TITIAN.

A ROMANCE OF VENICE.

BY

R. SHELTON MACKENZIE, LL.D.

"Che non avea creduto che l'arte potesse giungere a tanto, e che solo Tiziano era degno del nome di Pittore."

MICHAEL ANGELO.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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TO

SIR EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, BART.,

AS TO

A MASTER IN THE ART,

THIS ROMANCE

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

A SPECIES of romance has lately been produced by some Continental writers, of which, hitherto, we have scarcely had any specimen in English literature. This is the Art-Novel, which permits the blending of the Ideal and the Real, in no ordinary degree, being based upon circumstances not only romantic and picturesque in themselves, but rendered additionally so by their connexion with the fortunes of some of the illustrious who, by pen or pencil, have achieved renown.

One brilliant example of this class has been produced by the highly imaginative lady who writes under the name of GEORGE SAND. In "Les Maîtres Mosaïstes" she has boldly and very effectively introduced the great Titian, and James Robusti (better known as Tintoretti), with Sebastian Zuccati, and his eminent

sons Francesco and Valerio. Perhaps *our* nearest approach to the kind of fiction of which "Les Maîtres Mosaïstes" may be considered the *chef-d'œuvre*, is the truthful and thrilling romance which MR. CHARLES WHITEHEAD has recently published, entitled "Richard Savage"—a work in which the mind of the hero is laid bare with stern fidelity,—a work in which are admirably blended high imagination, accurate research, just conception of character, true delineation of manners, and pathos the most touching because the most natural.

In the following Romance, the design has been to produce an Art-Novel, and, as such, "Titian" is presented to the public. Few biographies present more varied and interesting incidents than those of the Great Italian Painters; and the career of Titian, the head of the brilliant Venetian School, particularly struck me, (long before I contemplated writing about him, in the present form,) as capable of being illustrated in the manner I have now attempted.

To trace the progress of a great mind, through its many hard struggles against ad-

verse circumstances—to show with what difficulties it contended, what perseverance it exercised, what aspirations it cherished, what energies it put forth—to exhibit its undeviating application, amid doubt, neglect, and even positive wrong, to the great aims for which it battled—to show its onward path from obscurity to fame, in which, like a star shooting across the heavens, it left a long track of glorious light behind—to manifest its constancy of purpose, its trustful patience, amid all the "sickness of hope deferred," and its great, yet unboasting, exultation when the triumph came, the more welcome for the very delay and doubt—such I contemplated as among the capabilities of the subject, and such, however short I may have fallen in my execution, formed the main portion of my design.

Nor was I unwilling, while thus exhibiting a few scenes from the life of Titian, to touch, however lightly, upon the glorious Art which he so thoroughly mastered—which, in these later days, has found so many and successful Adepts in our own land. The temp-

tation was strong, also, to cast my story in that picturesque City of the Sea which witnessed so many of the mighty Painter's triumphs, which was honoured with his constant residence, which contains so many glorious proofs of his exhaustless genius and unrivalled skill, which cherishes his memory as one of her greatest boasts, and preserves, after the lapse of nearly three eventful and changeful centuries, the very pencil, palette, and picture which he last touched, even as he left them. The man —the art—the scene—the time tempted me to write, and in the work which I have written, though the form be that of Fiction, the substance draws its elements from Facts. In a few instances, I have added references to the sources whence particular statements have been derived, but have thought it better not to load my pages with notes, assured that they are not requisite for those who know the history of the time and the biography of the man, while the general reader might think them rather an incumbrance, as checking the course of the story.

Some of the machinery which I have used may appear fanciful, as indeed it is: but Astrology and its attendants were among the characteristics of the age and clime, and therefore the writer of Romance is at liberty to avail himself of them.

Mr. Carlyle says, in his "Life of Schiller," that the history of Genius has, in fact, its bright side as well as its dark. In this story of Titian I have endeavoured to exhibit both phases—to show the struggles which, unless the Painter had been sustained by a principle stronger than the mere love of fame, might have led to despair or terminated in sin, and to record the course of the ultimate triumph which, subdued and chastened by the same high principle, preserved his mind from the arrogance begotten by success upon less noble natures, and only urged him on to yet loftier Emulation.

Feb. 2, 1843.

TITIAN.

CHAPTER I.

Man's life is but a voyage. By the shore
Of sunny youth, his barque awhile doth float
'Till comes the fresh'ning of the breeze and tide
And sends it far abroad. There with the waves
It buffets bravely—holds its constant course,
Despite of lull or tempest—passes ships
Of statelier size and sail—is left itself
Far, far behind by little tiny boats
One scarce would trust upon a waveless lake,
Reaches the port of Age, with battered hulk,
(If it escape the hidden rocks which make
The sea of Time most dangerous), and, at last,
Its broken planks bestrew the rugged strand!
Happy, methinks, are they who glide between
The banks of some fair river, nor speed forth
Dallying with danger on life's troubled sea.

It was a lovely day in the autumn of the year 1507, on the Brenta might be seen

The common ferry
Which trades to Venice,

a large and commodious barge, towed by

mules, and gliding slowly down the sluggish stream.

The passengers were many. There were merchants from Germany, France, and various parts of Italy, going to make their market in Venice, then the great entrepôt for the rich products of the East; there sat the rich Jew from the Guidecca, scorning those who scorned him, but bearing, in humility of speech and aspect, "the badge of all his tribe;" there was the dark-eyed, dark-haired, and ruddy contadina, from Lombardy, full of quick smiles and mirthful movements; there was the cittadina, too proud to seem pleased with anything; there were a brace of Carmelites returning to their monastery, with a precious array of relics from Terra Firma; there were mercenaries in the service of St. Mark, holding hot converse on the merits of an arquebuse, with a lock of a new construction, which one of them had brought with him from Milan; there were children, rich in the charms and happy in the joyousness of infancy, loudly

anticipating the wonders which a first visit to the Piazzetta was to show them; add to these some half score sailors, who, having spent their money on land, were proceeding with empty pockets and light hearts to seek ships at Venice, and some idea may be formed of the various classes who composed the forty or fifty passengers on board that ferry-boat.

The costumes were as contrasted as the occupations of these people. The cittadina, keeping aloof from all contact with her chance companions, could not resist her sex's vanity, but even to their gaze displayed the richness of her robe of velvet, and the flashing brilliancy of her jewelled ornaments. Far more gaudy in attire, but less tasteful, were the peasant girls in their many-hued festive habits, and with their happy festive smiles. The children, too, were decked by parental pride in garments of the gayest and brightest colours. In contrast with these were the dark cloaks of the merchants; the grey robes of the monks; the yellow gabardine and red hat of the Jew,

(which were the distinguishing badges the law compelled him to wear), the glittering half-mail of the mercenaries, and the careless, but not unbecoming attire of the seamen. All of these, grouped picturesquely, would form a study for the painter fond of the striking effect produced by strong and harmonious contrast.

Although the distance from Padua to Lizza Fusina is little more than twenty miles, the ferry was some hours in accomplishing it. Therefore, while with frequent pauses for the purpose of taking in passengers, the boat slowly proceeded down the Brenta, the voyagers had both time and opportunity to form that brief but pleasant acquaintance, which sometimes terminates in mutual esteem and friendly regret. After a time, the foreign merchants consulted the Venetian Jew upon some question of commerce, and speedily were deep in discussion with him, on the mysteries of usance and exchange. The peasant girls laughed and jested with each other for a time, in the happy exuberance of youthful

mirth. The Carmelites talked together of the wonders of their respective supply of relics, and then, more anxiously and seriously, began to conjecture what the energetic character of the new Pontiff, Julius the Second, might be likely to undertake and effect for the advancement of the Church's temporal interests. The soldiers variously disposed themselves—some over the cheap wine of the country, discussed the merits of Bayard, the latest living flower of chivalry, and murmured at the continuance of peace; others, according to the prescriptive custom of all idle warriors, busied themselves in the laudable duty of flirting with the pretty villagers, whose looks of irrepressable coquetry seemed to challenge as a right what it was apparent they enjoyed as a pleasure. And a few weather and war beaten veterans who had fought under Trivulzi, when Charles VIII of France had invaded Italy, some years before, gravely and doubtfully spoke respecting the Emperor's Maximilian's recent demand of a free passage through the territory of Venice,

on the pretence of wishing to go to Rome, there to receive from the sacred hand of the Holy Pontiff, the iron crown of the Cæsars.

The Brenta, ere it mixes its waters with the sea, flows on from Padua between banks which, three centuries ago, (the epoch of our tale), were crowned with rows of stately poplars, and dark cypresses. The vines luxuriantly and greenly twined around the trees, pensile from branch to branch—for Nature, in a sportive moment, had exercised her fancy to produce festoons more graceful and beautiful than the imitative skill of art could present. On the banks, we might almost say on the very water itself, were beds of mint and patches of the multi-coloured Iris. Here and there grew tall reeds and yellow osiers, bending to each breath of wind, amid which some aquatic fowls had made their nests. But the greatest ornaments by the Brenta's side were the majestic willows, of immense and luxuriant growth, just dipping their drooping branches in the water.

The country through which the Brenta

passes, ere it glides into the Venetian Lagunes, is a level campaign, which was then highly cultivated, as its fruitful vineyards, and fertile fields abundantly and beautifully evidenced. On either side were frequent villages, thickly inhabited. Beside these, even then, (for the greater number of stately erections which Palladio built, and Paul Veronese embellished, belong to a later period), even then, there were many palaces rich in marble and mosaic, with splendid gardens in which graceful fountains and beautiful statues alternated with clustering groups of orange and myrtle trees, breathing perfume into the air. But to the eye and mind of the contemplative observer there appeared, as something far lovelier than the cultivated beauty of the country, or the rich splendour of the palaces—the richer beauty of the gaily dressed peasantry, who, (for it was the glowing vintage season), joined in and made the festivities which, at that genial time, are still general throughout the south of Europe. The palaces have lost much of the beauty which they

then wore; the statues, ruined and broken, lie upon the ground which rank weeds have overrun; an uncultured soil repays neglect with comparative barrenness; but, even yet, the traveller who enters Venice by that route is struck with the natural grace of each manly form, and each female face.

The miscellaneous company, whom we have described, were unobservant of the scenes through which they passed. To many of them the place was familiar, and being so, was slighted. Some were plodding men of business, for whom a sequin wore a more golden aspect than would the Dryad-haunted valleys of Arcadia, or the sunny glades of Cythera. Others full of the anticipated delights of Venice,

> First Ocean's daughter, then his bride,

were all too busy with their own thoughts for observation of the passing scenery. The wine-cup challenged the exclusive attention of more, while, for the rest, there was sufficient attrac-

tion in eyes and features, "looks and tones," whose expression, at the moment, was pleasing —because it was kind.

There was one, however, for whom the scene appeared to have many beauties—if an opinion might be formed from the fixed and pleased admiration he bestowed upon it. Of the rank and occupation of this youthful person, little could be guessed from his appearance. In those days, when the chief distinctions of dress were not defined in so marked a manner as at an earlier and a later period, the stranger, wearing the semi-warlike attire then general, might have been taken for a merchant or a traveller, a soldier or a citizen.

He sat in the bow of the boat, delightedly regarding the scene through which they were passing, and more than one of the female passengers viewed him with interest. Their accustomed eyes took in his portrait at a look. He was of the middle stature, and his slight but well-proportioned figure did not indicate the possession of much muscular strength, yet

he had much experience of war and travel, and had borne fatigue of mind and body under which stronger men might have sunk. At this time he had just completed his twenty-first year. Intense study, or the premature toils of life—or both, perhaps—had already marked the calm and settled expression of manhood upon his features, so that a casual beholder might take him for some five or six years more than he really had reached. His features were rather well than regularly cut. A sculptor would say that the lower part of his face was too square and massy, and that the mouth was rather large, but the upper features fairly balanced these defects, for the brow was high, the nose well shaped, and the dark grey eyes full and piercing. His complexion was pale, but it did not appear to be the pallor of ill health. In the deep clear tones of his voice, there was gravity almost to sadness, and if he wanted the bloom and the laughing look of youth, few would say that his face, strongly marked with thought and feeling, had not a far deeper

interest, especially when emotion threw successive tides of light rather than colour over its paleness. Add to these particulars, short moustaches, and dark brown hair flowing in thick curls upon his shoulders, and more thinly —even retreatingly—upon his high forehead, and some idea of the appearance of the stranger may be formed.

A tunic of lawn, confined at the neck by a jewelled clasp, a falling or turn-down collar of yet finer material, in striking relief to a doublet of dark cloth, open in front and girt round the waist by a richly embroidered girdle, in which a small dagger was placed—a cap of purple velvet, with a short dark plume, fastened on one side by a gem of more value than show—a short Spanish cloak, negligently thrown across his shoulders, and loosely clasped by tassels round his neck, and a rapier or walking sword by his side—such was his attire.

These details imperfectly indicate rather than describe the person, brought out, thus prominently, from the assembly of passengers

in that ferry-boat. Descending from particulars, we may give the simple assurance that the Signore Carloni was not so fortunate as to be an Apollo in form, nor an Adonis in beauty. If not apparently above the general run of travellers—half merchant, half soldier—of the early part of the sixteenth century, he certainly was not beneath it. The commonplace of the Signore's appearance may disappoint those who are accustomed to think of one of the chief characters in a romance as something between a demigod and a demon; but the fact must be stated as it was. It may be a consolation for such to remember that the most unpromising exterior may conceal a treasure; it was in the leaden casket, and not in that of gold or silver, that Bassanio found the scroll which gave Portia to his heart.

If his fellow-passengers had been of a superior rank, they might have found in Signor Carloni, perhaps, something more than the silent and unsociable person he seemed to them. One signal of the freemasonry of society, is a

nameless and undefinable something which, under all circumstances, *will* cling to those of gentle blood and nurture. To describe it, would be as difficult as to describe some sweet-souled melody. It may mingle its grace with the slightest movements of the body, rest on the speaking smile, show itself by a glance from the eye or a word from the lip. It is Protean. We watch for it, and it does not appear. We forget it, and it is displayed beyond questioning.

About half of that short voyage had been sluggishly accomplished, when Signor Carloni observed among the passengers, whom, from time to time, they took in at different landing-places, one who certainly was of a class much superior to the rest. That very intelligence and sympathy which silently attract, even in a crowd, speedily drew him into conversation with this last-comer, who acquainted him that his name was Vecelli, that he was a resident in Venice, and was then on his return from a short visit at the villeggiatura or country-resi-

dence of the noble family of Barberigo. And the Signore Vecelli learned, in turn, that the companion whom chance had thus cast in his way, had latest come from Inspruck, and knew not whether his sojourn in Venice would be brief or extended. These mutual statements being made, the parties gradually glided into conversation, and thus beguiled the tediousness of the slowly-passing time.

Carloni, who was at once a scholar, a soldier and a courtier—an union more rare in his time than ours—speedily discovered that Vecelli possessed extensive and general knowledge, gleaned, apparently, like his own, as much from intercourse with society as from the perusal of books. He had some difficulty, at first, in conjecturing what station such a person might occupy in Venice, but judged, from his frequent reference to the Signor Barberigo, that he was probably attached to that noble in the capacity of secretary, for which he appeared well qualified. The plainness of his attire, when all in Venice who were

not noble usually displayed a certain magnificence in their habits, confirmed this conjecture.

Those who beheld the two cavaliers, as they conversed together, would notice that Vecelli, who was several years the senior, had also greatly the advantage in personal appearance. Not merely because in stature he was over the common height, and combined strength and activity of form in no ordinary degree of perfection—if in that there *can* be degrees—but the features were strikingly handsome, and the bearing was eminently that of one "master of his own mind," and accustomed to acts of importance and decision. His eyes were large and dark, and the intellect which clearly beamed from them (bearing out the theory of Lavater,) was confirmed by the ease with which, in conversation, he shewed himself acquainted with each subject that arose. His profile was strongly marked, exhibiting the compact forehead, the full eye-brow, the aquiline nose, the well-cut and expressive mouth, the

bold and rounded chin, and the well-shaped neck, which might have been a model to a sculptor anxious to adjust the head of an Antinous upon a suitable support. The physiognomist might think, perhaps, that the mouth indicated tastes a little too luxurious, but it was impossible for him to behold that face without feeling that it *must* belong to one who had the power and desire to struggle for a mighty prize, and the ability and energy which find a make-a-way to the goal. It was, in short, one of those faces on which SUCCESS was written plainly. Scarcely any person is there, who, once at least, in the path of life, has not come across such a face, and bewildered himself, from time to time, in after years, wondering whether the promise it held forth had been accomplished, and in what manner.

"In Venice," said Vecelli, in reply to some remarks from the other, "there is less communion of thought than you anticipate. The policy of the State forbids familiar intercourse

between her nobles and foreigners, and even excludes her own citizens, however distinguished, from commanding her army, so strong is the precaution against the abuse of power. In Venice, men are cautious what they say and where they say it, for walls have ears. The spy lurks among one's most familiar friends, and the Lion's mouth ever is open to receive secret denunciations from all quarters. As a stranger, therefore, you can have little intercourse with Venetian society; but, on the other hand, you may pursue your own path, if it be an harmless one, and rest confident that scarcely, except by your own fault, can evil fall upon you."

"But I would inquire," said Carloni, "from you, who appear acquainted with the subject, why Venice, all powerful as she is, should thus sanction a system which destroys open confidence between man and man, while it appears to give encouragement to spies, and traitors, and secret slanderers?"

"Why?—because the condition of Venice is different from the condition of every state

now existing—of every state that ever has existed. Her beginning is like a dream, her history like a legend! Ten centuries ago, a handful of bold men sought an asylum amid a few barren islets on the shore of the Adriatic. They rescued these spots of earth from the sea, and erected humble dwellings, in which, whatever else they might want, they were rich at least in liberty. By much struggling, and great fortune, their little settlement gradually emerged from obscurity. They became known as traders at a time when maritime enterprize was rare, and their numbers increased from various quarters. Then came the necessity for a government and laws. They fixed certain rules by which to be guided; they deputed the ruling power to the most worthy. Wealth increased. The desire for foreign dominion was awakened, when cities and states on Terra Firma entreated their friendship, their assistance, and their protection. The city became a Seigniory; a mighty State with wide possessions and many tributaries. Nature has rendered the seat of government inacces-

sible on all sides, except by treason. To prevent—to detect—to punish this, is the constant care of the Venetian rulers. The situation is peculiar—peculiar are the means. Viewing the matter, as a stranger may, without a knowledge or a thought of the true position of Venice, as a state, I wonder not that her policy should appear hard and strange, but considering that by such policy she has achieved her unequalled greatness, one may ask, whether by any other means she could have won it? By the result, we judge of the means! Thus has Venice arisen; the Rome of the ocean, or rather, in her wealth, her commerce, and her greatness, the Tyre of Christendom."

"Perhaps, like the ancient Tyre, to fall and be forgotten?"

"It may so," replied Vecelli, "for we know not what the fulness of time may bring forth. But, whether Venice flourish or fade, the part she *has* borne among nations can never be forgotten. Not alone in the art of conquest,

which has given her power, as if by miracle—nor in commerce, which sends her fleets throughout the world—nor in policy, which has rendered the City of the Sea mighty among the mightiest; but in the arts which adorn, and civilize, and elevate, is Venice foremost among the nations. Her architecture has employed the ablest masters, from the first who changed her mud huts into palaces, to our Giacopo Sansovino, who appears determined to reduce the poetry of his art into form and substance. Venice was among the first to take advantage of the discovery of printing, and the learned labours of Manutius Aldus, even now, produce and multiply copies of the classics, with a fidelity which, a century ago, would have been considered the effect of magic. Her sculptors form a peculiar class, perpetually engaged in adorning the dwellings of her warrior-merchants, until the stranger wonders at the number no less than the beauty of their productions. Her mosaic-workers are eminent throughout Europe, and Zuccato's name gives

warrant of the ability which heads them. Her manufactures of silk, glass, and jewellery, are renowned above all others; her very coin is so beautiful in design and pure in material, that from the Mediterranean to the sea of China, the Asiatics know no other European coin but the Venetian sequin; and her painters have already formed a new school, the characteristic of which is the practical illustration of the great principle, hitherto too little cared for, that truth shall be the basis of their art, whether as regards design or colouring."

"Across the Alps," said Carloni, "we prize the paintings of the Venetian artists beyond all others. It is true that we have beheld few of them, for frescoes can only be viewed where they are executed, but our Albert Durer has brought with him brilliant specimens of art executed by Venetian painters. Thus he has formed a collection which even the Emperor Maximilian delights to visit. Not only have we thus seen paintings by the Bellini and their pupils, but by their master, Antonello de

Messina, who contrived to cheat John of Bruges out of the secret of painting in oil."

"The trans-montane belief that the Bellini were pupils of Antonello, is incorrect," observed Vecelli. "There was something like retaliation in the way by which Giacomo Bellini, father of the present painters, acquired his knowledge of the mode of working colours in oil. When John of Bruges sent some of his paintings to the King of Naples, they were seen by Antonello, who immediately proceeded to Van Eyck, entered himself as a pupil under a feigned name, and by close observation discovered the secret which has given permanency to modern paintings. Accompanied by Pino, of Messina, he came to Venice, where he practised the new mode. Giacomo Bellini observed how mellow and brilliant was his colouring, and how the pale and monotonous tints were, by this process, succeeded by the gradations of light and shade. His person was unknown to Antonello, and he boldly went to him to sit for his portrait. In the

second sitting he discovered the means by which the new effects were produced, and immediately commenced employing them."

"Let me inquire, Signor, since our discourse has fallen upon art, whether Albert Durer, whom I knew during his last visit to Venice, is succeeding as a painter?"

"He now engraves more than he paints, and is employed on a great work, the Triumphs of the Emperor Maximilian, which will exhibit the finest examples of the graver's skill and the painter's design. The Emperor has not only given him a pension, but patents of nobility, and he has been appointed a member of the Council of Nurenberg. He well remembers Venice, and shews with wonder and delight—for a great artist can afford to speak the truth of a rival—a surprising painting which Titian, a dweller in Venice, executed before he had reached the year of manhood, in competition with himself. Durer declares that in minute and laborious fidelity it equals the

best of his own productions, while in grace and colouring, it surpasses them."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Vecelli, "then is Albert Durer as generous as he is gifted. This Titian, of whom you speak, must be happy when he learns that his old rival gives him praise. Know that he has done more—he has invited him to reside with himself in Germany, with the assurance that *there* his pencil would have constant employment and procure him fame and riches."

CHAPTER II.

THE CITY OF THE SEA.—THE RIVALS.

Once she did hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West: the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth.
Venice, the eldest Child of Liberty!

WORDSWORTH.

MEANWHILE, approaching the termination of its voyage, the boat passed that village of palaces, the Mira. Soon after, it neared Fusina, on the verge of the Lagunes, and speedily, as one of the seamen shouted, "Venezia! Venezia!" many eyes eagerly turned to catch a glimpse of the City of the Sea.

Beautiful Venice!—if in these latter days, when "ruin greenly dwells" in those proud

palaces once peopled with the beautiful and the brave, the lip becomes eloquent in praise, and the heart treasures up, for aye, bright imaginings and remembrances of that romance of real life in which, for a thousand years, her children bore their stirring part — how rich must have been that mural beauty, how proud these associations of glory, in the summer of her greatness. Even yet, the pale shadow of her former self, the Ocean Queen is wealthy in charms and attractions amid decay and ruin; but, in the olden days, when her rich argosies swept over every sea; when her merchants were the very princes of commerce; when her chivalry was the bulwark of Christendom against the Ottoman; when what she won by arms, she extended by policy;* she must have been glorious and magnificent indeed.

With an aspect unique as it was picturesque, its architecture blending the lightness and luxury of the East with the stately and solid grandeur of the West—Venice was a place

* Macchiavelli paid this compliment to Venice.

which, once seen, could never be forgotten. It looked, with its Saracenic domes and minarets, like an Asiatic city transported to the Adriatic by a spell—powerful as that muttered by the crafty Afrit when he commanded "the slaves of the lamp" to remove the palace of Aladdin from Tartary to sandy Sahara. Her people—peculiar in their government, policy and customs. Her commerce—which up to the close of the fifteenth century, monopolized the richest trade of Europe and of Asia. Her manufactures—which gave employment to her sons and riches to her traders. Her enterprise, which had gradually made the greater part of northern Italy subject to her rule, and extended her territory even to the Archipelago. Her admirable diplomacy—which, up to this period, had borne her triumphantly, because wisely, through every storm that assailed her from without, and each internal commotion. Her palaces and public buildings—combining various orders of architecture into a whole which would have appeared incongruous, if not

ludicrous, any where else, but here was precisely suited to the peculiar situation and appearance of the city. Her patronage of arts and letters—which added new glory to her name. Her attractive pleasures—which truly made her

The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy.

