regret the impotence of my poor condition.”

“Who knows?” cried the baron, earnestly; “perhaps you can do more than you think, if not to unite us, at least to soften sometimes the horror of our separation. Should you feel the courage to brave some dangers for us?”

“With as much joy as you exposed your life to save me.”

“Well, I depend upon it. Recollect this promise, Consuelo. Perhaps I shall recall it to you unexpectedly.”

“At whatever hour of my life it may be, I shall not have forgotten it,” replied she, extending her hand to him.

“Well,” said he, “give me some sign, some token of little value which I can again present to you on occasion; for I have a presentiment that great trials await me, and there may be circumstances in which my signature, even my seal, would compromise *her* and you.”

“Do you wish this roll of music which I was about to carry to some one for my master? I can get another, and will make a mark on this, by which I can recognize it on occasion.”

“Why not? A roll of music is, in fact, that which can best be sent without exciting suspicion. But I will separate

the sheets, that I may make use of it several times. Make a mark on each page."

Consuelo, resting upon the balustrade of the staircase, wrote the name of Bertoni upon each sheet of the music. The baron rolled it up and carried it away, after having sworn an eternal friendship to our heroine.

At this period, madam Tesi fell ill, and the performances at the imperial theatre threatened to be suspended, as she there performed the most important parts. Corilla could indeed replace her. She had great success both at the court and in the city. Her beauty and her provoking coquetry turned the heads of all those good German lords, and they did not think of criticising her voice which was somewhat frayed, or her rather epileptic acting. All was beautiful from so fine a person; her snowy shoulders gave forth admirable sounds, her round and voluptuous arms always sang just, and her superb attitudes carried her through the most venturesome strokes without opposition. Notwithstanding the musical purism on which they prided themselves, the Viennese, as well as the Venetians, surrendered to the fascination of a languishing look; and madam Corilla in her boudoir, prepared many strong heads to be rapt and intoxicated by her performances.

She therefore boldly presented herself to sing, *ad interim*, the parts of madam Tesi; but the trouble was how to replace herself, in those she had sung. Madam Holzbäuer's flute-like voice did not allow her to be thought of. It was therefore necessary to admit Consuelo, or to be satisfied with small things. Porpora worked like a demon; Metastasio, horribly dissatisfied with Corilla's Lombard pronunciation, and indignant at the attempts she made to drown the other parts, (contrary to the spirit of the poem and in spite of the situation,) no longer concealed his antipathy to her, nor his sympathy for the conscientious and intelligent Porporina. Caffariello, who was paying court to madam Tesi, (which madam Tesi already cordially detested Corilla, for having dared dispute with her her *effects* and the sceptre of beauty,) declaimed boldly for

Consuelo's admittance. Holzbauer, desirous of supporting the honor of his office, but frightened at the ascendancy which Porpora would soon assume if he got a foot only behind the scenes, knew not which way to turn. Consuelo's good conduct had conciliated so many partisans, as to make it difficult to impose upon the empress much longer. In consequence of all these reasons, propositions were made to Consuelo. By making them mean it was hoped she would refuse them. Porpora accepted them at once, and as usual, without consulting her. One fine morning, Consuelo found herself engaged for six performances, and without being able to withdraw, without understanding why, after waiting six weeks she had received no news from the Rudolstadt, she was dragged by Porpora to the rehearsal of Metastasio's *Antigono*, set to music by Hasse.

Consuelo had already studied her part with Porpora. Doubtless it was a great suffering to the latter to be obliged to teach her the music of his rival, the most ungrateful of his pupils, the enemy whom he hated above all others; but, besides the necessity of doing this in order to get the door opened for his own compositions, Porpora was too conscientious a professor, too upright an artist, not to bestow all his attention, all his zeal upon this study. Consuelo seconded him so nobly that he was at once delighted and distressed. Spite of herself, the poor child found Hasse magnificent, and her soul experienced much more development in those songs of the Sassone, so tender and so full of passion, than in the somewhat naked and sometimes rather cold grandeur of her own master. Accustomed, when studying other great masters with him, to abandon herself to her own enthusiasm, she was this time compelled to restrain herself, on seeing the sadness of his look and the despondency of his reflections after the lesson. When she entered upon the stage to rehearse with Caffariello and Corilla, though she knew her part very well, she felt so much agitated that she could hardly open the scene of *Ismene* with *Berenice*, which commences with these words :



“No; tutto, o Berenice,  
Tu non apri il tuo cor, &c.”\*

To which Corilla replied by these :

“ — E ti par poco,  
Quel che sai de' miei casi ? ” †

At this place, Corilla was interrupted by a loud shout of laughter from Caffariello; and turning towards him, her eyes sparkling with anger, “What do you find so funny in that?” asked she of him. “You said it very well, my fat Berenice,” replied Caffariello, laughing still louder; “no one could say it more sincerely.” “Do the words amuse you?” said Holz-bäuer, who would not have been displeased to be able to report to Metastasio, the sopranist’s jests upon his verses. “The words are beautiful,” drily replied Caffariello, who knew his ground well; “but their application in this circumstance is so perfect, that I could not help laughing at it.” And he held his sides as he repeated to Porpora :

— E ti par poco,  
Quel che sai di *tanti* casi ?

Corilla, seeing what a cutting satire was contained in this allusion to her morals and trembling with anger, hate and fear, was about to rush upon Consuelo and disfigure her; but the countenance of the latter was so gentle and so calm that she dared not. Moreover, the dim light which penetrated the stage, falling upon the face of her rival, she stopped, struck by vague reminiscences and strange terrors. She had never seen her by daylight or near to, at Venice. In the midst of the pains of child-birth, she had confusedly seen the little Zingaro Bertoni busy about her, and had not been able to comprehend his devotedness. At this moment, she strove to collect her ideas, and not succeeding, she remained under the influence of a disquiet and uneasiness which troubled her through the whole rehearsal. The manner in which the Porporina sang her part, contributed not a little to increase

\* No, Berenice, you do not frankly open your heart to me.

† Does what you know of my adventures seem to you but little ?

her ill humor, and the presence of Porpora, her old master, who, like a severe judge, listened to her in silence and with an air almost contemptuous, became to her, little by little, a real punishment. M. Holzbäuer was not less mortified, when the maestro declared that he beat time quite incorrectly; and they were obliged to believe him, as he had been present at the rehearsals which Hasse himself had directed at Dresden when the opera was first produced upon the stage. The necessity they felt of good advice, made ill-will yield and silenced anger. He led the whole rehearsal, taught each one his duty and even reprimanded Caffariello, who pretended to listen to his advice with respect, in order to give him more weight with the others. Caffariello only thought of wounding the impertinent rival of madam Tesi, and no sacrifice which procured him this pleasure was too great on that day, not even an act of submission and modesty. It is thus that, with artists as with diplomatists, on the stage as in the cabinets of sovereigns, the finest and the meanest actions have their hidden causes which are infinitely small and frivolous.

On going home after the rehearsal, Consuelo found Joseph quite full of a mysterious joy; and when they could converse in private, she learnt from him that the good canon had arrived at Vienna; that his first thought had been to send for his dear Beppo and give him an excellent breakfast, while asking him a thousand tender questions about his dear Bertoni. They had already arranged the means of making acquaintance with Porpora, in order that they might see each other familiarly, openly and without scandal. On the next day, the canon was presented as a protector of Joseph Haydn, a great admirer of the maestro, and under the pretext of coming to thank him for the lessons he was so kind as to give to his young friend. Consuelo appeared to salute him for the first time, and in the evening, the maestro and his two pupils dined in a friendly manner with the canon. Unless he affected a stoicism which the musicians of those days, even the greatest, did not pretend to, it would have been difficult for Porpora not to take a sudden liking for this honest canon who kept so good a

table and appreciated his works so highly. They had music after dinner, and thenceforth, saw each other almost every day.

This was moreover a solace to the anxiety which Albert's silence began to cause to Consuelo. The canon was of a cheerful spirit, chaste and at the same time free, exquisite in many respects, just and enlightened on many other points. In fine, he was an excellent friend and a perfectly amiable man. His society animated and strengthened the maestro; the temper of the latter became more gentle, and therefore, Consuelo's home life more agreeable.

One day when there was no rehearsal, (it was two days before the performance of *Antigono*,) Porpora having gone into the country with an acquaintance, the canon proposed to his young friends to go and make a descent upon the priory, in order to surprise those of his people whom he had left there, and to see for himself, by falling upon them as from the clouds, if the gardener's wife took good care of Angela and if the gardener did not neglect the volkameria. The proposition was accepted. The canon's carriage was stuffed with patés and bottles, (for they could not make a journey of four leagues without acquiring an appetite,) and they arrived at the benefice, after having made a little circuit and left the carriage at some distance, the better to ensure the surprise.

The volkameria was in wonderful condition; it was warm and its roots were fresh. Its flowering had ceased on the return of cold weather, but its pretty leaves lay without languor upon its graceful stalk. The green-house was in good order, and the blue chrysanthemums braved the winter and seemed to laugh behind the glass. Angela, hanging on the bosom of her nurse, began to laugh also, when her attention was drawn by pretty tricks; and the canon very wisely decreed that this good disposition must not be abused, because forced laughs, when excited too often in such little creatures, develop their nervous temperament in an untimely manner.

They were there, conversing freely in the gardener's little cottage; the canon, wrapped in his wadded gown, was warming his legs before a great fire of dry roots and pine cones;

Joseph was playing with the pretty children of the gardener's handsome wife, and Consuelo, seated in the middle of the room, held Angela in her arms and contemplated her with mingled tenderness and pain. She was thinking that this child belonged to her more than to any other and that a mysterious fatality bound the lot of the little one to her own, when the door suddenly opened, and Corilla appeared opposite to her, like a phantom invoked by her melancholy reverie.

For the first time since her delivery, Corilla had felt, if not a sentiment of love, at least an attack of maternal remorse, and she had come to see her child in secret. She knew that the canon was living at Vienna; arriving half an hour after him and not seeing the tracks of his wheels near the priory, since he had made a circuit before entering, she stealthily penetrated through the gardens, and without meeting any one, to the house where she knew Angela was at nurse; for she had not omitted to obtain some information in this respect. She had laughed a great deal over the embarrassment and christian resignation of the canon, but she was entirely ignorant of the part that Consuelo had played in the adventure. It was therefore with surprise mingled with fear and consternation, that she saw Consuelo in this place; and not knowing, not daring to guess, what child she was thus tending, she was about to turn and fly. But Consuelo, who by an instinctive movement had clasped the infant to her breast, as the partridge hides her young under her wing at the approach of the vulture; Consuelo, who was on the stage, and could the next day present in another light the secret of the comedy, which Corilla had hitherto related in her own manner; Consuelo in fine, who looked at her with a mixture of terror and indignation, kept her chained and fascinated in the middle of the floor.

Still Corilla was too consummate an actress to lose her presence of mind and her powers of speech for a long time. Her tactics were, to prevent a humiliation by an insult; and, to recover her voice, she began her part by this apostrophe uttered in the Venetian dialect with a sharp and bitter tone:

“Eh! Dio Santo! my poor Zingarella, is this house then a receptacle for foundlings? Have you also come here to find or to deposit your child? I see that we run the same risks and have the same luck. Doubtless our two children have the same father, for our adventures date from Venice and the same epoch; and I have seen with compassion for you, that it was not to rejoin you as we had thought, that the handsome Anzoleto deserted us so unceremoniously in the midst of his engagement last season.”

“Madam,” replied Consuelo, pale but calm, “if I had had the misfortune to be as intimate with Anzoleto as you were, and, in consequence of that misfortune, the happiness of becoming a mother, (for that is always a happiness to one who knows how to feel it,) my child would not be here.”

“Ah! I understand,” replied the other, with a dark fire in her eyes; “it would be brought up at the villa Zustiniani. You would have had the wit I wanted, to persuade the dear count that his honor was pledged to acknowledge it. But you have not had the misfortune, as you pretend, to be Anzoleto’s mistress, and Zustiniani was so happy as not to leave you proofs of his love. They say that Joseph Haydn, your master’s pupil, has consoled you for all your misfortunes, and doubtless the child you have in your arms—”

“Is yours, mademoiselle,” cried Joseph, who now understood the dialect very well and who advanced between Consuelo and Corilla in a manner which made the latter recoil. “It is Joseph Haydn who assures you of the fact; for he was present when you brought it into the world.”

Joseph’s face, which Corilla had not seen since that unlucky day, brought immediately to her memory all the circumstances which she had vainly endeavored to recollect, and the Zingaro Bertoni at last appeared to her under the true features of the Zingarella Consuelo. A cry of surprise escaped her, and for an instant, shame and spite filled her breast. But soon, impudence returned to her heart and insult to her lips. “Really, my dears,” cried she, with an atrociously benignant air, “I did recognize you. You were both

very pretty when I met you on your adventures, and Consuelo was quite a nice boy in her disguise. It is then in this holy house, between the fat canon and the little Joseph, that she has passed the year since her flight from Venice? Come, Zingarella, do not be uneasy, my child. We have each other's secret, and the empress, who wants to know everything, will learn nothing from either of us."

"Supposing I had a secret," replied Consuelo coldly, "it is in your possession only to-day; and yours was in mine on the day when I talked an hour with the empress, three days before the signing of your engagement, Corilla?"

"And you spoke ill of me?" cried Corilla, becoming red with anger.

"If I had told her what I know of you, you would not have been engaged. If you are so, the reason apparently is, that I did not wish to profit by the opportunity."

"And why did n't you? You must be very stupid!" returned Corilla, with a frankness in perversity, wonderful to see.

Consuelo and Joseph could not help smiling as they looked at each other; Joseph's smile was full of contempt towards Corilla; Consuelo's was angelic and raised towards heaven.

"Yes, madam," replied she with overpowering gentleness, "I am as you say, and feel very well so."

"Not too well, my poor girl, since I am engaged and you are not!" returned Corilla, moved and somewhat thoughtful; "they told me at Venice, that you wanted wit and would never be able to make your way. That was the only true thing Anzoleto told me of you. But what of that? It is not my fault if you are so. In your place, I should have told all I knew of Corilla; I should have represented myself as a virgin, a saint. The empress would have believed it; she is not difficult to persuade—and I should have supplanted all my rivals. But you did not do so. That is strange, and I pity you for not knowing better how to shape your course."

For the moment, contempt prevailed over indignation; Consuelo and Joseph burst into laughter, and Corilla, who,

on perceiving what she called in her mind the incapacity of her rival, lost that aggressive bitterness with which she had first armed herself, put herself at her ease, drew a chair towards the fire and prepared to continue the conversation tranquilly, in order that she might better discover the strong and weak points of her adversaries. At this instant, she found herself face to face with the canon whom she had not yet perceived, because the latter, guided by his spirit of ecclesiastical prudence, had made a sign to the gardener's stout wife and her two children to keep before him until he could understand what was passing.

## CHAPTER XCIV.

AFTER the insinuation she had thrown out, a few minutes before, respecting Consuelo's connection with the fat canon, the sight of the latter produced upon Corilla somewhat the effect of a Medusa's head. But she gained confidence at the thought that she had spoken in Venetian, and saluted him in German, with that mixture of embarrassment and effrontery which characterizes the look and the very physiognomy of the woman of bad life. The canon, usually so polite and gracious in his hospitality, nevertheless did not rise nor even return her salutation. Corilla, who had enquired much about him at Vienna, had been told by everybody that he was extremely well-bred, a great lover of music, and incapable of severely reproving a woman, especially a cantatrice. She had intended to go and see him and fascinate him in order to prevent his speaking against her. But if, in such affairs, she had the kind of wit which Consuelo wanted, she also had that nonchalance and those desultory habits, which belong to disorder, laziness, and, though this may seem out of place, to unneatness. All these feelings are attached to the life of gross organizations. Effeminacy of body and mind render powerless the effects of intrigue, and Corilla, who had an instinct for all sorts of treacheries, had rarely the energy to conduct them well. She had therefore put off her visit to the canon from day to day, and when she found him so cold and so severe, she began to be visibly disconcerted.

Then, seeking to recover herself by a bold stroke, she said to Consuelo who still kept Angela in her arms:

"Well, why don't you let me embrace my daughter and lay her at sir canon's feet, that—"

"*Dame Corilla*," said the canon, in the same dry and coldly satirical tone, with which he had formerly said, *dame Brid-*



get, "have the goodness to let that child alone;" and expressing himself in Italian with much elegance, though with a slowness rather too accented, he thus continued, without moving his cap from his head; "During the fifteen minutes I have been listening to you, though I am not very familiar with your patois, I have understood enough to warrant me in telling you, that you are, by far, the most impudent jade I have ever met with in my life. Still, I believe you more stupid than wicked, more cowardly than dangerous. You comprehend nothing that is beautiful, and it would be a waste of time to attempt to make you comprehend it. I have only one thing to say to you: that young girl, that virgin, that saint, as you called her just now in mockery, you pollute by speaking to her; therefore speak not to her again. As to this child which was born of you, you would disgrace it by your touch: therefore touch it not. An infant is a holy being; Consuelo has said it, and I have understood her. It was from the intercession, the persuasion of Consuelo, that I dared to take charge of your daughter, without fear that the perverse instincts she might have inherited from you would some day make me repent of it. We said to each other that divine goodness gives to every creature the power of knowing and practising what is good, and we resolved to teach her what is good and to make it pleasant and easy to her. With you, it would be far otherwise. From this day, therefore, you will no longer consider this child as yours. You have abandoned it, ceded it, given it; it no longer belongs to you. You remitted a sum of money to pay for its education—" He here made a sign to the gardener's wife, who, directed by him an instant before, had taken from the wardrobe a tied and sealed purse; that which Corilla had sent to the canon with her daughter, and which had not been opened. He took it and threw it at Corilla's feet, adding: "We have nothing to do with it and do not wish it. Now, I request you to leave my house and never to set foot in it again, under any pretext whatever. On these conditions, and that you never allow yourself to utter a word respecting the circumstances which

have forced us into relations with you, we promise you the most absolute silence respecting all that concerns you. But if you act otherwise, I warn you that I have means you know not of letting her imperial majesty hear the truth, and that you may suddenly exchange your theatrical crowns and the applauses of your admirers, for a residence of some years in a Magdalen asylum."

Having spoken thus, the canon rose, made a sign to the nurse to take the child in her arms, to Consuelo to retire with Joseph to the extremity of the apartment, and with his finger, pointed out the door to Corilla, who, terrified, pale and trembling, rushed out convulsively and as if distracted, without knowing where she went nor what was passing about her.

The canon, during this kind of imprecation, had felt an honest man's indignation, which, little by little, had rendered him truly powerful. Consuelo and Joseph had never seen him thus. The habit of authority which is never lost in a priest, and also, the attitude of royal command which passes somewhat in the blood, and which, at that instant, betrayed the son of Augustus II., clothed the canon, perhaps without his knowledge, with a kind of irresistible majesty. Corilla, to whom no man had ever thus spoken in the austere calmness of truth, experienced more fear and terror, than her furious lovers had ever excited in her by their outrages of vengeance and contempt. Italian and superstitious, she was really afraid of that ecclesiastic and his anathema, and fled terrified through the garden, while the canon, exhausted by the effort so contrary to his habits of benevolence and cheerfulness, sank upon his chair, pale and almost fainting.

While hastening to aid him, Consuelo involuntarily followed with her eyes the agitated and tottering steps of poor Corilla. She saw her stumble at the end of the alley and fall upon the grass as if she had made a false step in her trouble, or could no longer support herself. Carried away by her good heart, and considering the lesson more severe than she would have had strength to give her, she left the canon in the care of Joseph, and ran to her rival who was suffering under a violent

nervous attack. Unable to calm her and not daring to lead her back to the priory, she prevented her from rolling on the ground and tearing her hands with the gravel. Corilla was as if crazy for some moments; but when she recognized the person who was assisting her and who endeavored to console her, she calmed herself and became of a bluish paleness. Her contracted lips kept a gloomy silence, and her dull eyes were not raised from the ground on which they were fixed. Still she allowed herself to be conducted to her carriage which was waiting for her at the gate, and entered it, supported by her rival, without saying a single word. "You are very ill," said Consuelo, frightened at the alteration in her features. "Let me go a little distance with you, I will return on foot." Corilla, for all answer, pushed her rudely back, then looked at her a moment with an impenetrable expression. And suddenly, bursting into a paroxysm of sobs, she hid her face in one of her hands, making with the other a sign to her coachman to drive off, and lowering the blind of the carriage between her and her generous enemy.

On the next day, at the hour for the last rehearsal of *Antigono*, Consuelo was at her post, and waiting for Corilla in order to begin. The latter sent her servant to say that she would come in half an hour. Caffariello wished her at all the devils, said he was not at the command of such an abigail, that he would not wait for her, and pretended to go away. Madam Tesi, pale and suffering, had wished to be present at the rehearsal, in order to amuse herself at Corilla's expense; she had had a stage sofa brought, and extended thereon behind the first wing, painted like a folded curtain, which, in the familiar dialect of the green room, is called *Harlequin's cloak*, she calmed her friend and insisted on waiting for Corilla, thinking it was to avoid her criticism that she hesitated to appear. At last, Corilla arrived, more pale and languishing than madam Tesi herself, who recovered her color and strength on seeing her thus. Instead of throwing off her mantle and hood with the haughty movement and careless air she usually assumed, she let herself fall upon a throne of gilt wood which

had been left at the back of the stage, and spoke thus to Holzbäuer in a faint voice: "Mr. manager, I declare to you that I am horribly ill, that I have lost my voice, that I have passed a terrible night—" ("with whom?" asked the Tesi languishingly of Caffariello)—"and that for all these reasons," continued Corilla, "it is impossible for me to rehearse to-day and sing to-morrow, unless I resume the part of Ismene, and you give that of Berenice to another."

"Do you dream of it, madam?" cried Holzbäuer, as if struck by a thunder-bolt. "Is it on the eve of performance and when the court has fixed the hour, that you can bring forward an excuse?"

"You will have to consent to it," replied she, resuming her natural voice, which was by no means gentle. "I am engaged for the second parts, and there is nothing in my contract can compel me to perform the first. It was a desire to oblige which induced me to accept them on the failure of madam Tesi, and not to interrupt the pleasures of the court. Now I am too ill to keep my promise, and you cannot make me sing against my will."

"My good friend, you will be made to sing *by order*," said Caffariello, "and you will sing badly; we were prepared for it. This is a little misfortune to be added to all those you have been willing to encounter in the course of your life; but it is too late to repent of it. You ought to have made your reflections a little sooner. You presumed too much upon your powers. You will suffer *fiasco*; that is of little consequence to us. I shall so sing as to make the audience forget that the part of Berenice exists. The Porporina also, in her little part of Ismene, will make amends to them, and everybody will be satisfied except you. This is a lesson by which you will profit, or by which you will not profit, another time."

"You are much deceived as to the motives of my refusal," replied Corilla with assurance. "If I were not ill, I could perhaps sing the part as well as *any other*; but as I cannot sing it, there is one here who will sing it better than it has yet been sung in Vienna, and that no later than to-morrow.

Thus the performance will not be put off, and I will with pleasure resume my part of Ismene which does not fatigue me."

"Then you think," said Holzbäuer, surprised, "that madam Tesi will be well enough to-morrow to sing her part?"

"I know very well that madam Tesi cannot sing for a long time," said Corilla, in a loud voice, so that from the throne on which she was seated she could be heard by the Tesi, extended upon her sofa ten paces from her: "see how she is changed, her face is frightful. But I have said that you have a perfect Berenice, and here she is," added she, rising and taking Consuelo by the hand to draw her into the middle of the anxious and agitated group which had formed around her.

"Me?" cried Consuelo, who thought she was dreaming.

"You!" cried Corilla, pushing her upon the throne with a convulsive movement. "Now you are a queen, Porporina, you are in the first rank; it is I who place you there, I owed you that. Do not forget it!"

In his distress, Holzbäuer, on the point of failing in his duty and perhaps of being forced to give in his resignation, could not refuse this unexpected relief. He had in fact seen from the style in which Consuelo performed Ismene, that she could also perform Berenice in a superior manner. Spite of his aversion to her and Porpora, he had at this moment but one fear, which was that she would not accept the part.

She did indeed excuse herself, and very seriously; and cordially pressing Corilla's hands, begged her, in a low voice, not to make for her a sacrifice which gave her so little satisfaction, while in her rival's mind, it was the most terrible expiation and the most fearful submission she could impose upon herself. Corilla was not to be shaken in her resolution. Madam Tesi, terrified by the serious competition with which she was threatened, would have wished to try her voice and resume her part were she to expire the moment afterwards, for she was seriously indisposed; but she did not dare. It

was not allowable at the court theatre, to give way to those caprices to which the good natured sovereign of our days, the good public, submits so patiently. The court expected something new in this part of Berenice; it had been announced; the empress depended upon it. "Come, decide," said Caffariello to the Porporina. "This is the first sensible thing Corilla has ever done in her life; let us profit by it."

"But I do not know the part; I have not studied it," said Consuelo; "I shall not be able to know it by to-morrow."

"You have heard it; therefore you know it, and you will sing it to-morrow," said Porpora at last, in a voice of thunder. "Come, no more nonsense and stop this debate. We have wasted more than an hour in babbling. Sir manager, let the violins commence. And you, Berenice, to the stage! no book! down with that book! when you have rehearsed three times, you ought to know all the parts by heart. I tell you that you do know it!"

"No; tutto, ô Berenice," sang Corilla, who had again become Ismene.

"*Tu non apri il tuo cor.*"

"And now," thought that girl, who judged of Consuelo's pride by her own, "*all that she knows of my adventures will seem to her of little consequence.*"

Consuelo, whose prodigious memory and all powerful facility Porpora well knew, did in fact sing the part, music and words, without the least hesitation. Madam Tesi was so struck by her acting and her singing, that she found herself much more ill, and was carried home after the rehearsal of the first act. The next day, it was necessary for Consuelo to prepare her dress, arrange the *strokes* of her part and go over the whole carefully, by five o'clock in the evening. Her success was so complete, that the empress, on going out, said: "That is an admirable young girl; decidedly I must have her married; I will think about it."

On the day after, they commenced the rehearsal of Metastasio's *Zenobia*, music by Predieri. Corilla still insisted on yielding the first part to Consuelo. Madam Holzbäuer sang

the second this time; and as she was a better musician than Corilla, this opera was much better studied than the other. Metastasio was delighted to see his muse, which had been neglected and forgotten during the war, recover favor at the court and excite enthusiasm at Vienna. He almost thought no more of his troubles; and, urged by the benevolence of Maria-Theresa and by the duties of his office, to write new lyrical dramas, he prepared himself, by reading Greek tragedies and Latin classics, to produce some one of those masterpieces which the Italians in Vienna and the Germans in Italy placed without ceremony above the tragedies of Racine, of Corneille, of Shakespeare, of Calderon, above everything, to speak openly and without false shame.

It is not in the very midst of this history, already so long and so full of details, that we shall further impose upon the reader's patience, perhaps long since exhausted, by telling him what we think of Metastasio's genius. That can be of little consequence to him. We shall therefore only repeat what Consuelo said of it in private, to Joseph.

“My poor Beppo, you could not believe the difficulty I find in playing these parts which are called so sublime and so pathetic. It is true that the words are well arranged, that they flow easily from the tongue in singing; but when I think of the personage who utters them, I know not where to find I will not say emotion, but gravity to pronounce them. What a strange medley has been made by modelling antiquity to the fashion of our own time, and bringing upon the stage intrigues, passions and moralities, which would be appropriate, perhaps, in the memoirs of the margravine of Bareith, of baron de Trenck or of the princess of Culmbach, but which, in Rhadamistes, Berenice or Arsinoe, are absurd anachronisms. During my convalescence at Giant's castle, count Albert often read to me to make me sleep; but I did not sleep, and listened with all my might. He read to me the Greek tragedies of Sophocles, of Eschylus and Euripides, and he read them in Spanish, slowly but clearly and without hesitation, though he had the Greek text before him. He was so

well versed in ancient and modern languages, that you would have said he was reading an admirably written translation. He endeavored to make it literal, he said, that from the scrupulous exactness of his interpretation I might comprehend the genius of the Greeks in all its simplicity. What grandeur, Dio Santo! What poetry and what wisdom! What gigantic personages, what pure and strong characters, what energetic situations, what deep and true sorrows, what heart-rending and terrible pictures, he made pass before me! Still weak, my imagination still under the influence of the violent emotions which had caused my illness, I was so overpowered by what I heard, that I imagined myself, when listening to him, to be by turns Antigone, Clytemnestra, Medea, Electra, and to play in person those terrible and sad dramas, not upon a stage in the glare of the foot lights, but in horrible solitudes, upon the thresholds of yawning grottoes, or under the columns of ancient porticoes, by the light of pale fires, where I bewailed the dead and conspired against the living. I heard those heart-rending choruses of the Trojan women and the Dardanian captives. The Furies danced around me—to what strange rhythms and what infernal modulations! I never think of it without a feeling of pleasure and of terror which makes me shudder. Never shall I experience, upon the stage, in the realization of my dreams, the same emotions and the same powers which I then felt stirring in my heart and brain. There, for the first time, I felt myself to be a tragedian, and I conceived types of which no artist had furnished me the models. There I comprehended the drama, the tragic effect, the poetry of the theatre; and as Albert read, I inwardly improvised a chant upon which I imagined that I followed and myself said all that I heard. I sometimes surprised myself in the attitude and with the physiognomy of the persons whom he was making speak, and he often stopped, frightened, thinking that he saw Andromache or Ariadne appear before him. Oh! I learnt and divined more in a month from those readings, than I should in a whole life spent in repeating M. de Metastasio's dramas, and if the composers had not intro-



duced in the music the feeling and the truth which are wanting in the action, I believe I should sink under the disgust I experience in making grand-duchess Zenobia converse with landgravine Eglé, and in hearing field-marshal Rhadamistes dispute with ensign Zopire. Oh! all that is false, egregiously false, my poor Beppo! false as our costumes, false as the blonde-colored wig of Caffariello Tiridates, false as madam Holzbäuer's deshabillé Pompadour in the Armenian shepherdess, as prince Demetrius' rose-colored knit breeches, as these scenes which are here beside us, and which are as much like Asia as the abbé Metastasio is like old Homer."

"What you have just said," replied Haydn, "explains to me the reason why, feeling as I do the necessity of writing operas for the theatre, if indeed I can ever attain to that, I am conscious of more inspiration and hope when I think of composing oratorios. There, where the puerile artifices of the stage do not continually give the lie to the truth of feeling, in that symphonic scale where all is music, where soul speaks to soul by the ear and not by the eye, it seems to me that the composer can develop all his inspiration and carry the imagination of his audience into truly elevated regions."

While conversing thus, Joseph and Consuelo, waiting the coming of others for the rehearsal, walked side by side along a great back scene which was that evening to be the river Araxes, and which, in the half light of the stage, was then only a broad band of indigo stretched out among great splashes of ochre, destined to represent the mountains of the Caucasus. These back-scenes, when prepared for the performance, are placed one behind another, so as to be rolled upon a cylinder at each change. In the intervals which separate them, the actors walk during the performance; the supernumeraries sleep or exchange pinches of snuff, seated or lying in the dust, under the drops of oil which slowly fall from the badly secured lamps. During the day, the actors walk along these narrow and dark alleys, repeating their parts, or talking of their private concerns; sometimes listening to the little secrets, or surprising

the deep machinations of other promenaders conversing quite near to them without seeing them, behind an arm of the sea or a public square.