Her daughters — embodiments of loveliness, "soft as their clime and sunny as their skies," casting around them an atmosphere of light, like the genii-jewel of Istakar, streaming forth beams that brighten and hallow where they fall. It was to Venice, remarkable for all of these—to Venice, then in the fulness of fame and fortune, that Signore Carloni was proceeding, and his expectations were naturally awakened to the uttermost.

On arriving at Fusina, the passengers took gondolas and separated. Carloni committed himself to one of these hearse-like boats, and as there was ample room for two in its little pavilion, courteously invited Vecelli to share

his conveyance. Soon, Venice broke more fully on his sight, (he had seen some of her steeples from Terra Firma), and he perceived how well she merited to be called a City *in* the Sea. As the land was left behind, the churches and palaces became more and more apparent—spire and pinnacle came nearer and clearer to view. And now, as the gondola glided on, (passing, midway, the island of San Giorgio in Alga), the sun was going down behind the mountains; the clouds were many-hued, graduating from the deep crimson to the darkest violet; the calm and unruffled waters tremblingly reflected these rainbow-coloured tints; and the spires and minarets showed in sharp relief between the spectator and the sky. Then, as the clouds changed into dark blue, the buildings stood out more massive than in the sunshine; the shadows became deeper; a mysterious aspect did that huge city bear, like one of the gorgeous yet solemn creations which the high imagination and skilful pencil of Martin alone appear capable of represent-

ing; as if, in effect, a noble metropolis, of unique architecture, was floating upon the sea, and was just visible between the waters and the sky. No marvel was it that, following the recommendation of Vecelli, Carloni should have ordered the boat's progress to be suspended, while he watched the gradual changes from sunset to dusky twilight, which showed him Venice in the manner we have attempted to indicate.

At length, the order was given to proceed, and the suburbs being speedily cleared, if, indeed, it be not anomalous to speak of the suburbs of a place entirely surrounded by water, the gondola reached the nearest or western entrance of the Grand Canal. The gondoliers paused and demanded where the Signori would choose to land? Vecelli had learned from Carloni that his destination was near the Rialto, to which, by passing directly down the Grand Canal, a few minutes would bring them, but suggested, from an avowed desire to give a stranger a striking and favour-

able impression of Venice, that they should rather make a detour by the Guidecca and the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, and sweep up close by the Riva delli Schiavoni, (as if they were entering seaward), so as to take in, at one glance, the Ducal Palace, the Piazzetta, the columns of St. Mark and St. Theodore, and the lofty Campanile.

Pausing to behold this view—unequalled, perhaps, in the world—Carloni gave way, in terms of strong admiration, to the delight he had experienced, and warmly thanked Vecelli for having presented it to him.

"It is strange," said he, as they entered the serpentine sweep of the Grand Canal, "that Venice is so completely accordant with every preconceived idea of its situation and aspect, that it appears rather a place which I have seen before, than one which I now behold for the first time. If I am disappointed in anything, it is in these noble palaces, which seem more massy in their mag-

nificence than agrees with the Asiatic character of the city. Even on Terra Firma they would appear as if built with a view of enduring until the very end of time, but here, where they form a city completely realizing the idea of a floating metropolis, at anchor in the sea, they make me wonder more and more how the unstable sands can bear them."

"You have fallen into a common error. There can be no doubt, from various circumstances, that the ground upon which Venice stands was formerly part of the main land. By the gradual advance and increase of the waters in the Adriatic Gulf, that portion of the shore became submerged. The foundation, therefore, is not sandy, but solid. When a palace is to be built, the water is carefully excluded, the soft alluvial matter which then first presents itself is removed, and the original bed of the Lagune discovered, into which are driven strong piles of wood, which form the foundation. Though the waves, at high water, fre-

quently dash into the very halls of the structures thus erected, they are firm as if built upon a mountain."

A noble and unrivalled prospect was presented to the travellers, as they went up the Grand Canal — that superb water-street, to which there is no likeness in the world. On either side, public edifices and private palaces arose in emulous magnificence—rich in sculpture, in frescoes, in mosaic, and in arabesque. Here and there were merchant-vessels, with their tall masts and fluttering pennons; gondolas swiftly impelled, with lamps upon stem and stern; lights glancing from the windows of the palaces and from the landing-places before them; the bustle of life upon the waters, as the boats glanced by each other, apparently within a hair's breadth of constant collision, yet adroitly kept separate by the dexterity of the rowers. They were now, in truth, upon the great thoroughfare of Venice; that city, within which never sounds the noise of a car-

riage-wheel, and never falls the hoof of a horse.*

The people and the edifices were alike strange to Carloni; the architecture especially so, being a riddle in its blended details of Greek, Saracenic, and Gothic:—it might be termed regular in its irregularity, and was in keeping with a place in every respect so peculiar. The gondola now came to the Fondaco de' Tedeschi, (or Exchange of the German merchants), beyond the bridge of the Rialto—the wooden one, built in the beginning of the thirteenth century, which was not replaced by the present one of *Pietro Dura*, from Istria, until 1591, when Pascal Cigogna was Doge—turned down the narrow canal to the less public

* Bishop Burnet has fallen into a great and unaccountable mistake in his description of Venice. "Here," he says, "as well as throughout Lombardy, the coaches are extremely inconvenient to ride in, being not hung upon the carriages." The fact is, that the streets are too narrow for carriages, and Venice is so intersected by canals, that the gondola supersedes all other description of vehicle.

riva, and here Carloni disembarked. Here, also, Vecelli landed, bade his companion farewell, and, turning down an adjacent foot-passage, was immediately lost to view.

No sooner had the gondola shot out of sight, than another, which had been in waiting between the Fondaco and the bridge, came into the *rio*, and was placed close by the landing-place. The *gondolieri* wore the gay and expensive livery of a noble—rich jackets of flowered silk, falling collars of crimson, and bright velvet caps of the same rich colour. The armorial badge worked on the front of these caps, in gold embroidery, was a BEAR—indicating that the wearers were in the service of Nicolo Orsino, Count Petigliano, at that time, chief in command of the land-forces of Venice.

One of these servitors, jumping ashore from the gondola, respectfully saluted Carloni, inquired his name, and, on learning it, told him that they had been for some time awaiting his arrival. The luggage which the Stranger had

brought with him, was speedily transferred to the large and handsome gondola in which he now took his seat; and, the oars being plied with the adroitness which to this day distinguishes the rowers on the canals of Venice, in a few minutes they were abreast of the water-gate of Petigliano's palace, (adjoining the Merceria), which the Senate had appropriated for his accommodation, whenever, as at that time, they wished personally to consult him respecting matters connected with the important trust so worthily confided to his valour and discretion. Like other palaces in Venice, this one appeared to rise out of the water—by which, indeed, it was washed on two sides, so that, at times, the sea swept over the doorway and a few yards upon the marble floor of the basement story, which was but a little higher than the level of the canal. Such buildings might have appeared too massive, but for the beauty and variety of their embellishments, which relieved and broke the heaviness of that solidity. Colonnade towered over colonnade, in airy but

majestic beauty, to a heighth almost unknown elsewhere, and elaborately carved medallions were the usual external adornments of these dwellings, of which the situation and aspect were alike singular. One might have fancied that they had been hewn from the rock, so solid did they appear, instead of having been raised upon a foundation made upon piles of wood. If these fabrics were not embellished in the purest taste, no expense, at least, had been spared. Innumerable carvings, columns, medallions, and frescoes, combined to decorate them on the outside, while the interior adornments were in a yet richer style, and included all that Wealth could lavishly provide. The tapestry which covered the walls was enriched with alternations of fine paintings and costly mirrors. Columns of *giallo antico*, added to the palatial splendour of the principal apartments, and the floors—a polished mosaic of Greek and Italian marbles, smooth and hard as glass, and rich in various and vivid hues—appeared almost too beautiful for daily use.

It is impossible to say why such a waste of wealth as these palaces exhibit should have been encouraged; but it is certain that State policy did encourage this kind of expenditure, either that the native artisans might thus be employed, and this distribution of money prevent the nobles from accumulating it, as an engine of ambition and power; or that the nobles, restrained by a strict sumptuary law, from any but the plainest attire, must have indulged their pride or vanity by lavishing on their dwellings the wealth which, otherwise, in a rich city and a luxurious age, might have been devoted to the adornment of their persons.

While by one side ran a *canaletto*, or narrow water-course, communicating at the rear with the less public entrance, the principal façade of the Petigliano palace fronted the Grand Canal. Immediately before the entrance were placed mooring-posts, painted with gaudy colours, to which several gondolas were attached. The vestibule was ascended by a few marble steps,

and at the extremity of the large hall, upon which it opened, was a double flight of broad stairs, with richly embellished balustrades of bronze. Ascending these steps, Carloni was conducted along a wide and lofty corridor, into a suite of apartments, which by the aid of mirrors, paintings, tapestry from Arras, busts (some spoils from the East), silken hangings, and ottomans, had a very noble appearance. The floors were partially covered with mats, the handy-work of Indian artificers. The windows opened upon light balconies, hanging over the canal, on either end of which were vases containing orange-trees and exotics, which greenly festooned around the branches and amid the golden fruit. At that twilight time, the existence of these plants were indicated more by the odours they exhaled than the beauty they displayed. Shaded lamps diffused a chastened, rather than a brilliant light through the rooms. At length, the servitor paused before a closed door, gained admittance, and introduced Signore Carloni

from the ante-chamber into a spacious apartment, in which there sat an old man, whom Carloni immediately knew could be no other than Count Petigliano.

That renowned warrior appeared fast declining into the vale of years. His frame was bent, his hair white, his visage worn, but time had been even less of a spoiler than toil. There was an expression of pride, rather than of *hauteur*, in his countenance; and few could view that face without acknowledging that its possessor was a master spirit. And, indeed, Nicolo Orsino was a man of no ordinary fame and ability. A younger son of that princely family which so often had held the office of Senator of Rome, he had entered life with little more than his sword—had served under various Condottieri—had obtained high, although not the highest, command in the army of the Siennese, who rewarded him with the fief which gave him his title—had next served, for a short time, at the head of the Roman troops, in the pay of Pope Alexander the Sixth

—had commanded (*en second* under the famous Trivulzi) the Neapolitan army when Charles the Eighth of France invaded Naples, in 1494 —had then passed into the service of Venice, becoming governor of her army, under Francesco de Gonzago, the Captain General—had succeeded to the supreme command on the retirement of Gonzago, in 1497, and so much gratified the Seigniory, that when the Pope was prosecuting or persecuting the Orsini, "in course of justice," (as it was called) the Venetian Senate would not allow Petigliano to be molested; and finally, in 1504, as Thomas de Fougasses relates, "Count Petillan at the same time, being on great promises entreated by divers Kings and Princes to serve them, would never forsake the Seigniory. In acknowledgement whereof, the State of Venice made him General of their army for three years, with a yearly annuity of five hundred pounds of gold." He had recently arrived at Venice on the invitation of the Seigniory, to assist them with his council. The trust he held, important as it was, had

seldom been confided to a braver or more judicious soldier. Equally at home in the cabinet and camp, his judgment, schooled by experience, was what the Seigniory wished to have the benefit of, when they now saw the forward shadow of advancing peril. Venice had arrived at such greatness as to be at once formidable and envied, and it was only by being fully prepared to meet danger, that she could hope to avert it.

Proud of his achievements—especially of that skill in strategy, for which he was more famous than for a temperate courage, which neither shunned nor courted peril—Petigliano had, immediately under him in command, Bartholemeo Alviano, (or D'Alvaine, as he is most commonly called by historians,) whose characteristic was that, which Miss Landon attributed to Crescentius,—

> A spirit that could dare
> The deadliest form that Death could take,
> And dare it for the daring sake!

A soldier of fortune, and of obscure birth, D'Alvaine had literally fought his way up to

distinction, until at length he bore the second bâton of St. Mark. He, too—like nearly all the eminent commanders of that country and time —was a mercenary, selling his sword to the best bidder, and faithful to each contract, while it lasted. Thus, he had fought with and against the French—then he took command under Venice, and is said to have suggested to Gonsalvo of Cordova, (commonly known as *the Great Captain*) the plan by which, in 1503, he defeated the French, by crossing the Garigliano on a bridge of boats, and surprising them in the rear. Shortly after, D'Alvaine wholly abandoned the Spanish service, and was at this time in that of Venice.

The general belief, although no appearance of coolness between them was visible, was that little confidence or friendship existed between the two commanders. Petigliano was wary and cautious, almost to a fault, in the field and in council. D'Alvaine, daring and impetuous, usually had obtained success by some brilliant *coup de main*. The soldiery were accustomed to

call one "a slumbering lion," and speak of the other as "the watchful lynx." One read little, the other, even in the tumult of the camp, delighted to cultivate letters, and had collected around him a circle of friends including many of the most eminent *literati* of Italy. Petigliano could appreciate the Arts, but D'Alvaine had encouraged them. The qualities they held in common were chivalric honour, and undaunted courage—but even in this last, there was a difference. D'Alvaine fought like a Paladin, to whom war was a pastime; with Petigliano it was rather a matter of science and calculation, and he would not needlessly strike a blow, for the mere pleasure of the contest. In a word, war was defensive on the part of Petigliano, offensive on that of D'Alvaine. There was a rivalry between them, more felt by each other than suspected by the world; a rivalry which kept each obstinate in his own opinion; a rivalry which might have been most injurious to the State, if the Provveditori (who invariably accompanied the Venetian army to the

field, and might be said to hold command over the Commanders) should lack the address to combine their respective powers, and profitably bring them into operation for the public advantage. In general, D'Alvaine deferred somewhat to his superior, for he was too good a soldier not to know that discipline and subordination should be maintained from the highest to the lowest rank. At this time he was about fifty, and Petigliano some twelve or fifteen years older.

It was the policy of the government to attach Count Petigliano to the service of St. Mark, by kindness and attention. This they felt was wise, not only as regarded the future, but as a mark of gratitude for his having given them the preference, when, three years previously, the most splendid offers were made him to take the chief military command in other States. Now, too, when his term of engagement had nearly expired, they wished to tempt him to renew it; and thus, the ruling passion

of his old age, (and that, indeed, by which wiser men were then deceived,) being the pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone, they readily permitted him to take a secretary from Germany; fully aware that, under this name, he would engage some Adept whose experience might avail him in the science of which, rather late in life, he had become the disciple! This concession, craftily vaunted of as a great favour, obtained the completion of the Senate's wishes, and Petigliano consented to remain chief in military command for three years longer.

It must be confessed that Petigliano had hitherto been unfortunate or unskilful in his scientific adventures. The grand Alcahest, or universal dissolvent, had not been produced from his alembics, crucibles, or aludels;—he had patiently watched the process of this tincture and of that menstruum, but had always been disappointed, the Protean Hermes had been sublimed to an oxide by the heat of the Athanor, or the Magisterium had evaporated

altogether. In a word, the union of the Red Lion and the White Lily had not been effected, though, with great patience, the Count had watched the many-hued vapours as they rose !* Therefore, he determined to obtain assistance, and the Council of Three, fully acquainted with his secret pursuits, complied with his request, after raising a show of difficulty, to enhance the favour. It was for this purpose, therefore, but nominally as secretary to Count Petigliano that Signore Carloni had come to Venice.

At present, when Alchemy has no followers, it is common to smile at the delusion which duped so many—which often deceived the wisest. But is not the spirit, even yet, the dupe of golden dreams, as distant from realization as the phantasies of Hermes or the

* It is scarcely fair to mention Alchemy without referring to the great quantity of curious information upon that subject which Dr. Anster has accumulated in the notes to his admirable translation—or rather, his transfusion into English verse, of Goëthe's "Faustus."

Alcahest of Geber? Lo, what truthful eloquence does the voice of poetry pour out on this head—

> Alas! we play the Alchemist with life;
> We fling our hearts, with all their precious wealth
> Of feelings, into Passion's fatal fire,
> Hoping to win from them some priceless store
> Of an unended happiness. And there
> We sit, with fevered brow, and trembling hands,
> Watching until the fire decays, and nought
> Of all the mighty wealth we risked is found
> In the cold ashes.

CHAPTER III.

THE UNKNOWN KNOWN.

Cornelius Agrippa went out one day.
SOUTHEY.

With infinitely more respect and attention than their respective ranks might seem to warrant, the Count Petigliano saluted his visitor. The salutation was silently returned, and both sat down.

"You have been expected for some days, Signore," said the Count.

"I was detained at Padua, beyond my desire. Your messenger, too, with the safe-conduct of the Three, only came up with me yesterday, and I thought it well to wait for it

and him. He had crossed me on my return from Paris to Inspruck. I perceive, by your letter, that the difficulties you anticipated did not arise, that the State is satisfied this scholar's cap does not cover a conspirator. Were they afraid that a poor German student was likely to carry away one of their galleys beneath his cloak? Have they—"

"For the love of Heaven, Signore, do not jest with aught belonging to St. Mark. Walls have ears, and eyes, and tongues in Venice, and a sorry jest, harmless as your own, has wrecked many a proud heart here, ere now. The Council most willingly acceded to my request—they have fixed no limit to the period of your residence, and only declare that it must be beneath this roof."

"I thank you, Sir Count, for the intimation. If I am brief in my acknowledgments, I pray you to excuse me, for I begin to feel the fatigue of nearly three weeks' travel."

"I would but add," said the Count, "that I shall feel my roof honoured by its covering one

who comes under it with the recommendation of Cornelius Agrippa; the good opinion I entertain of you upon his account, I am confident will speedily be augmented on your own. The riot of pleasure and the trifling of society will not distract you here. I scarcely know whether I should rejoice or lament that while the Seigniory invites the services of those who are not citizens of Venice, it prohibits us from social converse with all who are."

"I like it well," said the stranger, "for the din of the frivolous Court of King Louis, at Paris, still rings in my ears. And now, with your leave, I would retire."

We have said that Cornelius Agrippa was the person to whom Count Petigliano had applied—as to a Master in science—when he required assistance in the Alchemical studies he had taken up. What the issue of that application had been, the reader already knows, but he may not know a few particulars about Agrippa of which we desire he should not any longer remain ignorant. Therefore, with as

much brevity as possible, we shall inform him.

At the period of which we write, one of the most remarkable scholars, in every respect, was Henri Cornelius Agrippa, the private secretary, and familiar friend of the Emperor Maximilian. At this time, it is true, he was by no means so publicly distinguished for his acquirements, his genius, and his researches, as at a later period; but, even then, he had achieved enough of honourable reputation, as a scholar and a cavalier, to give him high eminence among the most rising and brilliant characters at the German court. He was of noble birth, too, being of the ancient family of Nettesheim, which for many generations had held high appointments under the Princes of the house of Austria. While yet a child, he had mastered many languages (at the era of our story he could speak and write no less than *eight* of them), and had obtained such credit, even then, that his Sovereign, who was himself a ripe scholar, took charge of his fur-

ther education, when he was only ten years of age, shortly after gave him an appointment about his person, finally made him his secretary (for the beauty of his penmanship was remarkable), and encouraged him to study the more abstruse and occult sciences, the superiority in which, at a more advanced period of life, obtained him the doubtful and disastrous name of Magician.

The secrets of art and nature were indeed so familiar to him that, in an age when credulity, ignorance, and superstition abounded, he was believed by the many to hold converse with the powers of darkness. But the man whose merits won the contemporary praises of Trithemius, Erasmus and Melancthon, could have been no common character. From childhood to youth, from youth to manhood, and from manhood to the grave, the thirst for knowledge and the desire of celebrity had been on him, like a spell. Deep in the confidence of his Imperial master, he had latterly devoted himself to politics as much as to letters. The

variety and extent of his attainments, the accuracy of his judgment, the wisdom of his expedients, the keenness of his capacity, his great familiarity with languages—nay, his very youth (tempting diplomatists to the flattering belief that they could readily overreach him) were so many concurring causes, why he had recently been sent to transact political business of some importance, at the court of King Louis of France, which the Emperor wanted to be executed with adroitness and secrecy. So, too, when the missive from Count Petigliano reached Agrippa immediately before his departure for Paris, on this secret embassy, he lost no time in forwarding his recommendation of Carloni, who really was a ripe scholar and an adept in the art in which the Count required assistance and instruction. Finding, on his return to Inspruck, where the Emperor held his Court, that it was deemed important and requisite to have an emissary of trust at Venice, to make secret reports of the military preparations, which it was suspected were being made

by the Seigniory, Agrippa quickly perceived how unsuspiciously the Imperial interests might be advanced by his own assumption of Carloni's name and situation, which would place him in constant communication with the Venetian generalissimo. We need not pause to inquire how far such assumption might be considered the reverse of honourable in the present day—it is sufficient to say that, ready to suffer the penalty of detection in such a deceit, Agrippa felt it his duty to undertake it, if the interests of his Imperial master could thereby be advanced; and the personage, therefore, who has hitherto been designated and introduced as Signore Carloni, was in truth none other than the celebrated Henri Cornelius Agrippa.

The Count Petigliano soon saw how infinitely superior to his own idea of Alchemy, which some one has expressively called the poetry of chemistry, was the beautiful and almost perfect science whose resources and wonders Agrippa daily exhibited to him. He per-

ceived that he was indeed in the hands of an adept, and readily believed, what Agrippa told him, that the least time in which the powder of projection could be obtained was nine months, a period precisely according with that of human gestation, for his books plainly declared that it was doubtful whether it could be produced even within that time, unless the operations were commenced and advanced under the appropriate astral influences. Agrippa was well acquainted with all the siderial signs, and now, (to wile away the leisure which was likely to pass heavily during his abode in Venice, as well as to make the experiment for its own sake), he felt anxious to try the successive processes which the alchemical sages—from Alfarabi and Morien, to Raymond Sully and Nicholas Flamel—declared necessary. Thus he commenced with an endeavour to accommodate the inchoate Magisterium to the changes of the Zodiac, and soon, in the true spirit of the children of Geber, he took an interest in

watching the alternating hues of the vapours arising from and floating over the preparation, by which the progressive success of the process was indicated. To a mind like his, ever anxious to trace effects up to their causes, there was excitement in the trial whether the metals had a common basis, and whether they could be transmuted by any means, when in a state of fusion. For Alchemy may be simplified to this one question. Can the metals be *de*-composed? If so, they can certainly be *re*-composed, and their elements mingled in what proportions, the Adept pleases, so as, in fact, to be transmuted. We recommend the matter to Faraday's investigation. *He*, perhaps, may solve the riddle which has puzzled Bacon, caused King Alfonso to write his famous *Libro de Tesero*, and numbered among its searchers King Piccatrix (the Saracen), the Emperor Frederick the Third, some of the Popes, many of the Clergy, and even the Regent Orleans! Fascinating, indeed, must have been the spell

which could thus subdue mighty minds—by the tempting promise of the exhaustless riches which constitute power, and the mysterious draught which would bestow perpetual youth amid the changes of revolving years. Of all the superstitions of our forefathers, surely this was at once the most graceful and excusable. Think what good might spring from the distribution of illimitable wealth—what wants might be relieved—what bounties bestowed—what discoveries made—what inventions perfected. Fancy too, the sweet delight of perpetuating the youth and beauty of the beloved — of infusing vigor into fading mortality—of casting a bridle over the neck of Time, and binding him for ever! To this day, as we read of the brave experiments and bold projects of the early Alchemists, of the Cabala, with their ten enumerations called Sephiroth, their holy Sigils, their sacred Pentacles—of the Tables of Ziruph, a magic roll-call of the seventy-two Angels—of all, in short, that cheated the mind in the

early days, we cannot help considering such pursuits as the spray dashed up by the adventurous diver who boldly seeks the pearl of Truth in the troubled waters of Conjecture!

CHAPTER IV.

NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

Lo ! how it runs, this friendship of the hour,
Child-like in youth, omnipotent in power.
Springs like the weed, yet mighty as the oak
Strong as heart cherished or affection spoke.
But now a stranger 'mid the lovely there,
Pass a brief moment and their looks declare
How much they like his voice, his words, his air !

THE Count Petigliano having informed his daughter Amicia di Orsino, and her cousin Beatrice, that he was desirous his secretary should be treated upon the equal terms of friendship, their invitation followed, that he would join their evening repast. This was within a week after his arrival, but Agrippa appeared incurious or uncourteous, for, at the

time, he declined the proferred introduction to their society, and requested the Count to plead his apology to the ladies.

Piqued at this apparent want of courtesy, they now began to make more particular inquiries concerning Agrippa. They were aware that, after the fashion of the time, when Speculation took the name of Philosophy, the Count amused himself with alchemical studies, in the absence of the active pursuits he had long been accustomed to, and they ascertained that Agrippa, (known to them as Carloni, the secretary), was in reality his assistant, if not his instructor. They had not yet seen him, and amused themselves in imagining what sort of a person he might be. They were so lonely in that huge palazzo, that the introduction of any new inmate—and of the male sex, too, was what modern parlance would call "quite an event." We should have mentioned that the Count's daughter, Amicia, was little more than fifteen—her cousin, two years older. Their curiosity had not very

long to wait, for, a few days after, when there came a natural thaw to the courtesy which had hitherto appeared frozen up, Agrippa promptly acceded to the Count's renewed offer of an introduction to the ladies of his house.

The part of the palace appropriated to their use exhibited less costliness, indeed, but infinitely more taste than characterized the gorgeousness of the state apartments, which were fitted up rather for show than occupation. There was richness in the furniture, the ornaments, the mirrors, and the tapestries of the whole edifice—for all had been magnificently provided at the cost of the State; but, in the suite of rooms inhabited by the ladies, the arrangement, suggested by their own taste, was visibly superior. The ottomans were not too splendid for use, nor the tables too fragile in their beauty — in a word, a welcome atmosphere of domesticity appeared to pervade them, giving that cheerful, home-like appearance which is seldom present where womanly occupation is not—without which, indeed, no place can be the abode of comfort.

Beatrice and Amicia had prepared to receive their guest with distant coldness; but the intention was not adhered to. The Count had mentioned how little difference there was between the age of his secretary and their own, and the youth of Agrippa immediately interested them. He was, like them, in the very spring of life, and the magnet does not more surely and powerfully attract the needle, than youth, by some electric sympathy of soul, is attracted by youth. If the quiet easiness of his manner, the gentle fascination of his smile, and the grave earnestness of his low, clear voice, confirmed the impression which his youthful appearance had made, it was completely established by his frank confession, spoken with a slight confusion, not quite unsuited to the occasion, that he felt how much pleasure he had lost by not having sooner availed himself of the happiness of becoming known to them. The apology was readily accepted, and, ere an hour had passed, they felt that the monotony of their daily life of seclusion was now interrupted in

as pleasant a manner as they could possibly desire. When the Count retired for the evening, with the words—" I recommend the Signore Carloni to your kindness, if he is not already wearied of conversation so very different from what his instructed mind is accustomed to," there was a smile upon each face as he closed the door. Already had there been established in that *boudoir*, a new Council of Three !

Agrippa was usually reserved and rather silent, but people of such a temperament, when cast into society in which they find or fancy sympathy, rapidly experience a transition which has the effect of making them at once agreeable and fascinating companions. The sunshine of the heart makes the spirit expand —such a change did he now experience. He was perfectly free, too, from the presumption too common to youth, so ill-accordant with its pretensions, even when the highest talent exists. Indeed, it has generally been noticed that those who have most cause for such presumption display it least—as a treasure-car makes

less rattle in the streets than an empty carriage. How many a puny pretender affects the *savant*, while the immortal Newton's self-deprecating remark, at the close of that career which did so much for science, was — "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me!"

Agrippa's manners, from his early and prolonged connexion with the Imperial Court were free from the *mauvaise honte* to which mere scholars are so apt to become subject. He could use that graceful badinage which wins rather than wounds; he had wit, with its

> Summer lightnings, flashes of the mind,
> That shine, but harm not, arrows rosy-twined.

And he was not unskilled in those elegant compliments, (some one has fitly called them "the small coin of conversation"), which are insinuated rather than expressed, and are often

more gratefully received and remembered than actual praise, for the sensitive mind shrinks from that, however merited. Nor should it be forgotten that, at least, as it is measured by years, he had barely passed from youth to manhood—that his two companions were yet younger—and that he came before them with the reputation of great acquirements and abilities. It is not very wondrous, then, if, as he endeavoured, he not only obtained plenary indulgence for the appearance of past discourtesy, but became more than a mere acquaintance of the fair beings with whom he sat.

It would be strange, indeed, if from the sweet encouragement of such society, the mind does not produce thought and language far superior to what it may fling off in the coarser collision of less select company. When the ears thus drink in the clear and silvery music of woman's voice—when the eye delightedly gazes upon her beauty—when she yields her attention to what is spoken, and thus gives the best encouragement to speak—the heart,

soothed by her sympathy or sunned by her smiles, is certain to pour out the best thoughts in the best words. For there are two kinds of eloquence,—one, springing from the stirring excitement of public events; the other, purely conversational, arising, almost without an effort, from the soft inspiration of feminine society. The moment a man has the feeling "they understand me," he is certain of using this easy and unconscious eloquence in the fair circle, and the smaller it is the better, whom he thus considers intelligent. We may have been tedious in this definition, but it was necessary to explain *how* Agrippa was influenced upon this evening. He saw that his conversation was listened to with pleasure, and, therefore, he tried to make it worth listening to; had he been a much older man, he might have failed, for the *effort* at this result often makes a man dull and didactic, when he hopes to be particularly agreeable!

In this manner, a few hours passed on quickly; it is only the hours of pain and care that have fetters to restrain their flight, and in

that brief time, the youthful trio had made mutual acquaintance, more intimate than colder, older, or less imaginative persons might have formed in half a life-time.

It is peculiarly for the young, thus to plunge "in medias res" with their friendships; and such are more stable, in general, than might be suspected upon first consideration. Let any one tax his memory—unless, indeed, his be a heart which requires "proper introduction" before it condescend to what it calls friendship—and he may find that he owes his most agreeable, often his warmest, friends to the accident of an accident. A casual rencontre—a chance coincidence or difference of opinion—a slight service opportunely rendered, such are "trifles light as air," and yet such have led to many and fast friendships. Yon mighty river, which, with rapid swell, speeds on to mix its waters in the ocean (even as Time bounds on to be lost in Eternity) had its origin, like such friendships, from sources so small as to appear almost impossible. But

wary manhood hesitates to commit himself by any sudden yielding to his natural sympathies, while eager youth grasps at a friend as childhood at a pleasure, and erects fair palaces for hope, out of dreams beautiful and fleeting as the Morgana of the Sicilian sea.

The youthful Three !—Beatrice, Amicia, and Agrippa, they were already, if not actually friends, on the high road to friendship. Yet, there had been little of conversation, little of what would now pass for the currency of converse. There was no prating about the gauds of fashion—no raking up the grey ashes of smouldering reputations—no ingenuities of scandal—no small talk, merely *pour passer le temps*. That their tastes were somewhat congenial was gradually ascertained, but this knowledge was understood rather than expressed. They spoke of music, which had not then risen to be almost one of the languages of Italy—of the semi-miracles of painting—of the life-like creations of sculpture. They turned the thought-gemmed page

of poetry, and the tenderness of Petrarca led them to speak of the charms of Laura de Noves, the poet's lady-love, whose beauty and coldness he has perpetuated in his deathless verse. And then, when the pathos of the poetry had almost subdued her to tears, Beatrice, smiling through them—a poet might say, like sunshine through a summer shower—took up her theorbo, at Agrippa's solicitation, and (for the twilight had now declined, and the moonbeams cast a long line of lustre upon the waters) sang the following words, which, however unartificial in structure, were certainly not inappropriate at that moment.

THE SONG OF BEATRICE.

The last sun-burst of glory
  Has faded away,
And the rushing waves murmur
  A knell for the day;—
But a lustre more lovely
  Floods Heaven with delight
For the moon has arisen,
  Bright queen of the night!

Not a cloud is before her
That lustre to blight,
Not a shadow comes o'er her
To lessen her light;
But radiant her progress—
One star by her side—
As she beams through yon azure,
Earth's beautiful bride.

Shine on, lovely planet,
Unclouded and free;
Pour that soft beauty down
On the land and the sea;—
And while our rapt gaze
To thy glory is given,
Our hearts soar from earth
And are with thee in heaven!

Beatrice blushed as Agrippa praised the expression she had thrown into this simple air, and then they parted for the night. Young hearts quickly open, like flowers which unfold their petals to the early sunshine. No wonder if that evening was considered a pleasant one by all parties, or that it was "the first of a series" of yet pleasanter ones. Agrippa's time thus happily passed on; his mornings were dedicated to his studies, and to experiments

in the Count's laboratory; in the afternoon, when the heat of the day had declined, he he visited the Basilicas, the Arsenal, the Campanile, the library of St. Mark (founded by Petrarch), the Ducal palace, or others of the many remarkable objects with which Venice is crowded; his evenings he cheerfully surrendered to the hitherto unaccustomed delight of free and familiar society in the Casa Petigliano. There was a winning charm in the conversation of the fair habitants there. Their *naive* yet naturally elegant manners, their richly cultivated minds, their graceful and subduing beauty,

> Which caught
> New loveliness from each new thought,

their desire of knowledge, the liquid sweetness of their voices—all these combined, from the first, to break down the barriers of his accustomed reserve, and make him happy in their society.

Sometimes, when the beauty of the au-

tumnal evenings tempted, he had the privilege of accompanying them in their gondola, upon the water. Their masques would have sufficiently concealed them from recognition and notice, even if they had not the power of completely effecting it, by drawing the curtains of the pavilion. Thus, chaperoned by Agrippa, they saw more of Venice than, without his aid they were likely to have seen, had they resided there for half a dozen *lustra;* thus they visited the shady garden of the convent in the little isle of San Secundo; thus they often took their evening repast on one of the woody islands which stud the Lagune, with the rustling of the pines and the murmur of the waves for their music; thus their friendship became more intimate and familiar; and thus of Agrippa, it might truly be said,

How happy the days of Thalaba went by !

CHAPTER V.

THE COUSINS.

There's no miniature
In her fair face, but is a copious theme
Which would, discoursed at large of, make a volume.
What clear arch'd brows! what sparkling eyes! the lilies
Contending with the roses in her cheeks
Who shall most set them off. What ruby lips;
Or unto what shall I compare her neck,
But to a rock of chrystal? Every limb
Proportioned to love's wish, and in their neatness
Add lustre to the riches of her habit,
Not borrow from it.

MASSINGER.

The relationship between Amicia and Beatrice di Orsino having already been indicated, let us endeavour to convey an idea of their respective merits, personal and mental. It may be best done now upon the threshold of a tale in which each of them will bear a part.

There were more points of resemblance than contrast between them; for there was a likeness in their features and their minds. Both were fair—but Amicia was lovely. They had more than ordinary accomplishments, in a time when the female intellect was much neglected, but the mind of Beatrice was self-cultivated by genius. Both were young. Beatrice, having just completed her seventeenth year, had the opening maturity of womanhood, Amicia had seen only fifteen summers, and, in that soft clime, it would be difficult to say whether she were child or woman.

Beautiful as she was, her loveliness as yet was rather more of promise than completion. If I borrowed an illustration from song, I might apply to her part of Byron's delicately sketched description of Aurora Raby, as sweet a creature as poetry ever made immortal—and speak of her as

> A young star who shone
> O'er life, too sweet an image for such glass;
> A lovely being, scarcely formed or moulded,
> A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet folded.

A more brilliant blending of bright eyes and gentle accents—of softness and gaiety—of beauty and blandishment, heart could not imagine. Her features were like her father's—"but softened into beauty." It was the mild expression of her eyes that subdued her hereditary hauteur of aspect. They were darkly, deeply blue, for her mother was one of the Colonna family, and the daughters of that ancient line have usually been distinguished by the rare, but not unpleasing contrast of dark hair, blue eyes, and a complexion delicately, almost dazzlingly, fair.

Amicia di Orsino was exactly of the middle stature, and slightly formed. The long dark lashes which shaded her eyes reposed upon a cheek "carnationed like an infant's." It was a natural mistake to think that those expressive and unfathomable eyes were black, but in their beauty was the deepest and darkest azure of the sky, whose richest hue they resembled; it had been fancifully, but truthfully said of them, that they seemed dark in the

light, and bright in the shadow. Small white hands—tiny feet, beneath whose airy tread the flowers would be rather disturbed than crushed —graceful and gliding motions; in short, to complete the sketch, there needs but Donne's delicate description of his mistress—

> Her pure and eloquent blood
> Spoke in her cheek, and so distinctly wrought,
> That one might almost say—her body thought!

It might be deemed that mirth was the characteristic of her mind—for she scattered smiles around her like sunshine—were it not that, at times, meditation, subdued almost to mournfulness, would usurp the ascendancy, until, at length, the overcharged heart would be relieved by tears. If a poet had seen her thus, he might say that, at such moments, her eyes were like violets upon which the May-dew yet lingered and glistened. The few shadows which had crossed her were only summer clouds, for grief was to her rather a thought than a reality; and beholding that beautiful face, into which the pure and gentle

mind had visibly breathed itself, the heart would be impelled to pray almost involuntarily, that sorrow might never shade it.

In the countenance of Beatrice there was less of beauty, but more of mind. It was probable that, until she was known and appreciated, the eye, dazzled by the superior loveliness of the cousin, might either not notice her, or fancy that she was even almost plain. But, when she was known, the marvel would be how such features, soul illumined, could ever have been deemed other than beautiful. The dark eyes flashed with intelligence, the pale cheek glowed with enthusiasm, the brow looked the very throne of thought, the clear, earnest voice breathed forth its welcome words in all the sweetness of music—and then the maiden might be truly said to "walk in light of her own making." For, after all, it *is* the mind that best displays the beauty, even as the sunshine brings out the full loveliness of the landscape! It was for Amicia to conquer with a glance—for Beatrice to steal gradually

into the heart. Amicia might lose a votary, but whom her cousin once won would ever be a captive; for some maids, as the poet sings, weave nets while others make cages.

Early in the sixteenth century, where a sovereign was sometimes unable to accomplish any greater feat in letters than that of making his sign manual, the education of females was much neglected; nor, indeed, up to this hour, has Italy paid sufficient attention to the duty and necessity of cultivating the intellects of her daughters. Count Petigliano well knew the value of letters, although his troubled career had given him little leisure to cultivate them much, and gladly availed himself of the means which accident placed in his way for the instruction of his daughter and his niece. An Armenian caloyer, driven from his own land by persecution, had found a home, after many wanderings, at Vicenza, where Count Petigliano had resided some years previous to the date of this narrative. He became known to the Count, who, assured of his great attain-

ments, did not hesitate to intrust to the old man the education of the two whom he loved as dearly as he loved fame. If they were fortunate in such an instructor, the Armenian was not less so in the intellect of his pupils. He made them fully acquainted with the lore of their own sweet language, and opened to them much of the treasures which had descended from the poets and historians of the olden times. Amicia loved to amuse herself with the sweet lays of Petrarca, and the varied fancies of Boccaccio, (for the Decameron had not then been banned by that fastidious prudery which has more care for the *seeming* than the reality of things), rather than with the graver works which had greater attractions for her cousin. The *surveillance* of the Armenian ceased only with his life, which terminated a short time before the Count, summoned by the Seigniory to reside in Venice, withdrew his daughter and niece from the convent in which they had dwelt, almost since infancy had seen both of them motherless.

Far lovelier than their beauty was the moral loveliness of the affection that linked them together: mutual confidings of feeling, gentle interchanges of thought, whisperings of hope, trusting love, over which rarely fell a gloom—for if ever the shadow came, it was soon dispersed, like a thin cloud floating between the sun and the world his smile makes glad, a moment seen, and in a moment vanishing.

Both had early become orphans: Beatrice doubly so, and hence, perhaps, the greater intensity and gravity of her feelings. To be left alone in the wide world, with scarcely a friend—this makes the sadness, which, striking its pang into the minds of the young and the affectionate, teaches them too soon to watch and interpret the spirit-signs of their own hearts. The solitude of the aged, when, one by one, their friends fall off, as fall the sere-leaves from the trees in autumn—what is it to the overpowering sense of desolation which fills

almost to breaking the sensitive heart of youth, when the nearest and dearest ties are severed? Rendered callous by time and suffering, the old feel less, although they complain more; the young, "bearing a grief too deep for tears," shrine in their bosoms sad memories and melancholy anticipations which often give dark hues to their feelings in after-life.

Having now arrived at an age when they more especially needed the kindly and watchful guidance of maternal solicitude, it was happy for them, that in the convent, where their youthful years had been passed, much care had been taken to instil principles of religion and virtue into their minds. It might be considered fortunate also, that the same state of jealousy which, while it confided high command to the Count Petigliano, prevented his associating with the Venetian nobles, except in the Council, or upon ceremonial occasions, when his attendance was requisite as part of

the pageant. Hence, the young Signoras, isolated from all intimacy with their own sex, were spared the contagion of evil example, and lived in the heart of the most voluptuous city in Europe, seeing little more of the world, its people, and its pleasures, than when they dreamed of it in the Convent at Vicenza. We shall not deny that they often entertained the wish to mingle in the gaiety which surrounded them; and it had happened, more than once, when some cavalier took his place at midnight beneath adjacent balconies, and

Breathing hope through walls of stone,

a serenade sweetly broke the hushed silence, they had ventured to wonder whether, and when, such strains would be poured forth for *them!*

Such thoughts, more of conjecture than desire, could not long disturb or bewilder innocent hearts like theirs. Gladness sat upon

the forehead of Amicia, as upon the brow of Spring, and she grew beneath the eye of Beatrice like some sweet flower gently guarded, lest the air of Heaven should too roughly kiss it. For her, Beatrice long had blended the soft care of a mother with the sweet affection of an elder sister, and when sleep pressed those lids, which seemed too beautiful for tears, Beatrice never sought her own pillow until her heart had breathed a blessing on the lovely child before her—until her lips had kissed that cheek which the rosy charm of slumber had tinted with its richest and most delicate bloom.

Both now *felt* how great was the solitude in which they had lived until the coming of Agrippa. They had awakened from the thoughtlessness of girlhood, and with that awakening came that longing for society which, at such a crisis, is but a natural desire and impulse of their sex. Never does the heart of Woman throb with a softer and yet more embar-

rassing thought, than when the sudden consciousness is felt that she was born to love and to be loved. It is Nature's gentle and genial instinct that whispers this, and makes the heart desire the sympathy it was created to awaken and to share. It is the first step into womanhood —a step that falls lightly, as if on flowers.

Beautiful in infancy, when cradled by a mother's arm; in childhood, when her smiles and half-formed words are the solacing treasures of many a weary hour; in girlhood, when the blossom is unfolding, rich with the glad promise of a thousand charms; in womanhood, when, tremblingly by the altar, she speaks the vow she hopes will wed her to happiness; in matron pride, with her olive branches round about her table; in age, when her children's children play before her feet—but far more beautiful is she when she just pauses on the narrow isthmus which separates the Girl from the Woman, and tremulously blushes into the purity and the feeling of maiden loveliness!

But we have too long neglected Agrippa. It is scarcely possible to imagine a more fascinating, and, at the same time, a more perilous position than that in which he was now placed. He was completely domesticated with those young and interesting ladies, for the ill-health of Petigliano, gradually increasing, kept him almost wholly confined to his own apartments. That was the time, and Agrippa's was the age when the romance of life had its greatest, because its freshest charm, and, though much of chivalric observance had departed, the feeling of deep devotion to the sex remained. Agrippa found his heart unconsciously becoming more and more interested in his fair companions. Amicia had grown familiar with him as if he were a dear brother, and talked with him as if he had been the friend of years. Nor was this confidence so very wonderful, for, whatever his demeanour to his own sex, it was gentle, and even kind to woman. He looked upon Amicia as a child;

of great promise, certainly, yet only a child; and her quick apprehension readily saw how purely fraternal were his regards for *her*. Calmly as their life had hitherto flowed on, she felt that this calmness was not happiness, and was grateful to Agrippa for rippling the placid current. To be perfect, happiness must be shared. The pains of life serve, by contrast, to multiply enjoyment; they make the foil which sets off and heightens the flashing brightness of the gem.

Sometimes, giving the rein to fancy, Amicia would invent some merry plot to cheat Agrippa and her cousin into sudden smiles. Again, she would be silent as night, while Beatrice touched her lute, or Agrippa told of other lands and people, or translated a romance, such as the Minnesingers had sang in his native Germany. Now, she would bend over the page of poetry, and, rapt in its charm, grow unconscious of all around her—look again, and she was wreathing flowers into a fantastic chaplet with which, for the moment, to crown Beatrice as Flora!

The full tide of her joyous and innocent feelings, thus released, one might wonder how a spirit so free, so bounding, and so happy could ever have been prisoned, or being so, could have been content in solitary life.

If the society of Agrippa was thus a source of enjoyment to Amicia, it was much more to her cousin. What was pleasant to one, was happiness to the other. Beatrice found thrilling delight in thus basking, as it were, in the sunshine of an intellect whose treasures appeared exhaustless. If her words did not express this to Agrippa, probably her looks might sometimes unconsciously do so; for while he smiled at the playfulness of Amicia, his more grave conversation was for Beatrice. Respect is the truest homage of the heart; his is quite untouched who can merely "smile and smile." Agrippa felt himself compelled to acknowledge and admire the grasp of thought and energy of mind which distinguished Beatrice. The unobservant might think her taciturn, but

he had learned to read the eloquence of her dark eyes, and interpret the thoughts which lighted rather than coloured her cheek. He had learned, too, to draw her into conversation, and its quality may be judged from the fact that Amicia, who knew her so well, found daily cause for astonishment in the extent of her mental resources, and the brilliancy of her occasional remarks.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STRANGER OF THE CAMPANILE.

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise,
(That last infirmity of noble minds)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days.

MILTON.

The way to fame is like the way to heaven — through much tribulation.

STERNE.

We have already said that, according to the wonted custom of strangers in that city, Agrippa employed a portion of his leisure in visiting the many remarkable places and objects in Venice. One of his favourite resorts was the Campanile of St. Mark, if not the finest, certainly the most curious building there. A square, narrow tower of brick,

ornamented with cornices and small marble columns, it springs to the height of nearly three hundred feet, and is ascended, not by steps, but by a winding passage within the walls; an ascent so gradual, that there is a tradition of one of the French kings, who visited Venice, having ridden up to the first gallery of the bells.* From this part of the Campanile, nearly two hundred feet above the level of the sea, Agrippa loved to view Venice, with her Lagunes and Lido; the fortresses and ports of Malamocco and Chiozza; the Adriatic, washing the coasts of Italy and Dalmatia; the distant outlines of the Istrian and Friulian

* The Campanile has been measured thus: each of its four sides is 25 feet broad; from the base to the upper cornice, or gallery of the upper bells, 180 feet high; thence, to the extremity, 160 feet more. The whole is surmounted by a long pyramid, covered with plates of copper, and on the top of this stands the figure of an angel, of the same metal, with his wings extended. The pyramid and figure were gilt, while the Republic had the reality or semblance of power, and had a most brilliant appearance in the sunshine. It was Henry III, of France, on his way to visit Venice, in 1574, who is said to have driven his carriage up to the gallery of the bells.

mountains, and the coast of Terra Firma. From each side of the open gallery of the Campanile is an admirable bird's-eye view of sea-shore and city, and our wonder is, that some artist has not, ere this, availed himself of such a position. We have innumerable views *of* the Campanile, the novelty would be a glance *from* it.

Open to all who pleased to ascend it, and yet not much frequently visited even by strangers at that time, the Campanile was an especial place of resort for Agrippa. Sometimes he beheld the prospect in the sunshine of noon, in which light the distances are as distinct as the foregrounds. Then, when the full tide swept on, covering the Lagunes, Venice well merited her name of the City of the Sea. Looking down towards the base of that tall tower, (which, nearly a century later, had the distinction of being used as an observatory by "the starry Galileo,") he could see a panorama composed of such picturesque details as are grouped in no place else:—the Piazza,

with its tesselated pavement, on which, as a special compliment to Petrarch, a tournament had once been exhibited; the Merceria beyond it, with its labyrinth of narrow streets and its wealth of business; the Basilica of St. Mark, with its mosque-like minarets and domes, its crowd of porphyry pillars, its bright mosaics, and the celebrated Grecian horses over its central portico; the Piazzetta, with the Ducal Palace upon one side, and the buildings of the Procuratorie on the other, and in the centre, near the quay, the two ophite columns, crowned with the winged lion of St. Mark, and the statue of St. Theodore, which had been brought from Constantinople, when Sebastiano Ziani was Doge. Then, too, the silence in the city, (for the crowds did not come out until the sultry mid-day heat was past); the sea, dotted with many a sail; the standard of St. Mark heavily waving from the armed galeass, which was continually stationed opposite the isle of San Giorgio Maggiore, with the prow turned between the great columns of

the Piazzetta, next the quay of which the galley was moored; the gondolieri,

Ruffling with many an oar the chrystal deep,

their gay dresses relieved by the green of the water, and the azure of the sky; the sunshine, bringing out the colouring with dazzling brilliancy, and the very shadows illuminated by the reflected brightness from the waves, "making light in light," as Göethe has described it; and the pigeons, in hundreds, fluttering on quick pinions from the roof of the Ducal Palace to the cupola of the Basilica, thence dashing at full speed through the open galleries of the Campanile,* unawed by the

* Every one who has been at Venice must have remarked the pigeons who flutter from the Campanile to the Ducal Palace, and thence to the roof of the church of St. Mark. In the *Lettere su Venezia*, by Signor Dandolo of Varese in the Milanese, (published a few years ago), will be found the following account of these birds:—"In truth, in these pristine days of the city, it was customary to celebrate Palm Sunday with peculiar ceremonies; amongst others, birds were turned loose from the Basilica, so encumbered about the legs with weights proportioned to their respective

presence of man in that lofty solitude, and retreating back to their nests in the *Piombi*,—free and fearless in their flight, sometimes the only living things the eye could see in that meridian sunshine.