Fortunately, Metastasio was not upon the other bank of the Araxes while the inexperienced Consuelo thus poured out her artist's indignation to Haydn. The rehearsal began. It was the second of *Zenobia*, and it went on so well that the musicians of the orchestra applauded, according to custom, with their bows upon the body of their violins. Predieri's music was charming, and Porpora led with more enthusiasm than he had been able to feel for that of Hasse. The part of Tiridates was one of Caffariello's triumphs, and he did not wish to be offended at their dressing him like a savage Parthian warrior, while they made him warble like Celadon and talk like Clitander. Consuelo, if she felt her part to be false and stiff in the mouth of a heroine of antiquity, at least found in it a woman's character agreeably drawn. It presented at the same time a kind of similarity to the frame of mind in which she was between Albert and Anzoletto; and forgetting entirely the *local color*, as we say now-a-days, to represent only human sentiments, she perceived that she was sublime in that air, the text of which she had so often felt in her own heart:

Voi leggete in ogni core ;  
 Voi sapete, o giusti Dei,  
 Se son puri i voti miei,  
 Se innocente é la pietà.

At this instant she was conscious of a true emotion and of a deserved triumph. She did not require the glance of Caffariello, who was not restrained that day by the presence of the Tesi and who admired in good earnest, to confirm her in what she already felt, the certainty of the irresistible effect she should produce with that splendid passage upon all audiences and under all possible circumstances. She thus found herself quite reconciled with her part, with the opera, with her comrades, with herself, with the stage in a word; and spite of all the imprecations she had uttered against her profession an

hour before, she could not help feeling one of those inward thrills, so sudden and so powerful, that it is impossible for any one who is not an artist in something, to understand what ages of labor, of deceptions and sufferings they recompense in an instant.

## CHAPTER XCV.

IN his quality of pupil, still half-servant to Porpora, Haydn, desirous of hearing music and of studying, even under a material point of view, the arrangement of operas, obtained permission to glide behind the scenes when Consuelo was singing. For the last two days he had remarked that Porpora, at first quite disinclined to admit him thus to the interior of the stage, had authorized him to do so with an air of good nature, even before he dared to ask him. The fact was that the professor's mind had taken a new turn. Maria-Theresa, talking of music with the Venetian ambassador, had recurred to her fixed idea of matrimoniomania, as Consuelo called it. She had told him that she should be pleased to see that great cantatrice establish herself permanently at Vienna by marrying the young musician, her master's pupil; she had obtained information respecting Haydn from the ambassador himself, and the latter having said much in his favor, assuring her that he displayed great musical powers and especially that he was a very good Catholic, her majesty had desired him to bring about the marriage, promising to make a comfortable provision for the young couple. The idea pleased M. Corner, who loved Joseph tenderly and had already given him a pension of seventy-two francs a month that he might continue his studies with freedom. He spoke of it warmly to Porpora, and the latter, fearing lest his Consuelo should persist in her idea of retiring from the stage to marry a gentleman, after having hesitated and resisted a long while, (he would have preferred above everything that his pupil should live without marriage and without love,) at last allowed himself to be persuaded. To strike a great blow, the ambassador showed him Haydn's compositions, and confessed that the serenade *en trio* with which he had been so much pleased, was Beppo's.

Porpora acknowledged that they displayed the germ of great talent; that he could give him a good direction and help him by his advice to write for the voice; in fine, that the situation of a cantatrice married to a composer might be a very advantageous one. The extreme youth of the couple and their slender resources would make it necessary for them to devote themselves to labor without other ambitious hopes, and Consuelo would thus be chained to the stage. The maestro consented. He had received no answer from Riesenburg any more than had Consuelo. This silence made him fear some resistance to his views, some project on the part of the young count. "If I can marry or at least betroth Consuelo to another," thought he, "I shall have nothing more to fear on that score."

The difficulty was to bring Consuelo to this resolution. To advise her to it would have inspired her with the idea of resisting. With his Neapolitan tact, he said to himself that circumstances must produce an insensible change in the young girl's mind. She felt a friendship for Beppo, and Beppo, though he had overcome love in his heart, showed so much zeal, admiration and devotedness for her, that it was easy for Porpora to imagine him violently in love. He thought that by not thwarting him in his relations with her, he would give him the means of making his attentions acceptable; that by informing him, at fit time and place, of the empress' designs and his own consent, he would inspire him with the courage of eloquence and the fire of persuasion. In fine, he suddenly ceased to abuse and disparage him, and allowed free scope to their fraternal freedom, flattering himself that matters would advance more speedily than if he openly interfered.

Porpora, in not sufficiently doubting of success, committed a great mistake. He exposed Consuelo's reputation to slander; for it was only necessary that Joseph should be seen twice in succession with her behind the scenes, for all the people of the theatre to proclaim her love for that young man, and poor Consuelo, confiding and without foresight like all upright and pure souls, never thought of anticipating the dan-

ger and guarding against it. Thus, from the day of this rehearsal of *Zenobia*, all eyes were opened and all tongues let loose. In each wing, behind each scene, the actors, the choristers, the employés of all sorts who were walking about, made their remarks, malicious or good-natured, accusing or benevolent, respecting the scandal of that nascent intrigue or the freedom of those happy betrothals.

Consuelo, entirely occupied by her part, by her artist's feelings, saw, heard and suspected nothing. Joseph, dreamer as he was, absorbed by the opera they were singing and that which he meditated in his musical soul, caught, indeed, some whispered words and did not understand them, so far was he from being flattered by a vain hope. When he overheard in passing, some equivocal sentence, some cutting observation, he raised his head, looked around, searched for the object of these satires, and not seeing any, fell again into his meditations; for he was profoundly indifferent to all talk of the kind.

Between each act of the opera, they often gave a comic interlude, and that day they rehearsed the *Impresario delle Canarie*, a collection of very gay and comic scenes by Metastasio. Corilla, who played in it the part of an exacting, imperious and capricious prima donna, was absolutely perfect, and the success she usually had in this farce consoled her a little for the sacrifice of her great part of *Zenobia*. During the rehearsal of the last part of the interlude, and while waiting for that of the third act, Consuelo, somewhat oppressed by the emotion of her part, went behind the back scene, between the *horrible valley bristling with mountains and precipices*, which formed the first decoration, and that good river Araxes, bordered by *most delightful mountains*, which was to appear in the third scene, agreeably to refresh the eyes of the *feeling* spectator. She was walking rather fast, forwards and backwards, when Joseph brought her fan which she had left upon the prompter's box, and of which she made use with much pleasure. The instinct of his heart and Porpora's voluntary inattention, mechanically impelled Joseph to join his friend; the habit of confidence and the need of sympathy always made Consuelo

receive him joyfully. This double movement of sympathy at which the angels in heaven would not have blushed, fate had decreed should be the occasion and the cause of strange misfortunes. We know very well that our lady novel-readers, always in a hurry to reach the dénouement, think "the more mischief the better sport;" we beg them to have a little patience.

"Well, my friend," said Joseph, smiling upon Consuelo and extending his hand; "it seems to me that you are no longer dissatisfied with the drama of our illustrious abbé, and that you have found in your air of the prayer, an open window through which the demon of the genius who possesses you can take his flight in good earnest."

"Then you think I sang it well?"

"Do you not see that my eyes are red?"

"Ah! yes, you have wept. That is good. So much the better! I am glad to have made you weep."

"As if it were for the first time! But you are becoming an artist, as Porpora wishes you to be, my good Consuelo. The fever of success is excited in you. When you sang in the bye-paths of the Boehmer-wald, you indeed saw me weep and you wept yourself, moved by the beauty of your song; now it is altogether another matter; you smile with happiness and are thrilled with pride on seeing the tears you cause to flow. Come, courage, my Consuelo, you are *prima donna* in the full sense of the term!"

"Do not tell me so, friend. I shall never be like her." And by her gesture she indicated Corilla who was singing on the other side of the back-scene, upon the front part of the stage.

"Do not misunderstand me," resumed Joseph, "I mean to say that the God of inspiration has conquered you. Your cold reason, your austere philosophy and the recollection of Riesenbourg have in vain struggled against the spirit of Python. This is what fills you to overflowing. Confess that you pant with pleasure; I feel your arm tremble in mine; your face is animated and I have never seen in you the look

you now wear. No, you were not more agitated, you were not more inspired when count Albert was reading the Greek tragedies to you!"

"Oh! what pain you give me!" cried Consuelo, suddenly becoming pale and withdrawing her arm from Joseph's. "Why do you pronounce that name? It is a sacred name which ought not to be heard in this temple of folly. It is a terrible name which, like a thunderbolt, drives back into night all the illusions and all the phantoms of gilded dreams!"

"Shall I say it, Consuelo?" resumed Haydn, after a moment's hesitation; "you can never resolve to marry that man."

"Be silent, be silent, I have promised!"

"Well! if you keep your promise, you can never be happy with him. You! leave the stage? renounce your life as an artist? It is too late by an hour. You have tasted a joy, the remembrance of which would be the torment of your life."

"You terrify me, Beppo! Why do you say such things to me to-day?"

"I know not: I say them as if in spite of myself. Your fever has passed into my brain, and it seems to me that when I go home I shall write something sublime. No doubt it will be something ridiculous. No matter; I feel full of genius for the moment."

"How gay you are! how tranquil you are! while I, in the midst of this fever of pride and joy of which you speak, feel an intense sadness and would like to laugh and weep at the same time."

"You suffer, I am sure; you must suffer. At the moment when you feel your power burst forth, a dismal thought seizes upon and freezes you——"

"Yes! that is true; what does it mean?"

"It means that you are an artist, and that you have imposed upon yourself as a duty the cruel obligation, abominable to God and yourself, of renouncing art."

"Yesterday it seemed to me that it was not so, and to-day



it seems to me that it is. I am nervous, and these agitations are terrible and fatal, as I see. I had always denied their impulse and their power. I had always entered upon the stage with calmness, with a conscientious and modest attention. Now I am no longer mistress of myself, and if I had to appear at this moment, it seems to me that I should commit some sublime follies or miserable extravagances. The reins of my will slip from my hands; I hope I shall not be so to-morrow, for this emotion partakes both of delirium and agony."

"Poor friend! I fear that it will always be so henceforth, or rather I hope so; for you will not be truly powerful except under the influence of this emotion. I have heard it said by all the musicians, all the actors with whom I have conversed, that without this delirium or this trouble, they could do nothing; that instead of becoming more calm with age and habit, they became always more impressionable at each embrace of their demon."

"This is a great mystery," said Consuelo sighing. "It does not seem to me that vanity, the jealousy of others, the mean desire of triumph, can have so suddenly seized upon me and transformed my whole being in the course of a single day. No! I assure you that in singing that prayer of Zenobia and that duet with Tiridates, in which Caffariello's passion and vigor carried me away like a whirlwind, I thought neither of the public, nor of my rivals, nor of myself. I was Zenobia; I thought of the immortal gods of Olympus with an entirely Christian ardor, and I burned with love for that good Caffariello, whom I cannot look at off the stage without a smile. All this is strange, and I begin to think that, as the dramatic art is a perpetual lie, God punishes us by striking us with the madness of believing in it ourselves and of considering as real what we do to produce illusion in others. No! It is not permitted to man to abuse all the passions and all the emotions of life in order to make of them a play. He wishes us to keep our souls healthy and powerful for true affections, for

useful actions, and when we defeat his ends, he punishes us and makes us mad."

"God! God! The will of God! There lies the mystery, Consuelo! Who can penetrate the designs of God towards us? Would he give us, from our cradles, these instincts, this need of a certain art, which we never can stifle, if he intended to proscribe the use we are called upon to make of them? Why, from my childhood, did I take no pleasure in the plays of my little comrades? Why, ever since I have been my own master, have I applied myself to music with an eagerness from which nothing could distract me, with an assiduity which would have killed any other child of my age? Repose wearied me, labor gave me life. It was the same with yourself, Consuelo. You have told me so a hundred times, and when one of us related his history to the other, the latter thought he heard his own. Yes, the hand of God is in all, and every power, every inclination is his work, even when we do not understand its object. You were born an artist, therefore you must be one, and whoever prevents you from being one will kill you or give you a life worse than the grave."

"Ah! Beppo," cried Consuelo in consternation and almost distracted, "if you were really my friend, I well know what you would do."

"What then, dear Consuelo? Does not my life belong to you?"

"You would kill me to-morrow as soon as the curtain falls, after I have been truly an artist, truly inspired, for the first and the last time in my life."

"Ah!" said Joseph with a sad gaiety, "I would rather kill your count Albert or myself."

At this moment, Consuelo raised her eyes in a melancholy revery toward the wing which opened before her. The interior of a great theatre, seen by day, is so different from what it appears to us from the hall by lamp-light, that it is impossible to form an idea of it when one has not seen it thus. There is nothing more sad, more gloomy and more frightful than that hall buried in obscurity, in solitude and silence. If a human face

should show itself distinctly in those boxes closed like tombs, it would seem like a spectre and would make the boldest actor recoil with fear. The fitful and dim light, which falls from several windows in the roof at the back part of the stage, glances aslant over scaffoldings, torn scenes and dusty boards. Upon the stage, the eye, deprived of the illusion of perspective, is astonished at that contracted space where so many persons and passions are to act, representing majestic movements, imposing masses, ungovernable emotions, which will seem such to the spectator, and which are studied, measured to a line, so as not to interfere and be confused, or strike against the scenes. But if the stage look small and mean, on the other hand, the height above it intended to receive so many decorations and to move so much machinery, appears immense, freed from all those scenes festooned in clouds, in architectural cornices or verdant boughs which divide it in certain proportions to the eye of the spectator. In its real disproportion this elevation has something austere, and, if in looking upon the stage, you would think yourself in a dungeon, on casting your eyes upwards, you would believe yourself in a Gothic church, but in a ruined or unfinished one; for everything there is dim, unformed, odd and incoherent. Ladders without order for the use of the machinist, placed as if by chance and thrown without apparent motive against other ladders which are not distinguished in the confusion of these indistinct details; piles of oddly shaped boards, scenes upside down, the design of which presents no meaning to the mind; ropes interlaced like hieroglyphics; nameless fragments, pulleys and wheels which seem prepared for unknown punishments; all this resembles those dreams we have when about waking, in which we see incomprehensible things, while we make vain efforts to ascertain where we are. Everything is vague, everything floats and seems ready to fall to pieces. You see a man who works tranquilly upon the rafters and seems upheld by spiders' webs; he may appear to you like a sailor climbing the shrouds of a vessel, or like a gigantic rat sawing and gnawing the worm-eaten timbers.

You hear words which come you know not whence. They are uttered eighty feet above your head, and the strange sounding of the echoes huddled together in every corner of this odd-shaped dome brings them to your ears, distinct or confused, as you make a step in one direction or another, which changes the acoustic effect. A horrible noise shakes the scaffoldings and is repeated in prolonged whistlings. Has the roof given way? Has one of those weak balconies cracked and fallen, burying poor workmen beneath its ruins? No! it is a watchman sneezing, or a cat rushing after her prey across the precipices of that suspended labyrinth. Before you become accustomed to all these objects and all these noises, you are afraid; you know not what is happening, nor against what unheard of apparitions you must arm yourself with courage. You understand nothing, and that which is not distinguished by the eye or by the thought, that which is uncertain and unknown, always alarms the imagination. The most reasonable idea you can form, on first entering such a chaos, is that you are about to be present at some senseless mummery in the laboratory of a mysterious alchymy.\*

\* And still, as everything has its beauty for the eye which knows how to see, those theatrical limbos have a beauty much more affecting to the imagination than all the pretended illusions of the stage, when lighted and prepared for the hour of performance. I have often asked myself in what that beauty consisted, and how it would be possible for me to describe it, if I wished to impart the secret to the mind of another. What, it will be said, can external objects, without color, without form, without order and without distinctness, assume an aspect which speaks to the eye and to the mind? Only a painter could reply: "Yes, I understand it." He will recall the *Philosophy in meditation* of Rembrandt: that large room lost in shadow, those staircases without end, which turn one knows not how; those dim lights which shine and are extinguished, one knows not why, upon different planes of the picture; all that scene so indistinct and at the same time so clear; that powerful color spread over a subject, which, in fact, is painted only with light and dark brown; that magic of chiar'oscuro, that play of well managed light upon the most insignificant objects, upon a chair, a pitcher, a copper kettle; and at once, those objects, which are not worthy to be looked at, and still less to be painted, become so interesting, so beautiful in their way, that you cannot withdraw your eyes from them. They have received life, they exist and are worthy to exist, because the artist has touched them with his wand, because he has there fixed a portion of the sun, because between them and him he has

Consuelo therefore let her eyes wander absently over this singular edifice, and the poetry of that disorder was revealed to her for the first time. At each extremity of the passage formed by the two back scenes, opened a dark and deep wing in which figures passed from time to time like shadows. Suddenly she saw one of those figures stop as if to wait for her, and she thought she saw a gesture which called her. "Is that Porpora?" asked she of Joseph. "No," said he,

known how to extend a transparent, mysterious veil, the atmosphere which we see, which we breathe, and into which we think we enter, as in our imagination we bury ourselves in the depths of his canvas. Well! if in real life we should find one of his pictures, were it composed of objects more contemptible still, of broken boards, faded rags, smoked walls; if a pale light dimly throws its illusion over it; if the chiar'oscuro there displays that essential art which is in the effect, in the assemblage, in the harmony of all existing things without man's intervention, man knows how to find it there, and he delights in it, he admires it, he enjoys it as a conquest which he has made.

It is almost impossible to explain in words those mysteries which the pencil of a great master unfolds intelligibly to all eyes. On seeing the interiors of Rembrandt, of Teniers, of Gerard Dow, the most common eye will recall the reality which nevertheless had never struck it poetically. To see this reality poetically, and to make of it in thought, one of Rembrandt's pictures, it is only necessary to be endowed with the picturesque vision common to many organizations.

But to describe this picture and make it pass by words into the mind of another, requires a power so ingenious, that in attempting it, I declare I am yielding to a whim without hope of success. The genius endowed with this power, and which expresses it in verse, (a much more prodigious thing to attempt,) has not always succeeded. And yet I doubt, whether, in our age, any literary artist can approximate to the results he has obtained in this style. Read a piece of poetry which is called *The Well of India*; it will be a masterpiece, or a dissipation of the imagination, according as your faculties are or are not sympathetic with those of the poet. As for myself, I confess that I was horribly shocked by the perusal. I could not approve such disorder and such intemperance of description. But when I had closed the book, I could see nothing else in my brain but those wells, those subterranean passages, those gulfs, through which the poet had made me pass. I saw them in my dreams, I saw them when awake. I could not get out of them, I was buried alive in them. I was overpowered, and was not willing to read the piece again, for fear of finding that so great a painter, so great a poet, was not a faultless writer. Nevertheless, I retained in my memory for a long while the last eight verses, which, in all times and to all tastes, will be a profound and sublime passage, and without reproach, whether heard by the heart, the ear or the mind.

“but it is doubtless some one who has come to notify you that the third act is to be rehearsed.”

Consuelo hurried forward, directing her steps towards the person whose features she could not distinguish because he had drawn back to the wall. But when she was three feet from him, and was about to question him, he glided quickly through the neighboring wings and gained the bottom of the stage, passing behind all the scenes.

“That is some one who seems to watch us,” said Joseph.

“And who likewise seems to fly,” added Consuelo, struck by the earnestness with which he had withdrawn himself from her eyes. “I know not why I feel afraid of him.”

She returned to the scene and rehearsed her last act, towards the termination of which she again experienced the feelings of enthusiasm which had before transported her. When she wished to put on her mantle to retire, she looked for it, but was dazzled by a sudden brightness; a luthern-window had just been opened above her head, and the rays of the setting sun fell obliquely before her. The contrast of that sharp light with the obscurity of surrounding objects perplexed her sight for an instant; and she made two or three steps at random, when suddenly she found herself by the side of that same person in a black cloak, who had disturbed her in the wing. She saw him confusedly, and still it seemed to her that she recognized him. She uttered a cry and rushed towards him; but he had already disappeared, and she looked for him in vain.

“What is the matter?” said Joseph, presenting her mantle; “have you hit against an ornament? have you hurt yourself?”

“No,” said she, “but I have seen count Albert.” “Count Albert here? Are you sure? Is it possible?” “It is possible, it is certain,” said Consuelo, dragging him onward; and she went through all the wings, running and penetrating into every corner. Joseph assisted her in the search, all the while persuaded that she had deceived herself, while Porpora called her impatiently that he might conduct her to their lodging.

Consuelo found no one who recalled to her the least feature of Albert; and when, compelled to go out with her master, she saw pass all the persons who had been on the stage at the same time with herself, she remarked several cloaks quite similar to that which had struck her. "It makes no difference," said she in a low voice to Joseph, who drew her attention to this, "I did see him; he was there!"

"It was an hallucination of yours," returned Joseph. "If it had in truth been count Albert, he would have spoken to you; and you say that he twice fled from your approach."

"I do not say that it was really he; but I have seen him, and as you say, Joseph, I now think it was a vision. Some misfortune must have happened to him. Oh! I have a great mind to go off at once and fly to Bohemia. I am sure that he is in danger, that he calls me, that he expects me."

"I see that, among other bad things, he has inoculated you with his craziness, my poor Consuelo. The exaltation you felt in singing has disposed you to these reveries. Recover yourself, I conjure you, and be certain that if count Albert be in Vienna, you will see him hasten to you alive and well before the close of the day."

This hope reanimated Consuelo. She quickened her pace with Beppo, leaving behind her old Porpora, who was not vexed this time at her forgetting him in the warmth of her conversation with the young man. But Consuelo was thinking no more of Joseph than of the maestro. She ran, she arrived quite out of breath, ascended to her apartment, and found no one. Joseph questioned the domestics if any one had asked for her during her absence. Nobody had come, nobody came. Consuelo expected in vain the whole day. During the evening and quite far into the night, she looked from her window at the belated passers-by who went through the street. It continually seemed to her that she saw somebody direct his steps towards her door and stop. But each somebody passed on, one singing, another with an old man's cough, and were all lost in the darkness. Consuelo, convinced that she had dreamt, went to bed, and on the morrow,

this impression being dissipated, she confessed to Joseph that she had not really distinguished any feature of the person in question. His whole appearance, the cut and hang of his cloak, a pale complexion, something black at the lower part of his face, which might be a beard or indeed the shadow of his hat strongly thrown by the peculiar light of the stage, these vague resemblances, rapidly seized by her imagination, had been enough to persuade her that she saw Albert.

“If such a man as you have often depicted him to me had been upon the stage,” said Joseph to her, “there were so many people wandering all about that his neglected apparel, his long beard and black locks must have attracted attention. Now, I have asked everybody, even the door-keepers who let no one into the interior without recognizing him or seeing his permit, and nobody had seen any stranger at the theatre on that day.”

“Then it is certain that I was dreaming. I was agitated, beside myself. I thought of Albert; his image passed in my mind. Some one was there before my eyes, and I made Albert of him. My head must have become very weak? It is certain that I must have cried from the bottom of my heart, and that something very extraordinary and very absurd took place in me.”

“Think no more of it,” said Joseph; “do not fatigue yourself with chimeras. Go over your part, and think of this evening!”



## CHAPTER XCVI.

THAT day, Consuelo saw from her window a very strange troop file towards the square. It consisted of thick-set, robust and weather-beaten men, with long moustaches, their naked legs clad in thongs interlaced like the ancient buskin, their heads covered with pointed caps, their belts garnished with four pistols each, the neck and arms uncovered, the hand armed with a long Albanian carabine, and the whole set off by a red cloak. "Is that a masquerade?" asked Consuelo of the canon, who had come to pay her a visit: "we are not in the carnival that I am aware of."

"Look well at those men," replied the canon, "for we shall not see them again for a long while, if it please God to maintain the reign of Maria-Theresa. See how the people look at them with curiosity, though with a kind of disgust and terror! Vienna saw them enter in her days of anguish and distress, and then she received them more joyously than she does now, ashamed and dismayed as she is at having owed her salvation to them."

"Are those the Sclavonian brigands, whom I heard so much of in Bohemia, and who did so much mischief there?"

"Yes, those are they," replied the canon; "those are the remnant of the hordes of serfs and Croatian bandits whom the famous baron Francis de Trenck, cousin-german of your friend the baron Frederick, had freed or enslaved with an incredible boldness and ability to make almost regular troops in the service of Maria-Theresa. There, there he is, that frightful hero, that Trenck with the burnt mouth, as our soldiers call him; that famous partisan, the most crafty, the most intrepid, the most necessary in the sad and warlike years which have just passed; the greatest talker and the greatest pillager of his century, decidedly; but also the most brave.

the most hardy, the most active, the most fabulously rash of modern times. That is he, Trenck the pandour, with his famished wolves, a sanguinary pack of which he is the savage shepherd."

Francis de Trenck was still taller than his cousin of Prussia. He was nearly six feet five. His scarlet cloak, fastened round his neck by a brooch of rubies, opened upon his chest to display a whole museum of Turkish artillery studded with precious stones, of which his girdle was the arsenal. Pistols, curved sabres and cutlass, nothing was wanting to give him the appearance of the most expeditious and the most determined slayer of men. As a plume, he wore on his cap the figure of a small scythe with four sharp blades, falling towards the front. His aspect was horrible. The explosion of a barrel of powder\* in disfiguring him, had put the finish to his diabolical look. "He could not be seen without a shudder," say all the memoirs of the time.

"Then that is that monster, that enemy of humanity!" said Consuelo, turning away her eyes with horror. "Bohemia will long remember his passage; the cities burned and sacked, the old men and children cut in pieces, the women ravished, the country exhausted by contributions, the crops devastated, the flocks destroyed when they could not be carried away, everywhere ruin, desolation, murder and conflagration. Poor Bohemia! eternal rendezvous of all strifes, theatre of all tragedies!"

"Yes, poor Bohemia! victim of all furies, arena of all combats," returned the canon; "Francis de Trenck has there renewed the horrible excesses of the time of Jean Ziska. Like him unconquered, he has never given quarter; and the terror of his name was so great, that his advance guards have

\* Having descended into a cellar at the pillage of a town in Bohemia, and in the hope of discovering first, some casks of gold the existence of which had been reported to him, he hurriedly approached a light to one of the precious casks; but it was powder which it contained. The explosion brought down a part of the vault upon him, and he was rescued from the ruins, dying, his body furrowed with enormous burns, his face covered with deep and ineffaceable wounds.

carried cities by assault, while he was yet four leagues distant fighting with other enemies. It may be said of him as of Attila, that the grass never sprouts again where his horse has passed. The vanquished will curse him to the fourth generation."

Francis de Trenck was lost in the distance ; but for a long time Consuelo and the canon saw file before them his magnificent horses, richly caparisoned, which his gigantic Croatian hussars led by hand. "What you see is only a trifling specimen of his riches," said the canon. "Mules and chariots loaded with arms, pictures, precious stones, ingots of gold and silver, incessantly cover the roads leading to his estates in Sclavonia. There he has amassed treasures which would furnish the ransom of three kings. He eats from gold plate, which he took from the king of Prussia at Soraw, when he almost took the king of Prussia himself. Some say that he missed him by a quarter of an hour ; others pretend that he had him prisoner in his hands, and that he sold him his liberty at a high price. Patience ! Trenck the pandour will not long enjoy, perhaps, so much glory and riches. They say that a criminal process threatens him, that the most horrible accusations are suspended over his head, that the empress is much afraid of him ; in fine, those of his Croats who have not taken, according to their custom, their discharge under their caps, are to be incorporated in the regular troops and kept in check after the Prussian manner. As to himself—I have a bad idea of the compliments and rewards which await him at the court."

"They have saved the Austrian crown, from what is said !"

"That is certain. From the frontiers of Turkey even to those of France, they have spread terror and carried the best defended places, the most desperate battles. Always the first in attack at the front of an army, at the head of a bridge, at the breach of a fort, they have forced our greatest generals to admire and our enemies to fly. The French have always recoiled before them, and the great Frederick has paled, they

say, like a simple mortal at their war-cry. There is no rapid river, no inextricable forest, no miry bog, no precipitous rock, no hail of bullets or torrent of flames, which they have not passed at all hours of the night and in the most rigorous seasons. Yes, certainly, they have saved the crown of Maria-Theresa more than all the old military tactics of our generals and all the craft of our diplomatists."

"In that case, their crimes will be unpunished and their thefts sanctified!"

"Perhaps they will be too severely punished, on the contrary."

"Those who have rendered such services are not usually punished?"

"Excuse me," said the canon, maliciously; "when there is no more need of them—"

"But were not all those excesses permitted, which they committed on the territories of the empire and her allies?"

"Doubtless, everything was permitted, because it was necessary."

"And now?"

"Now that this is no longer the case, they are blamed for all that was permitted them."

"And the great soul of Maria-Theresa?"

"They have profaned churches!"

"I understand. Trenck is ruined, sir canon."

"Chut! that must be said in a low voice," returned he.

"Have you seen the pandours?" cried Joseph, entering quite out of breath.

"With little pleasure," replied Consuelo.

"Well, did you not recognize them?"

"This is the first time I have seen them."

"Not so, Consuelo, it is not the first time those figures have struck your eyes. We met some of them in the Boehmer-wald."

"None, thank God! to my recollection."

"Then you have forgotten a hut in which we passed the

night on the fern, and where we perceived all of a sudden that ten or a dozen men were sleeping around us?"

Consuelo remembered the adventure of the hut and the encounter with those savage persons whom she, as well as Joseph, had taken for smugglers. Other emotions, which she neither shared nor imagined, had engraved upon Joseph's memory all the circumstances of that stormy night. "Well," said he, "those supposed smugglers who did not perceive our presence beside them and who left the hut before day, carrying bags and heavy bundles, were pandours; they had the same arms, faces, mustaches and cloaks which I have just seen pass, and Providence delivered us, without our knowledge, from the most dangerous encounter we could have made on our journey."

"Without any doubt," said the canon, to whom the details of that journey had often been related by Joseph; "those honest people had been discharged by their own will, as is their custom when their pockets are full, and were gaining the frontier to return to their country by a long circuit, rather than pass with their booty over the territory of the empire, where they were always afraid of having to give an account of themselves. But be sure that they did not reach it without difficulty. They rob and assassinate each other all along the road, and it is the strongest who reaches his forests and his caverns, laden with the shares of his companions."