Beautiful as was this prospect in the day time, Agrippa would often visit the Campanile when the glow and glare had gone by and the bright hues were somewhat toned down. Immediately before twilight, if the tide had ebbed, the watery mirror of the Lagunes disappeared, the islands which seemed like

sizes, that, after fluttering awhile, they must necessarily drop down in the Piazza—the populace struggling among themselves to seize these birds, offering a most animated spectacle. The poor animals, when about to drop, alarmed by the noise, redoubled their exertion, and whilst hands were dashed out on all sides to clutch them, many, by short and useless flights, only prolonged their misery, amidst the dizzy uproar of the crowd; but some, contriving to shake off their burthens, took refuge on the roof of the neighbouring palace. There they remained; there they increased and multiplied, and the tiny commonwealth excited such compassion, that, by the universal will, subsequently embodied in a decree, they thenceforward, were not only respected, but amply fed with corn at the public charge."

specks upon it, appeared grey mounds in the midst of green marshes, covered with weeds, and intersected by the canals. It was the Venice of the morning—and yet, how different!

But at night!—it was then that he saw Venice as herself. Then hurried forth the mightiest and the meanest, equally intent on the pursuit of pleasure. Then glanced by the frequent gondola—then sounded the lute—then arose the song of the serenader; and, from the mid-air height of the lofty Campanile, amid, and yet removed from the scenes which such phases of life were exhibited, Agrippa frequently used to behold the features which folly or pleasure there assumed. There, at such hours, he was seldom intruded on, for the post was a solitary one, and if a Venetian keeps an hereditary hatred for any thing, it is for that worst of company—his own. But that could scarcely be considered intrusion, where the place was open to all—least of all, where courteous words, in the liquid dialect of

Venice, spoke apology to the stranger. To this day, the Venetians are remarkable for the blandness of their address—for the difficult and desirable art of setting a stranger at ease by a word, almost by a look. Three centuries ago, they excelled the French in *politesse*, for the pride of prosperity led them to make the display of courtesy a thing of course. To the few whom Agrippa met in the Campanile, his manner was courteous in return—with some of them (but this was rare,) he conversed on the light and current topics of the day; for he knew that, in Venice, where almost every man played espial on his neighbour, it was unsafe to talk of more serious subjects. Such was his skill in languages, that, except by the difference in the local dialect, he might have been taken for a Venetian—as it was, few thought him a German, for he spoke pure Tuscan.

One evening, after he had thus been watching how the moonlight softly bathed palace and church, sea and shore, with silvery sheen, he leant in abstracted thought, over the mid-

gallery, and scarcely heeded the hum of the crowd beneath. His meditation was broken, after a time, by a sigh—such as the mourner wearily breathes when care sits heavily on the heart. Advancing from the shade, which had screened him, he perceived a cavalier leaning against the opposite balcony. The noise of the movement drew the attention of this person to him, and advancing a pace or two he said to Agrippa, "Believe me, Signore, that when I ascended here, a few minutes ago, I had no intention of intrusion. There was no attraction for me in the crowd below, and I came hither to muse in the stillness which this tower enjoys, even in the midst of revelry, upon hopes and fortunes which it has pleased God to render alike unhappy."

Agrippa's reply, although brief, was in the soothing tone and words of sympathy, and there needed no more introduction, in that land of courtesy. Soon they launched into the current of conversation, and each was pleased with a discourse in which there was more ease

and frankness than mere strangers are wont to display on a casual meeting. When they had thus conversed for some time, Agrippa remarked that though the darkness of the gallery did not enable him to distinguish the features of his new acquaintance, there was something in the tone of his voice familiar to the ear. "I must have met you somewhere, Signore, and I have been tasking my memory, for the last five minutes, to discover where. Perhaps, you may be able to inform me if I am right?"

"If I am not mistaken," said the other, "we were fellow-voyagers for a short time, a few weeks ago."

"What! my acquaintance of the Brenta? Well met, Signore. I have often thought upon you since, and wondered whether the good fortune which gave me your company, at that time, would procure me a renewal of the boon. By the body of Diana!—you may see that I have already picked up a Venetian expletive—I am rejoiced to meet you;—but you spoke

despondingly, just now—methinks you have met with some misfortune since we parted?"

"With none—except the continuance of evil days. In the sunshine, when away from Venice, and when cheered by my kind friend Signor Barberigo with the hope of brilliant success in the Art which I pursue, my spirits became buoyant, and I forgot the sad reality of what *is* in the gay day-dream of what *may* be. I return home, to my hopeless struggle and my sordid dwelling, and my mind becomes depressed. You may thus see why, when I met you first, it was not easy to perceive that disappointment had wrung me, and that care had been my constant visitant.

"Yet," said Agrippa, "I never saw a face in which I could more plainly read that triumph, great and enduring, must be achieved by the mind which had strikingly marked it."

"The features are not infallible in their expression. In this instance, they have certainly misled you."

"I think not. The temperaments, if not the very conditions, of men may be judged by lineaments of their faces. From the most ancient times, this has been believed and exercised. According as to the planets under which each man may be born, will be his temperament. The shape of the features, and their expression afford sufficient ground for forming a judgment. The low furrowed brow does not more clearly indicate mean and sensual faculties than the high and open forehead declares noble and expanded intellect. There is scarcely a day in which, almost involuntarily, we are not impressed favorably or the reverse as to the temper and talents of whom we encounter, even by the first casual glance at their countenances. Sculpture and painting derive their truth from a closer observation. And it is only carrying it on a little further to ascertain the probable result which such temper and talents may effect as to the fortunes of the individual. Let me hope, seeing success written plainly upon your countenance, that you have

unconsciously exaggerated the disappointments you may have met?"

"I spoke only as I have had too much cause to feel. The mirror that accident dashes on the ground is not more shattered than my hope. Partial failure of my expectations, I think I could have borne, but to see *all* my aims baffled, and to feel that I had cause for trusting some of them might prosper, is enough to make me despair. If I speak of myself, you have led me to do so, and the voice of sympathy is now so new to me that my feelings *will* overflow into utterance when it meets my ear."

Agrippa hastened to assure the cavalier, that he did him no more than justice, as indeed he was sincere in the hope that one who appeared so worthy was more fortunate than his words denoted.

"For my own part," he continued, "I, too, have known how bitter a thing is disappointment, and, therefore, I can understand what pangs wring the quick bosom when it comes.

And now, Signore, let me tax your courtesy to acquaint me with your calling."

"It may be a vain speculation," said the other, "but it is just possible that my name may have reached your ear before. I am a painter, my name is Tiziano Vecelli."

"What! that same Titian of whom our own excellent Albert Durer ever loves to speak, as combining the loftiest genius with the most patient industry? The same Titian, some of whose works, as I once before told you, he last year brought hence to Germany, and presented to the Emperor Maximilian, for I myself have seen them in his private cabinet?—The same—"

"To whom, if Venice afford some scanty praise, she denies bread; who might have starved, ere now, but for the charity (the more agreeable name is patronage) of one of her nobles. Yes, Signore Carloni, you behold that same Titian."

"Can this be possible?" said Agrippa, after a pause, in a tone of deep concern.

"I only know," replied the painter, with bitterness, "that it is true. It is something, however, to know that in the transmontane countries which our Italian pride considers barbarous and uncouth, I have won something —however trifling—of a name. This is one consolation amid many troubles. I do not know what may be the limit of my life, it will probably not be a long one, but I would willingly give all my future years, few or many, for one hour in which to see the fulfilment of my desire."

"It may be less distant than you deem."

"No!" said Titian. "*You* cannot now deceive me with hope, for I have ceased to deceive myself."

Agrippa attempted to solace him by talk of better and brighter days, and said: "You despond overmuch. What is this desire which you covet so engrossingly? that you would risk all to obtain for a single hour?"

"To *gain* it, Signore, never to *resign* it! While I was yet a child, so young that *this* is

one of my earliest memories, there arose in my heart the desire of distinction and the thirst for fame. Circumstances combined to draw my attention to the art of Painting, and my parents, resolving to encourage the bias, provided me with instruction. The desire of the Child matured into the soul-engrossing pursuit of the Man. None but myself can know with what devotion I have sought perfection in the art; what exclusive dedication of thought, and time, and labour I have given it; what patient exercise of the pencil has been mine; what keen observance of nature; what pains'-taking experiments. I became a Painter, and if the youthful impulse which made me one had succeeded, men would have called it the inspiration of genius. I have failed, and they will say that, having soared like Icarus, I deserved to fall like him. Can you *now* ask what it is that I would give life to win? What is this feverish dream of existence in which we play our little part—what is it, if we quit life without making and leaving some memory for

Time to keep immortal? To know, that after this heart had been resolved to dust, I would yet live in the works it had taught this hand to execute; for *this* consciousness, would I cheerfully surrender—could the exchange be made—all of life that remains to me."

The Painter abruptly concluded; perhaps, he thought that he had been induced to unbosom his quick and unquiet thoughts too freely to a stranger; but his heart was full, and his pent-up feelings *would* find a voice. Agrippa pressed his hand and said, "You have given me too much or too little of your confidence. Too much, if these casual meetings do not lead to more intimate acquaintance, too little, if they do. Indulge me, I entreat, with some account of your course of life, of the progress of those studies which have given you the mastery of your art. You magnify the evils of your present position, for it is clear that although you have not had complete success, you cannot have failed so wholly as you imagine, seeing that you have acquired not

only some reputation here, in Venice, but your ability is honorably appreciated at the Court of the Emperor."

"I have little to tell you," said Titian, "but such as it is, you are welcome to the recital. The life of an Artist is one of thought rather than action—he has to speak of the struggles of mind rather than the conflict of circumstances. Give me your attention, then, for a little, and you shall learn what an ambitious and disappointed man has to tell."

"I thank you," answered Agrippa, "for you do me no more than justice. But the roof of heaven, star-spangled though it be, may be exchanged now, methinks for a less airy covering."

"I was about proposing," said Titian, "that as my humble dwelling is not remote, you should accompany me there. The fittest place to tell you of myself is among the efforts of my art."

They quitted the Campanile—threaded their way through the merry and motley crowd in

the Piazzetta—entered Agrippa's gondola, and, in a few minutes, were within Titian's dwelling near the church of the Miracoli. A short time was passed in looking at the productions of art, which lay around, many and beautiful, and then they took their seats.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHILDHOOD OF A GREAT PAINTER.

While yet a child, and long before his time,
Had he perceived the presence and the power
Of greatness ; and deep feelings had impressed
Great objects on his mind, with portraiture
And colour so distinct, that on his mind
They lay like substances, and almost seemed
To haunt the bodily sense.

WORDSWORTH.

A FEW branches of the purple grapes of Lombardy, and a flask of that cheap and delicious wine of Arquà, which yet bears the poetical name of Vino di Petrarca, formed the slight repast to which Agrippa and the Painter now sat down. Agrippa was unwilling to lead back the subject personally to his host, until he saw

that it was desired, and thus their conversation was upon general topics, for a time. It seemed as if Titian had half repented of his promise of confidence, if Agrippa might judge from the spirit with which he discoursed, as if anxious to postpone to the latest that further account of himself which he had promised.

"And now," said Agrippa, closing a discussion upon Italian beauty, "it is clear, Signore, that we shall only agree to disagree upon this debateable subject. I still hold my faith that the blue eyes, fair cheeks, and sunny tresses of my own Germany, may challenge admiration with the darker and more brilliant loveliness of this Southern clime. I think that our Gothic buildings are more stately, if not quite so graceful as the irregular architecture of this Aphrodite of cities; and despite your glorious sunshine, and your cloudless skies, I still prefer the ruder land of my birth, with all its faults, to any other I have seen. Thus, we hold our opinions, and hold them the more firmly, perhaps, because we have defended

them. So, as the discussion is at an end, now let me hope that you will indulge me with the narration which you have promised."

Titian answered that he would willingly be absolved from the promise, for the incidents of his life had been fewer, perhaps, than those of other artists, and he feared it would be a wearisome effort of courtesy for a stranger to listen to the history of a Mind, rather than a narrative of Adventure. But Agrippa renewed the assurance of his unabated anxiety to learn the details he spoke of, so that, not quite unwilling to ease his mind, by confiding its feelings to one who appeared, not simply interested, but evidently sympathising, Titian waived his scruples, and spoke as follows :

"In other days, Signore, when hope was young, and Fancy freely ranged, unfettered by the cares and struggles of life, I loved to imagine some resemblance between the fortunes of Giovanni Cimabue, and my own. I speak of Cimabue, the Florentine, who awoke for our Italy, the lovely Genius of Painting, which

had been entranced during long, long centuries. Like him, my love of the art had been early and vividly manifested; like him I had applied my very soul to its prosecution; like him I was of noble blood, and waiving all assumption on that account, dreamed that, like him, it might be mine to achieve a fame which would make my name brighter than of yore, and make art gain for it a loftier and more enduring lustre than my ancestors had won by arms. It was a wild hope, but I long found it a sustaining one. I have become wiser and sadder now, for the wings of fancy are clipped, and her spirit broken.

"Long before Cadore, in the Friuli, was conquered for Venice, my fathers had high rank in that province; it is scarcely two centuries since one of them was elected its Governor. The family of the Vecelli have continued to hold office under the Seigniory, and, even now, my grandfather is Podesta of the Pieve del Cadore.

"My father, Gregorio Vecelli, was very for-

tunate in marriage with the Signora Lucia Delphini. The fruits of that marriage, were a daughter and two sons, of whom I am the youngest. In the course of years the fortunes of my house had gradually declined, and with a pride which (because they did not understand it) many have condemned, the Vecelli have ceased to bear the distinguishing title of nobility conferred upon one of our house for his services in the perilous war of Chiozza. His name is written in the *Libro d'Oro* of Venice, as one of the NOBILI DELLA GUERRA DI GENOA,* and should there ever dawn the day of a more auspicious fortune, we may claim and resume the title we have voluntarily laid aside. We might, it is true, have retained a rank which is a mockery where there is no wealth to support its dignity; like the degraded

* At the conclusion of the great war between Venice and Genoa, by the fall of Chiozza, in 1380, thirty families whose heads had distinguished themselves during the contest, were ennobled by having their names written in the golden Book of Venice. These newly ennobled, were called *I Nobili della Guerra di Genoa.*

Barnabotti, we might have debased ourselves by dancing attendance upon more wealthy nobles, the ministers and tools of their lowest pleasures, glad to accept a daily dole as the price of the debasement; we might have sued the Senate for a license to beg, have assumed the garb and humility of the Vergognosi, and suppliantly held out a *cartoccio* for casual alms*—but we thought it nobler to be men than mendicants, and to lay aside a profitless dignity which our means could not support, rather than degrade it by unworthiness.

" My mother involuntarily cherishes many of the superstitions of her native land, as is the case very frequently, with those who pass their lives in the country, where such belief is rarely

* The *Barnabotti*, so called because most of them originally resided in the parish of St. Barnabas, were a degraded class of the nobility—at once paupers and panders. The *Vergognosi*, (or shame-faced), were indigent nobles to whom the Senate formerly granted licenses to beg. They wore a particular dress, had a kind of hood over their face to prevent their being recognised, and carried in their hands a paper cone (*un cartoccio*), which they mutely held out for the reception of alms.

challenged. A few weeks before my birth, she had a strange dream or vision, which made a great impression upon her mind, and may have somewhat influenced my own fate. She dreamed that from our dwelling sprang a tree which, advancing to maturity by slow but stately growth, suddenly shot up into an immense size, and spread extensively, until, at last, its mighty canopy of leaves and branches overshadowed the land, while the rich perfume from its blossoms filled the air, and, at the same time, its golden fruitage surpassed any that had ever before been seen. There were not wanting those who declared that they knew how to interpret the mysteries of dreams, and one of these—an aged man whose head was hoary with the snows of an hundred years—read this vision, and declared that the child, which would speedily be born, would obtain such fame as one day was to fill the earth! To this hour, Signore, that fond mother has a firm belief in the truth of this prediction;

—as yet, there seems scanty chance of its fulfilment.

"St. Titian, Bishop of Odessa, was one of our ancestors, and as my birth took place upon the day dedicated to him, his name was given to me—in the hope, perhaps, that the compliment might propitiate his sanctity. Hitherto he has been culpably inattentive to the fortunes of his namesake!

"When I was scarcely seven years old, Giovanni Egnazio visited Cadore. He was a ripe scholar, and, above all men whom I have ever known, possessed the faculty of communicating knowledge, by exciting a desire for its attainment. Not from books alone did he give his lessons. The ample page of Nature lay before him, and he drew instruction from the objects around us. He loved, also, to dwell upon bright achievements in the world of thought, and what he related sank so deeply into my mind that I speedily outstripped my brother, Francisco, in the study of letters.

"Whether governed by the patriarchs of Grado, the princes of Tyrol, the lords of Cammino, or the Seigniory of Venice, the province of Cadore has always preserved its own laws, magistrates and institutions. One of the last provides for the appointment of masters, by whom letters may be taught to all destined for a liberal profession, without their being compelled to leave their birth-place. Hence, Signore, arises that love of home which distinguishes us of Cadore above all other Italians. —My father succeeded in getting Egnazio appointed one of the public teachers at Cadore, and Francisco and myself were educated by him.* To follow the eagle to his difficult haunts—to chase the ibex on the hills—to fly

* Giovanni Egnazio, by whom Titian was instructed in the learning of the time, was a most accomplished scholar. Together with Leo X, he had the advantage of being taught by Angelo Politien. Among other works of his was a Latin history of the Emperors, from Cæsar to Maximilian. He closed his days in Venice, where he was held in such high estimation as a learned man, that he finally had a pension from the State, and was exempted from paying any taxes.

his falcon—to send the arrow home to the centre of the mark—to exercise with the sword—to break the wild steed which none else dare back—to seek danger and to face it were my brother's peculiar delights, and, dearly as he loved me, there was as much scorn as pity in his look and speech for the child (for I was four years his junior), who rather loved to pore over the pages of romance and poetry, and whose chief happiness was to dream away the hours in wild uncertain aspirations for future fame. You smile, Signore, but it was ever thus with me; although then little more than eight years old, I had day-dreams of glory—bright visions of renown! I, too, can almost smile now at the aimless ambition of a boy, the premature fancies of childhood. But the precepts and the lore of Egnazio, (reduced by his kindness to my youthful comprehension), had made a vivid impression upon my mind, and so thoroughly was it given up to these imaginings, that I was wont to frame a continuous romance of which *I* was the chief

actor; to body forth, in this vision of my fancy, persons and scenes, and to imagine noble adventures in which mine would be a stirring part. And this habit of building castles in the air became so habitual and ascendant, that when my musings were interrupted I could instantly suspend them, having the power of readily renewing the broken thread of thought when I pleased, and of throwing my mind into abstraction and invention, with as much ease as if I were but resuming the perusal of a narrative I had laid down only an hour before.

"My kind teacher, Egnazio, did not discourage such fancies. It was of such, he said, that high deeds would be born in coming days, and that seldom was man eminent in after-life whose thoughts had not thus become the searchers of his heart in youth. Ever anxious was he to excite the ambition of his pupils—of such of them, at least, as he believed to possess higher faculties than the rest. I know not how it chanced, but he particularly attached himself

to me. He used often to invite me to a ramble with him among the hills that sheltered our home, and then he would speak to me of the men whose daring had changed their swords into sceptres, and their steel morions into jewelled crowns—of statesmen, whose wisdom had been the shield and salvation of their country. The beautiful fictions of mythology, hallowed by time and tradition into yet deeper beauty, sometimes furnished matter for discourse, and—for Egnazio was eloquent as truth—child though I was, I delighted, with excited and instructed spirit, in the lore he taught me.

"Nor was it solely of the events, recorded by history and moralized upon by a far-looking philosophy, that I thus gained the knowledge, in these walks, the memory of which is grateful to me yet. My instructor also told me of Song and Art, and these subjects soon won my intense regard. He spoke of Homer, an aged and sightless man, wandering through the land whose language his genius made immortal, and

leaving a fame growing on with growing time. I heard how the world's ruler, Alexander, treasured his songs beside his pillow by night, and daily read them amid the perils of war, the cares of empire, and the distractions of pleasure. And, as I heard, my young heart panted with the desire to understand this deathless spirit of poetry, which could rival a Conqueror's dream of Ambition, and, through long ages, shed the halo of renown upon an old man, else so obscure that the place of his birth is unknown.

"Thus, Egnazio—the schoolmate and friend of Cardinal de Medicis—constantly stirred up the ambition of a child, even from its very depths, by informing me what the minds of famous men had achieved, with lesser aids from knowledge than, in these later days, have been given to us. Nor did he limit his instruction to the examples drawn from the great and gifted of distant days and climes. He read for me—sparing neither sagacious comment nor wise

interpretation — from the sublime revealings of Dante, the passionate heart-strains of Petrarca, the sportive yet often pathetic fictions of Boccaccio, the truthful stories of Sacchetti, the characteristic liveliness of Pecorone, the delicate harmonies of Conti, the quick satire of Poppio Braccioloni, and the chivalresque gaiety of Pulci and Boiardo. If, thus early, I could not appreciate the beauty of their compositions nor comprehend the fullness of their meaning, yet the music of such poetry sank into my heart, and I snatched something for meditation from its sweetness and its power. I learned, too, from the varied story of their lives, as well as from their works, that Genius has a spell to conquer Time—that while princes often leave but a fleeting memory, it is for the gifted who had dug into the mine of intellect and brought forth the treasures of thought and fancy, to bequeath the Fame that outlives Empire. Egnazio had turned my thoughts to this subject, because, having seen

some verses which I had attempted, his partiality, conquering his judgment, made him think that they showed something of promise. But if there was poetry in my mind, it was not in the form of words that its developement was to take place.

"I fear, Signore, that this story may fatigue you, and, even yet, ere I proceed with it, let me entreat that you will not hesitate to tell me if it does. I well know that to speak of one's-self—though you will acknowledge that I have done so only at your desire—is more pleasant to him who speaks than him who listens."

"Proceed, by all means," said Agrippa. "What I have heard whets my appetite for the remainder. The history of a mind, when frankly told, can never lack interest to him who listens from a higher motive than curiosity. Proceed, then, by all means. At a future day, when you shall have to tell me of hope fulfilled, of fame mightily achieved, and of higher conquests in contemplation, it will be pleasant to

look back upon the shadow of the present time and wonder how it gloomed you."

Titian gravely smiled in acknowledgment of these words, and resumed his narrative.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PAINTER'S PROGRESS—RIVALRY AND DISAPPOINTMENT.

And oft it is the doom
Of loftiest genius to know sorrow's gloom.
To struggle with obscurity,—to strive,
'Mid crushing cares, to keep fair hope alive;
While on its best and loftiest fruits doth fall
Neglect, which weakens heart, and hand, and all.
Yet bright the thought; one day, perchance, the name
Men know not now may far be spread by Fame!

"Much," continued Titian, "much as I loved the Poetry with which Egnazio made me familiar, my attention was more earnest when he spoke of its fair rival, Painting, which he told me, although glorious once, had been nearly forgotten until these latter days, when once more it had become a world's wonder.

When he spoke of other subjects, I was wont to question him much, for he delighted to reply to such inquiries ; but when he spoke of Art, I was unwilling, by interruption, to lose one thought of the lore he was pouring into my mind. Oh! with what rapt attention did I listen, while he told me how, in early Greece, Art was the graceful hand-maid of Religion; how there, beneath serene skies, and amid lovely scenes, its first essays were to represent the Divinities which imagination, elevated into faith, dreamed of as the habitants of the lofty mountains, the winding streams, the solemn groves, the flowery vallies, and the surging sea ; how raising the real to the ideal, elevating the human to the divine, Art spread abroad a deep and refining sense of the Beautiful, touching things and thoughts of common life with gentlest hues from heaven. He said that thus Art became poetry embodied in more palpable form than language, combining grace and beauty, sublimity and simplicity, to represent the divinities and heroes of the

antique time; breathing expression into the cold marble, and sentiment into the pencilled lines. He moralized, too, upon the historical certainty that the Arts had always flourished best under the ægis of Liberty, for that it was the attribute of political freedom to elevate and expand the mind. Egnazio showed me, also, how Genius alone could not have wrought the high achievements that he named—that if the inspiration of Art soared beyond the earth, it was on the patient wings of Application—if the intellectual beauty of the heroic form, the subduing graee of Womanly loveliness, and the grandeur and softness of Nature's countless charms were admirably represented by chisel or pencil, Industry was the aid of Genius in such wonders. He loved to narrate how, even in the full triumph of success, the great Apelles laid down the rule, which has become a proverb, that no day should pass without the exercise of his art*—for Application is one of the secrets of Perfection—and upon my mind

* "Nulla dies sine lineâ."

was constantly impressed the truth that Art must combine Nature as well as Imagination; not alone the power to conceive and the skill to represent, but the judgment which corrects and improves, by imbuing the fair creation with the hues, the aspect, and the language of Life.

"Deeply versed in the lore of Antiquity—that which has come down to us from the poets and the orators, the historians and the sages of Greece and Rome—Egnazio was wont to illustrate his conversation by frequent reference to them. And thus, Signore, at an age when others had scarcely entered the vestibule of knowledge, I had learned much of what History records of the early artists, and was familiar with the traditionary renown of their works. And then, while he told me that of most of what these men had done, little was left, except an uncertain memory, while their fame abides enduringly for all time, he instructed me how, for more than twelve hundred years the eloquent and truthful Arts they had

made so perfect, had become torpid—how, when Freedom fled from Greece, these arts which she had fostered and perfected had a sudden and long decline—how, two centuries ago, they had shone forth among the morning stars in the dawn of that recovered Liberty which dispersed, for our fair Italy, the cloud that long had overcast her—how when Letters were restored to our land, it was the noble ambition of Cimabue, (himself a scholar), to awake Painting from its trance and breathe the life of Poetry into her veins—and how the impulse thus given to Art thrilled through the mighty heart of Europe. He traced the onward course of Painting through Giotto and Masaccio, Antonio da Messina and Dominico Veneziano, Andrea del Castagno and Ghirlandaio, Mantegna and Luca Signorelli, down to that living master, the great Da Vinci, whom, if his colouring equalled his expression, composition and drawing, none may hope to surpass. And then, while my young spirit

thrilled with emotion as I listened to such a theme, a voice within spoke to my heart, I TOO SHALL BE A PAINTER!

"Just at this time, while these impressions were most vivid, there came an artist commissioned to paint the Reception of the Madonna into Heaven, which now is the chief embellishment of the little church of the Pieve da Cadore.* He was the Signore Antonio Rossi, an able painter, but poor. My father invited him to reside with us while his occupation detained him at Cadore, and it became my daily delight to attend in the room which he used as his *studio*—to watch how the picture arose into beauty and reality beneath his hand, —to notice how he disposed the lights and the shadows—how skilfully he made a harmony of tone by the contrast as well as the blending of the hues. From observing, I soon felt the

* Lanzi classes Antonio Rossi (who was Titian's first master) among the best painters of the Venetian school, and this his picture painted at Cadore has been highly praised.

ambitious desire to imitate him. It was a secret ambition, and the execution was secret also.

"Nor was it easy to attempt what I had in view. Without pigments, or the opportunity of procuring them, and afraid to disclose my design by asking Signore Rossi for the use of his—which, indeed, I could scarcely expect him to grant—I used the juice of flowers, and thus, rudely enough, made a small copy of his painting. For some days, I hoarded it up, as if it were a sin to have dreamed of such presumption, but, at last, my sister Ursula, (who alone was privy to the attempt), placed it before Signore Rossi, who was pleased to doubt whether a child, such as I was at the time, could have executed such a thing.* Of this he

*The biographers of Titian say that, when he was about nine years old, "an image of the Virgin which the boy had coloured with the juice of flowers, being considered by every body as a prodigious performance, his father determined on sending him to Venice, to be instructed in the principles of painting." It may be remembered that the genius of West was even more precocious. It is said that, before the age of

speedily became satisfied, and protested that Nature had thus plainly indicated the profession I ought to follow. My kind teacher, Egnazio, also applauded what I had done—my mother, mindful of that dream which had been interpreted to pre-figure my future eminence, insisted that I should become a Painter—and my father, whose authority extended to every house in Cadore (except his own) was obliged to yield to her will and abandon his design of bringing me up for the Church. From that day, Signore Rossi began to instruct me in the principles of his art.

"Four months after I had thus given indication of a taste for painting, it was determined that I should proceed to Venice, for a full

seven, being left in charge of his infant sister, he was struck with her beauty as she lay sleeping in a cradle, and made his first essay at drawing by attempting to sketch her portrait on a piece of paper, with pen and ink. Lewis, one of his American biographers, tells how, a year or two later, he used the juice of berries, until some of the Indians gave him some of the red and yellow earths with which they painted themselves; his mother added a bit of blue from her laundry, and thus he first had the three primary colours.

course of instruction, and there reside with my uncle, Antonio Vecelli, a counsellor of the law. He was my father's elder brother, and a proud man, for he had married Signora Daria, only daughter of Giacomo Coltroni, of Brescia, Engineer to the Republic. I arrived in Venice before I had reached my tenth year, and lost no time in applying myself to the study of the art I loved so well. I had not been quite a year in Venice, when Sebastiano Zuccati, the Trevisan, (who had been specially brought to repair the mosaic roof of the Basilica of St. Mark), happened to visit at Messer Coltroni's, with whom my uncle lived, and there saw some of my drawings. He was pleased to profess himself so much satisfied with them, that he frankly offered his aid to give me instruction. He is the most perfect master of mosaic whom Italy has ever produced, and his ability as a Painter would be scarcely less acknowledged, if he had sufficiently exercised it; but, excelling in the art of Mosaic, he was in such full and profitable employment, that

he seldom had leisure to pursue the more lofty but less lucrative branch of Painting.

"In one point—which may have been taught him by the necessarily minute details of his daily practice in mosaic—Sebastiano Zuccati is distinguished beyond almost every painter whom we have yet seen in Venice. In accuracy of design—hitherto too much neglected here—his excellence is unsurpassed. The necessity of attending to correct drawing, he constantly impressed upon me during the four years I was his pupil, and from his precepts and example I have derived the desire of faithfully, because accurately, drawing from Nature.

"I had just passed my fourteenth year, when the excellent Zuccati, assisted by my old master Rossi, made interest to have me received as a pupil by Gentile Bellino, who, with his brother Giovanni, was then painting in the Great Council Chamber of the Ducal palace. The advantage of this was considerable, for the Bellini have long been eminent

in Venice. But I remained only a short time with Gentile: for having been pressed to say what I thought of a painting of his brother's, I confessed that I preferred it to one upon the same subject, from his own pencil. Upon this unfortunate exercise of candour, which a craftier pupil would not have made, it pleased Gentile Bellino to tell me, angrily, that as I thought so meanly of *his* performances, it was impossible that he was competent to instruct so nice and difficult a critic. He requested me to remove from his dwelling with all convenient speed, and added, for my consolation, that my execution was so rapid, and my manner such a deviation from his own, that, unless I changed both, I would never be a painter! So much, Signore, for speaking the truth to an artist. Truly, we *are* a captious race—avaricious of criticism, yet sensitive of each opinion which even hints a fault.

"But seeming evil is often the parent of real good, and so it was in this instance. Giovanni Bellino, hearing of what had oc-

curred, immediately invited me to become *his* pupil, saying that it would be unfair to allow truth to be punished. And thus I profited by the exchange—Giovanni being a better painter than his brother.

"At this time, Giorgio Barbarelli, of Castel Franco—better known to you, perhaps, as Giorgione—was also a pupil under the same master. He was three years my senior in age, and infinitely my superior in Art. I had been his fellow-pupil for about two years, when, at the summons of a rich relative, whose heir he was, he visited Florence. There he saw the works of Leonardo da Vinci, and was immediately struck with the contrast between the hard and laboured manner of the Bellini, and the expressive grace which breathes life into the paintings of the Florentine. There, where Cimabue had revived the art, Da Vinci had reached perfection in it. Throwing off the too prevalent custom of imitating the antique rather than nature, in which the antique found its noblest models, he produced

new and brilliant effects. He had the boldness, too, to deviate into a vigorous arrangement and employment of light and shade, and, instead of a loose and scumbling method of design, to adopt a correctness in drawing, which inferior artists can more readily envy than equal. Above all, happy in the possession of varied and extensive knowledge—for he is skilled in letters, music, mechanics, poetry, medicine, architecture, and mathematics—he culled a flower from every art to form the unfading wreath with which he has crowned the brow of Painting. He blended the principles of his various accomplishments; from mathematics he brought the exactness of science; from anatomy he learned correctness in delineating the human form; from letters he gleaned the historic truth which gives reality to his works; from poetry he caught the expression of the loftiest thought; and from quick observation he saw that Nature was his best example. From works executed on such principles, Giorgione speedily perceived

how cold and lifeless were the mere effigies of art which he had been wont to see at Venice, and, on his return from Florence, wholly forsaking the Bellini, busied himself with experiments upon the effects of light and shade. He made new combinations of tints—he studied greater accuracy of drawing—until, making a happy union of extreme vigour with great elevation of style, and rich luxuriance of colouring, he formed a peculiar and beautiful manner, the novelty of which immediately drew public attention, while the brilliant execution shewed that the innovator was an artist with ability equal to his boldness.

"About the same time that Giorgione struck into this bolder and freer style, I, also, had observed the defects of our Venetian painters. The Signore Antonio Barberigo, nephew to the late Doge, had brought some paintings from Florence, which I was permitted to copy, and it was impossible to examine them without feeling that while Da Vinci had represented Nature, we of Venice had deviated from her.

The error of the Bellini was that they copied pictures rather than the realities which the pictures represented, until, at length, their test of excellence was the resemblance to the painted models, rather than to the breathing form and the natural beauty!

"Giovanni Bellino had taught me how to design—but it was to design without grace and imagination. He looked upon the freedom of Da Vinci's manner as an unpardonable innovation, and when he found Giorgione succeeding in his adoption of that manner, his dislike to it was increased. I, also, lost favour in his eyes when he saw that I was infected with the same heresy. Vesalius, who is the best anatomist in Venice, had honoured me with his friendship, and, at this time, condescended to shew me, for the purpose of my art, the construction of the human body:—hence, Signore, any success of mine in the delineation of the human form. This knowledge, also, Bellino considered a breach of all precedent—because *he* had not studied anatomy—and his in-

creasing dissatisfaction at my abandonment of his own formal manner, as well as the gradual souring of his temper from the advance of age, made me resolve to leave him, as Giorgione had previously done. I did so, when I was not quite eighteen—nine weary years ago.

"I was all hope, for I had now reached the startling point—I was a Painter! Yet a painter who depends upon his pencil for his bread, may possess the powers of an Apelles, and never find an opportunity of having them acknowledged. But this was a thought of after-years. Now that I was an artist, I was too proud to demand assistance from the wealth of my uncle or the poverty of my father. I was young and ardent, and, above all, had that strong faith in my own powers which so much sustains all enterprise.

"It seemed, at first, as if success would have been immediate. The Signor Barberigo, who had accidentally made my acquaintance when I was Bellino's pupil, did me the honour to visit my humble *studio* shortly after I had

professed the Art on my own account. He gave me praise for the copies I had made of Da Vinci's paintings; he purchased two of them at a price that frugally supported me for the first year of my adventure, and—what was better still—at the end of that time, he employed me to paint his portrait. Nay more, so pleased was he with it, that he used his influence with some leading members of the Senate and (although some said that it was a task for one of the Bellini, while others declared that Giorgione alone could do it justice), obtained for me the distinction of taking the likeness of Catarina Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus, to be hung in the Ducal Palace. I proceeded to Asola, in the Trevisan mountains, which Venice had allotted as a residence for the unqueened Sovereign, and there had the fortune to produce a portrait which Signor Barberigo assured me most fully justified his high commendation of me to the Senate*, and

* "Her picture," says Mr. Smedley in his picturesque *Sketches from Venetian History*, in "widow's weeds, (even

which first made my name known out of Venice, for I have painted several copies of it, some of which have gone beyond the Alps.

"It was after I returned with this portrait, that Giorgione, who had sometimes availed himself of my assistance in his excess and my dearth of employment, told me that he could dispense with it in future. Scanty consolation was it to think that thus, jealous of his rising fame, Domenico Ghirlandaio had, a little before, dismissed his pupil, Michel Angelo Buonarotti, from the same feelings of jealousy!

"It was only natural to expect, after the general approval of my portrait of Queen Catarina, that I should now have success—but it did not reach me. Still, I kept up my hopes, for a long time. I visited my home at

now glowing with almost original freshness among the treasures of the *Palazzo Manfrini*), was one of the earliest great works of Titian, which, both from the skill of the artist and the loveliness of the subject, extended his growing fame beyond the borders of the Lagune."—A copy, in the Dresden Gallery, (one of the famous Modena Collections), is certainly from the hand of Titian himself.

Cádore ;—the child who had left it years before, came back an eager, ardent man. My brother, Francesco Vecelli, who had frequently visited Venice while I was yet a youth, and had even for a time studied with me under Giovanni Bellino, had quitted our home. Better than pencil and pallet, did he then love spear and sword. He had joined the army which Venice had raised, in league with Sforza and other princes, to drive King Charles of France out of Italy, and for his valour at the battle of Taro, which freed our soil from the invader, received (though little more than a stripling) the special thanks of Melchior Trivisano, who was one of the Venetian Proveditori in the campaign which that victory gloriously closed. He still remained in the Venetian service, advanced to the command of a squadron of the *Stradiotti.** Without him

* Titian's brother ultimately quitted the army and became a distinguished Painter, at Venice. It is said that Titian was jealous of his talents and persuaded him to abandon historical painting on a large scale, and confine himself to small pieces on the insides of rich cabinets.

home was dull—I was impatient to resume my pencil, and speedily returned to Venice.

"There I found but occasional success. It was alleged that my style was but an imitation of that of Giorgione—and some, who pretended to be excellent judges of Art, openly affirmed, when Signore Barberigo shewed them his portrait which I had taken, that it was from Giorgione's pencil, and certainly one of his finest pieces. When they were shewn my name, which I had fortunately written in the dark corner of the picture, they were somewhat astonished; but the detection of their want of judgment made them yet more my enemies, and they every where repeated the accusation that I was nothing but a copyist of my rival.—Now, my earliest pictures, which I painted for Giovanna Danna, of Flanders, before I had quitted Bellino, shew that, even then, I had abandoned the labored and hard manner of that master. Except what I painted for the Signori Danna and Barberigo, and a few which my uncle Antonio purchased, I sold

few of my productions during the first six years of my probation. Yet I still was true to my art. I knew her to be a jealous mistress, and my vigils, my studies, my labours were all for her.

"Oh, the misery of unrequited labours!—the agony of heart, the self-humiliation, the heavy pressure of necessity which, during long years, I have endured. The lowest wants contending with the loftiest aims: sometimes needing the common necessaries of life—living, as I have lived, for three days on six scudi—too sensitive not to feel and too proud to complain;—do you wonder that I have often envied the careless gondolier who plies upon the Lagunes, for he had food and was without the elegant tastes which make a man enjoy competence, but doubly embitter want.

"It was not my own failure that most afflicted me;—no, nor the success of Giorgione, because I feel that he has amply deserved it. It was the constant iteration of the assertion that I had merely copied my rival's style—for

I certainly had invented, as soon as he had, that manner which mingles the colouring of the Bellini with the graceful freedom of Da Vinci. None but those who have felt it can tell how bitter and thankless it is to labour on with scarcely a hope that what he does will be appreciated by the world, or with the fear that all claim to originality of conception may be whispered away. Give me, as a more hopeful doom, to weave a cable out of the sands on the sea-shore.

"My rival, Giorgione, had many things to recommend him besides undoubted ability. He is wealthy—and the world cheerfully patronises him who does *not* depend upon its favour. His wealth gives him admission into circles where, as a mere artist, he would be but coldly received—for they have not yet learned in Venice to estimate a man for what he is, not what he has. His skill in music is great—so that, on this account, as well as because he is rich, his company is much sought. But his advantage over me as an artist is this—

he had complete knowledge of fresco-painting, long before I had ever applied one colour to the plaster, and when, having purchased a house in the Campo San Sylvestro, he painted its façade in an admirable style of design and colouring, the result was that he had more applications to embellish other houses in like manner than he could execute. From what he had done, I taught myself to paint in fresco, and to this—certainly an inferior degree of the art—I have for some time owed the chief means of support.

"Yet, though in the higher branch of painting, I have not met with the slightest encouragement, I never abandoned hope until recently. I kept myself prepared for the brighter day that was to dawn, and knew that, to be equal to what it would demand, my skill must be sustained by constant practice, my mind kept from rust by constant study. There was monotony in this routine of painting and reading, so, I taught myself to engrave upon wood and copper. To ridicule those who cannot draw a

figure, without a statue before them as a model, I designed and engraved a group of monkies imitating the sublimities of the Laocoon; and, having my attention drawn to it by Albert Durer, who was recently here, I am now executing a series of designs, upon wood, which I call the Triumph of Faith.

"The Signore Barberigo is so seldom in Venice (public business often taking him to foreign courts), that he does not know how low my fortunes are. Whenever he does come, his friendship is most active in my behalf. This year, through its influence, I painted the scriptural piece of the Angel and Tobias, for the church of St. Martial, and the Presentation at the Temple for La Carità. But he has been absent now for many months—with the exception of a short visit, to his country residence on the banks of the Brenta, where I lately went to see him;—and, with the desire, and I would fain believe, with the power, to accomplish something the world would one day value, I am doomed to languish in obscurity:

and this glorious art—for it *is* glorious, though many such as I should fail to win a name by it—I must desert in despair.

"Now, Signore, I have done. Judge whether I have complained without cause? One by one, my hopes have declined, and their fulfilment seems more remote than at first. When a man, who has devoted himself to one pursuit from childhood, verges on the close of his twenty-seventh year, as I do, without any fair propect of succeeding, it is time for him to quit the field in despair."

CHAPTER IX.

SOOTHSAYING AND CHIROMANCY.

Folks will always listen when the tale is their own; and of many who say they do not believe in fortune-telling, I have known few on whom it had not a very sensible effect.

HENRY MACKENZIE.

"Such," said Titian, "is my story. It is one of common life—a struggle for distinction, anxiety, failure. I scarcely care now what may happen next. The dream is ended, and it matters little to the baffled, in what shape evil may next avail him, to whom it has already done its worst."

It was difficult to pour balm into a mind thus wounded, and Agrippa, sensibly touched

by the full and frank confidence of the Painter, scarcely knew how to make the attempt. He said, "Be of better hope. As the day, even in this glorious autumn, is not without clouds, so no fortune is without some shadow. Happy are they upon whose youth it falls, while they have energies for the trial. Difficulty excites the mind to the dignity which sustains and finally conquers misfortune, and the ordeal refines while it chastens. You do not know how soon the trial may be a triumph. No! while life remains, the contest should be continued, where it is honourable even to have striven for success."

Soothingly as the voice of sympathy fell upon Titian's mind, it did not renew the freshness of the withered flowers of hope.

A silence of some minutes succeeded, which was broken by Agrippa's abruptly asking, "If the page of the Future could be laid open to your view, would you avail yourself of that opportunity to terminate the misery of suspense, by learning, at once, whether your for-

tunes will be bright or gloomy? Do you think that your heart is firm enough to dare the trial?"

"Yes—if it could be made. I am so heart-weary of this dull suspense, that I would encounter any difficulty to end it."

"Nay," said Agrippa. "I spoke not of the impossible. Where the heart is bold and the determination earnest, difficulty vanishes. But, would you make the attempt?"

Titian looked earnestly in Agrippa's face, to see whether he jested; but there was no smile upon it. "*Can* it be made?" he doubtingly inquired. "*Can* the secrets of the veiled future be disclosed?"

"*Can* it be done?" repeated Agrippa with animation. "Aye!—by the bright stars above us, the watchers, through long centuries, over the deeds of this lower world. Aye! to those who by anxious thought, by long study, by trusting faith, and by bold daring win, from the spirits of the elements, the power to read the secrets of the world above—to them, the

mysteries of nature are laid open—to them the veil of the future is withdrawn—to them is given the knowledge of intelligences, spirits, and dominations—to them are the revelations, which, by permission of the Highest, make them accomplish what, wondering at, the world bans as evil, because its source is occult."

"You think; then, that there is power in Divination and Occult Philosophy?"

"There is the power of Truth!" exclaimed Agrippa. "It is only owing to the depravity of the times and of men—who give the name of Magic to various errors of religion and philosophy—that the practice and the knowledge of which I speak have become dishonoured. Ignorantly, or wilfully, men take the name of magic in the worst sense, not knowing that among the learned, a magician does not signify a sorcerer or one superstitious, but a wise man, a priest, a prophet.* I speak not of the

* This theory is fully and curiously developed in Agrippa's Three Books of Occult Philosophy, written in 1510, and

Hebrew prophecies, so remarkably fulfilled both in letter and spirit, because their inspiration is unquestionable—but of the Advent *they* announced the Sybils prophecied most clearly, and the Magi, knowing that it was truth, were the first to see and follow the star which guided them on—the first to worship the new incarnation!—To trace events from casual sp ings has been attempted from the earliest times, when the children of the skies had commerce with the daughters of earth. To seek for knowledge of events, to aim at the power of commanding the external causes which influence them, has created Astrology and Divination, and called up the arts of magic which unfold the deep mysteries of creation. This is not a world of chance: the ruling wisdom which made it, provided a cause for every thing, and to search for and into these causes—that is, to learn more and more of the depths of that wisdom is banned as unlaw-

published in 1531.—Indeed, I have taken leave to put the *ipsissima verba* that he there wrote, into his own mouth.

ful, by those who have not the intellect to make the search!"

Titian replied that he was aware many had professed this knowledge; but had it not palpably been a cheat, when brought to the test?

"Aye," retorted Agrippa, with bitterness, "thus it is. A charlatan comes forward, with shallow pretensions and splendid professions—he deceives the world, if he can—at last, the deceit is detected—and his fraudful ignorance passes as another proof of the vanity of the art! You might as well say that womanly virtue is a fable, because Venice swarms with courtesans. Is there nothing in the facts, authenticated by history, of all that the true magi have known and done? The Hebrew youth faithfully interpreted the mystery of the Egyptians' visions — the Hebrew law-giver wrought portends before Pharoah and his people, and, for a time, the Egyptian Magi matched portend with portend*—she of Endor

* There was published at Leipsic, in 1775, a curious Latin volume, written by Antony de Haen, (Aulic Councillor,

called up the spirit of the dead to prophecy before the Hebrew King. If there be truth in the inspired oracles of God, then are the examples of this art indisputable. Think you that the ancients — wise in philosophy, in letters, in art, and in science—would have been only unwise in their belief that the future could be read and the secrets of Nature known by men who had devoted their lives to the searchings after these mysteries? If, in these

physician to the Empress Maria Theresa, and Professor of Medicine in the University of Vienna) called "*De Magiâ Liber*," which was probably the last *serious* essay in favour of the theory that Magic was possible and had been successfully practiced. One of de Haen's illustrations is from the book of Exodus. It is clear, he argues, that what the Egyptian Magi performed was not a mere *deceptio visûs*, but reality—for if they had only deceived Pharoah and the people into the belief that they, as well as Moses, had changed their rods into serpents, and turned the waters into blood, and brought up frogs over all the land, why should they not have been able also to deceive them by the semblance of the other miracles? If, asks Haen, there was a *deceptio visûs* in some cases, why not in all? because the Magi brought real portents, as far as their art allowed, and only gave in when it was clear that Moses was a Magus superior to themselves. De Haen died in 1776. His work is curious and scarce.

latter days, we have lost much of the greater power, which worked what were miracles of old, why should we discredit the lesser power, which only foretells events? What were the chief divinities of Greece, but the memories of men who had wielded power over the mysteries of Nature? Because, in this day, none can disperse an army, as did the enchantments of Zoroaster — or stop a pestilence, like Epimenedes, the Cretan—or raise the dead, like Empedocles, the Sicilian, must it be said that lesser deeds cannot be done? If Apollonius, of Tyana could tell, at Ephes, in the very moment when it took place, that Domitian had been assassinated at Rome, and if Alexander, the Paphagonian, could foretell events for twenty years, by his oracle at Abonotica, why should not we, commanding the springs of like knowledge, do such things in part? To this hour has continued the command over the mysteries of nature. Here, even in Venice, do crowds consult Esteban, the Astrologer—and yet his claims are scarcely recognised by

the instructed who are scattered throughout Europe."

"If you speak of the Astrologer of St. Marks," cried Titian, "I have heard of him. Is *he* an impostor?"