The hour of performance came to distract Consuelo from her sombre recollection of Trenck's pandours, and she went to the theatre. She had no room to dress in; until then madam Tesi had lent hers to her. But this time, madam Tesi much enraged at her success and already her sworn enemy, had carried away the key, and the prima-donna of the evening was much embarrassed to know where to find a refuge. These little perfidies are usual at the theatre. They irritate and indispose the rival whose powers they are intended to paralyze. She loses time in asking for a dressing room, she is afraid of not finding one. The hour advances; her comrades say to her in passing: "What! not yet dressed? they

are going to begin." At last, after many requests and many steps, by means of anger and threats, she succeeds in getting into a room, in which she finds nothing that she requires. If the milliners are ever so little bribed, the costume is not ready or fits badly. The dressing maids are at the orders of every other than the victim destined to this little punishment. The clock strikes, the notifier, (the *butta-fuori*,) cries with his shrill voice in the corridors: "*Signore e signori, si va cominciar!*" terrible words which the debutante does not hear without a mortal chill; she is not ready; she hurries, she breaks her laces, she tears her ruffles, she puts on her mantle awry, and her diadem will fall off the very first step she makes upon the stage. Palpitating, indignant, nervous, her eyes full of tears, she must appear with a celestial smile upon her face; she must display a pure, fresh and unerring voice, when her throat is suffocating and her heart ready to break.—Oh! all those crowns of flowers which rain upon the stage at the moment of triumph, have beneath them thousands of thorns.

Fortunately for Consuelo, she met Corilla, who, taking her by the hand, said: "Come to my room; the Tesi has flattered herself she could play you the same trick she did me at the beginning. But I will come to your assistance, were it only to enrage her! it is a vengeance at least! At the rate at which you go on, Porporina, I really risk seeing you pass before me wherever I have the misfortune to meet you. Then you will no doubt forget the manner in which I behave to you here, and remember only the injury I have done you."

"The injury you have done me, Corilla?" said Consuelo, entering her rival's dressing-room and commencing her toilet behind a screen, while the German dressing-maids divided their attention between the two cantatrices who could converse in Venetian without being understood. "Really, I do not know what injury you have done me; I cannot recollect any."

"The proof that you feel a grudge against me is, that you say *you* to me, as if you were a duchess and as if you despised me."

"Well, I do not remember that *thou* hast done me any

injury," returned Consuelo, overcoming the repugnance she felt at treating familiarly a woman whom she respected so little.

"Do you say the truth?" retorted the other. "Have you so far forgotten poor Zoto?"

"I was free and able to forget him; I have done so," returned Consuelo, fastening on her queen's buskin with that courage and freedom of mind which the feeling of the profession gives at certain moments; and she made a brilliant roudade not to forget to keep herself in voice.

Corilla replied by another roudade for the same reason; then she interrupted herself to say to her maid: "By the devil's blood, wench, you squeeze me too tight. Do you think you are dressing a Nuremberg doll? These Germans," resumed she in dialect, "don't know what shoulders are. They would make us as square as their dowagers, if they had their way. Porporina, don't let yourself be bundled up to the ears as you did last time: it was absurd."

"Ah! as to that, my dear, it is the imperial order. These dames know it; and I don't think it worth my while to rebel for so small a matter."

"So small a matter! our shoulders, a small matter!"

"I do not say so for you, who have the most beautiful form in the universe; but for me—"

"Hypocrite!" said Corilla with a sigh; "you are ten years younger than I am, and my shoulders will soon have to depend entirely upon their reputation."

"It is you who are a hypocrite," returned Consuelo, horribly wearied with this style of conversation; and to interrupt it, she began, as she did up her hair, to go through her gamut and embellishments.

"Hold your tongue!" suddenly said Corilla, who listened to her in spite of herself; "you plunge a thousand daggers in my throat. Ah! I would yield all my lovers to you with a good will; I could readily find others; but your voice and your method I never can dispute with you. Hold your tongue! I have a great mind to strangle you."

Consuelo, who saw well that Corilla was only half in jest, and that these mocking flatteries concealed a real suffering, took the hint; but an instant after, the latter resumed: "How do you make that stroke?"

"Do you wish to make it? I yield it to you," replied Consuelo, laughing with her admirable good-nature. "Here, I will teach it to you. Put it in some place of your part from this very evening. I will find another."

"That would only be a stronger one. I should gain nothing."

"Well then, I will not make it at all. It is as well, for Porpora does not like such things, and it will be one reproach less he will have to make to me this evening. Here, there is my stroke." And drawing from her pocket a line of music written upon a small piece of folded paper, she passed it over the screen to Corilla, who began to study it immediately. Consuelo assisted her, sang it to her several times and at last taught it to her; the dressings going on at the same time. But before Consuelo had put on her robe, Corilla impetuously pushed aside the screen and came to embrace her, thanking her for the sacrifice she had made. It was not a very sincere feeling of gratitude which impelled her to this demonstration. There was mingled with it a perfidious desire to see her rival's figure in her corset, that she might be able to betray the secret of some imperfection. But Consuelo had no corset. Her waist was unshackled as a reed, and her chaste and noble form borrowed not the aid of art. She guessed Corilla's intention and smiled. "You may examine my person and penetrate my heart," thought she, "you will find nothing false there."

"Zingarella," said Corilla to her, resuming, in spite of herself, her hostile manner and her harsh voice, "then you no longer love Anzoletto?"

"Not at all," replied Consuelo, laughing.

"And he, he loved you a great deal?"

"Not at all," returned Consuelo with the same assurance and the same well-felt and very sincere ingenuousness.

"So he told me, indeed!" cried Corilla, fixing upon her



her blue, clear and ardent eyes, in the hope of detecting a regret and re-opening a wound in the past life of her rival.

Consuelo did not pique herself upon finesse, but she had that of frank souls, so powerful when it strives against crafty designs. She felt the blow and resisted tranquilly. She no longer loved Anzoleto: she knew not the sufferings of self-love; she therefore permitted this triumph to Corilla's vanity. "He told you the truth," she answered, "he did not love me."

"But you, did you then never love him?" said the other, more astonished than satisfied at this concession.

Consuelo felt that she could not be frank half-way. Corilla wished to get the advantage of her and must needs be satisfied. "I," replied she, "I loved him a great deal."

"And you confess it so? Have you no pride, poor girl?"

"I have had enough to be cured."

"That is to say you have had philosophy enough to be consoled with another. Tell me with whom, Porporina. It cannot be with that little Haydn, who has n't a copper to bless himself withal."

"That would be no reason. But I have not been consoled with any one in the manner you mean."

"Ah! I know! I forgot that you pretend— But don't say such things here, my dear, you will be turned into ridicule."

"Therefore I shall not say them unless I am asked; and I shall not let everybody ask me. It is a liberty I have let you take, Corilla; you will not abuse it unless you are my enemy."

"You are a mask," cried Corilla. "You have wit, though you pretend to be so ingenuous. You have so much that I am on the point of believing you as pure as I was at twelve years old. Still that is impossible. Ah! how skilful you are, Zingarella! you will make the men believe whatever you wish."

"I shall not make them believe anything; for I shall not allow them to be sufficiently interested in my affairs to question me."

"That will be the wiser: they always take advantage of our confessions, and have no sooner drawn them from us than

they humiliate us with their reproaches. I see you know your business. You will do well not to inspire passions ; in that way you will have no trouble, no storms ; you can act freely without deceiving any one. With an uncovered face, you will find more lovers and make your fortune sooner. But for that you will need more courage than I have ; no one must please you and you must not care to be loved by any one ; for those dangerous delights of love cannot be enjoyed without precautions and falsehoods. I admire you, Zingarella ! Yes, I feel struck with respect at seeing you, so young, triumph over love ; for the thing most fatal to our repose, to our voices, to the duration of our beauty, to our fortunes, to our success, is indeed love, is it not ? Oh ! yes, I know it by experience. If I could always have kept myself to cold gallantry I should not have suffered so much ; I should not have lost two thousand sequins and two of my highest notes. But see, I humble myself before you ; I am a poor creature ; I was born unhappy. Always, in the midst of my finest affairs, I have done some mad thing which has spoiled all, I have allowed myself to be taken by a crazy passion for some poor devil, and then good-bye to fortune ! I might have married Zustiniani ; yes, I could have ; he adored me and I could not endure him ; I was mistress of his lot. That miserable Anzoleto pleased me—I lost my position. Come, you will give me advice ; you will be my friend, will you not ? You will preserve me from the weakness of my heart and the lightness of my head. And, to begin—I must confess that for a week I have an inclination for a man who is losing favor singularly, and who, in a little while, may be more dangerous than useful at the court ; a man who is rich by millions, but who may be ruined in a turn of the hand. Yes, I wish to detach myself from him, before he drags me over his precipice—There ! the devil wishes to give me the lie, for he is coming ; I hear him, and I feel the fire of jealousy mount into my face. Close your screen well, Porporina, and do not move ; I don't want him to see you."

Consuelo hastened to draw the screen with care. She had

no need of the warning to desire not to be examined by Corilla's lovers. A man's voice, quite vibrating and true though deprived of freshness, hummed in the corridor. He knocked at the door for form's sake, and entered without waiting for an answer.

"Horrible profession," thought Consuelo. "No, I will not allow myself to be seduced by the intoxications of the stage; the interior is too disgusting."

And she hid herself in her corner, ashamed at being in such company, indignant and dismayed at the manner in which Corilla had understood her, and perceiving for the first time that abyss of corruption of which she previously had no idea.

## CHAPTER XCVII.

WHILE hurriedly completing her toilet, in the fear of a surprise, she heard the following dialogue in Italian :—

“ Why do you come here? I told you not to enter my room. The empress has forbidden us, under the severest penalties, to receive any other men than our comrades, and even then there must be some urgent necessity respecting the business of the theatre. See to what you expose me! I did not think the police of the rooms was so negligent.”

“ There is no police for those who pay well, my all beautiful. Only saps meet with resistance or delay upon their road. Come, receive me a little better, or, by the devil’s body, I will not return again.”

“ That would be the greatest pleasure you could give me. Go, then! Well, why don’t you go?”

“ You seem to desire it with such good faith, that I remain to make you angry.”

“ I warn you that I shall send for the manager to rid me of you.”

“ Let him come if he is tired of life! I am willing.”

“ But are you crazy? I tell you that you compromise me; that you make me break a rule recently introduced by her majesty; that you expose me to a heavy fine, a dismissal perhaps.”

“ The fine, I take upon myself to pay to your director with blows of my cane. As to your dismissal, I ask nothing better. I will carry you to my estates, where we will lead a jovial life.”

“ I follow such a brute as you? never! Come, let us go out together, since you are determined not to leave me here alone.”

“ Alone? alone, my charmer? That is what I mean to be

sure of before I quit you. There is a screen which takes up a great deal of room in this little chamber. It seems to me I should do you a service by dashing it up against the wall with a good kick."

"Stop, sir, stop! There is a lady dressing there. Would you kill or wound a woman, brigand as you are?"

"A woman! Ah, that is very different! But I wish to see if she has not a sword by her side."

The screen began to shake. Consuelo, who was entirely dressed, threw her cloak upon her shoulders; and while the first leaf of the screen was opening, she tried to push the last, in order to escape by the door which was only two steps off. But Corilla, who saw her intention, stopped her by saying: "Remain there, Porporina; if he should not find you, he might think it was a man who fled, and then he would kill me." Consuelo, terrified, was about to show herself, but Corilla, clinging to the screen, between her and her lover, still prevented her. Perhaps she hoped that by exciting his jealousy, she would enkindle enough passion in him to prevent his noticing the touching grace of her rival.

"If it be a lady who is there," said he, laughing, "let her answer me. Madam, are you dressed? Can I present my homage to you?"

"Sir," replied Consuelo, upon a sign from Corilla, "please to keep your homage for another, and excuse me from receiving it. I am not visible."

"That is to say this is the right moment for looking at you," said Corilla's lover, making a gesture to push aside the screen.

"Take care what you do," cried Corilla with a forced laugh; "if instead of a shepherdess in dishabille, you were to find a respectable duenna."

"Devil! But no! her voice is too fresh to come from more than twenty years, at most; and if she were not pretty, you would have already let me see her."

The screen was very high, and notwithstanding his great stature, the lover could not look over it without throwing

down all Corilla's dresses which cumbered the chairs ; besides since he no longer thought of being alarmed at the presence of a man, the play amused him.

"Madam," cried he, "if you are old and ugly, say nothing, and I respect your asylum ; but, in good faith, if you are young and handsome, don't let yourself be calumniated by Corilla, and say the word for me to force the guard."

Consuelo did not answer. "Ah ! by my faith !" cried the curious man, after waiting a moment, "I will not be duped by you ! If you were old or badly made, you would not do yourself justice so tranquilly ; it is because you are an angel that you laugh at my doubts. In either case, I must see you ; for either you are a prodigy of beauty capable of inspiring fear to the beautiful Corilla herself, or you are sensible enough to confess your ugliness, and I should be much pleased to see for the first time in my life an ugly woman devoid of pretence."

He took hold of Corilla's arm with two fingers only, and made her bend like a spire of grass. She uttered a loud cry, pretended that he had hurt, had wounded her ; he took no notice of her, and opening the fold of the screen, presented to the eyes of Consuelo the horrible face of the baron Francis de Trenck. One of the richest and most gallant court dresses had replaced his savage war-costume ; but by his gigantic stature and the large scars of a reddish black which furrowed his swarthy visage, one could not fail to recognize at a single glance the intrepid and pitiless chief of pandours.

Consuelo could not restrain a cry of terror, and fell back pale upon her chair. "Be not afraid of me, madam," said the baron, bending one knee to the floor, "and forgive me for a temerity of which it is impossible for me, when looking at you, to repent as I ought. But allow me to believe that it was out of pity to me, (well knowing that I could not see without adoring you,) that you refused to show yourself. Do not cause me the vexation of thinking that I frighten you ; I am ugly enough, I agree. But if the war has made a kind of monster out of quite a pretty youth, be sure that it has not made me more wicked for all that."

"More wicked? that was doubtless impossible!" replied Consuelo, turning her back on him.

"Oh ho!" replied the baron, "you are quite a savage child, and your nurse has probably told you some vampire stories about me, which the old women of this country never fail to do. But the young ones do me more justice, they know that if I am a little rough in my manners with the enemies of the country, I am very easily tamed if they only take pains." And leaning towards the mirror in which Consuelo pretended to be looking at herself, he fixed upon her that look at once voluptuous and ferocious, of which Corilla had undergone the brutal fascination. Consuelo saw that she could not free herself from him except by irritating him. "Sir baron," said she to him, "it is not fear with which you inspire me, but disgust and aversion. You like to kill, and I do not fear death; but I hate sanguinary souls, and I know yours. I have just arrived from Bohemia, and have seen the traces of your steps."

The baron changed countenance and said, shrugging his shoulders and turning towards Corilla: "What a she-devil this is! The baroness of Lestock, who fired a pistol close at my head when I once met her, was not more enraged against me! Can I have unwittingly ridden over her lover in some thicket? Come, my beauty, be calm; I wished to jest with you. But if you are so crabbed, I salute you; indeed I deserve such treatment for having allowed myself to be distracted a single moment from my divine Corilla."

"Your divine Corilla," replied the latter, "cares little for your distractions, and requests you to retire; for, in an instant, the director will be making his round, and unless you wish to cause a scandal —"

"I am going," said the baron; "I do not wish to afflict you and deprive the public of the freshness of your voice, by making you shed tears. I shall wait with my carriage at the door of the theatre after the performance. It is understood?" And he embraced her before Consuelo, whether she would or no, and retired.

Immediately Corilla threw herself upon the neck of her companion to thank her for having so well repelled the baron's flatteries. Consuelo turned aside her head; the beautiful Corilla, stained with the kiss of that man, caused her almost the same disgust as he did. "How can you be jealous of so repulsive a being?" said she to her.

"Zingarella, you do not understand the matter," replied Corilla smiling. "The baron pleases women who are of higher rank and who consider themselves more virtuous than we pretend to be. His figure is superb, and his face, though spoiled by scars, has charms which you could not resist if he took it into his head to make you think it handsome."

"Ah! Corilla, it is not his face that repels me most. His soul is still more hideous. You do not know then that his heart is that of a tiger!"

"And that is in fact what has turned my head!" replied Corilla, briskly. "To listen to the flatteries of all those effeminate who tease you, is a great matter truly! But to chain a tiger, conquer a lion of the forest, to lead him in a leash; to cause to sigh, weep, groan and tremble him whose look puts whole armies to flight, and a blow of whose sabre makes the head of an ox fly off like that of a poppy, that is a sharper pleasure than all those which I have known. Anzoleto had indeed a little of that; I loved him for his wickedness, but the baron is worse. The other was capable of beating his mistress, this one is capable of killing her. Oh! I love him much more!"

"Poor Corilla!" said Consuelo, letting fall upon her a glance of profound pity.

"You pity me for this love, and you are right; but you would be still more right if you envied me. I like better that you should pity me, after all, than that you should dispute him with me."

"Be quite easy on that score," said Consuelo.

"*Signora, si va cominciar!*" cried the notifier at the door.

"*Begin,*" cried a stentorian voice at the upper story occupied by the rooms of the choristers.



"*Begin!*" repeated another voice, gloomy and hollow at the bottom of the staircase which led to the back of the stage, and these last syllables, passing like a weakened echo from wing to wing, died away at the ears of the prompter, who conveyed them to the leader of the orchestra by three taps upon the floor. The latter, in his turn, struck with his bow upon the desk, and after that instant of concentration and palpitation which precedes the commencement of the overture, the symphony burst forth and imposed silence upon the boxes as well as upon the pit.

From the first act of *Zenobia*, Consuelo produced that complete and irresistible effect, which Haydn had predicted to her the day before. The greatest talents have not always an infallible triumph on the stage; even supposing that their powers have not an instant of failure, all the parts, all the situations are not fitted to the development of their most brilliant faculties. It was the first time that Consuelo found a part and situation in which she could be herself and manifest herself in her candor, in her strength, in her tenderness and her purity, without a labor of art and attention to identify herself with an unknown personage. She was enabled to forget that terrible labor, abandon herself to the emotion of the moment, be suddenly inspired by pathetic and profound feelings which she had not had time to study and which were revealed to her by the magnetism of a sympathetic audience. She experienced therein an indescribable pleasure; and as she had felt in a less degree at the rehearsal, as she had sincerely expressed to Joseph, it was not the triumph which the public awarded her that intoxicated her with joy, but indeed the happiness of having succeeded in manifesting herself, the victorious certainty of having attained for a moment the ideal in her art. Until then, she had always asked herself with anxiety if she could not improve upon her style and her part. This time, she felt that she had revealed all her power, and, almost deaf to the clamors of the crowd, she applauded herself in the secret recesses of her conscience.

After the first act, she remained in the wing to hear the

interlude in which Corilla was charming, and to encourage her by sincere praises. But, after the second act, she felt the need of taking a moment's rest and reascended to the dressing room. Porpora, occupied elsewhere, did not follow her, and Joseph, who, by a secret effect of the imperial protection, had been suddenly admitted to take a part with his violin in the orchestra, remained at his post as may be supposed.

Consuelo therefore entered Corilla's room alone, the latter having given her the key, took a glass of water and threw herself for an instant upon the sofa. But suddenly the recollection of the pandour Trenck caused her a kind of terror, and she ran to fasten the door upon herself with a double turn of the key. Yet there was hardly any probability of his coming to torment her. He had placed himself in the theatre at the rising of the curtain, and Consuelo had distinguished him in a balcony among his most extravagant admirers. He was passionately fond of music; born and educated in Italy, he spoke the language as harmoniously as a real Italian, sang agreeably, and "if he had not been born with other resources, could have made a fortune on the stage," as his biographers pretend.

But what terror seized upon Consuelo, when, on returning to the sofa, she saw the fatal screen shake and open to make room for the appearance of the cursed pandour!

She rushed towards the door; but Trenck was there before her, and leaning his back against the lock:

"A little calmness, my charmer," said he with a frightful smile. "Since you share this room with Corilla, you must accustom yourself to meet here the lover of that beauty, and you could not be ignorant that he had a second key in his pocket. You have thrown yourself into the lion's den—oh! don't think of crying out! Nobody will come. They know Trenck's presence of mind, the strength of his hand, and how little he cares for the lives of fools. If they let him penetrate here, in spite of the imperial order, the reason apparently is, that among all your actors there is not one bold enough to look him in the face. Well, why do you tremble and look so pale? Are you

so little sure of yourself, that you cannot bear three words without losing your senses? Or do you think I am a man to do you violence or injury? Those are old women's stories which have been told you, my child. Trenck is not so wicked as he is said to be, and it is to convince you of this that he wishes to converse an instant with you."

"Sir, I will not listen to you until you have opened that door," said Consuelo, arming herself with resolution. "On that condition, I consent to let you speak. But if you insist on keeping me shut up with you here, I shall believe that this man so brave and so strong has doubts of himself, and fears to meet my comrades the actors."

"Ah! you are right," said Trenck, opening the door quite wide; "and if you are not afraid of taking cold, I like much better to have the air, than to stifle in the musk with which Corilla fills this little chamber. You do me a favor." Speaking thus, he returned, seized both Consuelo's hands, forced her to sit upon the sofa, and placed himself on his knees before her, retaining her hands which she could not draw away from him without exciting a puerile struggle, fatal perhaps to her honor; for the baron seemed to await and provoke that resistance which would arouse his violent instincts and make him lose all scruples and all respect. Consuelo understood him and resigned herself to the shame of a doubtful position. But a tear which she could not restrain rolled slowly over her pale and sad cheek. The baron saw it, and instead of being softened and disarmed, he allowed an ardent and cruel joy to glitter from his red eyelids, blood-shot and burnt to the quick by the powder.

"You are very unjust towards me," said he in a voice, the caressing gentleness of which betrayed a hypocritical satisfaction. "You hate me without knowing me, and are unwilling to listen to my justification. As for me, I cannot be stupidly resigned to your aversion. An hour since, I did not care for it; but since I have heard the divine Porporina, since I adore her, I feel that I must live for her, or die by her hand."

"Spare yourself this ridiculous comedy," said Consuelo, indignant.

"Comedy?" interrupted the baron; "here," said he, taking from his pocket a loaded pistol which he cocked and presented to her: "you will keep this weapon in one of your beautiful hands, and if I, in spite of myself, offend you in speaking to you, if I continue odious to you, kill me if you please. As to this other hand, I am resolved to keep possession of it until you give me permission to kiss it. But I wish to owe that favor to your goodness only, and you will see me ask and wait for it patiently under that murderous weapon which you can turn against me whenever my suit becomes insupportable to you."

In fact, Trenck put the pistol into Consuelo's right hand, and retained the left by force, remaining upon his knees with the confidence of an incomparable vanity. Consuelo felt herself quite strong from that instant, and placing the pistol so that she could use it at the first danger, she said to him with a smile, "You can speak, I listen." As she said this, it seemed to her that she heard steps in the corridor, and saw the shadow of a person already projected before the door. But that shadow immediately disappeared, either because the person had retraced his steps, or because Consuelo's fright had been an imaginary one. In the situation in which she was, and not having anything to fear more than a scandal, the approach of any indifferent person, or even of a rescuer, caused her more fear than pleasure; if she kept silence, the baron, surprised on his knees, with the door open, could not fail to appear shamelessly in good favor with her; if she called, if she cried for help, the baron would certainly kill the first who entered. Fifty traits of this character adorned the memoirs of his private life, and the victims of his passions did not on that account pass for less weak or less dishonored. In this horrible alternative, Consuelo could not but desire a prompt explanation, and hope that, by her own courage she should be able to bring Trenck to reason without having any wit-

ness to comment upon and interpret at his will this strange scene.

He understood a part of her thought, and pushed to the door, but without closing it entirely. "Truly, madam," said he, returning towards her, "it would be foolish to expose you to the malicious remarks of passers-by, and this quarrel must be settled between ourselves alone. Listen to me; I see your fears, and understand the scruples of your friendship for Corilla. Your honor, your reputation for loyalty are dearer to me even than the precious moments in which I can look upon you without witnesses. I know well that that she-pantier, with whom I was in love only an hour ago, would accuse you of treachery if she should surprise me at your feet. She will not have that pleasure; the moments are counted. She has still ten minutes to divert the public with her grimaces. I have therefore time enough to tell you that if I did love her, I already recollect it no more than I do the first apple I gathered; therefore do not fear to withdraw from her a heart which no longer belongs to her, and from which nothing can henceforth efface your image. You alone, madam, reign over me and can dispose of my life. Why should you hesitate? You have, they say, a lover; I will rid you of him with a fillip. You are constantly guarded by a gloomy and jealous old master; I will carry you off from under his eyes. You are perplexed at the theatre by a thousand intrigues; the public adores you, it is true; but the public is an ingrate who will abandon you at the first hoarseness you chance to have. I am immensely rich, and can make of you a princess, almost a queen, in a country wild indeed, but in which I can build for you, in the twinkling of an eye, palaces and theatres more beautiful and more vast than those of the court of Vienna. If you require a public, by a stroke of my wand I can draw from the earth one which shall be devoted, submissive and faithful, in proportion as that of Vienna wants those qualities. I am not handsome, I know; but the scars which cover my face are more respectable and more glorious than the paint which covers the pallid cheeks of your actors. I am severe

to my slaves and implacable to my enemies ; but I am gentle for my good servants, and those who love me swim in joy, in glory and opulence. In fine, I am sometimes violent ; you have been told the truth in this. One cannot be brave and strong as I am, without liking to make use of his power, when vengeance and pride become him. But a pure, timid, gentle and charming woman such as you are, can overcome my strength, enchain my will, and keep me under her feet like a child. Only try ; confide in me secretly for a while, and, when you know me, you will see that you can entrust to me the care of your future lot and follow me into Sclavonia. You smile ! You think the name resembles slavery. It is I, celestial Porporina, who will be your slave. Look at me and accustom yourself to this ugliness which your love would beautify. Say but one word, and you will see that the red eyes of Trenck the Austrian can shed tears of tenderness and joy, as well as the handsome eyes of Trenck the Prussian, that dear cousin whom I love, though we have fought in hostile ranks, and who was not indifferent to you, as I am told. But that Trenck is a child ; and he who speaks to you, though still young, (he is only thirty-four, though his face furrowed by the lightning would give him credit for twice that,) has passed the age of caprices, and will assure you long years of happiness. Speak, speak, say yes, and you will see that passion can transfigure me and make a radiant Jupiter out of Trenck with the burnt mouth. You do not answer ? A touching modesty makes you still hesitate ? Well, say nothing, let me but kiss your hand, and I withdraw, full of confidence and happiness. See if I am such a brute and tiger as I am depicted !”

Consuelo examined with surprise that frightful man who had seduced so many women. She studied that fascination, which would in fact have been irresistible in spite of ugliness, had it been the countenance of an honest man, animated by the passion of his heart ; but it was only the ugliness of an unbridled voluptuary, and his passion was only the Don Quixotism of an impertinent presumption.

“Have you said all, sir baron?” asked she of him with tranquillity; but suddenly she reddened and paled at seeing a handful of large diamonds, enormous pearls and rubies of great value which the Slave despot threw upon her lap. She rose suddenly and sent rolling on the floor those precious stones which Corilla was to gather.

“Trenck,” said she to him, with the strength of contempt and indignation, “you are the meanest of cowards with all your bravery. You have never fought but with flocks and herds, and you have cut their throats without pity. If a true man had turned against you, you would have fled like a ferocious and cowardly wolf as you are. Your glorious scars! I know that you received them in a cellar, where you were searching for the gold of the vanquished in the midst of corpses. Your palaces and your little kingdom are the blood of a noble people upon whom despotism imposed such a compatriot as you, who have paid for them; they are the last plunder torn from the widow and the orphan; the gold of treachery; the pillage of churches, in which you pretend to prostrate yourself and recite your prayers, (for you are a bigot, to complete all your great qualities.) Your cousin, Trenck the Prussian, whom you cherish so tenderly, you betrayed and wished to have assassinated; those women whose glory and happiness you have made, you violated after cutting the throats of their husbands and their fathers. This tenderness which you have improvised for me, is the caprice of a worn-out libertine. This chivalric submission which has caused you to place your life in my hands, is the vanity of a fool who thinks himself irresistible; and that slight favor which you ask of me, would be a stain that I could not wash out but by suicide. That is my last word, pandour of the burnt mouth! Leave my sight, fly! for if you do not release my hand, which for a quarter of an hour you have been freezing in yours, I will rid the world of a villain by blowing out your brains.”

“Is that your last word, daughter of hell?” cried Trenck; “well, woe to you! the pistol which I disdain to dash from

your hand is only loaded with powder ; a little burn more or less does not terrify him who is proof against fire. Fire the pistol, make a noise, it is all I wish ! I shall be pleased to have witnesses of my victory ; for now nothing can save you from my embraces ; and you have enkindled in me by your folly fires which you might have restrained by a little prudence."

Speaking thus, Trenck seized Consuelo in his arms, but at the same instant the door opened ; a man, whose face was entirely masked by a black crape tied behind his head, extended his hand to the pandour, made him bend and oscillate like a reed shaken by the wind, and cast him roughly to the floor. This was an affair of a few seconds. Trenck, confused at first, rose, and with haggard eyes, foaming mouth, sword in hand, rushed towards his enemy who gained the door and seemed to fly. Consuelo rushed also to the threshold, thinking she recognized, in that disguised man, the elevated stature and strong arm of count Albert. She saw him recoil to the end of the corridor, where a very steep winding staircase descended to the street. There he stopped, awaited Trenck, stooped suddenly while the baron's sword struck the wall, and seizing his body below the arms precipitated him over his shoulders, head foremost, down the staircase. Consuelo heard the giant roll ; she wished to run towards her deliverer, calling Albert ; but he had disappeared before she had strength to make three steps. A frightful silence reigned on the staircase.

" *Signora, cinque minuti !* " \* said the notifier to her, with a paternal air, making his appearance by the stage stairs which led to the same landing-place. " How happens it that this door is open ? " added he, looking at the door of the flight down which Trenck had been precipitated ; " truly your ladyship runs the risk of getting cold in this corridor. " He shut the door and locked it, according to orders ; and Consuelo, more dead than alive, returned to the dressing-room, threw

\* The act will begin in five minutes.



out of the window the pistol which had remained on the sofa, pushed with her foot under the furniture Trenck's precious stones which glittered on the carpet, and went to the stage where she found Corilla quite red and out of breath with the triumph she had obtained in the interlude.

## CHAPTER XCVIII.

NOTWITHSTANDING the convulsive agitation which had seized upon Consuelo, she even surpassed herself in the third act. She did not expect this; she had not counted upon it: she entered upon the stage with the desperate resolution to fall with honor, on seeing herself suddenly deprived of her voice and powers in the midst of a courageous struggle. She was not afraid; a thousand hisses would have been nothing in comparison with the danger and shame which she had just escaped by a kind of miraculous interposition. Another miracle followed that one; Consuelo's good genius seemed to watch over her: she had more voice than ever before; she sang with more *maestria*, and played with more energy and passion than she had ever before shown. All her being was exalted to its highest power; it seemed to her indeed, at every instant, that she was about to break like a cord too tightly strained; but that feverish excitement transported her into a supernatural sphere: she acted as in a dream, and was astonished to find therein the strength of reality.