"I am not sure that he is not," replied Agrippa, hesitatingly. "He foretells boldly—whether truly, time will show. I asked him to draw the scheme of my horoscope, and he told me that I should die in an hospital! It is strange, too, that when my nativity was cast, while I was yet a child in Cologne, the same prediction was made."

"But why need you, Signore, who, if I can judge rightly, are yourself versed in this art—why should you ask the knowledge from another, which it appears that you possess?"

"Because," said Agrippa, "though we do read the fate of others as it is written on the stars — or, certainly predict the prominent course of actions which especial influences may govern—we may not search the future for *ourselves*. So far, then, as fore-knowledge

of our own fate is concerned, the art is profitless to us."

"By Hercules," Titian exclaimed, "methinks it were better to be even a poor Painter, than a Necromancer who holds the key of knowledge, and dare not bestow its treasures upon his own need!"

"Here again, you are wrong. I spoke not of Necromancy, but of Celestial or Theurgical Magic as distinguished from it. Both, it is true, are under the ban of the Church, but one is practised by the very churchmen who denounce it. They sanctify the ceremonies of the Magi with the holy solemnities of Christian rites. They blend them in the spells by which they invoke communion with the Spirits of the Elements. The sign of the Cross alternates with the Pentalpha — the names of the four Evangelists are spoken with those of the Angels of the Seven Stars—and while their bulls place Thaumaturgy out of the Christian pale, these priests use the sacrifice of the Mass to perfect the charm. That Al-

bertus Magnus the Dominican, and Roger Bacon the Francescan, and Thomas of Aquinas have used these arts might show that they were not unholy."

"What! can the art number such disciples?"

"More than mere Disciples — they were Adepts. Many of the Pontiffs who have filled the chair of St. Peter, have exercised the art. Nay, haughty though he be, Julius de Rovigo practiced Thaumaturgy, ere he wore the triple crown, and even lately sent a special messenger to the Imperial Court, to learn from Cornelius Agrippa whether his contemplated League against Venice will have a fortunate issue. No doubt, *he*, also, will hurl the thunder of the Vatican against the art he consults! He little foresees that the throne on which he sits trembles beneath him—that the crosier he wields (he had rather it were a sword) will soon lose its power — that a purified faith will arise—yea, is even now arising from the ntelligence to which the in-

vention of Printing has given a voice. But this is yet a riddle to you, though you may live to see it read. And now, once more—would you know the future?"

"If it were guiltless to do so."

"Surely, Sir Painter, what the head of the Church consults, a simple layman may also consult. Know you the year, day, and hour of your nativity?"

Astrology was so common at this period, that the question could not surprise Titian, for it was then customary, at the birth of a child, to note with the greatest accuracy not merely the day and hour, but the very minute when its human existence commenced. Titian, therefore, had little difficulty in giving Agrippa the information he sought.

"Aye—this is well. From this I shall myself draw your horoscope. Let us now see what Chiromancy may tell us. Put forth your hands."

Agrippa looked long and earnestly upon each open palm, carefully examined all their lines,

and held up each hand, in different positions, so as to bring the full light upon them. "I perceive," said he, "that the series of linear characters and signs is more marked upon your right than your left hand, which tells me that you were born under a masculine planet—Jupiter, Mars, Saturn, or the Sun—and that such is lord of your geniture. Here is the cardiaca or line of life, broad, long, deep, and straight—a certain augury of long life and few diseases.* The line of the cephalica, also, with few intersections, here makes a triangle with the epatica and the line of life; which trine denotes quick intellect and rich imagination;—it also bears that forked mark, tending towards the mensa or part of fortune, which we always note as giving the assurance of honour and wealth, won by the exercise of one of the plastic arts. Here is the hill of Venus

* Writers upon Chiromancy quote, in support of their science, the passage in Proverbs (c. 3, v. 16)—"Length of days is in her right hand."—Cornelius Agrippa's Occult Philosophy expressly recognizes divination by Chiromancy.

—for the different lines of the palm are named after the planetary influences that rule them—with the line deep, but broken, shewing love with its reward tardy or uncertain. The Via Solis is equally drawn—and this denotes the favour of princes.* Signore Tiziano, if there be truth in Chiromancy, it is certain that honours and success must crown your labours."

"If my course be only half as fortunate as you promise, Signore Carloni," replied Titian, gaily, "I shall be abundantly satisfied. Let me have opportunity to work out my own

* The astrologers frequently resorted to Chiromancy, and it would appear, from various treatises upon it, illustrated with maps of the hand, that it had, in a measure, reached the dignity of a science! The most curious of these treatises is a thin quarto, "by Richard Sanders, Student in the Divine and Celestial Sciences," published in London in 1653, dedicated to Elias Ashmole, and prefaced by recommendations in prose and verse, by William Lilly and others. It is entitled "*Physiognomie, and Chiromancie. Metoposcopie, the symmetrical proportions and signal moles of the Body; with their Natural-predictive significations. The subjects of Dreams; Divinative, Steganographical, and Lullian Sciences —whereunto is added the Art of Memorie.*" The principal part of this curious work is occupied with Chiromancy.

way to honourable fame, and I shall not regard what the stars say, though they broke from their high places, to command the fortunes you predict."

"Now, by the bright stars which burn around the Throne, you are incredulous! Well, you may think this Chiromancy an idle thing —you may discredit the auguries which the stars can shew—but, if you *have* the courage to dare the trial, come with me, on the third night from this, to him of whom we spoke, the Astrologer of St. Marks, and read the Past and the Future in his Magic Mirror.— Nay, if your courage be not equal to the possibility of peril, remain with your curiosity unsatisfied!"

The taunt effected what argument might have vainly attempted, and Titian agreed to meet Agrippa, on the third night from that, by the column of San Theodore in the Piazzetta.— It was now far in the night, and they immediately separated.

CHAPTER X.

ASTROLOGY.

Make friendship with the stars!

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

And if this be the science of the stars,
I, too, with glad and zealous industry,
Will learn acquaintance with the cheerful faith.
It is a gentle and affectionate thought,
That in immeasurable heights above us,
At our first birth, the wreath of love was woven,
With sparkling stars for flowers.

COLERIDGE.

"THE six follies of Science," as they are called by the elder D'Israeli, were the quadrature of the circle, the multiple of the cube, perpetual motion, magic, the philosopher's stone, and judicial astrology:—the three first

continue to task the ingenuity of mankind; the three last, which long exercised a great influence upon the human mind, deluding even the wisest, have lost their charm. The pen is the only magician of these latter days; it is Enterprise that now changes brass into gold—and the only stars that influence us are the bright eyes of the beloved!

It was a poetical fancy which suggested that over the life of each mortal preside a good and evil intelligence, between whom is waged a perpetual battle for the mastery. Once crediting this, men became desirous to know the nature of these Spirits—to ascertain, by the aspect and position of the stars at each nativity, whether the good or evil genius would predominate through life. Hence came the philosophic study of Astrology, which naturally gave rise, in time, to the desire of seeing and communing with the spirits who protect us. The Middle Ages had no dream more splendid than that of Theurgical Magic, which, disclaiming converse with evil spirits, simply

invoked communion with the celestial intelligences, which ever strive with the demons of ill, and lead the soul to high and holy aspirations.

Judicial astrology was often connected with this lofty study, and both numbered eminent ecclesiastics, ripe scholars, and persons of high rank among their professors. Astrology commenced earlier and has continued later than magic, and, indeed, has many believers in England to this day. Attributing casual influences to the stars, it must chiefly have been conjectural, but its followers did not lack plausible pleas in its favour, To them, the heavens were as a mighty volume, in which the Creator had written the history of the universe, and where, (if he only knew how!) every man might see, not only the coming transactions of the time, but the future course of the native's life. They said that this science had originated with the early watchers of the stars, who had discovered Astronomy—that, with a clear sky favouring their celestial stu-

dies, the Chaldeans, tracing the courses and periods of the heavenly bodies, had observed the constant and invariable relation or analogy between them and the things of earth—that they reduced their observations into a system, which, by knowing the predominant heavenly influences at the time of any man's birth, could read his future fortunes with some probability. Thus, attributing to each of the seven planets, certain qualities and powers, and by ascertaining the conjunction and opposition of these planets at the natal hour, they drew conclusions, by settled rule, which gave them materials for a general prediction. Vague in its revealings, the Art was practised, believed, and honoured. While the magician was persecuted, and the alchemist secluded, (as if his patrons were ashamed of employing him), the astrologer was

> Welcome and caressed,
> High placed in courts a welcome guest.

Many who thus practised the art were earnest

and enthusiastic in their belief of the astral influences; but many prostituted it for lucre, professing a belief they did not hold, and a knowledge they did not possess. But it is difficult to determine when Credulity ceased and Craft commenced.

There was scarcely a Court in Europe to which, secretly or openly, an Astrologer was not attached. But it was observed that little good came from the foreknowledge of events. Either fatality was induced, and the predicted fate submitted to as a thing not to be resisted, or the prophecy wrought its own fulfilment. Thus, long before any danger was threatened, the Moors anticipated the overthrow of their empire in Spain, because the astrologers who were appointed to take the horoscope of Boabdil, the last King of Granada, predicted the calamities of his reign—whence he was called "El Zogoybi," or the Unlucky. One of the astrologers of the middle ages was taunted, on the scaffold, with not having foreseen his own fate. "Thrice was my horoscope drawn,"

said the poor man, "thrice was it foretold me that I should be exalted above my fellows—and, lo, here is the sad fulfilment." Shakspeare showed his usual judgment, when, making Macbeth

> Doubt the equivocation of the fiend
> That lies like truth,

he denounced the Wierd Sisters as

> Juggling fiends
> That palter with us in a double sense;
> That keep the word of promise to our ear,
> And break it to our hope.

As we are not writing an essay upon Astrology, we have said enough, perhaps, to indicate the general belief the science obtained in and after the middle ages. At Venice, in the Sestiere or quarter of St. Mark, was an astrologer who obtained a considerable livelihood by the exercise of his art. The Seigniory found him so useful as a spy, that he was permitted to work out his own purposes, while he was devoted to their interest, and many an un-

guarded word which his visitors let drop before him, speedily became known, through Esteban's intervention, to the Council of Three, the actual, secret, and irresponsible executive of Venice, for the power of the Doge was so cramped as to make him little more than an ostensible portion of the state pageantry.

The old man, known as "the Astrologer of St. Mark's," was not unlearned; but when he had tried to live by letters, in Seville, he was accused of heresy, and, quitting Spain with the utmost speed, now found it no difficult matter, credulity being ever rife in Italy, to live by reading the stars—or saying that he read them. Agrippa had visited this man, and it was at their first interview that Esteban hazarded the prediction that he should die in an hospital—which strangely coincided, notwithstanding his disbelief in the astrologer's knowledge, with what, while he was yet a child, Martius Galeotti had foretold as his fate.

On the night after Agrippa had heard Titian's story, he again visited the astrologer.

This worthy, true to his vocation of espionage, endeavoured to obtain from him sufficient data, upon which to ground a report or accusation for the Three. Accordingly, after the usual salutations and while they were talking about some indifferent subject, he suddenly said: "The Signore is a German, I think?"—But he had to deal with one not less subtle than himself and much more cautious. Agrippa inquired if it mattered whence he came?—"No," said Esteban, "certainly not, if the Signore should have wish or cause to conceal it. But the Senate rarely allow strangers to abide in Venice without knowing whence they come and who they are."

"Old man," said Agrippa, sternly fixing his eye upon Esteban, "this is well, if you be a spy for the Senate, instead of the professor of an art which demands not alone human knowledge, but honourable action guided by religious principle. Do you think that, coiled up like a serpent in your den, you can see, and remain unseen—know, and be unknown—

question, and evade inquiry? Tell me, Signore Esteban, who was it that attended the French King, Charles, in that which was his late illness, and—doubtless by mistake—administered a medicine, ordered by no leech, which hurried him to his grave with his many sins unrepented? And yet, if it were a simple mistake, Charles' successor would scarcely have given payment for the deed. Who was it, Signore, that, flying from the Court of France, when the scaffold awaited him for many heavy crimes, took refuge beneath the Emperor Maximilian's protection, and, charlatan as he was and is, was detected in the vanity of his vain-glorious professions, by the Emperor's youngest secretary, then little more than a boy?—Who was it that finally sought refuge in Rome, and has thence come hither as the spy of Pope Julius upon the Seigniory, and would betray him, in turn, if he had left any thing in his power? And *thou*, known to me in all thy changes of fortune, place, name, character, and fraud—*thou*, traitor to thy country

and thy God—*thou* would'st steal into *my* secrets, that thou might'st sell them to the Seigniory! It needs but one word from these lips, and thine are closed for ever—one motion of this hand to point out the proofs of thy treachery, and the Three would send thy body to feed the fishes in the canal Orfano."

"I had to do it or starve," faltered the old man. "It was necessary that I should live."

"I see no necessity for that."

"Mercy, mercy!" groaned the Astrologer, as he quailed beneath the bitter words and contemptuous glance of Agrippa.

"What mercy would'st thou ever shew?—Yet will I try—not trust thee. I *know* thee, old man, and this knowledge binds thee mine, while love of life remains in thy heart, stronger, if possible, than love of lucre."

"Command me as you please, Signore," exclaimed Esteban, casting himself at Agrippa's feet. "It is yours to will and mine to obey!"

What further passed between them need not here be declared, as we have only to do with

the results. It was evident that Agrippa was well acquainted with certain transactions which the Astrologer had no desire should be known to the Council of Three, and with this knowledge might calculate upon obedience to his behests. Making certain arrangements with him, with the assurance that he would repeat his visit on the following night to see how his bidding was executed, he quitted the house, leaving the disconcerted Astrologer to console himself as he best could under his detection, and wonder how it had been made.

Agrippa now proceeded to the Campanile, as a place sufficiently solitary, even in the midst of crowds, where he might meditate without interruption upon the best method of executing the plan for which he had commanded the co-operation of Esteban. As usual, the Campanile was deserted, and, leaning over the balustrades of the mid-gallery, he amused himself, for a little, in watching the moving mass of heads beneath, while the murmur of their voices came up in gusts, as the wind fitfully

lifted it up, ever and anon. But he soon grew wearied of this, the crowd gradually diminished, and the hum of their mirth grew less and less, until, at length, there were but a few homeless stragglers wandering in the deserted Piazzetta. The silence and the beauty of the hour shed their influence upon his spirit, for

Night looked on him with her starry eyes.

As he gazed upon the shining train, his thoughts involuntarily clothed themselves in spoken words—"Aye," said he, "ye shine in your courses, bright as the heart's young hopes, distant as their fulfilment. Since Time began, ye have watched the changeful world—yourselves unchanged. Still ye keep the immutable aspects, which—since first the early Chaldeans read your lore, until now, when with more imperfect vision of the mind, Sages would learn it—gleamed in beauty and in brightness over this lower sphere. Surely, in the olden time, the wise have communed with the intelligences which rule ye. Surely, to

some are ye yet familiar—smiling on them as smiles a mother on her children whom she loves. For some, even yet, the page of heaven is legible, covered as it is with records of the future time—mysterious legends of unutterable things! Beautiful—how beautiful yon blue arch gemmed with such sublimities. Oh, if a child of earth may know your wonders and yet live—dimly reading them, for this mortal sight is dull—aid me, now when I would inquire whether the cloud which casts its shadow on the Gifted shall continue or dissolve. Answer me, burning stars of heaven—answer me from your chrystal thrones!"

As he spoke, a dark cloud, which had veiled the face of the moon, passed on, changing into a bright golden gleam which made a long track in the sky, and leaving the planet in its fullest brightness.

"I see, oh mistress of the heavens! Thou, whom the stars answer and the elements serve —at whose nod the lightnings breathe forth, and all things fructify—thou, who wanderest

silent in the night and comest to us nearest of all the starry powers—thou, whose angel is Gabriel and whose spirit is Hasmodai—thou, who receivest the heavenly influences of all the stars and pourest them forth upon the earth—lo! thou hast given a sign which I read as in a glass, darkly."—He turned to the four quarters of the heavens, each time uttering some words in a strange dialect, and concluding with a prayer. He had scarcely done, when one of the stars suddenly shot across the sky, and his eye traced its progress afar by a long line of light. The portent—for such he considered it—appeared to satisfy him, for as he slowly descended from the tower, he said, "Aye, out of the gloom will come the glory. I shall cast his horoscope to-night, for the influences seem strangely in his favour."

Gentle reader!—dost thou shake thy glossy curls, and pout thy pretty lips, as, having thus far accompanied us, thou dost say it is impossible that Agrippa *could* have seriously spoken what we report he did speak? We would not

tax thy patience or dim thy beautiful eyes —the stars are less bright to him who loves thee !—with wearisome pouring over that bulky quarto of black letter which contains Agrippa's Three Books of Occult Philosophy, but, when next thou would'st impose a task upon him who lives but in thy smile and loves thy very caprices, ask *him* to examine that volume for thee. He will report to thee that Agrippa wrote it in his youth, retracted it in later years, and republished it, after that retractation, with amendments and additions—he will tell thee, that this looking for portents is in accordance with the spirit and letter of that work—and in the thirty-second and fifty-ninth chapters of the second book, he will find a very profitable exposition of the magical powers of the moon and her influences upon the superior and inferior intelligences of the heavens; naturally accounted for by the delectable assurance that, (not eschewing polygamy) she "is made as it were the wife of all the stars," and governs, therefore, it may be presumed, by vir-

tue of the prerogative of her sex!—Such, gentlest reader, he may tell thee, should he read the volume:—but, if he *does*, eschew his suit from that hour, for dull must be the heart, which, while the magic of thy smile and the charm of thy beauty are before it, could turn from them, even at thy command, to *any* volume. In such a case, Beautiful! is not disobedience something of a virtue? Try the question, we entreat thee, in the *Cour d'Amour!*

CHAPTER XI.

GLANCES AT THE FUTURE.

Like the Chaldeans, he could read the stars.
BYRON.

TITIAN and Agrippa met at the appointed time and place. The protracted struggle that the former had made against disheartening difficulties, shows that he was not deficient in strength of mind, and yet, though he did not anticipate that his visit to the Astrologer of St. Mark's, would involve him in personal peril, he had past the three days since he last saw Agrippa, in mental excitement of no ordinary kind. His religious feelings, which were strong and sincere, although he did not phara-

saically parade them — were opposed to any attempt at raising the veil of futurity; but the anxious curiosity to pierce into what is hidden, which more or less prevails in all hearts, and the apprehension that if he failed in his engagement to meet Carloni, it might be considered as induced by want of courage, conquered all hesitation, and induced him to keep his promise, and visit the prophetic seer, with a resolution to believe no more than his reason would sanction. Alas, for the bounded vision of the mind! The very determination to test the ability of the Astrologer, was akin to belief in his power.

"Here," said Agrippa, as they passed up and down a retired part of the Piazza, "I have cast your nativity, and you may keep this interpretation by you, to judge, not only by what you may learn to-night, but by the events of future years, as they are evolved from the abyss of Time, whether there be truth in the conclusions I have arrived at. I erected a theme for the precise place and moment of

your birth, by which I ascertained the exact position of the planets in the Heavens, at that period. I found that Venus, with a mighty and benignant power, was then in her exaltation—that Mercury was in the ascendant, the part of fortune rising near the Scorpion's head, and that these two planets were received into trine with Jupiter. Here, then, are the best auspices :—the royal Jupiter advances to dignity, Mercury rules the liberal arts, and Venus leads to prosperous marriage. When all of these are in trine—a rare conjunction !—it denotes not only success in all the native attempts, but long life. In addition, your ruling planet, Venus, being quadrate with Saturn and Mars, can also see that on the day you attain the age of twenty-seven, this conjunction will effect a position, as regards the practice of your Art, which it rests with your own ability to convert into prosperous fortune."

Titian smiled as he received the scroll of his nativity.

" I shall not have long to wait for the fulfil-

ment, Signore, for in a week, from this day, I shall have reached the years you mention."

"There is a power in numbers," said Agrippa, "which you know not of—for time consists of numbers, as does all motion and action, and whatever is subject to time and motion. And there is harmony in numbers, which philosophy alone can understand. The number twenty-seven, is especially a worthy one, for it is the multiple of nine, and the multiple of three—an odd number in a treble sense, and such are fortunate in nativity.* Three is a number holy and uncompounded—even perfection. For there are three persons in the Godhead, and three things—beginning, middle, and ending—in all spiritual and corporeal things. Three is the measure of time—past, present, and future. Three is magnitude—line, superfices, and body. All har-

* Shakspeare, who seems to have known all arts, alludes to this when he says,—

They say there is divinity
In odd numbers, either nativity, chance, or death.

mony, is three — diapason, hemiolin, and diatessaron. Three are the rulers of the world —Oromasis, Mitris, and Aramines, that is, of God, the mind, and the spirit. In intelligences, there are three Hierarchies of angelic spirits. Three powers are there of intellectual creatures —memory, mind, and wit. There are three theological virtues—faith, hope, and charity: three times—of nature, law, and grace. There are three quarternions of celestial signs; three heads and three faces to each sign; three lords of each triplicity. Among the planets there are three fortunes; amongst the Goddesses three Graces. The weird women of Destiny, the Judges of Mythology, and the avenging Furies are three. In the ordinances of ancient religion, and the ceremonials of ancient magic, the worship and the spell were alike incomplete unless they were thrice gone through. This mystic THREE is the key-stone of our own holiest belief.

"Nor less is the power of the number

NINE. So many are the moveable spheres, according to which sich is the number of the Muses. There are nine orders of the blessed Angels—Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominations, Powers, Virtues, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, which the prophet, Ezekial, has figured out by nine stones :—the Saphyr, Emerald, Carbuncle, Beryl, Onyx, Chrysolite, Jaspar, Topaz, and Sardis. Nine is the climacterical year, some great change occurring as that revolves. But these are mysteries which the uninstructed mind cannot understand. Content you to know, Signore, that unless the Art itself be wrong—which cannot be—or you erred as to the exact time of your birth, the horoscope you hold is true."

"But," observed Titian, who had listened with curiosity to Agrippa's declamation in favour of numbers, "if Astrology, as you say, can read the issue of events, cannot you tell me, not as in an enigma, but in plain words, what

are the circumstances which will affect my fate in a few days, and whether their issue will be favourable?"

"You make merry, fair sir; but it is because you mistake the Art and its powers. We cannot tell by the stars, what may be the issue of particular events, for that, to a great extent, must rest with the native. We shew what certain causes may produce—what they probably will produce—but the operation must mainly depend upon individual free will. The Art pretends to Knowledge, not to Omniscience. This is not the first time it has been consulted concerning the fortunes of an artist. When Michael Angelo was yet a child, his father, the Count de Canoses, had his horoscope cast by one whose knowledge was indisputable. What was written on the scroll that the Astrologer handed in? The conclusion that the boy's genius and skill would produce wonderful and stupendous works of art.* Has not the

* This anecdote is told, and the horoscope given, in Vasarie's Life of Michael-Angelo Buonarotti.

event justified the prediction? While a mere youth, he attracted the notice of Lorenzo de Medicis, for whom he executed sculpture rivalling the treasures of antiquity, and he is even now at Rome, on the special invitation of the Pope, to paint the interior of the Sistine Chapel. When he dies, the triple wreaths of Sculpture, Painting, and Architecture, may be placed upon his tomb, linked with the flowers of Poetry, for he has succeeded in them all."

It was now nearly midnight, and they proceeded to Esteban's dwelling. At the portal, taking leave of his companion, Agrippa said—

"You must be unaccompanied now, for what you may be permitted to see can only be beheld by him to whom it especially relates. Nor, anxious as I am to know how my predictions may agree with those of Il Maestro, may I inquire, when we again meet, what you learn to-night. The utmost I can hear from you is the general tendency—if, indeed, you can remember more. I shall see you to-morrow

night in the Campanile, and bid you farewell until then."

A Moorish page, of diminutive size and most hideous aspect, fancifully arrayed in his country's garb, mingled with a variety of European ornaments, received Titian at the Astrologer's door, and appeared to have been awaiting his arrival. Before Titian had time to utter a word, the negro, grinning a frightful smile, put his finger to his lips as if to prohibit speech, and then beckoned him to follow. Passing through the long and gloomy hall, they ascended the first flight of stairs, the negro still leading the way, while Titian was in utter darkness, save the slender light of his guide's solitary taper, and found it difficult to keep up, through passages with which he was unacquainted, with the swift motions of his dusky conductor. They paused, and the negro, throwing open a door, motioned Titian to enter. He had no sooner done so, than the door suddenly closed, with a loud noise that

woke a long echo in that stilly place, and Titian found himself in utter darkness, and alone.

After a delay of some minutes, during which he vainly endeavoured to find the entrance which had admitted him, he was startled by a strain of music, distant but distinct, and of exquisite sweetness. As it fitfully sounded, now gushing forth in a full swell and then melting into touching softness, it seemed like the far-off melody which he had sometimes heard, at eve, wind-wafted across the glassy expanse of the Lagunes, when the gondoliers, touched by the poetry of the hour and place, became emulous in song. Titian admired the skill of the unseen musician, for albeit accustomed to the concord of sweet sounds, he thought that he had never heard richer harmonies than these:—they calmed his ruffled spirit and soothed him into a voluptuous repose and quietude, in which his mind became re-assured, although subdued. Perhaps this was the effect intended to be produced.

The music died away, and, almost before its delicate echo was ended, folding doors opened, immediately before him, through which beamed such a flood of light as dazzled him with its exceeding brilliancy. At the same moment, the ill-favoured African re-appeared by his side, and, with the same unbroken silence, motioned him to advance. He entered the room whence came the light, but had no time to observe, so suddenly was it done, whither his sable and silent attendant had retired. Nor had he leisure to think upon it, for his attention was won by a scene as unique as it was brilliant.

Fancy a lofty apartment, supplied with furniture rich even to magnificence—beautiful tapestry—rich tables of foreign woods, curiously tesselated and inlaid with gold, silver, and mother-of-pearl—carved pedestals with marble slabs, on which were placed rarities of art and nature—seats of all fashions, from the throne-like chairs of Spain, to the luxuriant sofas of Persia—glorious paintings, in beauti-

ful frames—statues and statue-like casts upon which the light fell through screens of coloured silk, throwing delicate and warm hues upon the marble—Turkish carpets, so elastic and rich that the foot rather sprung from than sunk upon them—antique scrolls, gorgeously illuminated by the labours of the religious in the middle ages, ere Printing had been created to multiply thought—volumes of classic lore from the Venetian press of Manutius Aldus—and mirrors, from Murano, in which were reflected the rich contents of that room, by the light, which, with softening lustre, streamed from a chandelier (of that beautiful glass which had been deemed no unworthy gift for Royalty) pendant from the gilded and painted ceiling. Fancy such an apartment, of immense extent and loftiness, as in a blaze from the light which the frequent mirrors multiplied, and you may have some idea of that in which Titian found himself on suddenly emerging from the darkness which had previously surrounded him. He saw no person in the room, and, after some

pause of expectancy, arose from his seat, more closely to examine the paintings by which his attention had been immediately attracted. Each appeared a *chef-d'œuvre*, and he lingered long over them. There was yet one to be viewed, —it was almost hidden by the shadow of some crimson drapery, and had thus escaped his notice at first. He drew near to it,—nearer—yet more near, and then a jet of light shot out, like a tongue of flame, from a projection above the picture, while, at the same moment, the other lights grew dim. Titian saw, to his astonishment, that it was one of his own portraits of the Queen of Cyprus!—It was evident that the Astrologer, whoever he was, had a taste for Art, and it was equally clear that the possessor of so many and such valuable specimens could not be a needy man. Titian turned from his own work, once more to gaze upon the apartment, and, as he advanced, the central lights again gleamed with renewed brightness, while that by which he had been examining

the portrait in the recess was as suddenly extinguished.

And now, once more, that same music, which had sounded so sweetly before, swelled out again with its alternations of softest and richest tones—as from the very springs of melody, guarded by the bright and snowy-pinioned Watchers, making the harmony in which move the spheres. Beautiful exceedingly were the mournful notes, faintly and fitfully breaking the deep silence which, as if it were an atmosphere, had filled that mysterious and splendid saloon. Wonder and delight kept Titian a listener—yet were the lovely sounds caused by so simple an accessory of natural magic as a harp over whose strings the viewless spirit of the air had passed her tuneful fingers!

He sank into a chair, his head declined and covered by his hands, listening to these charmed sounds, and unwilling to lose one note of music so very exquisite. And now he was quite subdued—for Music holds the key of Memory—and his thoughts were with the distant and the

dear. Again the music ceased, and he raised his head. Within the few minutes of his abstraction, what a change had taken place! The sumptuous tables—the books—the manuscripts—the statues—the paintings—the mirrors—all that he had seen and admired but a little time before, all had vanished! The room itself, apparently contracted in size, was now furnished in a style of severe simplicity. In the centre stood a small table of white marble, behind which sate a venerable man, whose long white beard descended low upon his breast.

The Astrologer of St. Mark's—for Titian conceived that such was the personage whose sudden appearance startled him—sate motionless as a statue, and might have passed for a waxen image, but that his eyes did *not* want speculation. His countenance was unmoved, but his eyes seemed to smile (if I may use the words) when, smitten with surprise at the change in a few minutes, Titian involuntarily raised his hand and made the sign of the cross

upon his breast, as if he believed himself in the bodily pretence of some evil spirit and wished to Exorcise it—that the momentary impulse was quickly ended, and, resolved to maintain the semblance as well as the reality of an undaunted mind, he returned the old man's fixed glance by a look quite as resolute. Thus were the two, face to face, until the Astrologer, as if satisfied with his scrutiny, waved the Painter to a seat, and in a voice, low but deep and very distinct, inquired whence and why he had sought him?

CHAPTER XII.

THE MAGIC MIRROR.

What conjuration and what mighty magic.
SHAKSPEARE.

"NAY, Signore," replied Titian, "I have come hither to question, not to answer. If your art does not instruct you *why* I am here, it can be of little value. It may throw dust into the eyes of children, but cannot deceive the full-grown mind of man."

The Astrologer answered, in a mild and forbearing tone, "My son, if your heart fail you, depart; but unless you had a secret belief in the art of which I am an unworthy servitor, you had not now been beneath this roof.

What object can I have in deceiving you? I do not barter my knowledge with you for gold. Judge, from what you have seen here, whether I am not in a capacity rather to give than receive. But it is ever thus with Youth; anxious to raise the veil from mysteries which were as well left unknown—troubling the waters of life in the hope of bringing up that pearl of mighty price, enjoyment—wooing danger and on fire for fame—flushed with the heart's fever, Hope, and so confident in the exulting consciousness of early manhood as to forget that many years, and a furrowed brow, and white hairs demand, at the least, the lip-reverence of courteous words."

"You will pardon a hasty expression," said Titian, anxious to atone for his want of respect. "You will—"

"My son," said the old man, "the offence that is frankly admitted, is that moment atoned for. No more, I pray you. And now, Tiziano Vecelli, again I ask—what would you with him whom men call the Astrologer of St. Mark's?

Nay, do not start, nor look surprised. There is no miracle in telling your name. The gondolier whose boat will bear you home can fathom a mystery such as that! A third time I ask, what would you with me?"

"Frankly then—it was told me that, with your aid, the Future might be read, and I would crave that aid, if it may be exercised without offence to the ordinances of our holy faith."

"You shall judge for yourself, Signore, whether it be possible, and for any offence against our mother, the Church, if you never commit a heavier sin than asking an old man to read the stars, you will be no more guilty than the Holy Pontiff himself, and many Princes who call themselves Christian. Is your heart firm? Give me your hand."

Titian advanced to the table, and the venerable man laid his fingers across the wrist, to mark the pulsation. "Aye," said he, "it beats temperately as an infant's. Now for our

work, for the hour is late, and there is much to be done. Resume your seat, be silent, and be bold."

After a brief interval, during which Titian remarked that the hideous negro who had piloted him during the early part of the night was again in the room, the Astrologer assumed a change of his outward apparel. Upon his head he put a high conical cap, and in place of the long dark robe he had previously worn, put on a sort of flowing alb, confined round the waist by a girdle upon which were embroidered signs that looked like the characters of some strange language. Round his neck he placed a massy gold chain, from which hung a sort of gorget rich with brilliant gems, and terminating in a small cross. Before him a large volume was now laid, and a long wand of ebony was put into his hand by the negro, who then lighted a censer, which he swung to and fro as he slowly walked around the room, which was speedily filled with the rich heavy

odours, and dense clouds proceeding from the incense. This done, the dusky acolyte retired.

Titian could perceive that while the incense-burning was performing, the old man had knelt down and appeared deeply occupied in prayer. When he arose, instead of resuming his seat, he came in front of the table and repeating his motion that Titian should preserve silence, waved his wand. Suddenly the apartment was involved in complete darkness. In a few minutes, a curtain at the extremity of the room was slowly withdrawn, and the appearance thus and then discovered was sufficient to challenge admiration.

At the end of the room, which was now visible, a semi-circle appeared to be formed by seven beautiful statues of colossal size. On the head of each was a transparent star, from which flashed out light sufficient to illuminate not only the statue which bore it, but a considerable space around. These were the seven Planetary statues, and the colour of each star varied,

according to the dignity of the planet which it represented. Thus, in the middle stood Jupiter, with a severe brow, and his star was sapphire. On his right was the statue of the Sun, and that of the Moon upon his left: the first, crowned with a golden-hued star, like the bright topaz, and the other with a soft light like the pearl pale and silvery, as when she wooed young Endymion in the forest shades of Latmos. Respectively next them, were statues representing Saturn, with a rugged aspect, crowned by a pale star like the diamond; and Mars, with a ruddy flame of ruby upon his crest. The semi-circle on the right was completed by Mercury, with the purple beauty of the amethyst beaming from his forehead, and on the left was Venus, with a star of the delicate green of her own gem, the emerald. And by these lights, proper to each planet, the Virtues were severally represented. Thus, the topaz of Sol manifested Faith; the pearl of Luna, Innocence; the diamond of Saturn, Prudence; the ruby of Mars, Valour; the

amethyst of Mercury, Temperance; the emerald of Venus, Love; and the sapphire of Jupiter, Loyalty. Upon each pedestal was graven, in Greek letters, the name of the planet whose statue it supported. Upon every statue appeared the semblance of a golden crown, and there was a sceptre in the right hand of each. As the many-hued lights gleamed upon the marmoreal features of these sculptured representatives of the Seven Stars, it almost seemed—so life-like were their glorious aspects—as if they were instinct with soul, and waited but the summons to speak and act like the divinities of the olden time. While Titian gazed upon them, the feeling which arose—amounting almost to actual expectation—was that if they should descend from the elevations they occupied, and assume life and power, he would scarcely be astonished. So great was the terrible reality of these majestic images.

"You see, my son," said the Astrologer, breaking silence, "you see the images of the Seven Planets which rule the destinies of the

eighth—that world which we inhabit. Each has its proper power, each its peculiar attribute. Even the gem-like radiance streaming from each brow has its particular signification. To-night, evoking other powers to aid, we shall call up the Spirits of the Elements, and ask them to unfold, as far as may be permitted, the courses of your future fortune. Let us now, in secret prayer, invoke strength of heart for the trial we shall dare, and let us ask, if needs be, pardon from the Highest, should we err in what we do."

He again knelt down, and Titian, awed by his venerable aspect—his gentle yet commanding tones—and an indescribable feeling which the strangeness and solemnity of the scene excited, also committed his thoughts to prayer. When he had concluded, he stood prepared to bear his part in the coming mysteries, with his mood materially changed from that petulance which had prompted his first address to the Astrologer. He was awed by the *genius loci*.

The old man now described a circle with his wand, in the middle of the room, within which he took his stand. Titian he placed by his side, and each mystic figure traced upon the floor, within that circle, was proceeded and followed by what appeared to resemble a religious ceremony.

"The circle that I have drawn, and the figures I have traced, the eye cannot see—but you have beheld how far the charmed ring extends, and I desire you take heed, even as you value life, not to move beyond it unless I command you. Be silent, too, whatever you may see, for the first word from your lips, until all be finished, will not only dissolve, almost from your memory itself, all that my Art may bring up before you, but there is peril from the interruption of the spell—for the Spirits whose obedience I shall demand may not brook your interference. And now I again shall draw the circle—the third time completes the spell—but before I do so, take this ring and fix it in the space you will find reserved

for it by the statue of Jupiter—there, in the centre."

Titian took from his hand a ring, plainly set in gold. The stone, which had a dull metallic hue, resembled the Obsidian or Liparæan stone which Pliny speaks of as being used by the ancients for mirrors, and reflecting shadows instead of images. Its surface was smooth. He placed the ring in the tapestry, where there was a small slit to receive it, and, by the Astrologer's direction, put the stone outward. Returning to the circle, the Astrologer retraced its compass—drew fresh squares, crosses, and triangles within its limit—once more bent upon his knees, and, for the third and last time, passed his wand around the charmed circle within which they stood.

Then, kneeling on the floor and with his forehead bent down even to the ground, the old man (while his frame appeared shaken by strong excitement) in a low and musical tone chaunted the ;

INCANTATION.

Spirits of the earth and air,
Wondrous in the powers ye bear!
Spirits of the flame and wave—
Of the Dryad-haunted cave—
Of the valley and the mountain—
Of the desert and the fountain—
Of what has been and shall be—
Listen! for I summon ye,
And, with greater might, compel
Prompt obedience to my spell.

Spirits! wheresoever sent,
From whatever Element—
Whether sky, or wave, or earth
Claim your varied woe or mirth—
Speed, whate'er your missions are,
To this mortal's natal star;
Read his lore of life, which lies
Graven on yon glorious skies,
And, bold Spirits! quick return,
Like Thoughts to Memory's golden urn.

By the spells this hand hath cast,
Each one stronger than the last—
By the marvels Mind hath brought,
From the boundless world of Thought—
By the magic shapes which Art
Steals from Nature's every part—

By the loveliness which Soul
Breathes upon the glorious whole—
I call upon you, with a sway
Which I dare ye disobey!

From the sparry caves where Night
Hides her from the glance of Light—
From the Ocean-depths where roam
Horrid forms, mid surge and foam—
From the palaces on high,
Cloud-reared in the azure sky—
From the dreary Abyss beneath,
Where e'en Hope is doomed to Death—
Ye I summon, Spirits, all
—— Answer to the master-call!

Quickly gather!—quicker still!
Like the mists upon the hill
When the radiant day hath died
And dusky twilight reigns in pride.
Quickly gather!—yet unseen,
For each bears an awful mien,
Nor unwonted vision dare
View ye in the forms ye wear.
Answer this enforcing spell,
But be still invisible.

All around your influence cast:
Raise the curtain of the PAST
From the dust of buried years,
Youth's and manhood's hopes and fears:—

From the weary pains of heart
Which have wrung this child of Art,—
From the strivings after fame,
Which have filled his soul with flame,
Raise times awful, awful pall,
Shew him each, and shew him all!

As the Astrologer proceeded with this incantation, his voice—faint and low, at first, as the murmur of the night-wind, when it lingers among, and sorrowfully kisses the leafy trees, ere it speeds to join the tempest on the sea—gradually assumed depth and power, until, at last, its clear deep tones sounded like an organ-swell, and the room was filled, as it were, with its volume.

As the chaunt proceeded, Titian heard a sound like, he thought, that of many rapid pinions cleaving the air, and, in the excitement of the moment, almost fancied that now were assembling the Intelligences whom the astrologer was summoning from their distant royalties. As the last words were uttered, the various lights, from the star-crowned statues, were suddenly and simultaneously ex-

tinguished, and the room would have been utterly dark, save for a brightness which he now perceived to emanate from the ring that he had fixed in the distant tapestry. As he kept his eyes steadily upon this light, he thought the ring expanded gradually. He marked it yet more attentively, and became assured that it did. In a short time, so visible was this expansion, that the stone, or metallic substitute, had the appearance of a moderately large mirror. He had the utmost difficulty, in his wonder at this phenomenon, in restraining himself from questioning the old man as to its cause—indeed, it was only by a strong effort that he repressed an exclamation of astonishment.

He saw that a mirror of antique form had replaced the ring—for he could not believe it possible for the stone to expand to such a size. A dim cloud covered the surface of the mirror—like a veil of gauze. The old man waved his wand, the cloud slowly cleared off, and, images appeared upon the glass—palpable

and distinct, as if they were the shadows of material things and beings!

Nor had Titian any difficulty in recognising the scene and the persons. His heart leaped up when he beheld the home of his infancy, and that first parting from his kindred, which had left its unfading memory in his mind. There was the pale mother who so often had kissed the soft cheek of him, her youngest born—there she sate, grave and tearful, with his little sketches on the table before her, so often viewed with pride and hope, henceforth to be doubly cherished as reminding her of the absent. There stood his grey-haired father, with a smiling countenance vainly endeavouring to hide the grief at heart. There, by his side, was his sister, with her dark eyes fixed upon his face, and her little hand clasped in his. There was the youth, his brother, apparently the least moved of all—and yet he was sorrowful at heart. There was the old attendant wiping away the tears she could not

restrain, for she had nursed and dearly loved the boy. There, too, he recognized an image which he knew for his own, in childhood—it seemed as if nearly twenty years had been rolled back, and that he was once again placed upon the hearth stone of his early home!—Form, feature, dress—place, time, and circumstance—all were the very same as the images traced by affection, and kept by memory, upon the red-leaved tablets of his heart!*

The old man waved his wand.—The figures passed away and the Mirror became dulled, but again this indistinctness cleared off, and lo! another scene, and other images. The appearance was ten years later than that which had already moved Titian's quick spirit. It shewed another phase of the painter's life—the aspiring child grown up into the gifted man. There was a magnificent hall, in which, surrounded by a galaxy of living beauty, sat a lady

* All this, and more than this, is now engraved upon the red-leaved tablets of my heart.—*Haywood.*

in the sombre attire of a widow, and with the aspect of a Queen. She, in her rare loveliness, shone among and beyond her beautiful companions, as shines the moon among, and beyond, the starry train of Heaven. The royal lady, thus exquisitely fair, appeared to be sitting to an artist for her portrait—he turned round, and Titian knew the semblance of himself. He remembered the palazzo, at Asola, where Catarina, the Queen of Cyprus, had sat to him, while her suite were grouped around: again he saw the rich adornments of the place, —again he seemed to hear the bursts of music which, ever and anon, came borne in on the zephyr's wings from the beautiful gardens;—again he seemed to inhale the fragrant odours from the orange groves and myrtle shades which had then delighted him—and, as he recognised the scene, was again struck with the remarkable fidelity, even to minute details, with which the Magic Mirror brought up the Past.

The Astrologer traced some more figures within the circle, and then resumed the incantation:

Swiftly as the winds, when roar
Tempests 'gainst the wave-struck shore,—
As the eager pulses rush
In the heat of Passion's flush—
As the eagle's upward flight
To the sunny fount of light—
As the barque before the breeze
Wreck'd-doom'd on the stormy seas,—
Come from Heaven, or come from hell,
Answering this commanding spell.

Yet again, and falter not!
From the FUTURE's shadowy lot
Raise the veil that darkly lies
O'er this mortal's anxious eyes.
Show the forms of coming things,—
Nobles—princes—poets—kings—
Whom his pencil shall pourtray,
With a truth to live for aye—
Genius—beauty—nature—all—
And obey this master-call!

Again Titian heard a sound as of fluttering wings, but as he bent forward to listen, his at-

tention was arrested by a look from the Astrologer.

The old man waved his wand, and each time he did so, some scene was exhibited in that Magic glass, in which the astonished Painter was the chief person—in which the glory of his art was victor—in which he saw and knew that his own renown was shadowed forth. The previous representations had brought the Past so vividly and truly before him that he could not doubt (however startling the scenes, or beyond the wildest dream of his ambition), that the Future thus revealed to him was equally true. He could judge, too, from the time that had elapsed between the first and the second *tableau;* from the appearance of the child of ten years, and the man of twenty —as well as from the changes his own person exhibited in the successive scenes, that there was an interval of ten years between each. Nine times that old man waved that wand of power. The transitions represented Titian graduating from childhood to extreme, but

vigorous old age—could the painter believe that his life was to extend to more than ninety years? Yet the Mirror indicated that it would.

As the phantasmagoria passed before him, each scene wore the aspect of reality. If he could give credence to the visions that he saw, what a bright and glorious career he was to run! But the triumphs thus exhibited were so many, the success so great, the glory so continuous, and the duration of life so long, that he scarcely dared believe the flattering hopes thus created. What forms of grace, what aspects of beauty passed before him! What a long array of nobles, princes, sovereigns, with whom *he*—a few hours ago, a despairing and disappointed man—appeared upon familiar terms! What images of loveliness and majesty grew into form beneath his pencil! What triumphs of art that pencil was seen to achieve, during the long life-time which the magic glass denoted! Could he believe the scenes which were thus brought before him, when one of them showed

the painter dropping his pencil on the floor, and a majestic form, with the Imperial Crown upon his head, stooping to pick it up, and presenting it to him with the grave grace that well became his princely bearing.*

Nine times the old man waved his wand, and nine phases of the Painter's life did the Magic Mirror show. For the tenth time he tried the charm. There came across the glass a few indistinct images—they rapidly passed by—then the cloud swept over and settled on the polished surface—and the Astrologer concluded the spell, in these words, chaunted, as before:

> It is done! away, away!
> Ere ye meet the dawning day.
> Upward—downward—onward—back,
> Each in his appointed track;

* The Emperor Charles V professed a great regard for Titian, and when he sat to him for his third portrait, exclaimed, "Thrice have I gained immortality from your hands." On one occasion, as he was sitting to Titian, the painter dropped his pencil, Charles picked it up and presented it to him, saying, "Titian is worthy of being served by Cæsar."—*Périn's Anecdotes of the House of Austria.*

On the wave, or on the wind,
'Till not one remain behind;
Sport with Berenice's hair
As it flutters in the air,
Or, 'neath Ocean's cresting foam,
Seek his own accustomed home.

Noble spirits! brave and bold
As your Genii-sires of old;
In this dark and awful hour
Yours is a terrific power—
In this mystery of night,
Yours is a commanding might.
—Ye have done my purpose well,
Answering to this magic spell:
From commune with this mortal clay
Depart, and speed—away, away!

For the last time, the same fluttering sound —a rush, as of a mighty wind—an odour, sweet, but overpowering. A curtain fell before the planetary statues and the Wizard's glass, and all again became involved in gloom, for a moment. Suddenly, the ill-featured Moor appeared, with his solitary taper, as before. Titian looked round for the Astrologer, that he might express his wonder and return his thanks —lo! the old man had disappeared. The

negro showed him to the outer portal of the palazzo, and there, hailing a passing gondola, Titian wended homeward, convinced that he indeed had seen a master-spirit, and beheld a vision of power!

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PAUSE BETWEEN OBSCURITY AND FAME.

Alas,
Despair and genius are too oft connected.
BYRON.

THE reader, whose curiosity has brought him thus far, may not be displeased to learn that we are about turning to the brighter page of Titian's fortune. Henceforth, we shall have to tell of high and continuous triumph—of the rise and progress of a renown greater than that won by the conqueror's sword. The fame of those who *think* may not always be as eminent as the fame of those who *act*, but still it is a lofty fame. And, in proportion to that re-

nown, is the desire to know how it was achieved, what were the trials that Genius had to sustain, what difficulties it had overcome — how the laurels were won and how worn.

The fame which is not of contemporary date may generally be taken as well merited— for "Time at last sets all things even," and is a just, if a severe arbiter. It is pleasant to follow the gifted in their progress from obscurity to fame—to trace the gradual development of their genius and their fortunes —to feel for their griefs and rejoice in their joy. The glaring lustre of a tropic sun is less delightful than the changefulness of one of our April days in which the luminary struggling through the clouds that veil him, breaks into brightness—and thus we love to think of the gifted. We have no sympathy for the hero with the mail of proof, the sword of sharpness, the cap of ubiquity, and the sandals of swiftness, whom the fairy legend of our childhood presented to us as unconquer-

able—for there is no merit, as there can be no difficulty, in his triumph. Thus do we think of men eminently and always distinguished. They seem as under a spell—and we almost look for their star in the heavens! If a man *find* the wheel of fortune to stand still for him, where is *his* merit? What is it but the accident of an accident? But praise and honour to those who, in spite of moral and material obstacles, make their way, and enjoy success the more for having striven for it. It is "the rapture of the strife" that commands attention and excites interest. *Adversity is the school for Genius, which, like Religion, seems to require persecution to prove its divine origin!*

For our own part, we confess that the difficulties which clouded the early part of Titian's career, give that picturesque beauty to his life with which unvaried success could never have invested it. If, in mature life, he was the favoured artist whom sovereigns loved to employ, in order (as the Emperor Charles

the Fifth said) that he might give them immortality—if he was the friend of princes, the equal of nobility, the companion of the learned, the praised by poets, the honoured by all nations, and the well-beloved of his own royal Venice, we may not forget that the first years of his artist-life were clouded by disappointment and embittered by distress. In the natural world, a succession of unbroken views fatigues the eye—so, in life, whatever is varied and picturesque delights us more than a monotony of unbroken prospects, however beautiful.