And yet a thought of happiness reënimated her at every fear of failure: Albert, without any doubt, was there. He was in Vienna from the day before at least. He observed her; he followed all her movements; he watched over her: for to whom else could she attribute the unforeseen succor she had just received, and the almost supernatural strength with which a man must be endowed to cast to the ground Francis de Trenck, the Sclavonian Hercules? And if, from one of the strange moods of which his character presented but too many examples, he refused to speak to her, if he seemed to wish to conceal himself from her eyes, it was not the less evident that he still loved her ardently, since he protected her

with so much solicitude, and preserved her with so much energy.

“ Well,” thought Consuelo, “ since God allows that my powers shall not fail, I wish Albert to see me superior in my part, and in the corner of the theatre whence he doubtless observes me at this instant, enjoy a triumph which I owe neither to cabals nor to charlatanism.”

Even while keeping up the spirit of her part, she sought him with her eyes, but could not discover him; and when she reëntered the wing she sought him there again, but with as little success. “ Where could he be? where had he hidden himself? Had he killed the pandour on the spot, when he threw him down the stairs? Was he obliged to fly from pursuit? Would he come and ask shelter from her in Porpora’s lodging? Would she find him this time when she returned to the embassy?” These perplexities disappeared when she reëntered the scene: she then forgot, as by a magical effect, all the details of her real life, to feel only a vague emotion, mingled with enthusiasm, affright, gratitude and hope. And all this was in her part, and manifested itself in admirable accents of tenderness and truth.

She was recalled after the end; and the empress threw to her, the first, from her box, a bouquet to which was attached quite a valuable present. The court and city followed the sovereign’s example by sending a shower of flowers. Among these fragrant palms Consuelo saw fall at her feet a green branch, upon which her eyes involuntarily fixed themselves. As soon as the curtain was lowered for the last time, she seized upon it. It was a branch of cypress! Then all the triumphal crowns disappeared from her thoughts, leaving her only power to contemplate and comment upon this funereal emblem, a token of sorrow and of horror; the expression, perhaps, of a last farewell. A mortal chill succeeded to the fever of emotion; an insurmountable terror brought a cloud before her eyes. Her knees failed from under her, and she was carried almost fainting to the carriage of the Venetian ambassador, in which Porpora strove in vain to draw a word from her. Her lips

were frozen, and her petrified hand held under her cloak that branch of cypress which seemed to have been cast upon her by the wind of death.

On descending the stage staircase she had not seen any marks of blood ; and in the confusion of the exit, few persons had remarked them. But while she, absorbed in gloomy meditations, was regaining the embassy, quite a sad scene was passing with closed doors in the green-room. A short time before the termination of the performance, the officers of the theatre, on opening all the doors had found baron Trenck insensible at the bottom of the staircase and bathed in his own blood. They had carried him into one of the parlors reserved for the artists ; and not to make any noise or confusion, had secretly notified the director, the physician of the theatre and the police-officers, that they might verify the fact. The public and the actors therefore quitted the theatre and the stage without being acquainted with the occurrence, while the medical men, the imperial functionaries and some compassionate witnesses endeavored to restore and interrogate the pandour. Corilla, who was waiting for her lover's carriage, and who had sent her maid several times in vain to learn where he was, became angry and impatient and ventured to descend in person, at the risk of having to go home on foot. She met M. Holzbaüer, who knew her connexion with Trenck, and who conducted her to the green-room where she found her lover with his head broken and his body so bruised by the fall that he could move neither hand nor foot. She filled the air with her groans and lamentations. Holzbaüer put out all useless witnesses and closed the door. The cantatrice, on being questioned, could neither say nor imagine anything that would throw light upon the matter. At last, Trenck, having somewhat recovered his senses, declared that having come behind the scenes without permission, in order to see the dancers more closely, he had wished to hurry out before the end ; but that, not knowing the windings of the labyrinth, he had missed a step at the top of that cursed stair-case. He had fallen suddenly and rolled to the

bottom. They were satisfied with this explanation, and carried him to his house, whither Corilla went to nurse him with a zeal which made her lose the favor of prince Kaunitz and consequently the good will of her majesty ; but she boldly made the sacrifice, and Trenck, whose iron body had undergone much harder shocks, got off with a week's confinement and an additional scar on his head.

He boasted to no one of his mishap, and only promised himself to make Consuelo pay dear for it. He would have done so cruelly no doubt, had not an order for his arrest snatched him suddenly from Corilla's arms and thrown him into the military prison, hardly recovered from his fall and still shaking with fever.\* That which an undertoned public rumor had announced to the canon began to be realized. The riches of the pandour had excited in some influential men and skilful courtiers, a burning, inextinguishable thirst. He was its memorable victim. Accused of all the crimes he had committed, and of all those which could be imagined by persons interested in his ruin, he began to endure the delays, the vexations, the impudent prevarications, the refined injustice of a long and scandalous trial. Avaricious, spite of his ostentation, proud, spite of his vices, he was not willing to pay the zeal of his protectors or to buy the conscience of his judges. We will leave him confined, until fresh orders, in the prison, where, having behaved with some violence, he had the sorrow to see himself chained by one foot. Shame and infamy! it was exactly that foot which had been broken by the explosion of a bomb-shell in one of his most brilliant military actions. He had undergone the scarification of the ulcerated bone, and, hardly recovered, had remounted his horse to resume his service with a heroic firmness. An iron ring and a heavy chain were rivetted upon this horrible scar. The wound reöpened, and he endured new tortures, no longer to serve

\* Historical truth requires us to say also by what bravados Trenck provoked this inhuman treatment. From the first day of his arrival at Vienna he had been put under arrest in his own house by the imperial order. He had, none the less, shown himself at the opera that very evening, and in an interlude had tried to throw count Gossaw into the pit.

Maria-Theresa, but for having served her too well. The great queen, who had not been displeased at seeing him ravage and destroy that unfortunate Bohemia, a rather uncertain rampart against the enemy in consequence of the old national hatred, *the king* Maria-Theresa, who, having no more need of the crimes of Trenck and the excesses of his pandours to strengthen her upon the throne, began to look upon them as monstrous and unpardonable, was reputed ignorant of this barbarous treatment; in the same way that the great Frederick was reputed ignorant of the ferocious refinements of cruelty, the tortures of inanition and the sixty-eight pounds of iron, with which was martyred, a little later, that other baron Trenck, his handsome page, his brilliant artillery officer, the rescuer and the friend of our Consuelo. All those flatterers who have flippantly transmitted to us the recital of these abominable histories, have attributed their odium to subaltern officers, to obscure deputies, in order to clear the memory of the sovereigns. But those sovereigns, so ill-informed respecting the abuses of their gaols, knew so well, on the contrary, what was passing there, that Frederick-the-Great himself gave the design of the irons which Trenck the Prussian bore for nine years in his sepulchre at Magdeburg; and if Maria-Theresa did not exactly order Trenck the Austrian, her valorous pandour, to be chained by the mutilated foot, she was always deaf to his complaints, inaccessible to his petitions. Besides, in the shameful havoc which her people made of the riches of the vanquished, she knew very well how to carry off the lion's share and refuse justice to his heirs.

Let us return to Consuelo, for it is our duty as a romancer to pass rapidly over the details which relate to history. Still we know not how to isolate absolutely the adventures of our heroine from the facts which occurred at her time and under her eyes. On learning the pandour's misfortune, she thought no longer of the outrages with which he had threatened her, and, deeply revolted at the iniquity of his lot, she assisted Corilla in sending him money at a moment when all means

of softening the rigor of his captivity were refused him. Corilla, more ready in spending money than in acquiring it, found herself penniless exactly on the day when an emissary of her lover came in secret to obtain a necessary sum. Consuelo was the only person to whom this girl, overcome by the instinct of confidence and esteem, dared recur. Consuelo immediately sold the present which the empress had thrown upon the stage to her at the conclusion of *Zenobia*, and remitted the value to her comrade, approving her conduct in not abandoning the unfortunate Trenck in his distress. The zeal and courage with which Corilla served her lover as far as possible, even entering into an amiable understanding for this purpose with a baroness who was his acknowledged mistress and of whom she was mortally jealous, restored to Consuelo a kind of esteem for that creature, corrupted indeed but not perverse, who had still good feelings of the heart and bursts of disinterested generosity.

“Let us prostrate ourselves before the work of God,” said she to Joseph, who sometimes reproached her for being too open with that Corilla. “The human soul always preserves in its wanderings something good and great, in which we perceive with respect and discover with joy that sacred impress which is as the seal of the divine hand. Where there is much to lament, there is much to forgive; and where there is anything to forgive, be assured, good Joseph, there is also much to love. This poor Corilla, who lives after the manner of the beasts, has still sometimes the features of an angel. Come, I feel that I must be accustomed, if I remain an artist, to contemplate without fear and without anger those saddening turpitudes in which the lives of debased women pass, between the desire of good and the appetite of evil, between intoxication and remorse. And even, I confess to you, it seems to me that the character of a sister of charity is better fitted to the health of my virtue than a more purified and gentle life, than more glorious and more agreeable relations, than the calm of strong, happy and respected beings. I feel that my heart is made like the paradise of the tender Jesus, where there will

be more joy and welcome for one converted sinner than for a hundred triumphant just men. I feel that it is made to sympathize, to pity, to succor and console. It seems to me that the name my mother gave me at my baptism imposes upon me this duty and this destiny. I have no other name, Beppo! Society has not given me the pride of a family name to support; and if in the world's eye, I debase myself in seeking for some fragments of gold in the mud of the evil habits of others, I have no account to render to the world. I am *the Consuelo*, nothing more; and it is enough for the daughter of Rosmunda, for Rosmunda was a poor woman of whom even more evil was said than of Corilla, and, such as she was, it was my duty to love her, and I was able to. She was not respected like Maria-Theresa, but she would not have had Trenck chained by the foot to make him die in torture and to possess herself of his money. Neither would Corilla have done it; and yet, instead of beating her enemies for her, this Trenck whom she assists in his misfortune, has very often beaten her, Joseph! Joseph! God is a greater emperor than are all of ours; and perhaps indeed, since Magdalen has with him the seat of a duchess beside the immaculate virgin, Corilla will take precedence of Maria-Theresa to enter that court. As for myself, in the days which I have to spend upon the earth, I confess to you that, if I were obliged to leave the culpable and unhappy souls and seat myself at the banquet of the just in moral prosperity, I should believe I was no longer in the path of my salvation. Oh! the noble Albert understands these things as I do, and he would not blame me for being kind to Corilla."

When Consuelo was saying those things to her friend Beppo, a fortnight had passed since the evening of *Zenobia* and the adventure of baron Trenck. The six performances for which she had been engaged had taken place. Madam Tesi had reappeared upon the stage. The empress was secretly working upon Porpora through the ambassador Corner, and always made the marriage of Haydn with Consuelo the condition of the latter's definitive engagement at the imperial



theatre, after the expiration of the Tesi's. Joseph knew nothing of all this, Consuelo imagined nothing. She thought only of Albert, who had not reappeared and of whom she received no tidings. She revolved in her mind a thousand conjectures, a thousand contradictory decisions. These perplexities and the shock of such emotions had made her rather ill. She kept her chamber after she had concluded with the theatre, and incessantly contemplated that branch of cypress which seemed to her to have been brought from some tomb in the Schreckenstein.

Beppo, the only friend to whom she could open her heart, had at first tried to dissuade her from the idea that Albert had come to Vienna. But when she showed him the branch of cypress, he reflected profoundly on all this mystery, and at last believed in the young count's participation in the Trenck adventure. "Listen," said he to her, "I believe I understand what has taken place. Albert did in fact come to Vienna. He saw you, he heard you, he observed all your movements, he followed all your steps. The day when we were talking on the stage, beside the scene of the Araxes, he might have been on the other side of it and have heard the regrets which I expressed at seeing you removed from the theatre at the début of your glory. You yourself let fall I know not what exclamations which may have given him reason to think that you would prefer the brilliancy of your career to the solemn sadness of his love. On the next day, he saw you enter that dressing-room of Corilla, where perhaps, as he was always on the watch, he had seen the pandour enter a few minutes before. The time which he took to rescue you would almost prove that he thought you were there of your own free will, and it was only after having yielded to the temptation of listening at the door, that he understood the imminent necessity of his interference."

"Very well," said Consuelo; "but why act with mystery? Why conceal his face with a crape?"

"You know how suspicious the Austrian police is. Perhaps he has been the object of unfavorable reports to the

court, perhaps he had political reasons for concealing himself: perhaps his face was not unknown to Trenck. Who knows if he has not seen him in Bohemia during the last wars, if he has not affronted, threatened him? if he has not made him leave his prey when he had his hand upon some innocent? Count Albert may have secretly performed great deeds of courage and humanity in his country, while people believed him entranced in his grotto of the Schreckenstein: and if he did perform them, he would not have thought of relating them to you, since he is, as you say, the most humble and the most modest of men. He therefore acted wisely in not chastising the pandour with an uncovered face; for if the empress punishes the pandour now for having devastated her dear Bohemia, be sure that she is not any more disposed on that account to leave unpunished in the past an open resistance against the pandour on the part of a Bohemian."

"All that you say is very likely Joseph, and gives me subject for thought. A thousand anxieties are now awakened in me. Albert may have been recognized, arrested, and that may have been as unknown to the public as Trenck's fall on the staircase. Alas! perhaps he is, at this moment, in the prisons of the arsenal, at the side of Trenck's cell! And it is for me that he suffers this misfortune!"

"Be reassured, I do not believe that. Count Albert must have left Vienna immediately, and you will soon receive a letter from him dated at Riesenburg."

"Have you such a presentiment, Joseph?"

"Yes, I have. But if you wish me to tell you my whole thought, I believe that letter will be very different from what you expect. I am convinced that, far from persisting in obtaining from a generous friendship the sacrifice which you wished to make him of your artist's career, he has already renounced that marriage, and will soon restore to you your liberty. If he be intelligent, noble and just, as you say he is, he must scruple at taking you from the stage which you love passionately—do not deny it! I have seen it, and he must have seen and understood it as well as I, on hearing *Zenobia*.

He will therefore reject a sacrifice above your strength, and I should little esteem him, did he not do it."

"But read again his last billet! Here, there it is, Joseph! Did he not say that he would love me on the stage, as well as in the world or in a convent? Could he not admit the idea of leaving me free in marrying me?"

"Saying and doing, thinking and being are two different things. In the dream of passion, all seems possible; but when the reality suddenly strikes our eyes, we recur with terror to our original ideas. Never will I believe that a man of quality can see without repugnance his wife exposed to the caprices and outrages of a pit. In placing his foot, for the first time in his life certainly, behind the scenes, the count has had, in Trenck's conduct towards you, a sad specimen of the misfortunes and dangers of your theatrical career. He must have retired, despairing, it is true, but cured of his passion and recalled from his chimeras. Forgive me if I speak thus to you, sister Consuelo. It is my duty; for this abandonment of count Albert is a good for you. You will feel it so hereafter, though your eyes fill with tears at this moment. Be just towards your betrothed, instead of being humbled at his changing. When he said to you that the stage did not repel him, he made of it an ideal which has crumbled at the first examination. He then recognized that he must cause your misery by drawing you from it, or consummate his own in following you there."

"You are right, Joseph. I feel that what you say is true; but let me weep. It is not the humiliation of being forsaken and despised that swells my heart; it is the regret of an ideal which I had formed of love and its power, as Albert had formed to himself an ideal of my life upon the stage. He has now recognized that I could not preserve myself worthy of him, (at least in the opinion of men,) in pursuing that path. And I am forced to recognize that love is not powerful enough to overcome all obstacles and abjure all prejudices."

"Be just, Consuelo, and do not ask more than you have been able to grant. You did not love enough to renounce

your art without hesitation and without suffering: do not blame Albert because he could not break with the world without fear and without consternation."

"But, whatever may have been my secret sorrow, (I can confess it now,) I was resolved to sacrifice all for him, while he, on the contrary —"

"Remember that the passion was in him, and not in you. He asked with ardor, you consented with an effort. He saw well that you were going to immolate yourself; he has felt, not only that he had the right to free you from a love which you had not provoked, and of which your soul did not recognize the necessity, but even that he was obliged by his conscience to do so."

This reasonable conclusion convinced Consuelo of Albert's wisdom and generosity. She feared, by abandoning herself to sorrow, to yield to the suggestions of wounded pride, and in accepting Joseph's hypothesis, she submitted and was calm; but, from a well known strangeness of the human heart, she no sooner saw herself free to follow her inclination for the stage without distraction and without remorse, than she felt affrighted at her isolation in the midst of so much corruption, and dismayed at the future of fatigues and struggles which opened before her. The stage is a burning arena; when you are upon it you are exalted, and all the emotions of life appear cold and pale in comparison; but when you withdraw, overpowered by lassitude, you are affrighted at having undergone that trial of fire, and the desire which recalls you is crossed with terror. I imagine that the slack-rope-dancer is the type of that painful, ardent and perilous life. He must experience a nervous and terrible pleasure upon those cords and ladders, where he accomplishes prodigies beyond human powers; but when he has descended conqueror, he must feel himself faint at the idea of remounting and grasping once again death and triumph, a spectre with two faces which incessantly hovers over his head.

Then Giant's castle, and even the stone of horror, that nightmare of her every slumber, appeared to Consuelo,

through the veil of decided exile, as a lost paradise, as the abode of a peace and a candor forever august and respectable in her remembrance. She fastened the branch of cypress, last present from the Hussite grotto, to the foot of her mother's crucifix, and confounding together these two emblems of catholicism and of heresy, she raised her heart towards the idea of the only, eternal and absolute religion. She drew thence the feelings of resignation for her own personal sufferings, and of faith in the providential designs of God respecting Albert, and respecting all men, good and wicked, whom she must thenceforth live among, alone and without a guide.

## CHAPTER XCIX.

ONE morning, Porpora called her to his chamber earlier than usual. His countenance was radiant, and he held a great thick letter in one hand, his spectacles in the other. Consuelo started and trembled all over, imagining that this was at last the answer from Riesenburg. But she was soon undeceived; it was a letter from Hubert, the Porporino. This celebrated singer announced to his master that all the conditions proposed by him for Consuelo's engagement were accepted, and he sent him the contract signed by the baron de Poelnitz, director of the royal theatre at Berlin, and wanting only Consuelo's signature and his own. To this instrument was united a very affectionate and honorable letter from the said baron, inviting Porpora to come and canvass for the mastership of the king of Prussia's chapel, while making his trials by the production and execution of as many operas and new fugues as he might be pleased to bring. The Porporino congratulated himself on having soon to sing, according to his heart, with a *sister in Porpora*, and earnestly requested the master to leave Vienna for *Sans Souci*, the delicious abode of Frederick-the-Great.

This letter gave Porpora great delight, and yet it filled him with uncertainty. It seemed to him that fortune began to smile upon him with her so long crabbed face, and that, in two directions, the favor of monarchs, (then so necessary to the development of artists,) presented to him a happy perspective. Frederick called him to Berlin; at Vienna, Maria-Theresa caused fine promises to be made to him. On both sides, Consuelo was to be the instrument of his victory; at Berlin, by giving great value to his productions; at Vienna, by marrying Joseph Haydn.

The moment had therefore come to remit his lot into the

hands of his adopted daughter. He proposed to her marriage or departure, at her choice ; and, under these new circumstances, he was much less earnest in offering her Beppo's heart and hand than he would have been even the day before. He was rather tired of Vienna, and the thought of seeing himself appreciated and honored by the enemy smiled upon him as a little vengeance, of which he exaggerated the probable effect upon the court of Austria. In fine, to bring in everything, Consuelo not having spoken to him of Albert for a long time and appearing to have renounced all thought of him, he liked better that she should not be married at all.

Consuelo soon put an end to his uncertainty by declaring that she never would marry Joseph Haydn for many reasons, and principally because he had never sought for her in marriage, being engaged to Anna Keller, the daughter of his benefactor. "In that case," said Porpora, "there is no occasion to hesitate. Here is your contract of engagement with Berlin. Sign, and let us get ready for our departure ; for there is no hope for us here, if you do not submit to the *matrimonomania* of the empress. Her protection is on that condition, and a decided refusal will make us blacker than devils in her eyes."

"My dear master," replied Consuelo, with more firmness than she had yet shown to Porpora, "I am ready to obey you as soon as my conscience is at rest on an important point. Certain engagements of affection and serious esteem bind me to the lord of Rudolstadt. I will not conceal from you that, spite of your incredulity, your reproaches and your raileries, I have persevered, during the three months we have been here, in keeping myself free from every engagement opposed to that marriage. But, after a decisive letter which I wrote six weeks since, and which passed through your hands, circumstances have occurred which make me believe that the family of the Rudolstadts have renounced me. Every day which passes confirms me in the thought that my promise is restored to me, and that I am free to consecrate to you entirely my cares and my labor. You see that I accept this destiny without regret and without hesitation. Still, after the letter I

wrote, I cannot feel easy with myself if I do not receive an answer. I expect it every day, it cannot long delay. Permit me not to sign the engagement with Berlin, until after the receipt of —”

“Eh! my poor child,” said Porpora, who, at the first word of his pupil, had got ready his previously prepared batteries, “you would have to wait a long time. The answer you expect was addressed to me a month since.”

“And you did not show it to me!” cried Consuelo; “and you left me in such an uncertainty! Master, you are a very strange man! What confidence can I have in you if you deceive me so?”

“In what have I deceived you? The letter was addressed to me, and it was enjoined upon me not to show it to you until I saw you cured of your foolish love, and disposed to listen to reason and propriety.”

“Are those the terms that were made use of?” said Consuelo blushing. “It is impossible that either count Christian or count Albert can have thus qualified a friendship so calm, so discreet, so proud as mine.”

“The terms are nothing,” said Porpora; “people of the world always speak a fine language, it is for us to understand them; so much is the fact, that the old count did not by any means wish to have a daughter-in-law on the stage; and that, as soon as he knew you had appeared here on the boards, he caused his son to renounce the debasement of such a marriage. The good Albert has become reasonable and restores to you your promise. I see with pleasure that you are not vexed. So, all is for the best, and we go to Prussia.”

“Master, show me that letter,” said Consuelo, “and I will sign the contract immediately after.”

“That letter, that letter! why do you wish to see it? It will give you pain. There are certain follies of the brain which we must know how to forgive to others and to ourselves. Forget all that.”

“One does not forget by a single act of the will,” returned Consuelo; “reflection assists us, causes enlighten us. If I



am rejected by the Rudolstadts with disdain, I shall soon be consoled; if I am restored to my liberty with esteem and affection, I shall be otherwise consoled with less effort. Show me the letter; what do you fear, since in one manner or the other I shall obey you."

"Well, I will show it to you," said the malicious professor opening his secretary and pretending to seek for the letter. He opened all his drawers, rummaged all his papers, and that letter which had never existed, could not well be found. He pretended to become impatient; Consuelo became so in truth. She herself put her hand to the search; he let her do as she would. She upset all the drawers, she turned over all the papers. The letter was undiscoverable. Porpora tried to remember it and improvised a polite and decided version. Consuelo could not suspect her master of so sustained a deception. It must be believed, for the honor of the old professor, that he did not carry it through wonderfully well; but little was required to persuade so candid a mind as Consuelo's. She ended by believing that the letter had been used to light Porpora's pipe in an absent moment; and after having reëntered her chamber to make a prayer, and to swear upon the cypress an eternal friendship to count Albert under all circumstances, she tranquilly returned to sign an engagement with the theatre of Berlin for two months, to be executed at the end of the one which had just commenced. There was more time than was necessary for the preparations for departure and the journey. When Porpora saw the ink fresh upon the paper, he embraced his pupil, and saluted her solemnly by the title of artist. "This is your day of confirmation," said he to her, "and if it were in my power to make you pronounce vows, I would dictate one of an eternal renunciation of love and marriage; for you are now the priestess of the god of harmony; the muses are virgins, and she who consecrates herself to Apollo ought to take the oath of the vestals."

"I ought not to take the oath never to marry," replied Consuelo, "though it seems to me at this moment, that nothing would be easier for me to promise and to keep. But I may

change my mind, and then I should repent me of an engagement which I could not break."

"Then you are a slave to your word? Yes, it seems to me that you are different in that from the rest of the human race, and that if you had made in your life a solemn promise, you would have kept it."

"Master, I believe I have already given proof of that, for since I exist, I have always been under the dominion of some vow. My mother gave me the precept and example of that kind of religion which she carried even to fanaticism. When we were travelling together, she was accustomed to say to me, as we approached the large cities: 'Consuelita, if I do a good business here, I take you to witness that I make a vow to go with bare feet and pray for two hours at the chapel which has the greatest reputation for sanctity in the country.' And when she had done what she called a good business, poor soul! that is to say, when she had earned a few crowns by her songs, we never failed to accomplish our pilgrimage, whatever was the weather, and at whatever distance was the chapel in repute. That devotion was not indeed very enlightened nor very sublime; but in fine, I looked upon those vows as sacred; and when my mother, on her death bed, made me swear never to give myself to Anzoletto but in legitimate marriage, she knew well she could die easy on the faith of my oath. At a later period I made also to count Albert the promise not to think of any other but him, and to employ all the strength of my heart to love him as he wished. I have not been wanting to my word, and if he did not himself now free me, I could truly have remained faithful to him all my life."

"Let alone your count Albert, of whom you must think no more; and since you must be under the dominion of some vow, tell me by what one you are going to bind yourself to me."

"Oh! master, trust to my reason, to my good intentions, to my devotedness towards you! do not ask me for oaths; for they are a frightful yoke to impose upon one's self. The fear

of failure takes away the pleasure one has in thinking well and acting well."

"I am not to be satisfied with such excuses, not I!" returned Porpora, with an air half severe, half cheerful; "I see that you have made oaths to everybody, excepting me. We will pass over that which your mother exacted. It brought you happiness, my poor child! without it, you would perhaps have fallen into the snares of that infamous Anzoletto. But, since afterwards you have brought yourself to make, without love and from pure goodness of heart, such grave promises to that Rudolstadt who was only a stranger to you, I should think it very wrong, if, on a day like this, a happy and memorable day in which you are restored to liberty and betrothed to the god of art, you should not have the smallest vow to make for your old professor, for your best friend."

"Oh yes, my best friend, my benefactor, my support and my father!" cried Consuelo, throwing herself with emotion into the arms of Porpora, who was so avaricious of tender words, that only two or three times in his life had he shown his paternal love to her with an open heart. "I can truly make, without terror and without hesitation, the vow to devote myself to your happiness and your glory, while I have a breath of life."

"My happiness is glory, Consuelo, as you know," said Porpora, pressing her to his heart. "I cannot conceive of any other. I am not one of those old German burghers, who dream of no other felicity than that of having their little girl by their side to fill their pipe or knead their cake. I require neither slippers nor barley-water, thank God! and when I require nothing more than these, I will not consent that you shall consecrate your days to me, as you now already do with too much zeal. No, it is not devotedness which I ask of you, that you know very well; what I exact is, that you shall be frankly an artist, a great artist. Do you promise me that you will be one? that you will combat that languor, that irresolution, that kind of disgust which you had here at the beginning? that you will repel the amorous nonsense of those fine lords, who

seek for women of the stage, some because they flatter themselves they can make good house-keepers of them, and desert them as soon as they see they have a contrary vocation; others because they are ruined, and the pleasure of again obtaining a coach and a good table at the expense of their lucrative better-halves makes them pass over the dishonor attached in their caste to this kind of alliance? Come now, will you promise me, moreover, that you will not let your head be turned by some little tenor, with a thick voice and curly hair, like that rascal Anzoletto who will never have any merit but in his calves, nor success but by his impudence?"

"I promise, I swear all that to you solemnly," replied Consuelo, laughing good-naturedly at Porpora's exhortations, always a little sarcastic in spite of himself, but to which she was perfectly accustomed. "And I do more," added she, resuming her serious air: "I swear that you shall never have to complain of a day of ingratitude in my life."

"Ah! as to that! I do not ask so much!" replied he, in a bitter tone: "it is more than belongs to human nature. When you are a cantatrice famous throughout all the nations of Europe, you will have requirements of vanity, ambition, vices of the heart from which no great artist has ever been able to defend himself. You will wish success at any rate. You will not resign yourself to obtain it patiently, or to risk it for the purpose of remaining faithful either to friendship or to the worship of the truly beautiful. You will yield to the yoke of fashion as they all do: in each city you will sing the music that is in favor, without troubling yourself about the bad taste of the public or the court. In fine, you will make your way and will be great in spite of that, since there are no means of being so otherwise in the eyes of the great number. Provided you do not forget to choose well and sing well when you have to undergo the judgment of a little coterie of old heads like myself, and that before the great Hændel and the old Bach you do honor to Porpora's method and yourself, it is all that I ask, all that I hope! You see that I am not a selfish father, as some of your flatterers no doubt accuse me of being. I ask

nothing of you which will not be for your happiness and your glory."

"And I, I care for nothing that relates to my personal advantage," replied Consuelo, moved and afflicted. "I may allow myself to be carried away in the midst of success by an involuntary intoxication; but I cannot think in cold blood of constructing a whole life of triumph in order to crown myself therein with my own hands. I wish to have glory for your sake, my master; spite of your incredulity, I wish to show you that it is for you alone Consuelo labors and travels; and to prove to you at once that you have calumniated her, since you believe in her oaths, I swear to you to prove what I assert."

"And on what do you swear that?" said Porpora with a smile of tenderness with which distrust was still mingled.

"On the white hairs, on the sacred head of Porpora," replied Consuelo, taking that white head in her hands, and kissing it on the brow with fervor.

They were interrupted by count Hoditz, whom a great heyduc came to announce. This servant, in requesting for his master permission to present his respects to Porpora and his pupil, looked at the latter with an air of attention, uncertainty and embarrassment which surprised Consuelo, who was nevertheless unable to remember where she had seen that good though somewhat odd face. The count was admitted and presented his request in the most courteous terms. He was about to depart for his manor of Roswald in Moravia, and, wishing to render that residence agreeable to the margravine his spouse, was preparing a magnificent festival to surprise her on her arrival. In consequence, he proposed to Consuelo to go and sing for three consecutive evenings at Roswald, and he also desired that Porpora would be pleased to accompany her to assist in directing the concerts, performances and serenades with which he intended to regale madam the margravine.

Porpora alleged the engagement which had just been signed and the obligation they were under of being in Berlin at a certain day. The count wished to see the engagement, and

as Porpora had always had reason to be pleased with his good proceedings, he allowed him the little pleasure of being placed in the confidence of this matter, of commenting upon the instrument, of playing the part of an understanding man, and giving his advice : after which Hoditz insisted upon his request, representing that there was more than the necessary time to comply with it without failing at the assigned period. " You can complete your preparations in three days," said he, " and go to Berlin through Moravia." This was not exactly the direct road ; but instead of journeying slowly through Bohemia, a country badly served and recently devastated by the war, Porpora and his pupil would go very quickly and comfortably to Roswald in a good carriage which the count placed at their disposition, as well as the relays ; that is to say, he would take upon himself all the trouble and expenses. He further agreed to have them conveyed in the same manner from Roswald to Pardubitz, if they wished to descend the Elbe to Dresden, or to Chrudim, if they wished to pass through Prague. The conveniences which he offered them to that point would in fact abridge the length of their journey, and the quite considerable sum which he added would give them the means of accomplishing the rest more agreeably. Porpora accepted, notwithstanding the little sign which Consuelo made to dissuade him. The bargain was concluded, and the departure fixed for the last day of the week.

When, after having respectfully kissed her hand, Hoditz had left Consuelo alone with her master, she reproached the latter with having allowed himself to be gained so easily. Although she had nothing more to fear from the impertinences of the count, she retained some resentment against him, and did not go to his house with pleasure. She did not wish to relate to Porpora the adventure of Passaw ; but she recalled to him the pleasantries he had made respecting the musical inventions of count Hoditz. " Do you not see," said she to him, " that I shall be obliged to sing his music, and that you will be obliged to direct seriously cantatas and perhaps even

operas of his style? Is it thus that you make me keep my vow to remain faithful to the worship of the beautiful?"

"Bah!" replied Porpora laughing, "I shall not do that so gravely as you imagine; I expect, on the contrary, to divert myself copiously, without the patrician maestro perceiving it the least in the world. To do those things seriously and before a respectable public, would in fact be a blasphemy and a shame; but it is allowable to amuse one's self, and the artist would be very unhappy if, in earning his livelihood, he had not the right to laugh in his sleeve at those who make him earn it. Besides you will there see your princess of Culmbach, whom you love and who is charming. She will laugh with us, though she seldom laughs, at the music of her father-in-law."

She had to yield, make her packages, the necessary purchases and farewells. Joseph was in despair. Still, a piece of good fortune, a great joy for an artist had just happened to him and made him a little compensation, or, at least, a forced diversion to the sorrow of this separation. On playing his serenade under the windows of the excellent comedian Bernadone, the renowned harlequin of the theatre of the gate of Carinthia, he had struck that amiable and intelligent artist with astonishment and sympathy. He had been made to ascend, and been questioned as to the composer of that agreeable and original trio. Bernadone was astonished at his youth and talent. Finally, he entrusted to him the poem of a ballet entitled *The Devil on two sticks*, of which he had begun to write the music. He was laboring at that tempest which cost him so much anxiety, and the remembrance of which still made the good-natured Haydn laugh when eighty years old. Consuelo tried to divert him from his sadness, by constantly talking to him of his tempest, which Bernadone wished should be terrible, and which Haydn, having never seen the sea, could not succeed in depicting. Consuelo described to him the Adriatic in fury, and sang to him the moaning of the waves, not without laughing with him at those effects of imitative harmony, assisted by that of a blue

canvass shaken from one wing to the other by the strength of arms. "Listen," said Porpora, to relieve him from his anxiety, "you might labor a hundred years with the finest instruments in the world, and with the most exact acquaintance with the noises of the waves and the wind, and you would not render the sublime harmony of nature. That is not the sphere of music. She wanders childishly when she runs after tricks of strength and the effects of sound. She is greater than that; she has emotion for her domain. Her end is to inspire it, as her cause is to be inspired by it. Think therefore on the impressions of a man given up to torture: picture to yourself a horrible, magnificent, terrible spectacle, an imminent danger: place yourself, a musician, that is, a human voice, a human wail, a living, vibrating soul, in the midst of that distress, of that disorder, of that abandonment and of those horrors; express your anguish, and the audience, intelligent or not, will share it. They will imagine they behold the sea, hear the creaking of the ship, the cries of the sailors, the despair of the passengers. What would you say of a poet, who, to depict a battle, should tell you in verse that the canon went '*boum, boum,*' and the drum '*plan, plan?*' Still, that would be an imitative harmony more exact than great images; but it would not be poetry. Painting itself, that art of description *par excellence*, is not an art of servile imitation. The artist would retrace in vain the sombre green of the sea, the sky black with storms, the broken hull of the ship. If he have not the feeling to depict terror and poetry together, his painting will be without color, were it as brilliant as the sign of a beer-shop. So, young man, be affected by the idea of a great disaster, and thus you will render it affecting to others."

He was still paternally repeating to him these exhortations, while the carriage, ready in the court-yard of the embassy, was receiving the travelling trunks. Joseph listened attentively to his lessons, drinking them in, so to say, at the source; but when Consuelo, in cloak and furred cap, came to throw herself on his neck, he became pale, stifled a cry, and not able to resolve to see her enter the carriage, he fled and



went to hide his sobs in the depths of Keller's back shop Metastasio conceived a friendship for him, perfected him in Italian, and compensated him somewhat by his good advice and generous services for the absence of Porpora : but Joseph was a long while sad and unhappy before he could accustom himself to that of Consuelo.

She, though sad also, and regretting so faithful and so amiable a friend, felt her courage, her ardor and the poetry of her impressions return, in proportion as she penetrated the mountains of Moravia. A new sun arose upon her life. Freed from every bond and every domination foreign to her art, it seemed to her that she owed herself to it entirely. Porpora, restored to the hope and the cheerfulness of his youth, exalted her by eloquent declamations ; and the noble girl, without ceasing to love Albert and Joseph as two brothers whom she should again meet in the bosom of God, felt herself light as the lark which rises singing to the sky, at the dawn of a beautiful day.

## CHAPTER C.

At the second relay, Consuelo had recognized in the domestic who accompanied them, and who, seated upon the box of the carriage, paid the guides and scolded the postillions for their slowness, that same heyduc who had announced count Hoditz, the day on which he came to propose to her the party of pleasure at Roswald. That large and powerful young man, who continually looked at her as if by stealth and who seemed divided between the desire and the fear of speaking to her, at last fixed her attention; and one morning, when she was breakfasting in a solitary inn at the foot of the mountains, Porpora having gone to take a walk in pursuit of some musical theme, while waiting for the horses to be baited, she turned towards the valet, at the moment when he handed her the coffee, and looked him in the face with a rather severe and irritated air. But he put on so piteous an expression that she could not restrain a burst of laughter. The April sun glittered upon the snow which still crowned the mountains; and our young traveller felt in good spirits.

"Alas!" said the mysterious heyduc to her at last, "your ladyship does not then deign to recognize me? I should always recognize you, were you disguised as a Turk or a Prussian corporal; and yet I saw you only for one instant, but what an instant in my life!"

While speaking thus, he placed upon the table the tray which he had brought; and approaching Consuelo, he gravely made a great sign of the cross, bent one knee and kissed the ground before her.

"Ah!" cried Consuelo, "Karl the deserter, is it not?"

"Yes, signora," replied Karl, kissing the hand which she extended to him; "at least so they tell me I must call you, although I have never well understood if you were a gentleman or a lady."

"Truly? And whence comes your uncertainty?"

"The reason is, that I have seen you as a boy, and that afterwards, though I recognized you very well, you had become as like a young girl as you had before been like a little boy. But that is nothing: be what you will, you have rendered me services which I shall never forget; and you might command me to throw myself from the top of the precipice up there, if it would give you any pleasure, and I should not refuse to do it for you."

"I ask nothing of you, my brave Karl, but to be happy and to enjoy your liberty; for now you are free, and I think you love life now?"

"Free, yes!" said Karl, shaking his head; "but happy—I have lost my poor wife."

Consuelo's eyes filled, from a sympathetic feeling, on seeing the square cheeks of poor Karl covered with a torrent of tears.

"Ah!" said he, shaking his red mustache, from which the tears dripped like rain from a thicket, "she had suffered too much, poor soul! Her sorrow at seeing me carried off a second time by the Prussians, her long journey on foot when she was quite ill, then her joy at seeing me again, all that caused a revolution in her system; and she died a week after her arrival at Vienna, where I was looking for her, and where, thanks to a note from you, she found me, by the help of count Hoditz. That generous lord sent her his physician and assistance; but nothing did her any good; she was tired of life, you see, and has gone to repose in the heaven of the good God."

"And your daughter?" said Consuelo, who wished to suggest to him a consoling idea.

"My daughter?" said he with a gloomy and rather wandering air, "the king of Prussia has killed her also for me."

"How killed? What do you say?"

"Was it not the king of Prussia that killed the mother by causing her so much suffering? Well, the child followed the mother. From since the evening when, having seen me made bloody by blows, bound and carried off by the recruit-

ers, they both remained lying, almost dead, across the road, the little one was constantly shaking with a heavy fever; the fatigue and suffering of the journey finished them. When you met them upon a bridge, at the entrance of I know not what Austrian town, they had eaten nothing for two days. You gave them money, you told them that I was saved, you did all you could to console and cure them; they told me all that: but it was too late. They did nothing but grow worse from the time we were united again, and at the moment when we might have been happy, they went to the cemetery. The earth was not yet settled over the body of my wife, before we had to reöpen the same place to put my child in; and now, thanks to the king of Prussia, Karl is alone in the world!"

"No, my poor Karl, you are not alone, you are not abandoned; you have some friends left who will always be interested in your misfortunes and your good heart."

"I know it. Yes, there are some good people, and you are one of them. But what have I need of now when I have neither wife, nor child, nor country! for I could never be safe in mine; my mountain is too well known to those brigands who have come there twice to get me. As soon as I saw myself alone, I asked if we were at war or would soon be. I had but one idea: that was to serve against Prussia, in order to kill as many Prussians as I could. Ah! Saint Wenceslas, the patron of Bohemia, would have directed my arm; and I am very sure that not a single ball from my musket would have been lost; and I said to myself: 'Perhaps Providence will permit me to meet the king of Prussia in some defile; and then—were he cuirassed like the archangel Michael—were I obliged to follow him as a dog follows the track of a wolf'—but I learnt that peace was determined for a long time; and then feeling no interest in anything, I went to find my lord count Hoditz to thank him and to request him not to present me to the empress, as he had intended. I wished to kill myself; but he has been so good to me, and the princess of Culmbach, his daughter-in-law, to whom he had privately related my whole history, has said so many

beautiful things to me upon the duties of a christian, that I have consented to live and to enter their service, where I am, in truth, too well cared for and too well treated for the little work I have to do."

"Now tell me, my dear Karl," said Consuelo, wiping away her tears, "how did you recognize me?"

"Did you not come, one evening, to sing at the house of my new mistress, madam the margravine? I saw you pass dressed all in white, and I recognized you immediately, though you had become a young lady. The truth is, you see, I do not remember much of the places through which I have passed, nor the names of the persons whom I have met; but as to faces, I never forget them. I began to cross myself when I saw a young lad who followed you, and whom I recognized as Joseph; and instead of being your master, as I had seen him at the moment of my deliverance, (for he was better dressed than you at that time,) he had become your domestic, and he remained in the antechamber. He did not recognize me; and as my lord count had forbidden me to say a single word of what had happened to any person whatsoever, (I have never known or asked why,) I did not speak to that good Joseph, though I had a strong desire to throw myself upon his neck. He went almost immediately into another apartment. I had been ordered not to leave that in which I was; a good servant knows only his countersign. But when everybody had gone, my lord's valet-de-chambre, who has all his confidence, said to me: 'Karl, you did not speak to Porpora's little lacquey, though you recognized him, and you did well. The count will be pleased with you. As to the young lady who sang this evening—' 'Oh! I recognized her also,' cried I, 'and I said nothing.' 'Well,' added he, 'you have done well in that also. The count does not wish it to be known that she travelled with him to Passaw.' 'That does not concern me,' I returned, 'but can I ask you how she delivered me from the hands of the Prussians?' Then Henry told me how the thing had happened, (for he was there,) how you had run after the count's carriage, and how, when you

had nothing more to fear for yourself, you had absolutely wished him to come and deliver me. You had said something about this to my poor wife, and she had told me also; for she died recommending you to the good God, and saying; 'Those are poor children, who seemed almost as unfortunate as we are; and still they gave me all they had, and they wept as if they had been of our own family.' So when I saw Mr. Joseph in your service, having been told to carry to him some money from my lord, at whose house he played the violin on another evening, I put into the paper some ducats, the first I had earned in that house. He did not know it, and did not recognize me; but, if we return to Vienna, I will so manage that he shall never be in want while I can earn my living."

"Joseph is no longer in my service, good Karl, he is my friend. He is no longer in want, he is a musician, and will earn his living easily. So do not rob yourself for him."

"As to yourself, signora," said Karl, "I cannot do much for you, since you are a great actress, as I am told; but look you, if you are ever in a situation to need a servant and cannot pay him, call upon Karl and rely on him. He will serve you for nothing and will be very happy to work for you."

"I am sufficiently well paid by your gratitude, my friend. I ask nothing from your devotedness."

"There is master Porpora returning. Remember, signora, that I have not the honor to know you, otherwise than as a servant placed at your command by my master."

On the next day our travellers having risen very early, arrived, not without trouble, at the chateau of Roswald. It was situated in an elevated region, on the slope of one of the most beautiful mountains in Moravia, and so well protected from cold winds, that the spring was already felt there, while at half a league round about, the winter still prevailed. Although the season was prematurely beautiful, the roads were hardly passable. But count Hoditz, who doubted of nothing, and for whom the impossible was a joke, had already arrived, and had a hundred pioneers at work smoothing the road over which the majestic equipage of his noble spouse

was to roll on the next day. It would perhaps have been more conjugal and of more assistance to have journeyed with her; but it was not of so much consequence to hinder her from breaking her arms and legs on the road, as to give her a fête; and, dead or alive, she must needs have a splendid entertainment on taking possession of Roswald.

The count hardly allowed our travellers time to change their dresses, and had served up to them a very fine dinner in a mossy and rocky grotto, which an enormous stove, skilfully masked by false rocks, warmed agreeably. At first sight, this place seemed enchanting to Consuelo. The view which opened from the entrance of the grotto was really magnificent. Nature had done everything for Roswald. Precipitous and picturesque hills, forests of evergreens, abundant springs of water, admirable perspectives, immense prairies, it seemed that with a comfortable habitation here was enough to constitute a finished place of pleasure. But Consuelo soon perceived the strange effects by which the count had succeeded in spoiling this sublime nature. The grotto would have been charming without the windows, which made of it an unseasonable dining room. As the honey-suckles and climbers were only beginning to bud, the frames of the doors and the windows had been masked with artificial leaves and flowers, which there made a ridiculous pretence. The shells and stalactites, somewhat damaged by the winter, showed the plaster and mastic which fastened them to the walls, and the heat of the stove, melting the remains of frost concentrated in the vaulted ceiling, brought upon the heads of the guests a blackish and unhealthy rain, which the count was determined not to notice. Porpora was quite vexed, and two or three times put his hand to his hat, still without daring to dash it on his head, as he was dying to do. He feared above all that Consuelo might take cold, and he ate very fast, pretending a great impatience to see the music he was to have executed the next day.

“What are you uneasy about, dear maestro?” said the count, who was a great eater and who liked to relate at

length the history of the acquisition, or construction directed by himself of all the rich and curious pieces of his table service ; " skilful and finished musicians like yourself, need only a little time to understand such matters. My music is simple and natural. I am not one of those pedantic composers who seek to astonish by learned and strange harmonic combinations. In the country, we want simple and pastoral music ; as for me, I love only pure and simple songs : that is also the taste of madam the margravine. You will see that all will go well. Besides, we are losing no time. While we are at breakfast here, my majordomo is getting everything ready according to my orders, and we shall find the choirs arranged at their different stations and all the musicians at their posts."

While he said this, information was given to my lord that two foreign officers, travelling through the country, asked permission to enter and salute the count, and to visit, if agreeable to him, the palace and gardens of Roswald.

The count was accustomed to this kind of visit, and nothing gave him more pleasure than to be himself the *cicerone* of the curious, through the delights of his residence.

" Let them enter, they are welcome," cried he ; " place covers for them and bring them here."

A few instants afterwards, the two officers were introduced. They had on the Prussian uniform. He who walked the first, and behind whom his companion seemed determined to efface himself completely, was small and had quite a disagreeable face. His nose, long, heavy and without nobleness, made appear more shocking still the falling of his mouth and the flight or rather absence of his chin. His somewhat bowed form gave, I know not exactly how, an elderly air to his person cramped in the ungraceful coat invented by Frederick. Still this man was only forty at most ; his bearing was determined, and when he had taken off his ugly hat, which cut his face even to the commencement of his nose, he showed what he had fine in his head,—a firm, intelligent and meditative forehead, movable eyebrows and eyes of an extraordinary



clearness and animation. His glance transformed him like those rays of the sun which suddenly color and embellish the most gloomy and least poetical situations. He seemed to be a head taller when his eyes shone above his pallid, mean and uneasy face.

Count Hoditz received them with a hospitality which was rather cordial than ceremonious, and, without losing time in long compliments, had two covers placed for them and helped them from the best dishes with a truly patriarchal good humor; for Hoditz was the best of men, and his vanity, far from corrupting his heart, assisted him to expand himself with confidence and generosity. Slavery still prevailed in his domains, and all the wonders of Roswald had been constructed at small expense by his people owing land and husbandry service;\* but he covered with flowers and gormandizing the yoke of his subjects. He made them forget the necessary by lavishing the superfluous; and convinced that pleasure is happiness, he gave them so much amusement that they did not think about being free.

The Prussian officer (for truly there was but one, the other seemed only his shadow) appeared at first a little astonished, perhaps even a little shocked at this want of ceremony on the part of the count; and he affected a reserved politeness, when the count said to him:

“Sir captain, I beg of you to put yourself at your ease and to do here as if in your own house. I know that you must be accustomed to the austere regularity of the great Frederick’s armies; I consider that admirable in its place; but here, you are in the country, and if one cannot be amused in the country, what does one go there for? I see that you are well educated persons and of good manners. You certainly could not be officers of the king of Prussia, without having given proofs of military science and determined bravery. I consider you therefore as guests whose presence honors my house; please to dispose of it freely and to remain in it as long as may be agreeable to you.”

\* *Gent taillable et corvéable.*

The officer immediately took his part like a man of sense ; and, after having thanked his host in the same tone, began to gulp down the champagne, which still did not cause him to lose a line of his sang-froid, and to make inroads into an excellent paté, respecting which he gave utterance to some remarks and gastronomic questions which did not communicate a very favorable idea of him to the abstemious Consuelo. Still she was struck by the fire of his glance ; but even that fire astonished without charming her. She found in it a something, I know not what, haughty, scrutinizing and distrustful, which did not reach her heart.

While eating, the officer informed the count that he was called the baron de Kreutz, that he was a native of Silesia, whither he had just been sent to obtain a supply of cavalry horses ; that, being at Neÿsse, he had not been able to resist the desire of seeing the so celebrated palace and gardens of Roswald ; that in consequence, he had passed the frontier that morning with his lieutenant, not without profiting by the time and opportunity to make some purchases of horses on his route. He even offered to the count to visit his stables, if he had any beasts to sell. He travelled on horseback and must return that very evening.

“ I shall not permit that,” said the count. “ I have no horses to sell you at present. I have not even enough for the new improvements I intend to effect in my gardens. But I wish to do a better business by enjoying your society as long as possible.”

“ But we learnt, on arriving here, that you were expecting madam the countess Hoditz from hour to hour ; and not wishing to be in the way, we will retire as soon as we hear of her arrival.”

“ I do not expect madam the countess margravine until tomorrow,” replied the count ; “ she will arrive here with her daughter, madam the princess of Culmbach. For perhaps you are not ignorant, gentlemen, that I have had the honor to make a noble alliance—”

“ With the dowager margravine of Bareith,” rather quickly

retorted the baron de Kreutz, who did not seem so much dazzled by the title as the count expected.

"She is the aunt of the king of Prussia!" resumed he with a little emphasis.

"Yes, yes, I know it," replied the Prussian officer, taking a huge pinch of snuff.

"And as she is an admirably gracious and affable lady," continued the count, "I doubt not she will have infinite pleasure in receiving and welcoming brave servants of her illustrious nephew."

"We should be very sensible of so great an honor," said the baron, smiling; "but we have not leisure to profit by it. Our duties imperiously call us to our post, and we must take leave of your excellency this very evening. In the mean while we shall be very happy to admire this beautiful residence: the king our master has not one that can compare with it."

This compliment restored all the kind feelings of the Moravian lord towards the Prussian. They rose from table; Porpora, who cared less for the promenade than for the rehearsal, wished to be excused.

"Not so," said the count, "promenade and rehearsal will both go on at once; you will see, my master."

He offered his arm to Consuelo, and passing first: "Your pardon, gentlemen," said he, "if I take possession of the only lady who is here at this moment: it is the lord's right. Have the goodness to follow me; I will be your guide."

"Allow me to ask you, sir," said the baron de Kreutz, addressing Porpora for the first time, "who that amiable lady is?"

"Sir," replied Porpora, who was in a bad humor, "I am an Italian; I understand German but little, and French still less."

The baron, who until then had always talked French with the count, according to the custom of those times among people of the fashionable world, repeated his question in Italian.

"That amiable lady, who has not yet said a word before you," drily replied Porpora, "is neither margravine nor dow-

ager, nor princess, nor baroness, nor countess ; she is an Italian cantatrice who is not devoid of a certain degree of talent."

" I am so much the more interested in making her acquaintance and knowing her name," returned the baron, smiling at Porpora's rudeness.

" She is the Porporina, my pupil," replied Porpora.

" She is a very skilful person, they say," returned the other, " and one who is impatiently expected at Berlin. Since she is your pupil, I see that it is to the illustrious master Porpora that I have the honor to speak."

" At your service," said Porpora briefly, again placing upon his head the hat he had just raised in answer to baron de Kreutz' profound bow. The latter, seeing him so little communicative, let him advance and kept in the rear with his lieutenant. Porpora, who had eyes even in the back of his head, saw that they laughed together while looking at him and speaking of him in their tongue. He was so much the more ill-disposed towards them, and did not even glance at them during the whole promenade.

## CHAPTER CI.

THEY descended quite a steep little slope, at the bottom of which they found a river in miniature which had been a pretty, limpid and rough torrent; but as it was necessary to make it navigable, its bed had been smoothed, its fall diminished, its banks graded regularly, and its beautiful waters muddied by recent labors. The workmen were still busied in clearing away some rocks which the winter had precipitated into it and which gave it some remains of individuality;—it was necessary to make this disappear quickly. A gondola was there in waiting for the promenaders, a real gondola which the count had brought from Venice and which made Consuelo's heart beat with a thousand pleasant and painful reminiscences. The party embarked; the gondoliers were also real Venetians, speaking their dialect; they had been brought with the bark, as, now-a-days, negroes with the giraffe. Count Hoditz, who had travelled a good deal, imagined that he could speak all languages; but though he had a great deal of confidence, and in a loud voice and an accented tone gave his orders to the gondoliers, the latter would have understood him with difficulty had not Consuelo served him as interpreter. They were directed to sing some verses of Tasso; but those poor devils, chilled by the ices of the north, expatriated and bewildered in their recollections, gave the Prussians a very poor specimen of their style. Consuelo was obliged to prompt them at every stanza, and promised to give them a rehearsal of the fragments they were to sing before the margravine the next day.

When they had rowed a quarter of an hour in a space which might have been passed in three minutes, but in which the poor stream, thwarted in its course, had been compelled to a thousand insidious windings, they reached the open sea.

It was quite a large basin which opened upon them through clumps of cypresses and firs, and of which the unexpected coup d'œil was really agreeable. But they had no time to admire it. They were obliged to embark on board of a pocket man-of-war, in which nothing was wanting; in masts, sails, and cordage, it was a finished model of a ship with all her rigging, which the too great number of sailors and passengers almost sunk. Porpora was quite cold, the carpets were very damp, and I even believe that, in spite of the particular examination which the count, who had arrived the day before, had already made of every part, the vessel leaked badly. No one was at ease excepting the count, who, thanks to his part of entertainer, never cared for the little discomforts connected with his pleasures, and Consuelo, who began to be much amused by the follies of her host. A fleet proportioned to this admiral's vessel came to place itself under her orders, and executed manœuvres which the count himself, armed with a speaking trumpet and erect upon the poop, gravely directed, getting quite vexed when matters did not go to his liking, and making them recommence the rehearsal. Afterwards they advanced in squadron to the sound of abominably false music of brass instruments, which completed Porpora's exasperation. "It is well enough to freeze us and make us catch cold," said he between his teeth; "but to scorch our ears in this style, it is too much!"

"Make all sail for the Peloponnesus!" and they sailed towards a bank crowned with little buildings in imitation of Greek temples and antique tombs. They steered towards a little bay masked by rocks, and, when ten paces distant, they were received by a discharge of musquetry. Two men fell dead upon the deck, and a very light ship-boy, who had his station in the rigging, uttered a loud cry, descended, or rather let himself slide down adroitly, and rolled into the very midst of the company, screaming that he was wounded and holding on to his head, which he said had been fractured by a ball.

"Here," said the count to Consuelo, "I have need of you

for a little rehearsal which my crew must go through. Have the goodness to represent for an instant the person of madam the margravine, and to command that dying boy and those two dead men, who, by the way, fell very stupidly, to rise, to be cured on the instant, to take their arms, and to defend her highness against the insolent pirates concealed in that ambuscade."

Consuelo hastened to assume the character of the margravine, and played it with much more dignity and natural grace than madam Hoditz herself would have done. The dead and the dying raised themselves on their knees and kissed her hand. Thereupon, it was enjoined them by the count not to touch the noble hand of her highness in earnest with their vassal mouths, but to kiss their own hand when pretending to approach hers with their lips. Then dead and dying rushed to their arms, making great demonstrations of enthusiasm; the little rope-dancer, who played the part of ship-boy, climbed his mast like a cat and discharged a light carbine towards the pirate's bay. The fleet closed around the modern Cleopatra, and the little cannons made a horrible uproar.

Consuelo, forewarned by the count, who did not wish to cause her a serious fright, had not been the dupe of the rather strange opening of this comedy. But the two Prussian officers, towards whom it had not been thought necessary to practise the same gallantry, seeing two men fall at the first fire, had closed up to each other and turned pale. He who had said nothing appeared afraid for his captain, and the trouble of the latter had not escaped the tranquilly observing glance of Consuelo. Still, it was not fear that was depicted upon his features; but, on the contrary, a kind of indignation, of anger even, as if the pleasantry offended him personally and seemed to him an insult to his dignity as a Prussian and military man. Hoditz did not notice it, and when the battle was raging, the captain and his lieutenant shouted with laughter and took the jest in the best manner. They even drew their swords and lunged into the air to have their share of the sport.

The pirates, in light boats, dressed as Greeks and armed with blunderbusses and pistols loaded with powder, had come

out from their pretty little reefs, and fought like lions. They were allowed to come alongside, and were there defeated with great slaughter, in order that the good margravine might have the pleasure of resuscitating them. The only cruelty committed was making some of them fall into the sea. The water of the basin was quite cold, and Consuelo was pitying them, when she saw that they took pleasure in it, and had some vanity in showing to the mountaineers, their companions, that they were good swimmers.

When the fleet of Cleopatra (for the ship on board of which the margravine was to be really bore this pompous title) had been victorious, as of right, it towed the pirate's flotilla as prisoners after it, and sailed to the sound of triumphal music, ("enough to bring the devil on earth," as Porpora said,) to explore the coasts of Greece. They afterwards approached an unknown island, on which they saw clay-built huts and exotic trees, very well acclimated or very well imitated; for one never knew what to be sure of in this respect, the false and the true being confounded everywhere. At the margin of that isle canoes were fastened. The natives of the country threw themselves into them with very wild cries and came to meet the fleet, bringing foreign flowers and fruits recently cut in the hot-houses of the residence. These savages were shaggy, tattooed and woolly, and more like devils than men. The costumes were not very well assorted. Some were crowned with feathers, like Peruvians, others bundled up in furs, like Esquimaux; but these matters were not to be examined too closely; provided they were very ugly and in very great disorder, they might be taken for anthropophagi at least.

These good people made many grimaces, and their chief, who was a kind of giant, having a false beard reaching to his waist, came to deliver a speech which count Hoditz himself had taken pains to compose in the savage tongue. It was an assemblage of high-sounding and crackling syllables, arranged at random to imitate a grotesque and barbarous patois. The count having made him recite his tirade without a mistake,



took the trouble to translate this fine harangue to Consuelo, who still performed the part of margravine for want of the real one. "This discourse signifies, madam," said he, imitating the salutations of the savage king, "that this horde of cannibals whose custom it is to devour all strangers who land upon their island, suddenly touched and tamed by the magic power of your charms, come to lay at your feet the homage of their ferocity, and to offer to you the royalty of these unknown realms. Deign to land without fear, and though they are sterile and uncultivated, the wonders of civilization will bloom under your feet."

They landed upon the island amidst the songs and the dances of the young savage girls. Strange and pretendedly ferocious animals, stuffed figures, which by means of springs were made to kneel suddenly, saluted Consuelo on the bank. Then, by the help of ropes, the newly planted trees and thickets fell, the pasteboard rocks disappeared, and they saw small houses ornamented with flowers and foliage. Shepherdesses conducting real flocks, (Hoditz did not lack these,) villagers dressed in the last style of the opera, though rather dirty when seen near to, in fine, even kids and tame deer came to offer faith and homage to the new sovereign. "It is here," then said the count to Consuelo, "that you will have to play a part to-morrow before her highness. You will be provided with the costume of a savage divinity, all covered with flowers and ribbons, and will remain in that grotto: the margravine will enter and you will sing the cantata which I have in my pocket, to yield to her your rights as a divinity, seeing that there can be but one goddess where she deigns to appear."

"Let me see the cantata," said Consuelo, receiving the manuscript of which Hoditz was the author. It did not cost her much trouble to read and sing at first sight that simple common-place song; words and music, all were *genteel*. The only thing was to learn it by heart. Two violins, a harp and a flute hidden in the depths of the cave accompanied her all wrong. Porpora made them begin again. In a quarter of an hour, all went well. This was not the only part Consuelo

had to play in the fête, nor the only cantata the count had in his pocket : they were short, happily ; her highness must not be wearied by too much music.

At the savage island they made sail again and went to land upon a Chinese shore : towers in imitation of porcelain, kiosks, stunted gardens, little bridges, bamboos, tea plantations, nothing was wanting. The literati and the mandarins, rather well dressed, came to make a speech in Chinese to the margravine ; and Consuelo, who, in the crossing, was to change her costume in the cabin of one of the boats and wrap herself up as a mandarin, was to attempt some couplets in the Chinese language and music, still in the style of count Hoditz :

Ping, pang, tiong,  
Hi, han, hong.

Such was the burden, which was understood to signify, thanks to the power of abbreviation possessed by that wonderful language :

“ Beautiful margravine, great princess, idol of all hearts, reign forever over your happy spouse and over your joyous empire of Roswald in Moravia.”

On leaving China, they entered some very rich palanquins, and on the shoulders of the poor Chinese and savage serfs, scaled a little mountain on the top of which they found the city of Lilliput. Houses, forests, lakes, mountains, all reached to your knee or your ankle, and it was necessary to stoop in order to see, in the interior of the dwellings, the furniture and household utensils which were in relative proportion to all the rest. Puppets danced upon the public square to the sound of bells, cymbals and tambourines. The persons who made them act and who produced this Lilliputian music were hidden under ground in cellars made for the purpose.

On redescending the mountain of the Lilliputians, they found a desert of a hundred paces in diameter, all encumbered with enormous rocks and vigorous trees given up to their natural growth. It was the only place which the count had not spoiled and mutilated. He had contented himself with leav-

ing it as he found it. "I was long embarrassed by the thought of what I could do with this precipitous defile," said he to his guests. "I knew not how to get rid of these masses of rock, nor what turn to give to these superb but disorderly trees: suddenly the idea came to me to baptize this spot the desert, the chaos: and I have thought that the contrast would not be disagreeable, especially since on leaving these horrors of nature we shall again enter admirably arranged and cultivated gardens. To complete the illusion, you shall see what a happy invention I have placed in it."

Speaking thus, the count pushed aside a huge rock which encumbered the path, (for he had felt obliged to make a smooth and sanded walk in the horrible desert,) and Consuelo found herself at the entrance of a hermitage worked in the rock and surmounted by a large wooden cross. The anchorite of the Thebäide came out: he was a good peasant, whose false beard, long and white, contrasted strangely with his fresh face adorned with the colors of youth. He made a fine speech, the barbarisms of which were corrected by his master, and offered roots and milk to Consuelo in a wooden bowl.

"I think the hermit is rather young," said the baron de Kreutz; "you might have put a real old man here."

"That would not have pleased the margravine," replied count Hoditz ingenuously. "She says with reason, that old age is not attractive, and that, in a fête, we should see none but young actors."

I will spare the reader the rest of the promenade. I should never finish if I wished to describe to him the different countries, the druidical altars, the Indian pagodas, the covered ways and canals, the virgin forests, the subterranean passages in which were seen the mysteries of the passion cut in the rock, the artificial mines with ball-rooms, the Champs-Elysées, the tombs, finally the cascades, the naiads, the serenades and the *six thousand* fountains which Porpora afterwards pretended to have been forced to *swallow*. There were indeed a thousand other fine conceits, of which the memoirs of the time have transmitted to us the details with admiration: a half-

obscure grotto into which you penetrated running, and at the bottom of which a mirror, casting back towards you your own image, in an uncertain light, must infallibly give you a great fright; a convent in which you were compelled, under pain of losing your liberty forever, to pronounce vows of which the formula was a homage of eternal submission and adoration to the margravine; a showering tree which, by means of a pump hidden in the branches, inundated you with ink, blood or rose-water, according as it was wished to gratify or to mystify you; in fine a thousand charming, ingenious, incomprehensible, and above all, expensive secrets, which Porpora had the brutality to consider insupportable, stupid and scandalous. Night alone put an end to this promenade round the world, in which, now on horseback, now in litters, on asses, in carriages or boats, they had travelled quite as much as three leagues.

Hardened against cold and fatigue, the two Prussian officers, while laughing at whatever was too puerile in the amusements and *surprises* of Roswald, had not been so much struck as Consuelo with the absurdities of this wonderful residence. She was a child of nature, born in the clear air, accustomed since her eyes were opened, to look upon the works of God without shade and without spectacles: but the baron de Kreutz, though he was not entirely the newest comer in that aristocracy accustomed to the draperies and prettinesses in fashion, was a man of his society and of his era. He did not hate grottoes, hermitages and symbols. On the whole, he amused himself good-naturedly, showed much wit in conversation, and said to his follower, who, on entering the dining-room, was respectfully pitying him for the ennui of such an unprofitable excursion; "Ennui? I? not at all. I have taken exercise, I have gained an appetite, I have seen a thousand follies, I have reposed my mind from serious matters; I have neither lost my time nor my trouble."

They were surprised to find nothing in the dining-room but a circle of chairs around an empty space. The count, having requested his guests to be seated, ordered his valets to

serve the supper. "Alas! my lord," replied he who was to give the answer, "we had nothing worthy to be offered to so honorable a company, and we have not even laid the table."

"That is pleasant!" cried the amphitryon in a pretended fury; and when this play had lasted a few moments: "Well!" said he, "since men refuse us a supper, I summon Pluto to send me one that shall be worthy of my guests." Speaking thus, he struck the floor three times, and the floor gliding immediately into a wing, they saw odoriferous flames burst forth; then, to the sound of a joyous and strange music, a magnificently served table came and placed itself under the elbows of the guests.

"This is not bad," said the count, raising the cloth and speaking under the table: "only I am very much astonished, since messire Pluto knows very well that there is no water to drink in my house, that he has not sent me a single goblet."

"Count Hoditz," replied, from the depths of the abyss, a hoarse voice worthy of Tartarus; "water is very scarce in hell; for most all our rivers are dry since the eyes of her highness the margravine have burned even to the entrails of the earth; still, if you require it, we will send a Danaïde to the banks of the Styx to see if she can find some."

"Let her be quick then," replied the count, "and above all give her a cask which has not been broached."

At the same instant, a beautiful cistern of jasper in the middle of the table, threw up a crystal fountain, which during the whole supper fell upon itself like a sheaf of diamonds, from the reflection of the numerous tapers. The *crown-all* was a master-piece of richness and bad taste, and the water of the Styx, the infernal supper, furnished the count with materials for a thousand plays upon words, allusions and idle nonsense which were no better, but for which the simplicity of his childishness made excuse. The savory repast, served by young sylvans and nymphs, more or less charming, cheered the baron de Kreutz a good deal. Still he paid only a slight

attention to the beautiful slaves of the amphitryon: these poor peasant girls were at once the servants, the mistresses, the choristers and the actresses of their lord. He was their professor of the graces, of dancing, singing and declamation. Consuelo had had at Passaw a specimen of his manner of proceeding with them; and thinking of the glorious lot which this lord offered to her then, she admired the respectful sang-froid with which he treated her now, without appearing either surprised or confused at her contempt. She knew very well that the margravine's arrival would change the aspect of things on the morrow, that she would dine in her chamber with her master, and that she would not have the honor of being admitted to the table of her highness. That did not trouble her in the least, though she was ignorant of a circumstance which would have greatly diverted her at this instant: the fact that she was supping with a personage infinitely more illustrious, who would not for all the world sup on the morrow with the margravine.

The baron de Kreutz, smiling therefore with quite a cold air at the aspect of the nymphs of the household, gave more attention to Consuelo, when, after having provoked her to conversation, he led her to talk about music. He was an enlightened and almost passionate amateur of that divine art: at least he spoke of it with a superior intelligence which, not less than the repast, the good dishes and the warmth of the apartment, softened the crabbed humor of Porpora. "It would be desirable," said he at last to the baron, who had a moment before delicately praised his method without naming him, "that the sovereign we are to try to divert were as good a judge as you!"

"They say," replied the baron, "that my sovereign is quite enlightened in this matter, and that he really does love the fine arts."

"Are you very sure of that, sir baron?" returned the maestro, who could not converse without contradicting everybody on every point. "As to me, I do not at all flatter myself that it is so. Kings are always first in everything, if you believe

their subjects ; but it often happens that their subjects know much more than they do."

"In matters of war, as in matters of science and engineering, the king of Prussia knows much more than either of us," replied the lieutenant with zeal ; "and as to music, it is very certain —"

"That you know nothing about it, nor I either," drily interrupted captain Kreutz ; "master Porpora must be referred to himself alone in this respect."

"As to me," returned the maestro, "royal dignity has never imposed upon me in matters of music ; and when I had the honor to give lessons to the electoral princess of Saxony, I did not pass over her false notes any more than another's."

"What!" said the baron, looking at his companion with an ironical expression, "do crowned heads ever make false notes?"

"Just like simple mortals, sir!" replied Porpora. "Still I must say that the electoral princess did not long make them with me, and that she had a rare intelligence to second me."

"So you would have the goodness to forgive some false notes to our Fritz, if he had the impertinence to make any in your presence?"

"On condition that he corrected them."

"But you would not wash his head?" said count Hoditz laughingly in his turn.

"I would do it, were he to cut off mine!" replied the old professor, whom a little champagne made expansive and boastful.

Consuelo had been well and duly warned by the canon that Prussia was a great prefecture of police, in which the slightest word, spoken very low on the frontier, arrived in a few moments, by a succession of mysterious and faithful echoes, at the cabinet of Frederick, and that one must never say to a Prussian, above all to a military man, to one holding any office whatever, "How do you do?" without weighing each syllable, and turning, as little children are told, the tongue seven times in one's mouth. It was with uneasiness

therefore that she saw her master give himself up to his sneering temper, and she endeavored to repair his imprudences by a little policy.

“ Even if the king of Prussia were not the first musician of his age,” said she, “ he may be allowed to disdain an art which is certainly very futile in comparison with all that he knows besides.”

But she was ignorant that Frederick attached no less importance to being a great flutist, than to being a great captain and a great philosopher. The baron de Kreutz declared that if his majesty had judged music an art worthy of being studied, he had most probably consecrated to it his attention and serious labor.

“ Bah !” replied Porpora, who became more and more excited, “ attention and labor reveal nothing in the matter of art, to those whom Heaven has not endowed with innate talent. The genius of music is not within reach of all fortunes, and it is easier to win battles and pension men of letters than to draw the sacred fire from the muses. The baron Frederick de Trenck in fact told us that his Prussian majesty, when he failed in the measure, threw the blame upon his courtiers ; but that will not do with me.”

“ The baron Frederick de Trenck said that ?” replied the baron de Kreutz, whose eyes glowed with sudden and impetuous anger. “ Well !” replied he, immediately calming himself by an effort of will, and speaking in a tone of indifference, “ the poor devil must have lost his fancy for jesting ; for he is shut up in the citadel of Glatz for the rest of his days.”

“ Truly !” said Porpora, “ and what has he done then ?”

“ That is a state secret,” replied the baron : “ but everything gives reason to believe that he has betrayed the confidence of his master.”

“ Yes !” added the lieutenant ; “ by selling to Austria the plans of the fortifications of Prussia, his country.”

“ Oh ! that is impossible !” said Consuelo, who had become



pale, and who, more and more watchful over her countenance and words, could not restrain this sorrowful exclamation.

"It is impossible, and it is false!" cried Porpora indignant; "those who have made the king of Prussia believe that have lied in their throats!"

"I presume that is not an indirect lie which you mean to give to us?" said the lieutenant, becoming pale in his turn.

"One must have a very uncomfortable susceptibility to take it in that light," replied the baron de Kreutz, darting a severe and imperious glance at his companion. "In what does it concern us? and what is it to us if the Porpora does feel warm in his friendship for that young man?"

"Yes, I should feel so, even in the presence of the king himself," said Porpora. "I would tell the king that he has been deceived; that it was very wrong in him to have believed it; that Frederick de Trenck is a worthy, a noble young man, and incapable of an infamous action."

"I believe, my master," said Consuelo, whom the captain's expression disquieted more and more, "that you would be fasting when you had the honor to approach the king of Prussia; and I know you too well not to be certain that you will speak to him of nothing except music."

"The young lady appears to me very prudent," returned the baron. "It is nevertheless said that she was quite intimate at Vienna with this young baron de Trenck?"

"I, sir?" replied Consuelo, with a very well acted indifference; "I hardly knew him."

"But," resumed the baron with a penetrating look, "if the king himself should ask you, by I know not what unforeseen chance, what you think of the treachery of this Trenck?"

"Sir baron," said Consuelo, meeting his inquisitorial glance with much calmness and modesty, "I should answer him, that I do not believe in the treachery of any one, for I do not understand what it is to betray."

"That is a beautiful saying, signora," returned the baron,

whose face suddenly cleared, "and you have said it with the accent of a beautiful soul."

He spoke of something else, and charmed the company by the grace and power of his wit. During all the rest of the supper, he had, when addressing Consuelo, an expression of kindness and of confidence which she had not before seen in him.

## CHAPTER CII.

At the end of the dessert, a ghost, dressed all in white and veiled, came to seek the guests, saying to them: *Follow me!* Consuelo still condemned to the character of the margravine for the rehearsal of this new scene, rose first, and followed by the other guests, ascended the great staircase of the chateau, the door of which opened at the extremity of the hall. The ghost who conducted them pushed open, at the top of the staircase, another great door, and they found themselves in an antique gallery, at the end of which they could perceive only a faint light. They were obliged to direct their steps thither to the sound of a slow, solemn and mysterious music, which was understood to be executed by the inhabitants of the invisible world. "Odsbuds!" said Porpora ironically in a tone of enthusiasm, "his lordship the count refuses us nothing! We have heard to-day Turkish music, sea music, savage music, Chinese music, Lilliputian music and all sorts of extraordinary music; but here is one which surpasses them all, and one may well say that it is truly the music of the other world."

"And you are not at the end yet!" replied the count, enchanted at this eulogium.

"We must expect everything on the part of your excellency," said the baron de Kreutz with the same irony as the professor; "though after this, I know not, in truth, what we can hope for superior."

At the end of the gallery, the ghost struck upon a kind of tam-tam, which gave forth a sullen sound, and a vast curtain drawing aside, allowed to be seen the body of the theatre decorated and illuminated as it was to be on the next day. I shall not give a description of it, though this would be to say: "There was no end to the festoons, there was no end to the chandeliers."

The stage-curtain rose; the scene represented Olympos,

neither more nor less. The goddesses were there disputing the heart of the shepherd Paris, and the competition of the three principal divinities constituted the body of the piece. It was written in Italian, which made Porpora say in a low voice, addressing himself to Consuelo: "The savage, the Chinese and the Lilliputian were nothing; here is the Iroquois at last." Verses and music, all were the count's manufacture. The actors and actresses were quite worthy of their parts. After half an hour of metaphors and *conchetti* upon the absence of a divinity more charming and more powerful than all the others, who disdained to compete for the prize of beauty, Paris having decided upon the triumph of Venus, the latter took the apple and descending from the stage by steps, came to lay it at the feet of the margravine, declaring herself unworthy to retain it, and making excuses for having aspired to it before her. It was Consuelo who was to perform this character of Venus, and as it was the most important, having to sing at the end a cavatina of great effect, count Hoditz, not willing to entrust it to any of his coryphées, undertook to fill it himself, as much to carry on the rehearsal, as to make Consuelo feel the spirit, the intentions, the finesses and the beauties of the part. He was so ridiculous in gravely personifying Venus and in singing with emphasis the insipidities pilfered from all the bad operas then in fashion and badly stitched together, of which he pretended to have composed a score, that no one could keep a serious face. He was too much excited by the task of scolding his troop, and too much inflamed by the divine expression which he gave to his acting and singing, to perceive the gaiety of the audience. They applauded him to the skies, and Porpora, who had placed himself at the head of the orchestra, stopping his ears in secret from time to time, declared that all was sublime, poem, score, voices, instruments, and the provisory Venus above all.

It was agreed that Consuelo and he should attentively read this master-piece together that very evening and the next morning. It was neither very long nor very difficult to learn.

and they promised that on the next evening they would be on a par with the piece and the troop. They afterwards visited the ball-room which was not yet ready, because the dances were not to take place till the day after the next, the fête having to last two days and to offer an uninterrupted succession of diversified entertainments.

It was now ten o'clock. The weather was clear and the moon magnificent. The two Prussian officers had insisted on recrossing the frontier that very evening, alleging a superior order which forbade their passing the night in a foreign country. The count was therefore obliged to yield, and having given orders to get ready their horses, carried them to drink the stirrup cup, that is to take coffee and excellent liqueurs in an elegant boudoir, whither Consuelo thought best not to follow them. She therefore took leave of them, and after having advised Porpora in a low voice to be more on his guard than he had been during supper, directed her steps towards her chamber, which was in another wing of the chateau.

But she soon lost her way in the windings of that vast labyrinth, and found herself in a kind of cloister where a current of air extinguished her taper. Fearing to lose her way more and more, and to fall into one of those *surprise* traps with which the mansion was filled, she tried to return, feeling her way until she could reach the lighted part of the building. In the confusion of so many preparations for foolish things, the comforts of that rich dwelling were entirely neglected. There were savages, ghosts, gods, hermits, nymphs, laughter and plays, but not a domestic to provide a torch, nor a being in his senses to guide you.

Still she heard coming towards her a person who seemed to walk with precaution and to keep designedly in the dark, which did not inspire her with confidence to call and name herself, the more that it was the heavy step and strong breathing of a man. She advanced somewhat agitated and keeping close to the wall, when she heard a door open not far from

her, and the light of the moon entering by that opening, fell upon the tall figure and brilliant costume of Karl.

She hastened to call him. "Is that you, signora?" said he in an agitated voice. "Ah! I have been trying to speak with you an instant for some hours, and now I am too late, perhaps!"

"What have you to say to me, good Karl, and whence comes the agitation in which I see you?"

"Let us go out of this corridor, signora. I must speak to you in an entirely isolated place where I hope nobody can hear us."

Consuelo followed Karl, and found herself in the open air with him on the terrace formed by the small tower which flanked the edifice.

"Signora," said the deserter speaking with precaution, (arrived that morning for the first time at Roswald, he knew the inmates no better than did Consuelo,) "have you said anything to-day which can expose you to the dislike or mistrust of the king of Prussia, and of which you might repent at Berlin, were the king exactly informed of it?"

"No, Karl, I have said nothing of such a nature. I know that every Prussian with whom you are not acquainted is a dangerous person to converse with, and for my own part, I have weighed all my words."

"Ah! it does me real good to hear you say so; I was very anxious! I approached you two or three times in the ship, when you were upon the water. I was one of the pirates who pretended to board; but I was disguised, you did not recognize me. It was of no use to look at you, to make signs to you; you noticed nothing, and I could not slip a single word to you. That officer was always at your side. All the time you were sailing round the basin, he did not budge a step from you. One would say that he divined you were his amulet, and that he hid himself behind you, in case a ball might have slipped into one of our innocent muskets."

"What do you mean to say, Karl? I cannot understand you. Who is this officer? I do not know him."

“ There is no need of my telling you ; you will know him soon, since you are going to Berlin.”

“ Why make a secret of it now ? ”

“ Because it is a terrible secret, and I must keep it for an hour longer.”

“ You have a singularly agitated air, Karl ; what is passing within you ? ”

“ Oh ! great things ! Hell burns in my heart ! ”

“ Hell ? one would say you had wicked designs.”

“ Perhaps ! ”

“ In that case, I wish you to speak ; you have no right to have a secret from me, Karl. You have promised me a devotedness, a submission proof against all trials.”

“ Ah ! signora, what words are those ? It is true I owe you more than my life, for you did all that was possible to preserve my wife and child for me ; but they were condemned, they perished—and their death must be avenged.”

“ Karl, in the name of your wife and child who pray for you in heaven, I command you to speak. You meditate I know not what act of madness ; you wish to be revenged ? The sight of those Prussians has taken away your senses.”

“ It makes me crazy, it makes me furious—. But no, I am calm, I am a saint. Look you, signora, it is God and not hell which impels me. I must go ! the hour approaches. Farewell, signora ; it is probable that I shall not see you again, and I request you, since you will pass through Prague, to pay for a mass for me at the chapel of saint John Népomuck, one of the greatest patrons of Bohemia.”

“ Karl, you must speak, you must confess the criminal intentions which torment you, or I will never pray for you, and I will call down upon you, on the contrary, the malediction of your wife and your daughter who are angels in the bosom of Jesus-the-Merciful. But how can you expect to be forgiven in heaven, if you do not forgive upon the earth ? I see that you have a carbine under your cloak, Karl, and that from here you are watching the Prussians on their passage.”

“ No, not here,” said Karl, shaken and trembling ; “ I do

not wish to shed blood in the house of my master, nor under your eyes, good sainted maiden! but below there, look you, there is a sunken path which I know very well already; for I was there this morning when they passed through. But I was there by chance, I was not armed, and besides I did not recognize him at once, him!—But directly, he will pass there again, and I shall be there, I! I can get there quickly by the path through the park, and though he is well mounted, I shall be in advance of him. And, as you say, signora, I have a carbine, a good carbine, and there is in it a good ball for his heart. It is there for some time; for I was not joking, when I lay in wait dressed like a false pirate. I had a good opportunity and sighted him more than ten times; but you were there, always there, and I did not fire—but directly, you will not be there, and he cannot hide himself behind you like a coward—for he is a coward, I am sure. I saw him blanch and turn his back on the fight, one day when he was making us advance with fury against my fellow-countrymen, against my brothers the Bohemians. Ah! what horror! for I am a Bohemian, I, by the blood, by the heart, and that never forgives. But if I am a poor Bohemian peasant, who only learnt in my forest how to handle a hatchet, he has made a Prussian soldier of me, and, thanks to his corporals, I know how to take good aim with a musket.”

“Karl, Karl, be silent, you are delirious! you do not know this man, I am sure. He is called the baron de Kreutz; you do not know his name and you take him for another. He is not a recruiter, he has never done you any injury.”

“He is not the baron de Kreutz, no, signora, and I do know him well. I have seen him more than a hundred times on parade; he is the great recruiter, he is the great master of robbers, and of the destroyers of families; he is the great scourge of Bohemia, he is my enemy, mine. He is the enemy of our church, of our religion, of all our saints; it was he who profaned, by his impious laughter, the statue of saint John Népomuck, upon the bridge of Prague. It was he who stole in the chateau of Prague the drum made with the skin of



Jean Ziska, who was a great warrior in his day, and whose skin was the safeguard, the respect and the honor of the country. Oh! I am not deceived, I know the man well! Besides, saint Wenceslas appeared to me just now, when I was saying my prayer in the chapel; I saw him as plainly as I now see you, signora; and he said to me: 'It is he, strike him to the heart.' I have sworn it to the Holy Virgin on the grave of my wife, and I must keep my oath. Ah! see, signora! there is his horse coming to the porch; that is what I waited for. I go to my post; pray for me; I shall pay for this deed with my life sooner or later; but I care little for that, provided God saves my soul."

"Karl!" cried Consuelo, animated with extraordinary strength, "I thought you had a generous, sensible and pious heart; but I see well that you are an impious and mean villain. Whoever be this man whom you wish to assassinate, I forbid you following him or doing him any injury. It was the devil who took the image of a saint to deprive you of reason; and God has permitted you to fall into this snare for having made a sacrilegious oath upon the grave of your wife. You are mean and ungrateful, I tell you; for you do not remember that your master, count Hoditz, who has loaded you with favors, will be accused of your crime and will pay for it with his head; he so honest, so kind and so gentle towards you! Go and hide yourself at the bottom of a cave, Karl; for you do not deserve to see the light. Do penance for having had such a thought. Hold! I see, at this instant, your wife who weeps at your side, and who tries to retain your good angel, ready to abandon you to the spirit of evil."

"My wife! my wife!" cried Karl, wandering and subdued; "I do not see her. My wife, if you are there, speak to me, let me see you once more and let me die."

"You cannot see her; crime is in your heart, and darkness upon your eyes. Fall on your knees, Karl; you may yet redeem yourself. Give me that gun which stains your hands, and betake yourself to prayer."

Speaking thus, Consuelo took the carbine, which was not

refused her, and hastened to remove it from before the eyes of Karl, while he fell on his knees and burst into tears. She hurriedly quitted the terrace to hide the weapon in some other place. She was exhausted by the effort she had made to seize upon the imagination of the fanatic, by invoking the chimeras which governed him. Time pressed; and it was not the moment to give him a course of more humane and more enlightened philosophy. She had said to him just what came into her mind, inspired perhaps by something sympathizing in the exaltation of that unfortunate, whom she wished at every cost to save from an act of madness, and whom she overwhelmed with a pretended indignation, even while pitying him for a frenzy which he could not master.

She hurried to remove the fatal weapon, in order to rejoin him afterwards, and retain him upon the terrace until the Prussians were far away, when, on opening the little door which led from the terrace to the corridor, she found herself face to face with the baron de Kreutz. He had just been to his chamber for his cloak and pistols. Consuelo had barely time to let the carbine fall behind her, into the angle formed by the door, and to throw herself into the corridor, closing that door between herself and Karl. She feared lest the fury of the latter should be reawakened by the sight of the enemy if he perceived him.

The precipitation of this movement, and the emotion which caused her to lean against the door, as if afraid of fainting, did not escape the eye of the clear-sighted baron de Kreutz. He carried a torch, and stopped before her smiling. His face was perfectly calm; yet Consuelo thought she saw that his hand trembled and made the flame of the torch oscillate very sensibly. The lieutenant was behind him, pale as death, with his sword drawn. These circumstances, as well as the certainty she acquired a little later that a window of the apartment, in which the baron had deposited and resumed his effects, opened upon the terrace of the tower, made Consuelo think afterwards that the two Prussians had not lost a word of her conversation with Karl. Still the baron saluted her

with a courteous and tranquil air ; and as the agitation of such a situation made her forget to return his salutation, and took from her the power of saying a single word, Kreutz, after having examined her an instant with eyes which expressed rather interest than surprise, said to her in a gentle voice, taking her hand : " Come, my child, recover yourself. You seem very much agitated. We must have frightened you by passing suddenly before this door at the moment you opened it ; but we are your servants and your friends. I hope we shall see you again at Berlin, and perhaps we can be of some service to you."

The baron drew Consuelo's hand towards him a little, as if at the first impulse he had thought of carrying it to his lips. But he contented himself with pressing it gently, saluted her anew, and withdrew, followed by his lieutenant,\* who did not seem even to see Consuelo, so much was he troubled and out of his senses. His countenance confirmed the young girl in the opinion that he was informed of the danger with which his master had been threatened.

But who was this man, the responsibility of whose safety weighed so heavily upon the head of another, and whose destruction had seemed to Karl so complete and so intoxicating a revenge ? Consuelo returned to the terrace to draw his secret from him, while she continued to watch him ; but she found that he had fainted, and not able to assist that colossus to rise, she descended and called the other domestics to go and succor him. " Ah ! it is nothing," said they as they went towards the place she pointed out : " he has drunk a little too much hydromel this evening, and we will carry him to his bed." Consuelo could have wished to ascend again with them ; she feared that Karl might betray his secret when coming to himself ; but she was prevented by count Hoditz, who passed by and who took her arm, congratulating himself that she had not yet retired, and that he could show her a new spectacle. She was obliged to follow him to the porch, and

\* In those times they said *low officer*. We have in our recital modernized a title which might cause some ambiguity.

thence she saw in the air upon one of the hills of the park, precisely on the side which Karl had pointed out to her as the end of his expedition, a great arch of light, on which she could confusedly distinguish some characters in colored glass.

"That is a fine illumination," said she with an absent air.

"It is a delicate, a discreet and respectful farewell to the guest who leaves us," replied the count. "In a quarter of an hour he will pass at the foot of that hill, by a sunken path which we cannot see from here, and there he will find that arch of triumph raised, as by enchantment, above his head."

"Sir count," cried Consuelo, shaking off her reverie, "who then is that personage who has just left us?"

"You shall know by and by, my child."

"If I ought not to ask I will be silent, sir count; still I have some suspicion that he is not really called the baron de Kreutz."

"I was not the dupe of that a single instant," returned Hoditz, who boasted a little in this assertion. "Still I respected his incognito religiously. I know that it is his fancy, and that he is offended if people don't appear to take him for what he gives himself to be. You saw that I treated him like a simple officer, and yet—" The count was dying with a desire to speak; but propriety forbade his articulating a name apparently so sacred. He took a middle term, and presenting his opera glass to Consuelo, "See," said he to her, "how well that improvised arch has succeeded. It is almost half a mile from here, and I bet that with my glass, which is excellent, you can read what is written on it. The letters are twenty feet high, though they seem imperceptible to you. Still, look carefully."

Consuelo looked, and easily deciphered this inscription, which revealed to her the secret of the comedy:

"LONG LIVE FREDERICK THE GREAT."

"Ah! sir count," cried she, earnestly, "there is danger to such a personage in travelling thus, and there is still more danger in receiving him."

"I do not understand you," said the count; "we are at

peace ; no one would now think of doing him any injury upon the territory of the empire ; nor can there be any objection on the score of patriotism to entertaining honorably such a guest as he."

Consuelo was buried in her reveries. Hoditz drew her from them by saying that he had an humble supplication to make to her ; that he feared to impose upon her good-nature, but that the matter was so important he was forced to importune her. After many circumlocutions, "the request is," said he with a mysterious and grave air, "that you will have the goodness to take upon yourself the part of the ghost."

"What ghost?" asked Consuelo, who was thinking only of Frederick and the events of the evening.

"The ghost that comes to seek madam the margravine and her guests at the dessert, to lead them through the gallery of Tartarus, where I have placed the field of the dead, and to cause them to enter the body of the theatre, where Olympus is to receive them. Venus does not appear upon the scene at first, and you will have time to put off in the wing the ghost's shroud, under which you will have the brilliant costume of the mother of loves all arranged, rose-colored satin with bows of silver streaked with gold, very small skirts, unpowdered hair, with pearls, plumes and roses ; a very decent toilet, and of an unparalleled attraction, as you will see ! Come, you consent to be the ghost ; for she must walk with much dignity, and not one of my little actresses would dare to say to her highness in a tone at once imperious and respectful, '*Follow me.*' It is a very difficult word to say, and I have thought that a person of genius might make a great sensation with it. What do you think of it?"

"The word is admirable, and I will be the ghost with all my heart," replied Consuelo, laughing.

"Ah ! you are an angel, an angel in truth," cried the count, kissing her hand.

But alas ! that fête, that brilliant fête, that dream which the count had cherished for a whole winter, and which had led him to make three journeys into Moravia to prepare its realization,

that day so long expected, was to vanish quite in smoke, as much as the serious and gloomy vengeance of Karl. On the morrow, towards noon, all was ready. The people of Roswald were under arms; the nymphs, the genii, the savages, the dwarfs, the giants, the mandarins and the ghosts waited, shivering at their posts, for the moment to commence their evolutions; the steep road was cleared of its snow and covered with moss and violets; the numerous guests, attracted from the neighboring chateaux, and even from quite distant towns, made a concourse respectable for the amphitryon; when, alas! a stroke of lightning overthrew all. A courier, arriving at full speed, announced that the carriage of the margravine had been overturned in a ditch; that her highness had broken two ribs, and that she was compelled to stop at Olmutz, whither the count was requested to go and join her. The crowd dispersed. The count, followed by Karl, who had recovered his reason, mounted the best of his horses and hurriedly departed, after having said a few words to his major-domo.

The pleasures, the brooks, the hours and the rivers resumed their furred boots and their woollen caps, and returned to their labors in the field, pell-mell with the Chinese, the pirates, the Druids and the anthropophagi. The guests reëntered their carriages, and the same berlin which had brought Porpora and his pupil was again placed at their disposal. The major-domo, conformably to the orders he had received, brought to them the sum agreed upon, and compelled them to accept it though they had only half earned it. They took that same day the road to Prague; the professor enchanted at being freed from the cosmopolitan music and the polyglot cantatas of his host; Consuelo looking towards Silesia, and afflicted at turning her back on the captive of Glatz, without hope of rescuing him from his unhappy fate.

That same day, the baron de Kreutz, who had passed the night in a village not far from the Moravian frontier, and who had departed again at dawn in a great travelling coach, escorted by his pages on horseback, and followed by a berlin,

which carried his secretary and his *tickler*,\* said to his lieutenant, or rather to his aide-de-camp, the baron of Buddenbrock, as they approached the city of Neisse, (and it must be noted that, dissatisfied with his awkwardness the day before, he spoke to him for the first time since their departure from Roswald): "What was that illumination which I perceived at a distance upon the hill we should have passed, if we had skirted the park of that count Hoditz?"

"Sire," replied Buddenbrock trembling, "I saw no illumination."

"And you were wrong. A man who accompanies me ought to see everything."

"Your majesty should forgive the frightful trouble into which the resolution of a wretch had thrown me—"

"You don't know what you are saying! That man was a fanatic, an unhappy Catholic devotee, exasperated by the sermons which the curates of Bohemia preached against me during the war; he was moreover driven to extremity by some personal misfortune. He must be some peasant carried off for my armies, one of those deserters whom we sometimes recapture spite of their fine precautions—"

"Your majesty may depend upon it that to-morrow this one shall be retaken and brought before you."

"You have given orders to have him carried off from count Hoditz?"

"Not yet, sire; but as soon as I arrive at Neisse, I will despatch four very skilful and very determined men—"

"I forbid it: you will, on the contrary, obtain information respecting that man; and if his family have fallen victims to the war, as he seemed to indicate in his disjointed talk, you will see that there be paid to him the sum of one thousand rix-dollars, and you will have him pointed out to the recruiters of Silesia, that he be left forever undisturbed. You understand me? His name is Karl; he is very large; he is a Bohemian and in the service of count Hoditz: that is enough to make it easy to find him, and to get information respecting his family and his position."

\* His travelling treasury.

"You majesty shall be obeyed."

"I hope so indeed! What do you think of that professor of music?"

"Master Porpora? He seemed to me foolish, self-satisfied, and of a very ugly temper."

"And I tell you that he is a man superior in his art, full of wit and a very diverting irony. When he arrives with his pupil at the frontier of Prussia, you will send a good carriage to him."

"Yes, sire."

"And he is to be made to enter it alone; *alone*, you understand? with much respect."

"Yes, sire."

"And then?"

"Then, your majesty means he shall be carried to Berlin?"

"You have not common sense to-day. I mean that he shall be carried back to Dresden, and thence to Prague, if he desire it; and thence even to Vienna, if such be his intention: all at my expense. Since I have drawn so honorable a man from his occupations, I ought to put him back again without its costing him anything. But I do not wish him to put foot in my kingdom. He has too much wit for us."

"What does your majesty command respecting the cantatrice?"

"That she be conducted under escort, whether she will or no, to Sans Souci, and that an apartment be given her in the chateau."

"In the chateau, sire?"

"Well! have you become deaf? the apartment of the Barberini."

"And the Barberini, sire, what shall we do with her?"

"The Barberini is no longer at Berlin. She has departed. Did you not know it?"

"No, sire."

"What do you know then? And as soon as that girl has arrived, I am to be notified, at whatever hour of the day or night. Have you understood me? These are the first



orders which you are to have inscribed upon register number 1 of the clerk of my tickler: the compensation to Karl; the sending back of Porpora; the succession of the Porporina to the honors and emoluments of the Barberini. Here we are at the gates of the city. Resume your good humor, Buddenbrock, and try and be a little less stupid the next time I take a fancy to travel incognito with you."

## CHAPTER CIII.

THE cold was quite biting when Porpora and Consuelo arrived at Prague, in the first hour of the night. The moon illumined that old city, which had preserved in its aspect the religious and warlike character of its history. Our travellers entered it by the gate called Rosthor, and passing through that part which is on the right bank of the Moldaw, they reached the middle of the bridge without accident. But there a heavy shock was given to the carriage, which stopped short. "Jesus God!" cried the postilion, "my horse has fallen before the statue! that is a bad omen! May Saint John Népomuck help us!"

Consuelo seeing that the shaft-horse was entangled in the traces, and that the postilion would require some time to get him up and readjust the harness, of which several buckles had been broken by the fall, proposed to her master to alight, in order to warm themselves by a little motion. The maestro having consented, Consuelo approached the parapet in order to examine the place in which she was. From that spot the two distinct cities which compose Prague, one called *the new*, which was built by the emperor Charles IV. in 1348, the other which ascends to the remotest antiquity, both constructed in the shape of amphitheatres, looked like two black mountains of stones, from which ascended here and there the lofty spires of the antique edifices and the sombre battlements of the fortifications. The Moldaw, dark and rapid, was engulfed beneath this bridge of a very severe style, the theatre of so many tragical events in the history of Bohemia; and the reflection of the moon, tracing upon it pale streaks of light, whitened the head of the revered statue. Consuelo looked at that face of the holy doctor, which seemed to contemplate the waves in a melancholy mood. The legend of Saint Népo-

muck is beautiful, and his name venerable to every one who esteems independence and loyalty. Confessor to the empress Jane, he refused to betray the secrets of her confession, and the drunkard Wenceslas who wished to know the thoughts of his wife, unable to draw anything from the illustrious doctor, had him drowned under the bridge of Prague. The tradition relates that at the moment when he disappeared beneath the waves, five brilliant stars glittered upon the barely closed gulf, as if the martyr had allowed his crown to float an instant on the waters. In record of this miracle, five stars of metal have been encrusted on the stone of the balustrade, at the very spot whence Népomuck was precipitated.

Rosmunda, who was very devout, had preserved a tender remembrance of the legend of John Népomuck; and in the enumeration of the saints whom every evening she caused to be invoked by the pure mouth of her child, she had never forgotten that one, the special patron of travellers, of people in danger, and above all, *the guardian of a good reputation*. As we see the poor dream of riches, so the Zingara made for herself, in her older years, an ideal of that treasure which she had by no means cared to lay up in her youth. In consequence of this reâction, Consuelo had been educated in ideas of an exquisite purity. Consuelo recalled therefore at this instant the prayer which she formerly addressed to the apostle of purity, and struck by the sight of the place that had witnessed his tragical end, she knelt instinctively among the devotees who, at that epoch, still paid, each hour of the day and night, an assiduous court to the image of the saint. They were poor women, pilgrims, old beggars, perhaps also some Zingari, children of the mandoline and proprietors of the highway. Their piety did not absorb them so much as to make them forget to hold out the hand to her. She gave them large alms, happy to recall the time when she was neither better shod nor prouder than they. Her generosity affected them so much that they consulted together in a low voice, and charged one of their number to tell her that they were going to sing one of the old hymns of the worship of the ble-

sed Népomuck, in order that the saint might avert the bad omen in consequence of which she was stopped upon the bridge. According to them, the music and the words were of the time even of Wenceslas the drunkard :

Suspice quas dedimus, Johannes beate,  
Tibi preces supplicés, noster advocate,  
Fieri : dum vivimus, ne sinas infames,  
Et nostros post obitum cœlis infer manes.

Porpora, who took a pleasure in listening to them, judged that their hymn was not more than a century old ; but he heard a second, which seemed to him a malediction addressed to Wenceslas by his cotemporaries, and which began thus :

Sævus, piger imperator,  
Malorum clarus patrator, &c.

Although the crimes of Wenceslas were not events of any consequence at that day, it seemed that the poor Bohemians took an everlasting pleasure at cursing, in the person of that tyrant, this abhorred title of *imperator*, which had become to them synonymous with foreigner. An Austrian sentinel guarded each of the gates placed at the extremity of the bridge. Their orders compelled them to walk without ceasing from each gate to the middle of the edifice ; there they met before the statue, turned their backs on each other, and resumed their interminable promenade. They heard the canticles ; but as they were not so well versed in church Latin as were the Prague devotees, they doubtless imagined they were listening to a song in honor of Francis of Lorraine, Maria-Theresa's husband.

On hearing those simple songs by moon-light, in one of the most poetical situations in the world, Consuelo felt herself affected by melancholy. Her journey had been pleasant and cheerful until then ; and by a very natural reâction, she fell suddenly into sadness. The postilion, who replaced his harness with German slowness, did not cease repeating with every exclamation of dissatisfaction : " That is a bad omen ! " so that Consuelo's imagination was at last impressed by it.

Every painful emotion, every prolonged reverie, recalled to her Albert's image. At that moment, she recollected that Albert, hearing the canonesse one evening invoke aloud in her prayer, Saint Népomuck, the guardian of good reputation, had said to her: "That is very well in you, aunt, who have taken the precaution to insure yours by an exemplary life; but I have often seen souls stained by vices call to their aid the miracles of this saint, in order to be better able to conceal from men their secret iniquities. It is thus that your devout practices serve quite as often for a cloak to gross hypocrisy as for a support to innocence." At that instant, Consuelo thought she heard Albert's voice at her ear in the evening breeze and in the gloomy waves of the Moldaw. She asked what he would think of her, he who perhaps believed her already perverted, if he should see her prostrate before that catholic image; and she was rising as if terrified, when Porpora said to her: "Come, let us get into the carriage again, all is repaired."

She followed him and was just entering the carriage, when a cavalier, heavily mounted on a horse more heavy still, stopped short, alighted and approached to gaze at her with a tranquil curiosity which appeared to her very impertinent. "What are you doing there, sir?" said Porpora, pushing him back; "ladies are not to be stared at so closely. It may be the custom in Prague, but I am not inclined to submit to it."

The stout man drew his chin out of the furs; and still holding his horse by the bridle, replied to Porpora in Bohemian, without perceiving that the latter did not understand a word; but Consuelo, struck by the voice of this person, and leaning forward to look at his features in the moonlight, cried, passing between him and Porpora: "Is it indeed you, sir baron of Rudolstadt?"

"Yes, it is I, signora!" replied baron Frederick; "it is I, the brother of Christian, the uncle of Albert; oh! it is indeed I. And it is indeed you also!" added he, uttering a deep sigh.

Consuelo was struck by his saddened air and his cold

greeting. He who had always piqued himself on a chivalric gallantry towards her, he did not kiss her hand, he did not even touch his furred cap to salute her; he was contented to repeat, as he looked at her with a dismayed, not to say a stupefied air: "It is indeed you! truly, it is you!"

"Give me the news from Riesenburg," said Consuelo with agitation.

"I will give them to you, signora! I long to give them to you."

"Well! sir baron, speak; tell me of count Christian, of madam the canoness and of—"

"Oh! yes, I will tell of them," replied Frederick, who was more and more stupefied and as it were besotted.

"And count Albert?" returned Consuelo, terrified by his countenance and his appearance.

"Yes, yes! Albert, alas! yes!" replied the baron, "I wish to speak to you of him."

But he did not speak of him; and through all the young girl's questions, he remained almost as mute and motionless as the statue of Népomuck.

Porpora began to get impatient: he was cold; he was in a hurry to reach a good lodging. Moreover this encounter, which might make a great impression on Consuelo, vexed him much. "Sir baron," said he to him, "we will have the honor to come to-morrow and pay our respects to you; but suffer us now to go to sup and warm ourselves—we have much more need of that, than of compliments," added he between his teeth, leaping into the carriage, into which he had just pushed Consuelo, whether she would or no.

"But, my friend," said the latter with anxiety, "let me inform myself."

"Let me alone," replied he roughly. "That man is an idiot, if he is not dead-drunk; and we might spend the whole night on the bridge, without his bringing forth a word of good sense."

Consuelo was the victim of a horrible anxiety: "You are without pity," said she to him, while the carriage was cross-

ing the bridge and entering the old city. "One instant more, and I should have learnt what interests me the most in the world."

"Heyday! are we still there?" said the maestro with temper: "Will that Albert be eternally running in your head? You would have had a pretty family there, very cheerful and very polite, to judge by that great lout, who has his cap nailed to his head, apparently! for he had not the civility to raise it on seeing you."

"It is a family of which you formerly thought so well, that you threw me into it as into a port of safety, desiring me to have all respect, all love for those who compose it."

"As to the latter point, you have obeyed me too well, from what I can see."

Consuelo was going to reply; but she became calm on seeing the baron on horseback, determined, in appearance, to follow the carriage; and when she alighted from it, she found the old lord at the porch, offering her his hand, and doing with politeness the honors of his house; for it was there and not to the inn that he had ordered the postilion to drive. Porpora in vain wished to refuse his hospitality; he insisted, and Consuelo, who burned with a desire to dissipate her gloomy apprehensions, hastened to accept and to enter with him into the hall, where a great fire and a good supper were waiting for them. "You see, signora," said the baron, drawing her attention to three covers, "I expected you."

"That astonishes me very much," replied Consuelo; "we had not announced our arrival here to any one, and even expected, two days since, not to arrive until the day after to-morrow."

"It cannot astonish you more than it does me," said the baron with a dejected air.

"But the baroness Amelia?" asked Consuelo, ashamed at not having before thought of her old pupil.

A cloud darkened the brow of the baron of Rudolstadt: his ruficand complexion, heightened by the cold, became suddenly

so pallid that Consuelo was terrified; but he replied with a kind of calmness: "My daughter is in Saxony with one of her relations. She will be very sorry not to have seen you."

"And the other persons of your family, sir baron," returned Consuelo, "can I not know—"

"Yes, you shall know all," replied Frederick, "you shall know all. Eat, signora, you must have need of it."

"I cannot eat unless you relieve me from my anxiety. Sir baron, in the name of Heaven, have you to deplore the loss of any of your relatives?"

"Nobody is dead," replied the baron, in a tone as melancholy as if he were announcing the extinction of his whole family; and he began to carve the meats with a slowness as solemn as he used to practise at Riesenburg. Consuelo had not the courage to question him further. The supper appeared to her mortally long. Porpora, who was less anxious than hungry, tried to converse with his host. The latter attempted, on his side, to reply obligingly and even to interrogate him respecting his affairs and his projects; but this freedom of mind was evidently beyond his strength. He never replied understandingly, and repeated his questions a moment after he had received the answer. He still cut large pieces for himself, and had his plate and glass copiously filled; but this was the effect of mere habit: he neither ate nor drank; and letting his fork fall to the floor and his looks to the table-cloth, he gave way to a deplorable dejection. Consuelo examined him and saw clearly that he was not drunk. She asked herself if this sudden decay was the effect of unhappiness, of illness or of old age. At last, after two hours of this suffering, the baron seeing that the repast was concluded, made a sign to his servants to retire; and after having for a long time searched in his pockets with a wandering air, took out an open letter, which he presented to Consuelo. It was from the canoness, and contained what follows:—

"We are lost; there is no more hope, my brother! Doctor Supperville has at last arrived from Bareith, and after having flattered us for some days, has declared to me that we



must arrange our family concerns, because, in a week perhaps, Albert will no longer exist. Christian, to whom I have not had the courage to communicate this opinion, still hopes, but faintly; his dejection terrifies me, and I know not if the loss of my nephew be the only blow that threatens me. Frederick, we are lost! Can we both survive such disasters? For myself I know not. May the will of God be done! That is all I can say; but I do not feel in myself strength enough to prevent my succumbing. Come to us, my brother, and try to bring us some courage, if any has remained to you after your own unhappiness, an unhappiness which is also ours, and which gives the finishing blow to the misfortunes of a family that may be called cursed! What crimes then can we have committed to deserve such expiations? May God preserve me from want of faith and submission; but, in truth, there are instants when I say to myself that it is too much to bear.

“Come, my brother; we expect you, we have need of you, and yet do not leave Prague before the eleventh. I have to give you a strange commission; I feel as if I were almost crazy in doing so; but I no longer understand anything of our life, and I conform blindly to the wishes of Albert. On the eleventh current, at seven in the evening, be on the bridge of Prague, at the foot of the statue. The first carriage that passes, you will stop; the first person you see in it, you will carry to your house; and if she can leave for Riesenburg that very evening, Albert will perhaps be saved. At least, he says he will have a hold on eternal life; and I do not know what he means by that. But the revelations he has made the past week, of events the most unforeseen by us, have been realized in so incomprehensible a manner, that it is no longer permitted me to doubt. He has the gift of prophecy and the sense of sight of hidden things. He called me this evening to his bed-side, and in that extinct voice which he has now, and which must be guessed more than it can be heard, told me to transmit to you the words which I have faithfully reported. At seven o'clock then, on the eleventh, be at the foot of the statue, and

whoever may be the person there in a carriage, bring her hither with all speed."

On finishing this letter, Consuelo, who had become as pale as the baron, rose suddenly; then she fell back into her chair and remained some instants with her arms stiffened and her teeth locked. But she soon recovered her strength, rose again and said to the baron who had fallen anew into his stupor: "Well! sir baron, is your carriage ready? I am; let us go."

The baron rose mechanically and went out. He had had strength to think of all in advance; the carriage was ready, the horses were waiting in the court; but he was now nothing more than an automaton obeying the pressure of a screw, and without Consuelo he would not have thought of departure.

Hardly had he left the chamber when Porpora seized the letter and ran it over rapidly. In his turn he became pale, could not articulate a word, and walked before the stove in a state of horrible disquiet. The maestro had to reproach himself with what happened. He had not foreseen it, but he said now that he ought to have foreseen it: and suffering from remorse, from horror, feeling his reason confounded moreover by the singular power of divination which had revealed to the sick man the means of again seeing Consuelo, he thought he was in a strange and frightful dream.

Still, as no organization was more positive in certain respects than his, and no will more tenacious, he soon thought of the possibilities and consequences of the sudden resolution which Consuelo had just taken. He moved about a great deal, struck his forehead with his hands and the floor with his heels, cracked all his knuckles, counted upon his fingers, calculated, reflected, summoned up his courage, and, braving the explosion, said to Consuelo, shaking her to reanimate her:

"You wish to go there, I consent; but I go with you. You wish to see Albert; perhaps you will give him the coup-de-grace. But there is no way to refuse; we will go. We can dispose of two days. We meant to pass them at Dresden; we will not rest there. If we are not at the Prussian frontier

on the 18th we fail in our engagements. The theatre opens on the 25th; if you are not ready, I shall be obliged to pay a considerable forfeit. I have not half the sum required, and in Prussia he who does not pay goes to prison. Once in prison you are forgotten; you are left there ten years, twenty years; you may die of sorrow or of old age, as you will. This is the fate which awaits me if you forget that we must leave Riesenburg on the 14th, at five o'clock in the morning at latest."

"Be tranquil, my master," replied Consuelo, with the energy of resolution; "I had already thought of that. Do not make me suffer at Riesenburg, that is all I ask of you. We will leave on the 14th, at five in the morning."

"You must swear it!"

"I swear it," replied she, shrugging her shoulders with impatience. "When your liberty and life are in question, I do not imagine that you require an oath on my part."

The baron reëntered at this instant, followed by a devoted and intelligent old domestic, who wrapped him up like a child in his furred pelisse and led him to the carriage. They drove rapidly to Beraum, and reached Pilsen by break of day.

## CHAPTER CIV.

BETWEEN Pilsen and Tauss, though they travelled as fast as possible, they were obliged to lose much time from the horrible roads, through forests hardly passable and very little frequented, the passage of which was not without danger of more than one kind. At last, after having made little more than a league an hour, they arrived, towards midnight, at Giant's castle. Never had Consuelo made a more fatiguing or more gloomy journey. The baron of Rudolstadt seemed ready to fall into paralysis, so indolent and gouty had he become. Not a year had elapsed since Consuelo saw him robust as an athlete; but that body of iron had never been animated by a strong will. He had never obeyed aught but his instincts, and at the first stroke of unexpected misfortune he was broken. The pity with which he inspired Consuelo increased her anxiety. "Is it thus, then, that I am to find all my hosts of Riesenburg?" thought she.

The bridge was lowered, the gates were open, the domestics waiting in the court-yard with torches. Neither of the three travellers thought to remark this: neither of them felt the strength to address a single question to the domestics. Porpora, seeing that the baron dragged himself along with difficulty, took him by the arm to assist him in walking, while Consuelo rushed towards the porch and rapidly ascended the steps.

She there found the canonesse, who, without losing time in welcoming her, seized her by the arm and said: "Come, time presses; Albert is impatient. He has counted the hours and minutes exactly; he announced that you were about to enter the court, and a moment afterwards we heard the rolling of your carriage. He did not doubt your coming, but he said that if any accident retarded you, it would be too

late. Come, signora, and in the name of Heaven resist none of his wishes, oppose none of his desires. Promise him all he may ask; pretend to love him. Lie, alas! if it be necessary. Albert is sentenced; his last hour approaches. Try to soften his agony; that is all we request of you."

While speaking thus, Wenceslawa drew Consuelo towards the great saloon. "Then he has risen? Does he not keep his chamber?" asked Consuelo hurriedly.

"He rises no longer, for he lies down no longer," replied the canoness. "For thirty days he has been seated in an arm-chair in the saloon, and he does not wish us to trouble him by carrying him elsewhere. The doctor declares that we must not oppose his wishes in this respect, because he would die on being moved. Signora, call up your courage, for you are going to see a frightful spectacle."

The canoness opened the door of the saloon adding, "Run to him; do not be afraid of surprising him. He expects you; he has seen you coming for more than two leagues."

Consuelo rushed towards her pale betrothed, who was in fact seated in a great arm-chair, beside the chimney. He was no longer a man: he was a spectre. His features, still beautiful in spite of the ravages of his disease, had contracted the immobility of a face of marble. There was not a smile upon his lips, not a ray of joy in his eyes. The physician, who held his arm and consulted his pulse, let it fall gently and looked at the canoness with an air which signified, "It is too late." Consuelo was on her knees before Albert, who looked at her fixedly and said nothing. At last he succeeded in making with his finger a sign to the canoness, who had learned to divine all his intentions. She took his arms, which he had no longer the strength to raise, and laid them upon Consuelo's shoulders; then she bent forward the head of the latter to Albert's breast, and as the voice of the dying man was entirely extinct, he pronounced these few words in her ear: "I am happy." For two minutes he held the head of his well-beloved against his chest, and his lips glued to her black hair. Then he looked at his aunt, and by impercepti-

ble motions made her understand that he desired her and his father to give the same kiss to his betrothed.

“ Oh ! with all my heart ! ” said the canoness, pressing her in her arms with tenderness ; then she raised her to lead her to count Christian, whom Consuelo had not yet observed.

Seated in another arm-chair opposite his son, at the other corner of the chimney, the old count seemed almost as much weakened and as much reduced. He still rose, nevertheless, and made some steps in the saloon ; but he was obliged to be carried every evening to his bed, which had been placed in an adjoining room. At that moment, he held his brother's hand in one of his own, and that of Porpora in another. He left them to embrace Consuelo with fervor several times. The almoner of the chateau came also, in his turn, to salute her, in order to give pleasure to Albert. He was a spectre likewise, notwithstanding his embonpoint, which had only increased ; but his paleness was livid. The effeminacy of a nonchalant life had so enervated him that he could not endure the sorrow of others. The canoness retained energy for all. Her face was marked with red spots, and her eyes burned with a feverish brightness ; Albert alone appeared calm. He had the serenity of a beautiful death upon his brow ; his physical prostration had nothing resembling the stupefaction of the moral faculties. He was grave and not dejected like his father and uncle.

In the midst of all those organizations ravaged by illness or sorrow, the calmness and health of the physician presented a striking contrast. Superville was a Frenchman formerly attached to Frederick, when the latter was only prince-royal. Foreseeing one of the first the despotic and suspicious character which he perceived smouldering in the prince, he had established himself at Bareith, in the service of the margravine Sophia-Wilhelmina of Prussia, Frederick's sister. Ambitious and jealous, Superville had all the qualities of a courtier ; quite an indifferent physician, notwithstanding the reputation he had acquired at that little court, he was a man of the world, a penetrating observer, a very intelligent judge of the moral

causes of disease. He had earnestly exhorted the canoness to satisfy all her nephew's desires, and he had hoped something from the return of her for whom Albert was dying. But in vain did he interrogate his features and his pulse, since Consuelo's arrival; he repeated to himself that it was too late, and he thought of departing that he might not witness scenes of despair which he could not avert.

Still he resolved to employ himself about the affairs of the family, to satisfy either some self-interested anticipation or his natural taste for intrigue; and seeing that no one among these dismayed relatives thought of profiting by the passing moments, he drew Consuelo into the recess of a window to speak to her quite low, in French, as follows: "Young lady, a physician is a confessor. I therefore very quickly learnt here the secret of that passion which is carrying this young man to the grave. As a physician, accustomed to probe all things and not easily to believe in disturbances of the laws of the physical world, I declare to you that I can give no credence to the strange visions and the ecstatic revelations of the young count. In what concerns you, at least, I consider it very natural to attribute them to secret communications which he has had with you respecting your journey from Prague and your speedy arrival here." And as Consuelo made a gesture of denial, he continued: "I do not interrogate you, mademoiselle, and there is nothing in my suppositions that ought to offend you. You should rather grant me your confidence, and consider me as entirely devoted to your interest."

"I do not understand you, sir," replied Consuelo, with a candor which did not convince the court physician.

"You will comprehend me, young lady," returned he with sang-froid. "The young count's family have opposed your marriage with him, with all their power, up to this day. But at last their resistance is at an end; Albert is about to die, and his desire being to leave you his fortune, they will not offer any opposition to a religious ceremony which will assure it to you."

"Eh! of what consequence is Albert's fortune to me?" said Consuelo stupefied; "what has it to do with the state in which I find him? I have not come here to think of business, sir; I came to try and save him. Can I not then retain any hope?"

"None! this malady, entirely mental, is one of those which baffle all our remedies and resist all the efforts of science. A month has passed since the young count, after a disappearance of a fortnight, which nobody here has been able to explain to me, returned to his family, attacked by a sudden and incurable malady. All the functions of life were already suspended. For thirty days he has not been able to swallow any kind of nourishment, and this is one of those phenomena of which the exceptional organization of the insane alone presents some examples; to think of his having been sustained until now by some drops of water by day and some minutes of sleep by night! You see him, all the vital forces are expended in him. In two days, at the most, he will have ceased to suffer. Arm yourself with courage, therefore; do not lose your self-command. I am here to second you and to strike some decisive blow."

Consuelo was still looking at the doctor with astonishment, when the canoness, at a sign from the patient, came to interrupt the latter and lead him to Albert's side.

Albert, having made him approach, spoke in his ear much longer than his state of weakness would seem to permit. Superville blushed and became pale; the canoness, who observed them, was eager to know what desire Albert had expressed to him.

"Doctor," said Albert, "all that you have just said to that young girl, I have heard." Superville, who had spoken at the other end of the saloon, in as low a voice as his patient employed at that instant, was confounded, and his positive ideas respecting the impossibility of ecstatic faculties were so overthrown, that he thought he should become crazy.

"Doctor," continued the dying man, "you can understand nothing of that soul, and you injure my design by alarming



her delicacy. She understands none of your ideas about money. She has never wished either my title or my fortune ; she had no love for me. She will yield only to pity. Speak to her heart. I am nearer my end than you think. Lose no time. I cannot live happy again, if I do not carry with me into the night of repose the title of her husband."

"But what do you mean by those last words?" said Supperville, occupied at that moment in analyzing the madness of his patient.

"You cannot comprehend them," returned Albert with effort, "but she will comprehend them. Limit yourself to repeating them faithfully to her."

"Hold, sir count," said Supperville raising his voice a little, "I see that I cannot be a lucid interpreter of your thoughts ; you have more strength to talk now than you have had for a week, and I conceive a favorable augury from that. Speak yourself to the young lady ; one word from you will convince her better than all I could say. Here she is near you ; let her take my place and listen to you."

Supperville, no longer comprehending anything in fact of what he had believed he did comprehend, and thinking besides that he had said enough to Consuelo to ensure her gratitude in case she had views upon the fortune, retired after Albert had again said to him : "Think of what you have promised ; the time has come ; speak to my relatives. Make them consent, and do not let them hesitate. I tell you that time presses." Albert was so fatigued by the effort he had just made, that he rested his forehead upon that of Consuelo when she approached him, and reposed there several instants as if ready to expire. His pale lips became bluish, and Porpora, terrified, thought he had yielded up his last breath. During this time, Supperville had assembled count Christian, the baron, the canoness and the chaplain at the other side of the chimney, and was speaking to them with earnestness. The chaplain alone made an objection timid in appearance, but which contained all the obstinacy of the priest. "If your lordships require it," said he, "I will give my ministration to this marriage ; but count

Albert not being in a state of grace, it would first be necessary for him to make his peace with the church, by confession and extreme unction."

"The extreme unction!" said the canoness with a stifled groan, "have we come to that, great God?"

"You have come to that, in fact," replied Supperville, who, a man of the world and Voltairian philosopher, detested the face and the objections of the almoner: "Yes, we have come to that without recourse, if sir chaplain insists upon this point and is resolved to torment the patient with the gloomy rites of the last ceremony."

"And do you believe," said count Christian, divided between his devotion and his paternal tenderness, "that the rites of a more cheerful ceremony, more conformable to the wishes of his heart, can restore him to life?"

"I can answer for nothing," returned Supperville, "but I dare to say that I hope much from it. Your lordship had formerly consented to this marriage."

"I have always consented to it, I have never opposed it," said the count, raising his voice designedly; "it was master Porpora, the guardian of this young girl, who wrote to me, on his part, that he would not consent to it, and that she had herself renounced it. Alas! that was the death-blow to my son," added he, lowering his voice.

"You hear what my father says?" murmured Albert in the ear of Consuelo; "but feel no remorse. I did believe in your abandonment, and allowed myself to be stricken with despair; but for the past week, I have recovered my reason, which they call my madness; I have read distant hearts as others read open letters. I have seen at once the past, the present and the future. I have known at last that you had been faithful to your oath, Consuelo; that you had done the utmost possible to love me; that you had really loved me for some hours. But we were both deceived. Forgive your master as I forgive him!"

Consuelo looked at Porpora, who could not hear Albert's words, but who, at those of count Christian, had been troubled,

and was walking before the chimney in a state of agitation. She looked at him with an air of solemn reproach, and the maestro understood her so well that he struck his head with his fist with mute vehemence. Albert made a sign to Consuelo to draw him towards him, and to aid himself to extend his hand to him. Porpora raised that frozen hand to his lips and burst into tears. His conscience murmured to him the reproach of homicide; but his repentance absolved him for his imprudence.

Albert again made a sign that he wished to hear what his relatives replied to Supperville, and he heard it, though they spoke so low that neither Porpora nor Consuelo, who were kneeling beside him, could catch a word.

The chaplain contended against the bitter irony of the physician; the canoness sought, by a mingling of superstition and of tolerance, of christian charity and maternal love, to reconcile irreconcilable ideas in the catholic doctrine. The debate turned only on a question of form; whether the chaplain believed he ought to administer the sacrament of marriage to a heretic, unless the latter at least promised to make profession of the catholic faith immediately afterwards. Supperville did not hesitate to lie, and to affirm that count Albert had promised him that he would believe and profess all they could desire after the ceremony. The chaplain was not to be duped in this manner. At last, count Christian, recovering one of those moments of tranquil firmness and simple humane logic, with which, after much irresolution and weakness, he had always cut short all domestic discussions, put an end to the disagreement.

“Sir chaplain,” said he, “there is no ecclesiastical law which expressly forbids your marrying a catholic to a schismatic. The church tolerates such marriages. Consider then Consuelo as orthodox, and my son as a heretic, and marry them immediately. The confession and betrothal are only of precept, as you know, and in certain cases of urgency may be dispensed with. There may result from this marriage a

favorable revolution in Albert's condition, and when he is cured we will think of converting him."

The chaplain had never resisted old Christian's will; it was for him, in cases of conscience, an arbiter superior to the pope. It only remained to convince Consuelo. Albert alone thought of that, and drawing her near him, he succeeded, without the aid of any one, in clasping with his emaciated arms, become light as reeds, the neck of his well-beloved. "Consuelo," said he to her, "I read your soul at this moment; you would willingly give your life to restore mine: that is no longer possible; but you can, by a simple act of your will, save my eternal life. I am about to leave you for a little while, and then I shall return to the earth by the manifestation of a new birth. I shall return cursed and despairing, if you abandon me now, at my last hour. You know that the crimes of Jean Ziska are not sufficiently expiated; and you alone, you, my sister Wanda, can accomplish the act of my purification in this phase of my life. We are brothers; to become lovers, death must still pass once more between us. But we must become spouses by an oath, that I may be re-born calm, strong, and delivered like other men from the memory of my past existences, which has caused my misery and my punishment for so many ages. Consent to pronounce that oath; it will not bind you to me in this life, which I shall leave in an hour, but it will reunite us in eternity. It will be a seal that will assist us to recognize each other, when the shades of death shall have obscured the clearness of our remembrances. Consent! It is a catholic ceremony which is to be performed, and which I accept because it is the only one which, in the eyes of men, can legitimize the possession we take of each other. I must needs carry this sanction to the tomb. Marriage without the consent of the family is not a complete marriage in my eyes. The form of the oath affects me little otherwise. Ours will be indissoluble in our hearts, as it is sacred in our intentions. Consent!"

"I consent!" cried Consuelo, pressing her lips to the wan and cold brow of her spouse.

These words were heard by all. "Well!" said Supper ville, "let us hasten!" and he resolutely pushed the chaplain, who called the servants and hurried to prepare everything for the ceremony. The count, somewhat reanimated, came and seated himself beside his son and Consuelo. The good canoness came and thanked the latter for her condescension, so far as to place herself on her knees before her and to kiss her hands. Baron Frederick wept silently, without appearing to comprehend what was passing. In the twinkling of an eye, an altar was arranged before the chimney of the great saloon. The domestics were dismissed; they thought that the preparations were only for the extreme unction, and that the condition of the patient required as little noise and as few exhalations in the apartment as possible. Porpora served as witness with Supperville. Albert suddenly recovered strength enough to pronounce the decisive *yes* and all the formulas of the engagement in a clear and sonorous voice. The family conceived strong hopes of a cure. Hardly had the chaplain recited the last prayer upon the heads of the newly married couple, than Albert rose, rushed into his father's arms, embraced in the same manner with an extraordinary precipitation and strength, his aunt, his uncle and Porpora; then he reseated himself in his arm-chair; and pressed Consuelo against his breast crying out: "I am saved!"

"That is the last effort of life, the final convulsion," said Supperville to Porpora, having consulted the features and the artery of the patient several times during the ceremony. In fact, Albert's arms opened, extended themselves in front, and fell upon his knees. Old Cynabre, who had never ceased to sleep at his feet during his whole illness, raised his head and thrice uttered a melancholy howl. Albert's look was fixed upon Consuelo; his mouth remained half open as if to speak to her; a slight color had tinged his cheeks; then that peculiar tint, that indefinable, indescribable shade, which passes slowly from the forehead to the lips, spread over him like a white veil. For a minute, his face assumed different expressions, always more serious, of concentration and resignation, until it

fixed itself in a definite expression of august calmness and severe placidity.

The silence of terror which rested upon the attentive and palpitating family, was interrupted by the voice of the physician, which pronounced in its funereal solemnity that sentence without appeal: "This is death!"

## CHAPTER CV.

COUNT CHRISTIAN fell upon his arm-chair as if struck by lightning; the canoness, with convulsive sobs, threw herself upon Albert as if she could have hoped to reanimate him by her caresses; baron Frederick pronounced some words without connection and without sense, which had the character of a tranquil alienation. Supperville approached Consuelo, whose energetic immobility frightened him more than the crisis of the others: "Do not think of me, sir," said she to him, "nor you either, my friend," answered she to Porpora, who gave all his solicitude to her at the first moment. "Lead away those unhappy relatives. Take care of them, think only of them. As for myself, I will remain here. The dead require only respect and prayers."

The count and the baron allowed themselves to be led off without resistance. The canoness, stiff and cold as a corpse, was carried to her apartment, whither Supperville followed to attend her. Porpora, no longer conscious where he was himself, went out and walked in the garden like a mad-man. He was suffocating. His sensibility was, as it were, imprisoned beneath a cuirass of coldness, more apparent than real, but of which he had acquired the physical habit. Scenes of mourning and terror excited his impressible imagination, and he ran a long while in the moonlight, pursued by ominous voices, which sang in his ears a frightful *Dies iræ*.

Consuelo therefore remained alone with Albert, for hardly had the chaplain commenced reciting the prayers of the service for the dead, than he fainted away, and was obliged to be carried off in his turn. The poor man had insisted on watching Albert with the canoness during the whole of his illness, and had expended all his strength. The countess of Rudolstadt, kneeling beside the body of her husband, holding

his frozen hands in hers, and with her head resting against that heart which no longer beat, fell into a profound reverie. What Consuelo experienced at that final instant was not precisely sorrow. At least, it was not that sorrow of regret and rending asunder which accompanies the loss of beings necessary to our every moment's happiness. Her affection for Albert had not that character of intimacy, and his death did not open an apparent void in her existence. The despair of losing those we love often relates to secret causes of self-love and of cowardice in view of new duties which their absence creates for us. A part of this sorrow is legitimate, the rest is not so, and ought to be combated, although it be natural also. Nothing of all that could be mingled with the solemn sadness of Consuelo. Albert's existence was foreign to her own in every point, excepting one alone, the need of admiration, respect and sympathy, which he had satisfied in her. She had accepted life without him, she had even renounced all testimony of an affection, which, two days before, she still thought she had lost. There had only remained to her the necessity and the desire of continuing faithful to a sacred recollection. Albert had before been dead to her; he was not any more so now, and perhaps he was less so in certain respects; for in fine, Consuelo, for a long time exalted by her communication with that superior soul, had come afterwards, in her dreamy meditations, to adopt Albert's poetical belief respecting the transmission of souls. That belief had found a strong foundation in her instinctive hatred to the idea of God's infernal vengeance towards men after death, and in her christian faith in the eternity of the life of the soul. Albert living, but prejudiced against her by appearances, unfaithful to love or devoured by suspicion, had appeared to her as if enveloped by a veil and transported into a new existence, incomplete compared with that which he had wished to consecrate to sublime love and unshakeable confidence. Albert, restored to that faith, to that enthusiasm, and breathing forth his last sigh upon her bosom, was he then annihilated for her? Did he not live in all the fulness of life in passing under that



triumphal arch of a beautiful death, which leads either to a mysterious temporary repose, or to an immediate awakening in a more pure and more propitious medium? To die, combatting one's own weakness, and be born again endowed with strength; to die, forgiving the wicked, and be born again under the influence and the protection of generous hearts; to die, torn by sincere remorse, and be born again absolved and purified with the innate strength of virtue, are not these sufficiently divine recompenses? Consuelo, initiated by the teachings of Albert into those doctrines which had their source in the Hussitism of old Bohemia and in the mysterious sects of anterior ages, (which were again derived from serious interpretations of the thought itself of Christ and that of his forerunners); Consuelo, sweetly, if not wisely convinced that the soul of her spouse had not suddenly detached itself from her own, to go and forget her in the inaccessible regions of a fanciful empyrean, mingled with this new notion something of the superstitious recollections of her youth. She had believed in ghosts, as the children of the people believe in them; she had more than once seen in her dreams the spirit of her mother approaching her to protect and preserve her. That was already a manner of belief in the eternal hymen of the souls of the dead with the world of the living; for this superstition of simple people seems to have remained in all times, as a protest against the absolute departure of the human essence to the heaven or the hell of legislating religionists.

Consuelo, attached to the bosom of that dead body, did not imagine then that he was dead, and felt none of the horror of that word, of that spectacle, of that idea. It did not seem to her that the intellectual life could vanish so quickly, and that this brain, this heart forever deprived of the power of manifesting itself, was already completely extinguished. "No," thought she, "the divine spark perhaps still hesitates to lose itself in the bosom of God, who will resume it, to send it forth again into universal life under a new human form. There is still perhaps a kind of mysterious, unknown life, in this hardly

cold bosom ; and besides, wherever Albert's soul may be, it sees, it understands, it knows what is passing about this its mortal covering. It perhaps seeks in my love an aliment for its new activity, in my faith the strength of an impulse to go and seek in God the spring of resurrection." And penetrated by these vague thoughts, she continued to love Albert, to open her soul to him, to devote herself to him, to renew to him the oath of fidelity which she had just made to him in the name of God and his family ; in fine, to treat him in her ideas and in her feelings, not like a dead person for whom we weep because we are going to be separated from him, but like a living one whose repose we respect while waiting to smile upon him at his waking.

When Porpora recovered his reason, he remembered with affright the situation in which he had left his ward, and hastened to rejoin her. He was surprised to find her as calm as if she had watched by the bedside of a friend. He wished to speak and exhort her to take some rest.

"Say no useless words before this sleeping angel," replied she to him. "Go and repose, my good master ; as for me, I remain here."

"You wish then to kill yourself?" said Porpora in a kind of despair.

"No, my friend, I will live," replied Consuelo ; "I shall fulfil all my duties towards *him* and towards you ; but I shall not leave him an instant this night."

As nothing was done in the house without an order from the canoness, and a superstitious fear prevailed respecting Albert in the minds of all the servants, none of them dared, during the night, to approach the saloon in which Consuelo remained alone with Albert. Porpora and the physician went and came from the chamber of the count to that of the canoness, and to that of the chaplain. From time to time they entered to inform Consuelo of the condition of those unfortunates, and to assure themselves of her own. They could not comprehend so much courage.

At last, towards morning, all was quiet. An overpowering

sleep subdued all the forces of suffering. The physician, worn out with fatigue, went to bed; Porpora slumbered in a chair, his head resting upon the side of count Christian's bed. Consuelo alone did not experience the necessity of forgetting her situation. Lost in her thoughts, by turns praying with fervor or dreaming with enthusiasm, she had only, for an assiduous companion of her silent watch, the sad Cynabre, who, from time to time, looked at his master, licked his hand, swept with his tail the cinders of the hearth, and accustomed no longer to receive caresses from that debilitated hand, laid himself down again with resignation, his head stretched out upon his motionless paws.

When the sun, rising behind the trees of the garden, threw a purple ray upon Albert's brow, Consuelo was drawn from her meditations by the canonesse. The count could not leave his bed, but the baron Frederick came mechanically to pray with his sister and the chaplain at the altar; then they spoke of proceeding to the enshrouding, and the canonesse, recovering her strength for these material cares, caused her women and old Hanz to be called. It was then that the physician and Porpora insisted upon Consuelo's going to take some repose, and she resigned herself to it, after having passed by the side of the bed of count Christian, who looked at her without appearing to see her. It could not be determined whether he was awake or asleep; his eyes were open, his breathing calm, his features without expression.

When Consuelo awoke after some hours, she descended to the saloon, and her heart was grievously oppressed on finding it deserted. Albert had been laid on a litter of state and carried to the chapel. His arm-chair was empty at the same place in which Consuelo had seen him the evening before. It was all that remained of him in this spot, which had been the centre of the life of the family for so many bitter days. His dog even was no longer there; the spring-tide sun enlivened those sad wainscottings, and the black-birds whistled in the garden with an insolent levity.

Consuelo passed softly into the adjoining room, the door of

which remained half-open. Count Christian was still in bed, still apparently insensible to the loss he had sustained. His sister, concentrating upon him all the anxiety she had felt for Albert, nursed him with vigilance. The baron with a stupefied air was looking at the brands burning in the chimney; only the tears, which fell silently down his cheeks without his thinking to wipe them away, showed that he had not had the happiness to lose his memory.

Consuelo approached the canoness to kiss her hand, but that hand was withdrawn from her with an unconquerable aversion. Poor Wenceslawa saw in that young girl the bane and the destruction of her nephew. She had felt a horror towards the project of their marriage in the beginning, and had opposed it with all her power; and afterwards when she had seen that in spite of absence it was impossible to make Albert renounce it, that his health, his reason and his life depended upon it, she had wished for and hastened it with as much ardor as she had before felt fear and repugnance. The refusal of Porpora, the exclusive passion for the stage he had not hesitated to attribute to Consuelo; in fine, all the officious and fatal falsehoods with which he had filled several letters to count Christian, without ever making mention of those which Consuelo had written and which he had suppressed, had caused to the old man the deepest sorrow, to the canoness the bitterest indignation. She had conceived a hatred, a contempt for Consuelo; she might forgive her, she said, for having alienated Albert's reason by that fatal love, but she could not absolve her for having cruelly betrayed him. She did not know that Porpora was Albert's real murderer. Consuelo, who comprehended her thoughts, could have justified herself; but she preferred rather to take upon herself all the reproaches, than to accuse her master and make him lose the esteem and affection of the family. Besides, she divined moreover, that if, the day before, Wenceslawa had been able to abjure all her prejudices and all her resentments by an effort of maternal love, she must necessarily recover them, now that the sacrifice had been uselessly accomplished. Every

look of that poor aunt seemed to say to her : " You have destroyed our child ; you have not been able to restore him to life, and now there remains to us only the shame of your alliance."

This mute declaration of war hastened the resolution she had already taken to relieve the canonesse as far as possible from this last sorrow. " May I implore your ladyship," said she submissively, " to fix for me the hour of a private conversation ? I must leave to-morrow before day-light, and I cannot quit this place without acquainting you with my respectful intentions."

" Your intentions ! I can guess them, for the matter of that," replied the canonesse, sharply. " Be satisfied, young lady, all shall be according to rule, and the rights which the law gives you shall be scrupulously respected."

" I see that, on the contrary, you do not understand me at all, madam," returned Consuelo ; " I therefore desire strongly—"

" Well, since I must drink of this cup also," said the canonesse, rising, " let it be as soon as possible, while I still feel courage enough. Follow me, signora. My elder brother appears to sleep for the moment. M. Superville, who has promised me still another day of attendance upon him, will have the goodness to supply my place for half an hour."

She rang, and sent to ask for the doctor ; then turning towards the baron : " My brother," said she to him, " your presence is useless, since Christian has not yet the consciousness of his misfortune. Perhaps he never will have it ; happily for him, unhappily for us ! Perhaps this insensibility is the forerunner of death. I have only you now in the world, my brother ; be careful of your health, which is only too much affected by the gloomy inaction into which you have fallen. You are accustomed to the open air and to exercise : go and take a walk with your gun ; the huntsman shall follow you with his hounds. I know well that it will not distract you from your grief ; but at least you will derive a physical benefit from it, I am certain. Do it for my sake, Frederick : it is the order of the physician, it is your sister's prayer ; do not refuse me. It is the greatest consolation you can give me at

this moment, since the last hope of my sad old age rests upon you."

The baron hesitated, and at last yielded. His domestics came, and he allowed himself to be led out like a child. The doctor examined count Christian, who gave no signs of sensibility, though he answered his questions and appeared to recognize everybody with an air of gentleness and of indifference. "His fever is not very strong," said Superville in a low voice to the canoness; "if it does not increase this evening, it will perhaps be nothing."

Wenceslawa, somewhat reassured, confided to him the care of her brother, and led Consuelo into a vast apartment, richly ornamented in the ancient style, into which the latter had never entered. There was in it a great state bed, the curtains of which had not been drawn for more than twenty years. It was that in which Wanda of Prachalitz, count Albert's mother, had given up her last breath; and this chamber was hers.

"It was here," said the canoness with a solemn air, after having closed the door, "that we found Albert, thirty-two days since, after a disappearance which had lasted fifteen. From that moment, he has not again entered here: he has not left the arm-chair in which he died yesterday evening."

The dry words of this necrological bulletin were articulated in a bitter tone, which buried so many needles in poor Consuelo's heart. The canoness then took from her girdle her inseparable bunch of keys, walked towards a large cupboard of sculptured oak, and opened both its doors. Consuelo saw therein a mountain of jewels, tarnished by age, of a strange shape, the larger portion antique, and enriched by diamonds and precious stones of considerable value. "These," said the canoness to her, "are the family jewels which my sister-in-law, count Christian's wife, had before her marriage; here, in this place, are my grandmother's, of which my brothers and myself made her a present; and here, lastly, are those which her husband bought for her. All these belonged to her son Albert, and henceforth belong to you, as his widow.

Take them, and do not fear that any one here will dispute with you these riches, to which we attach no importance, and with which we have nothing more to do. As to the deeds of ownership of my nephew's maternal inheritance, they will be placed in your hands within an hour. All is in order, as I told you; and as to those of his paternal inheritance, you will not, alas! have long to wait for them, perhaps. Such were the last wishes of Albert. My word appeared to him equal to a will."

"Madam," replied Consuelo closing the cupboard with a movement of disgust, "I should have torn the will, and I pray you to take back your word. I have no more need than you of all these riches. It seems to me that my life would be forever stained by the possession of them. If Albert bequeathed them to me, it was doubtless with the thought that, conformably to his feelings and habits, I would distribute them to the poor. I should be a bad dispenser of these noble charities; I have neither the administrative faculty, nor the knowledge necessary to make a useful disposition of them. It is to you, madam, who unite to those qualities a Christian soul as generous as that of Albert, that it belongs to employ this inheritance in works of charity. I relinquish to you my rights, if it be true that I have any, of which I am ignorant and wish always to remain so. I claim from your goodness only one favor: that of never insulting my pride by renewing such offers."

The canoness changed countenance. Forced to esteem, but unable to resolve to admire, she tried to insist.

"But what do you mean to do?" said she looking fixedly at Consuelo; "you have no fortune?"

"Excuse me, madam, I am rich enough. I have simple tastes and the love of labor."

"Then you intend to resume—what you call your labor?"

"I am compelled to, madam, and for reasons which prevent my hesitating, spite of the dejection in which I am plunged."

"And you do not wish to support your new rank otherwise in the world?"

"What rank, madam?"

"That which befits Albert's widow."

"I shall never forget, madam, that I am the widow of the noble Albert, and my conduct will be worthy of the husband I have lost."

"And yet the countess of Rudolstadt goes again to tread the boards."

"There is no other countess of Rudolstadt than yourself, madam canoness, and there will never be another after you, except the baroness Amelia, your niece."

"Is it from derision that you speak to me of her, signora?" cried the canoness, upon whom the name of Amelia seemed to produce the effect of a hot iron.

"Why that question, madam?" returned Consuelo with an astonishment, the candor of which could leave no doubt in the mind of Wenceslawa; "in the name of Heaven, tell me why I have not seen the young baroness here! Can she be dead also, my God?"

"No," said the canoness bitterly. "Would to Heaven she were! Let us not speak of her. This does not refer to her."

"I am nevertheless compelled, madam, to recall to you what I had not before thought of. It is, that she is the only and legitimate heiress of the property and titles of your family. This must put your conscience at rest respecting the deposit which Albert has confided to you, since the laws do not permit you to dispose of it in my favor."

"Nothing can deprive you of a dowry and title which Albert's last will has placed at your disposal."

"Then nothing can prevent my renouncing them, and I do renounce them. Albert knew well that I neither wished to be rich nor countess."

"But the world does not authorize you to renounce them."

"The world, madam! Well! that is precisely what I wished to speak with you about. The world would not understand



the affection of Albert, nor the condescension of his family towards a poor girl like me. They would make of it a reproach to his memory and a stain upon your life. They would make of it a ridicule and perhaps a shame for me; for, I repeat it, the world would understand nothing of what has passed here between us. The world ought therefore always to remain ignorant of it, madam, as your domestics are ignorant; for my master and the doctor, the only confidants, the only stranger witnesses of that secret marriage, have not yet divulged it and will not divulge it. I answer to you for the first; you can and you ought to assure yourself of the discretion of the other. Live tranquil then, madam, on this point. It will depend upon yourself alone to carry this secret to the tomb, and never, by my act, shall the baroness Amelia suspect that I have the honor to be her cousin. Forget, therefore, the last hour of count Albert; it is for me to remember it to bless him and be silent. You have tears enough to shed without my adding the vexation and the mortification of ever recalling to you my existence, so far as I am the widow of your admirable child!"

"Consuelo! my daughter!" cried the canonesse with sobs, "remain with us! You have a great soul and a great heart! Do not leave us again!"

"That would be the wish of this heart which is all devoted to you," replied Consuelo, receiving her caresses with emotion; "but I could not do it without our secret being betrayed or guessed, which is the same, and I know that the honor of your family is dearer to you than life. Allow me, by tearing myself from your arms without delay and without hesitation, to render you the only service in my power."

The tears which the canonesse shed at the termination of this scene, relieved her from the horrible weight that oppressed her. They were the first she had been able to shed since the death of her nephew. She accepted the sacrifice of Consuelo, and the confidence she granted to her resolutions proved that she at last appreciated that noble character. She left her to communicate them to the chaplain, and to come to an understanding with Superville and Porpora upon the necessity of forever keeping silence.

## CONCLUSION.

CONSUELO, seeing herself free, passed the day in wandering about the chateau, the garden and the environs, in order to revisit all the places that recalled to her the love of Albert. She even allowed herself to be carried by her pious fervor as far as the Schreckenstein, and seated herself upon the stone, in that horrid desert which Albert had so long filled with his mortal grief. She soon retired, feeling her courage fail, her imagination troubled, and believing that she heard a hollow groan coming from the entrails of the rock. She dared not say to herself that she even heard it distinctly: Albert and Zdenko were no more. This illusion could not therefore be other than diseased and hurtful. Consuelo hastened to withdraw herself from it.

On reapproaching the chateau, at night-fall, she saw the baron Frederick, who, little by little, had strengthened himself on his legs and become more animated in exercising his dominant passion. The huntsmen who accompanied him caused the game to rise in order to excite in him the desire of shooting it. He still took good aim, and picked up his victims with a sigh.

“This one will live and be consoled,” thought the young widow.

The canoness supped, or pretended to sup, in her brother's chamber. The chaplain, who had risen to go and pray in the chapel beside the dead body, tried to take his seat at the table. But he had a fever, and at the first mouthful felt himself sick. The doctor was somewhat vexed at this. He was hungry, and compelled to let his soup get cold in order to conduct the chaplain to his chamber, he could not restrain this exclamation: “These people have no strength or courage!

There are only two men here ; those are the canoness and the signora !”

He soon returned, resolved not to trouble himself much about the indisposition of the poor priest, and gave, as did the baron, quite a good reception to the supper. Porpora, deeply affected, though he did not show it, could not unclothe his teeth either to speak or to eat. Consuelo thought only of the last repast she had made at that table between Albert and Anzoletto.

She afterwards arranged with her master the preparations for their departure. The horses were ordered at four in the morning. Porpora did not wish to go to bed ; but he yielded to the prayers and remonstrances of his adopted daughter, who feared to see him fall ill in his turn, and who, to convince him, made him believe that she would sleep also.

Before separating, they went to count Christian's bedside. He slept peaceably, and Superville, who burned to leave that sad abode, assured them that he no longer had any fever.

“Is that very certain, sir ?” asked of him in private Consuelo, who was terrified at his precipitation. “I swear it to you,” replied he. “He is saved for this time ; but I must warn you that it is not for a long time. At that age, one does not feel sorrow very strongly at the moment of the crisis ; but the ennui of isolation finishes you a little later ; it is drawing back to leap better. Therefore, be on your guard ; for it is not seriously, I imagine, that you have renounced your rights.”

“It is very seriously, I assure you, sir,” said Consuelo ; “and I am astonished that you cannot believe so simple a thing.”

“You will permit me to doubt it, until the death of your father-in-law, madam. In the mean while, you have committed a great mistake in not providing yourself with the jewels and titles. No matter, you have your reasons, which I do not penetrate, and I suppose that so calm a person as you are does not act lightly. I have given my word of honor to keep the secret of the family, and I shall wait until

you free me from it. My testimony will be useful to you in time and place; you may depend upon it. You will always find me at Bareith, if God grant me life; and in that hope I kiss your hands, madam the countess."

Supperville took leave of the canoness, answered for the life of the patient, wrote a last recipe, received a heavy sum which seemed to him light compared with what he had hoped to draw from Consuelo for having served her interests, and quitted the chateau at ten in the evening, leaving the latter stupefied and indignant at his materialism.

The baron went to bed much better than the night before, and the canoness had a couch made up for herself at the side of count Christian. Two women watched in this chamber, two men in that of the chaplain, and old Hanz with the baron. "Happily," thought Consuelo, "poverty does not add privations and isolation to their misfortune. But who then watches Albert, during this gloomy night which he passes under the vaulted roof of the chapel? It will be myself, since this is my second and last wedding-night."

She waited until the chateau was silent and deserted; after which, when midnight had struck, she lighted a little lamp and went to the chapel.

At the end of the cloister which led there, she found two servants of the house, whom her appearance frightened at first, and who afterwards confessed to her why they were in that place. They had been ordered to watch their quarter of the night by the count's body, but fear had prevented their remaining there, and they had preferred to watch and pray at the door.

"What fear?" asked Consuelo, grieved to see that so generous a master no longer inspired other feelings in his servants.

"What would you, signora?" replied one of these men who were far from seeing in her the widow of count Albert; "our young lord had some strange practices and acquaintances in the world of spirits. He conversed with the dead, he discovered hidden things; he never went to church, he ate

with the Zingari; in fine, one does not know what might happen to those who passed the night in the chapel. It would be as much as our lives are worth to remain there. Look at Cynabre! he is not allowed to enter the holy place, and he has passed the whole day lying across the door, without eating, without moving, without complaining. He knows well that his master is there, and that he is dead. So he has not called him a single time. But since midnight struck, he is agitated, he snuffs, he scratches at the door and whines, as if he knew his master were no longer alone and tranquil within."

"You are poor fools!" replied Consuelo with indignation. "If you had hearts a little warmer, you would not have such weak minds." And she entered the chapel to the great surprise and the great consternation of those timid guardians.

She had not wished to visit Albert during the day. She knew that he was surrounded by all the catholic ceremonies, and she would have feared, by uniting exteriorly in those practices, which he had always repelled, to irritate his soul still living in her own. She had waited for this moment; and prepared for the gloomy aspect with which that worship had surrounded him, she approached his catafalco and contemplated him without terror. She would have thought she insulted those dear and sacred remains by a feeling which would be so cruel to the dead, did they perceive it. And who can assure us that the spirit, detached from the body, does not see it and does not experience a bitter sorrow from it? The fear of the dead is an abominable weakness; it is the most common and the most barbarous of profanations. Mothers do not know it.

Albert was lying upon a couch of brocade, escutcheoned at the four corners with the family arms. His head rested upon a cushion of black velvet embroidered with tears of silver, and a shroud of the same was draped around him in the form of curtains. A triple row of wax tapers illumined his pale face, which had remained so pure, so calm and so manly, that you would have said he slept peacefully. They had clothed the

last of the Rudolstadt in the antique costume of his fathers, according to the usage in vogue in that family. He had the count's crown on his head, the sword at his side, the shield under his feet and the crucifix upon his breast. With his long hair and his black beard, he was entirely like those ancient heroes whose statues, extended upon their tombs, lay around him. The floor was strewn with flowers, and perfumes burned slowly in little vessels of silver-gilt at the four corners of his mortuary couch.

During three hours Consuelo prayed for her husband and contemplated him in his sublime repose. Death, in spreading a more saddened shade over his features, had altered them so little, that often, in admiring his beauty, she forgot that he had ceased to live. She even imagined that she heard the sound of his respiration, and when she withdrew for an instant to refresh the perfume of the chafing dishes and the flame of the tapers, it seemed to her that she heard slight rustlings and perceived trifling undulations in the curtains and the draperies. She reapproached him immediately, and interrogating his frozen mouth, his silent heart, she renounced her fugitive, insensate hopes.

When the clock struck three, Consuelo rose and deposited upon the lips of her spouse her first, last kiss of love. "Farewell, Albert," said she to him in a loud voice, carried away by a religious exultation; "you read now without uncertainty in my heart. There are no more clouds between us, and you know how much I love you. You know that if I abandon your sacred remains to the cares of a family who will come to-morrow to contemplate you without weakness, I do not on that account abandon your immortal remembrance and the thought of your indestructible love. You know that it is not a forgetful widow, but a faithful wife who withdraws from your abode, and that she carries you forever in her soul. Farewell, Albert! you have said it, death passes between us and separates us in appearance only to reunite us in eternity. Faithful to the creed which you have taught me, certain that you have deserved the love and the blessing of God, I do not

weep for you, and nothing will present you to my thought under the false and impious image of death. There is no death, Albert; you were right; I feel it in my heart, since I love you more than ever."

As Consuelo finished these words, the curtains which fell closed behind the catafalco were perceptibly moved, and opening suddenly, presented to her eyes the pale features of Zdenko. She was at first terrified, accustomed as she was to look upon him as her most mortal enemy. But he had an expression of gentleness in his eyes, and, stretching to her across the bed of death, a rough hand, which she did not hesitate to clasp in hers: "Let us make peace upon his bed of rest, my poor girl," said he to her with a smile. "You are a good child of God, and Albert is satisfied with you. Go, he is happy at this moment, he sleeps so well, the good Albert! I have forgiven him, as you see! I came back to see him as soon as I learnt that he slept; and now I shall not leave him. To-morrow I will carry him to the grotto, and we will talk again of Consuelo, *Consuelo de mi alma!* Go and rest, my daughter; Albert is not alone. Zdenko is there, always there. He has no need of anything. He is so well with his friend! Misfortune is rebuked, evil is destroyed; death is vanquished. The thrice happy day has dawned. *May he who has been wronged be with thee.*"

Consuelo could no longer endure the infantile joy of that poor innocent. She bade him a tender farewell; and when she reöpened the chapel door, she allowed Cynabre to rush towards his ancient friend, whom he had not ceased to scent and to call. "Poor Cynabre! come; I will hide you under your master's bed," said Zdenko caressing him with as much tenderness as if he had been his child. "Come, come, my Cynabre! here we are all three reünited, and we will not leave each other again."

Consuelo went to waken Porpora. Then she entered the chamber of count Christian on tiptoe, and passed between his bed and that of the canoness. "Is it you? my daughter," said the old man without testifying any surprise: "I am very

happy to see you. Do not wake my sister who sleeps soundly, thanks to God! and go and do the same; I am entirely tranquil. My son is saved, and I shall soon be well."

Consuelo kissed his white hairs, his wrinkled hands, and hid from him the tears which would perhaps have destroyed his illusion. She did not dare to kiss the canoness, who reposed at last, the first time for thirty nights. "God puts bounds to grief," thought she; "they are its very excess. May these unfortunates remain a long time under the salutary weight of fatigue!"

Half an hour afterwards, Consuelo, whose heart was broken at leaving those noble old friends, passed with Porpora the drawbridge of Giant's castle, without remembering that this formidable manor-house, in which so many ditches and grates enclosed so much riches and sufferings, had become the property of the countess of Rudolstadt.

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NOTE.—Those of our readers who are too much fatigued with following Consuelo through so many perils and adventures, may now rest. Those, less numerous doubtless, who still feel some courage, will learn, in "The Countess of Rudolstadt," the continuation of her wanderings and what became of count Albert after his death.