The meridian brightness of art in Italy was reserved for the opening of the sixteenth century, which beheld, in the fulness of fame, Luca Signorelli, the Bellini, Andrea Mantigna, Pietro Perugino, and Leonardo da Vinci—while, at the same time, was dawning the genius which has immortalized the names of Michael Angelo, Correggio, Giorgione, Titian, and Raphael. It was a glorious era alike for art and letters.

How Giorgione and Titian, at an early age, abandoned the manner and quitted the instruction of the Bellini, need not be repeated here. Giorgione, who was older than his rival, had also the advantage of possessing wealth, and in justice must be conceded to him—whatever, or how early were Titian's private essays and exercises in the manner of the Florentine school—the credit of having introduced a novel style, which every one could recognize as more true to nature than that heretofore practised in Venice, and which, sustained as it was by most brilliant execution, placed him at the head of the art, at once and triumphantly. Thus, while Titian was yet a student, Giorgione was already a distinguished and popular Painter.

Thrown upon the world, almost before he had reached the age of manhood—with no resources save in that art to which he had, from his childhood, constantly devoted himself, Titian had no ordinary difficulties to contend with. From the time that he quitted the

Bellini, he had resolved that no circumstances should induce him to tax the poverty of his father, or the comparative wealth of his uncle for assistance of any kind. If there was pride in this, it was that respectable pride which leads to independence. To adhere to this resolution was not always easy, nor, indeed, was it done without many privations. But there is a buoyant and sustaining elasticity in the spirit of youth which—Anteus-like—makes its bound from the earth when circumstance has felled it, and is "up and doing" when age would despairingly lie down and perish. Happy is it, that, with this sanguine temperament, Youth scarcely pauses to calculate the chances of success, but looks at the possible rather than the probable—while Age, made wary by experience, grows distrustful of its own energies, and is hesitating to act, while youth is midway in the attempt.

Perhaps it was well that Titian was thrown, thus early, upon the unaided resources of his

own mind. In art—in war—in philosophy —in science—and in letters, the most eminent success has frequently arisen where the means appeared very unequal to the end. In mechanics, it is certain that many very great discoveries have thus resulted from expedients adopted to make one thing supply the place of another. We doubt, whether, after a Painter has acquired the elements of his art, it may not be an advantage for him to be cast, early and unaided, into that world of Action where great difficulties often lead to great triumphs—where there is so much to be observed, so much of breathing life and beauty to be studied, so much of passion to be seen, so much for Genius to seize as his own and stamp immortal by a touch!

Courted and employed, Giorgione pursued an eminently brilliant career, while, through nine weary years of a continued struggle, the thick cloud of obscurity almost constantly enveloped Titian. Sometimes there came the presage of

a brighter day. Such was the patronage of Signore Barberigo. Few there are, bearing the name and executing the office of Patron, who sufficiently consider what great service they may render by words as well as deeds of kindness. For the sympathy such words indicate falls upon the quick sensibilities of the gifted and the sensitive, refreshingly as a shower upon the parched earth in summer—it renews the failing life of hope—it often serves to mature fruits that, but for its sunny smile, else would perish in the blossom. Thus, the friendship of Barberigo had often lightened, if it could not dissipate, the despondency of Titian. Wisely and truly has Allan Cunningham said "Those who befriend genius when it is struggling for distinction, befriend the world, and their names should be held in remembrance."

Wealthy, and with a taste for art and letters, (he was the friend of Manuzio Aldus) the Signore Antonio Barberigo possessed a

refined mind and gentle manners. None had a rarer grace in conferring a favour or doing a kindness, so as to appear obliged, even while much obliging. While Titian was studying under Bellino, his works had attracted the attention of Barberigo, who saw that the young artist had powers of no ordinary kind, and, as their acquaintance ripened, made opportunities of serving the Painter, whom he considered, indeed, in some degree as a *protégé* of his own; but, while he knew that worth often pines without encouragement, he also knew that genius is the sensitive Mimosa of the moral world. For that reason, he contented himself with the name of Titian's friend, and avoided the seeming of being his patron. Thus, with a consideration at once thoughtful and kind, he endeavoured to adapt himself to the feelings of the Painter, rendered jealous by the failure of his hopes. When he took Titian from his humble rooms in the Sperezia, and gave him more suitable apart-

ments near the church of the Miracoli, in the Sestier di Castello, he made it appear as if Titian were obliging him by occupying a dwelling for which he had been unable to procure a tenant. He gave employment to his pencil also—and the treasures which yet remained in Barberigo's ancestral home, shew how well the Painter executed them. It was the Signore Barberigo who had obtained the order from the Pregadi, that Titian should paint the portrait of the Queen of Cyprus. But, for some months previous to Titian's *rencontre* with Agrippa, Barberigo had been at Rome, on a mission of state to Pope Julius, and in his absence all went ill with the Painter, who preferred suffering many privations and much occasional distress to communicating the exigencies of his position to one whose kindness had so long and liberally befriended him.

Let it not be said that the self-consciousness of merit is its own "exceeding great reward." It is pleasant to know, in success, that you

have deserved your fortune, but—to use the emphatic words of Keats' — "There is no fiercer hell than the failure of a great object." Scarcely inferior is the agony which racks a noble mind, languishing for scope for action, and languishing in vain. The fettered spirit dashes itself against the bars that prison it, and disables its own wing without breaking the thraldom! To have the consciousness of power, without the opportunity of exertion, is as if when the eagle would loftily soar into the clear azure, high up where the Day-God shines, he suddenly found his pinions powerless. To have hoarded knowledge, high intellect, and strong imagination, without the means of rendering them of avail—to have the fulcrum of Thought, yet want the lever of Action — energies to roam through space and into infinity, but cramped by the fetters of Circumstance — hopes that would mount with the Seraphim, yet are clogged to clay with the worm — when such are, it is as if earth's

treasures were buried at our feet, and we saw but could not touch the talisman which would open them for our disposal—as if a Phidian statue stood before us in palpable beauty, and not ours the spell whose utterance would compel it into glorious life!

Many may say that this is merely fanciful, but does not truth lurk amid the flowers? Many a noble spirit has "brokenly lived on" in the sickness of baffled hope. Obscurity rests upon many a lofty aim which would have soared immortal.

But it ever is for Genius to pursue—and who can blame the pursuit?—that fame which, mount as loftily as it may, cannot overtop desire. When all is won, how little has been won! Could we read the hearts of the most successful, what soul-sickness should we see—what sad doubts, what desperate struggles, what long despair.

When Columbus, buffeted by every wave of fortune, saw himself laughed at as a dreamer,

or rejected as an impostor—when the treacherous King of Portugal stealthily sent out a squadron to make the discoveries which *his* genius had anticipated—when for his plans there appeared, year after year, decreasing chances of accomplishment—when, at the Franciscan convent near Palos, he begged "a morsel of bread and a drink of water" for the fainting child he carried in his arms, surely he suffered agonies for which all his after-success, eminent as it was, could never compensate. Through all these weary and wasted years, in which his youth and manhood were exhausted, his heart was haunted with the dread that he might die with his great designs unexecuted—unattempted. What, if false tongues traduced him afterwards, and the Benefactor, in chains, returned to that Spain for which he had found a new world, had he not the consolation, and a proud one, of having fulfilled more than ever his wildest dream had anticipated? But, even when his triumph sat on the highest pinnacle,

what was it in atonement for the Wanderer's wretchedness, when all Courts rejected his proposals, and, as a Mendicant, he entered that Spain which his adventurous genius, as a Discoverer, was to enrich?

When Johnson—compared with whose intellect, modern minds are like the pigmies by the side of Gulliver—did "not live to write, but wrote to live," what pangs were his, in his long obscurity, as day after day, year after year passed by, finding him poor and leaving him struggling! What was all his after distinction, when the wisest and the noblest hailed him with pride as the great moralist of the land? Could he forget the humiliation of sitting behind a screen (too meanly dressed to take a place at Cave's table) waiting for the eleemosynary plate of victuals?

Yet!—a greater still! When Napoleon wanted bread in the crowded solitudes of Paris, what was his far-Atlantic rock of exile to the voiceless agony of such moments, when the

heart would rise to the throat with the deep, deep pain of concentrated emotions? What was it? In his prison-thrall he could look back, with a solemn and majestic pride, on the History which *he* had made; he could see—as if he were a living posterity, so isolated was he from the present, upon that rock—he could contemplate the deeds and the daring which had made his name immortal. But to live on, in the dawn of manhood, with the fever-dread that he might die obscurely, with his achievements yet unachieved!—such was his fear in early life at Paris; and what could equal the agony of such a dread to such a man?

It was thus with Titian. Oh, the heart-sickness of a mighty mind, fretting at the world's neglect, and wearily hoping that this cannot always last. Deep in the soul the barbed arrow festers—deadly the poison which it sends through the veins of young Expectation grown untimely grey! And who shall estimate the strong seductions and fierce trials

of the heart of Genius? Those who are thus eminently endowed, live like the petrel, in the midst of tempests, and seldom know the quiet enjoyed by other men. How little are they masters of themselves, how much is their will swayed, like a stately vessel, by the surging of the waves of passion! What can the minds of ordinary men know of the craving after excitement, and the high action that makes fame—of the Maelstrom of restlessness, of the quick longings after sympathy, which perpetually disturb such loftier minds. The prisoned lion rages to hurl himself upon some satisfying object, and dashes himself against the iron barriers of his den; so does Genius disturb itself with the maddening effort to achieve its desire, to exercise its strength. Yet such hearts are to school down their far glancing powers to the dull rules of duty, and if they fail to teach themselves due humility to the world's ordinances, the meanest will play the censor upon them! Within the heart of Genius do the pas-

sions throng—sensibility, love, ambition, pride —and when obscurity casts its shadows upon the rich endowments these passions have matured—when the world's neglect allows dull mediocrity to assume the place where genius should be the honoured occupant, is it wonderful that every pulse is pain and every breath a sigh? Alas it is the misfortune of genius that its blessedness should be its bane: its sensibility to suffering as exquisite as to pleasure. Tossed about upon the unquiet waves of passion, it cannot reach the harbour of peace, except under the pilotage of a trusting and religious faith.

Even in the elements of mental success, such as art or authorship sometimes wins, there is not much to satisfy the mind. The risk is heavy and the gain light. Few are in a position to work solely for distinction; and a man writes or paints against fearful odds when he works that he may live, and overtasks the mind at the imperious call of necessity, and is obliged to think and compelled to imagine, and

must crudely or hastily execute the cherished dreams and treasured schemes of his youth. Even the most fortunate, how many trials and doubts have harassed him, how little of fame has ever reached himself—as in a triumph, the hero who went in the van could see but a scanty portion of the crowd who followed.

And now, when no one will question Titian's claim to be ranked among the most gifted men who ever shed the lustre of rich genius upon Art, we may imagine what bitter pain was his, while, with a consciousness of his own ability, he saw himself doomed to obscurity and neglect, which, having darkened the Past held out but the same sad augury of the Future.

Obscurity and Poverty! They fetter the free spirit, they blunt the loftiest energies, they chill the noblest aspirations. Ambition is a very mockery, when want is gnawing at the heart: Learning an useless incumbrance, when toil alone can provide the scanty meal; it is as if, in utter misery, a robe of honor should be cast on the wasted frame—as if, when the

lamp had flickered out, aromatic oils should be brought to feed it. Chill penury weighs down the heart itself, and though it sometimes be endured with calmness, it is but the calmness of despair.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TURN OF FORTUNE.

Men talk of lucky fortune when, at last,
(After the long endurance of neglect,
Which withers, ere its time, the bloom of hope),
Fame crowns the worthy, and the word admits
That there *is* Genius in the works it sees.
Oh, wrong not the prerogative of Worth!
Say not the fruit of all its anxious thought,
Its nightly studies, its heart-wasting toil,
Its anxious searchings, and its mighty power,
Is fortune's chance and casual progeny;—
Success is but the offspring of Desert!

A FEW days after Titian had last seen Agrippa, and while he was musing on the curious incidents, which made their acquaintance a singular one; remembering, also, that

this was his birth-day, when he completed his twenty seventh year, and wondering whether, indeed, any of the predictions he had heard would be fulfilled, the Signore Barberigo entered his *studio*.

"I returned from Rome, last night," said he, after they had exchanged the courtesies of salutation, "and have seized the first leisure permitted me by urgent business, to satisfy myself that you are well."

"You are ever kind, Signore," replied Titian, "and have only too much consideration for one whose solace in misfortune is that he cannot be quite unworthy, since you allow him to call you friend."

"Nay, if you despond, I shall have little hope of you. Brighter fortunes may come, even when you least expect them. But we can talk of this at another time. Leave your Art for this one evening, and join a little festival that has been prepared to greet my return, by friends whose society will delight and cheer you."

"I must pray you, pardon me, if I decline," said Titian; "I am now but a moody man, who would only mar your mirth."

Barberigo, complying with the humour of the Painter, did not press him, but amused himself for a time in examining various pictures and sketches which had been executed in his absence. With two of them he appeared more particularly pleased, and said that he should become the purchaser.

"I foresee," he added, encouragingly, "that the time is not remote when, even to a friend, you will not dispose of such productions for a price such as you now tell me exceeds their value. You will recollect, my dear Tiziano, when all the world acknowledges and rewards the merits which I have had the gratification of knowing so long, that such is my prophecy. Who knows how soon it may be fulfilled? To ensure these two pictures, I shall immediately have them placed in my own cabinet —and to prevent the chance of your claiming

them, allow me to pay you for them now." The payment was made—a liberal payment—and Barberigo continued, "So I hear that your friend Giorgione has been employed to paint the new building of the Fondaco of the German merchants."

"This is news to me," said Titian; "but what concern have I in it? Is it not enough, Signore, that such enployment is not for me?"

"But if——"

"Hear me, Signore. I am wearied and heart-wrung by my adverse fortunes. It is not that I find within me the faculties without which poet and painter vainly essay to produce what may keep their names remembered. Even for present need—except through your generous kindness—my art cannot provide; and it were better, perhaps, that I should altogether resign a pursuit which, however I strive, is yet ungrateful."

"Abandon your art—surely you are but jesting?"

"No, Signore, I speak in seriousness. It would be with pain that I should cease to be a Painter, for well do I love the art. I have looked upon it as a mistress who would one day repay all the labours of my youth; for, from my childhood, until now, my heart has been devoted to it. If I sought for knowledge, it was that I might augment the resources which I dedicated to painting. If I gazed upon the appearances of the changeful Heaven—on the serene or tempest-stricken sea—on the forest-hills—on the vine-covered vallies—my chief aim was that I might make my art pourtray their grandeur or their beauty. For this, alone, have I kept myself heart free amid a thousand temptations; and gazed upon the form of grace or the features of loveliness only that my pencil might transfer them to the canvas. But, baffled in my hope of obtaining that fame which is to my soul what the life blood is to my heart, I feel it vain to combat against fate. I would hide my failure—for I *have* failed—in

some distant land, think of fame as a thing often sought and rarely found, and only remember the few kind friends who have striven to make pleasant my paths of pain."

"And what, let me ask," said Barberigo, "what sustained your hope so long?"

"Love of my art," replied Titian, "which still kept me busied in attempts at improvement; this has often made me abandon the half-formed purpose of laying aside my pencil. But my hope had another and a better stay—dependence upon the goodness of that Providence who watches alike over the well-being of the lowliest and the loftiest. There was a time, Signore, when such thoughts did not intrude, or were unheeded if they did;—but the time of trial brings them strongly before the mind as comforters, and the affliction that chastens, draws us, by a gentle compulsion, nearer to our God! I have not been tried in vain, if faith has sprung from suffering. I shall abandon painting, for why should I waste life

in a pursuit which leads me on a weary chase, and leads me on in vain?"

Barberigo answered with a smile—

"I know not why you should, except that the Fondaco di Tedeschi, which was burnt down three years ago, is now rebuilt—that the external frescoes must be executed immediately—that the façade towards the Grand Canal is all that Giorgione has time to paint—that I have even now spoken to several persons in office, concerning you, reminding them that the portrait of the Queen of Cyprus, in the Grand Hall of Audience, is from your pencil; that one of the friends whom I wished you to meet this evening, is Andrea de' Franceschi, the Grand Chancellor, who desires to make your acquaintance, especially as he had to inform you that *you* are to paint that façade of the Fondaco which is towards the Merceria; and that if you succeed, your pencil is to be employed for the future equally with Giorgione's, upon all works ordered by the Seigniory. Methinks, Signore

Tiziano Vecelli, that you will scarcely talk again of abandoning your art."

How Titian received this welcome intimation we shall not pretend to describe : he did not speak — there was a quick and earnest pressure of Barberigo's hand—and this was all. But there is a silence that speaks more eloquently than language.

"Then we shall see you this evening?" said Barberigo, as he quitted the painter's room. As he retired, he looked back, and saw that Titian's cheek was flushed, and that his eyes glistened with sudden tears. It is no common emotion which thus can cause the deep fountain of *man's* spirit to overflow.

The intelligence which Barberigo had communicated was, indeed, of great interest and importance. Here, at length, was the opportunity which Titian had eagerly desired. It brought him, at once, into public and direct competition with Giorgione. There was the disadvantage, it is true, that the façade towards

the Grand Canal was more public than that fronting the Merceria, and would of course be seen by more numerous passers-by. Still, Titian was confident—in the flush of reviving hope—that what he would do must have many beholders, and he had no fear of the issue of a competition with his more celebrated and successful rival. The consciousness of innate power inspirited him, and he was so engaged with speculations upon the coming competition that he did not observe the entrance of Agrippa, who said, "I came to see whether my prediction has been fulfilled. This is your birth-day, and I need not ask—for I already see my answer in your looks—whether some change for the better has not taken place in your prospects?"

Titian told him of the intelligence he had obtained from the Signore Barberigo, and Agrippa repeated his assurance that *this* was the event which his own hand might convert into prosperity. After he had gone, Titian

was struck with the exact fulfilment of one part of the prediction, and while he found it impossible to fathom the mystery, his faith in its truth involuntarily increased.

He proceeded to execute his commission at the Fondaco. We have already said that the fashion of the time was to embellish the exteriors of public buildings, and even of private dwellings, with fresco paintings. The subject that Titian selected was the story of Judith, from the Apocrypha. In the design and execution of this painting he exercised the best powers of his mind and art. He was uninterrupted in his labours, for while it became the fashion to pay frequent visits, to mark the progress which Giorgione was making on the more public façade, only one person appeared to take the slightest interest in the painting which grew into beauty beneath the rapid hand of Titian. Signore Barberigo had returned to Rome, rather earlier than he expected, and Agrippa was the friend who cheered Titian by

raising his hopes, and assisted him by judicious criticism and council.

Titian painted Judith with her "garments of gladness,"—her braided hair crowned with a tiar—"her sandals upon her feet,"—"her bracelets, her chains, and her rings, her ear-rings and all her ornaments, in which she decked herself bravely, to allure the eyes of all men that should see her," when she "put off the garments of her widowhood," and went from the city of Bethulia to the tent of Holofernes, the Assyrian. He depicted her with a severe yet lovely beauty, with resolve and firmness upon her lip, and lofty purpose flashing from her dark, full eyes, as before her lay her country's foe, heavy with sleep and wine," "upon his bed under a canopy which was woven with purple, and gold, and emeralds, and precious stones,"—and in one hand he figured the uplifted falchion which she had taken down from the pillar of the bed, while with the other "she took hold of the hair of his

head," and one blow would destroy the destroyer and liberate Judah from the bonds of the oppressor!

The painting was completed. Bnt Titian's heart grew heavy when many days passed, and no one appeared to notice it—when for him, no silvery accent fell from the rewarding lips of praise. While he had been busied in this work, the excitement of the very labour had sustained and cheered him, but now—having resolved that this painting should decide whether he was to prosecute or abandon his Art—he was sorely disappointed and dispirited at finding neglect instead of the applause he had expected. For Worth receives just applause with a grateful and elevated spirit.

Titian's Judith was completed long before Giorgione's portion of the paintings on the Fondaco di Tedeschi was half finished. Pride or want of curiosity had prevented Giorgione from looking at what his rival had done;—of his merit no one, not even Signore Barbe-

rigo himself, was more fully aware. It chanced that two friends of Giorgione, who were excellent judges of painting, accidentally walked through the Merceria, some days after Titian had completed his design. They did not know that any other than Giorgione had been engaged upon the pictorial decorations of the Fondaco, and were alike surprised and delighted with the bold design and brilliant colouring of the Judith.

Proceeding to Giorgione's residence they found him in his *atelier* surrounded by friends and pupils. Giorgio Barbarelli, commonly known as Giorgione, possessed more extensive worldly advantages than many painters of his time. He was now in the very flower of his manhood, and all contemporary accounts agree in representing him as one of the most gay and gallant cavaliers of Venice. His features, it is said, were almost too handsome for his sex, and might have been thought so, but for the grace of his figure, and his lofty stature, which,

owing to the admirable proportions of his form, appeared precisely the standard of manly size and symmetry.

Perfectly aware of this, Giorgione loved to display taste and even expense in his attire. The nobles of Venice were forbidden, by a sumptuary law, to wear, while within the bounds of the city, any but the plainest garb, —suits of black silk, covered by gowns of Paduan black cloth, lined with fur in winter, and confined by a dark broad girdle garnished with plates and buckles of silver; but Giorgione invariably was attired in silks and velvets of the richest texture and colour, and paid as much attention to his toilet, as if he were simply a *petit maître* of the "exquisite" dynasty. Instead of the *baretta* (or cap of black worsted, fringed with the same material,) he wore a large Spanish hat with a plume. In a word, he affected magnificence in dress, and had numerous imitators among the younger nobles, who, when on *Terra Firma*, took care to

compensate by the richness of their dress for the restrictions imposed upon them, in that respect, in Venice.

Amid all who surrounded him in his *atelier*, when his two friends came to see him, Giorgione appeared pre-eminent, both in stature and garb. Of his appearance we can present no more appropriate description than Croly's sketch of his Sebastian :

> Never raptured Greek
> Struck from the Parian stone a nobler form ;
> He looked among that light and glittering swarm,
> A stranger, from a loftier region sprung ;
> His crimson Venice cap was backward flung,
> Letting the dark curls sport about his brow.
> And those who saw that cheek's delighted glow,
> The smile that then his red lip loved to wear,
> Had little thought that thirty years were there."

"We have come hither to your levee," said the Signore Andrea Moncenigo, "to congratulate you upon your admirable performance at the German Fondaco—it surpasses all that you have yet done—indeed, it surpasses all that Art has yet produced in Venice."

"Nay," retorted Giorgione, smiling with the deprecatory complacency with which pride receives an expected compliment, "I fear that you view what I have done, with the partiality of friendship rather than the strict justice of severe and serious judgment. Besides, the work is not yet complete, and your praise is premature."

"Incomplete?—I should rather think that it were perfection. We could see nothing wanting to make it a master piece."

"What say you, Messires," said one of the company, "shall we all go to the Fondaco, and see this painting?"

"I tell you," said Giorgione, "it is not yet finished. I have much to add to it, and would rather that you should postpone your visit, until it be better worthy your inspection. Our friends here are but bantering on account of the unfinished state of the work."

But Moncenigo affirmed so positively that what he saw was not capable of being added to or improved, that the company agreed to

go to the Fondaco at once, and, by a sort of mirthful compulsion, took Giorgione with them.

When they reached the front of the Fondaco, there was a general exclamation against Moncenigo and his companion—for it was evident that much of Giorgione's task was unfinished. But they directed the gondoliers to bring them close to the landing place, whence there was readiest access on foot to the Merceria.

This was done, and they all landed. "I told you," said Giorgione, "with a smile, "that I had much to do here. But we are leaving all view of the façade I am painting?"

"How can this be?" asked Moncenigo. "Are not you painting both façades? It is of the beautiful and brilliant composition which faces the Merceria that I spoke, as surpassing all your previous performances. How can you have forgotten the most excellent of your works? You do it but to sport with us!"

Others of the company took up the word and exclaimed, "Yes, our friend has a mind to be merry at our expense, and therefore disclaims the excellence he has produced!"

Moncenigo, who had stepped back to look at the façade fronting the Grand Canal, came up at these words, and said, "By my faith, there is some masking here, for I have more closely examined the painting we have passed, and almost doubt whether our Giorgione can have touched it. Which of his pupils has been trying his hand? Look," he continued, backing a few steps, to obtain sight of the façade, "here is no composition worthy such a stately building. Here the pencil has drawn no intelligible story. Here we have only a confused collection of incongruous figures; men, women, and children—lion's heads and flying angels—winged griffins and fantastic Cupids, all mingled together, without order and without taste. The figures are well drawn, but their total want of arrangement makes them

of little value. No, our friend would have us first look at these confused sketches—the hasty work of one of his new pupils, I dare say—in order that, by the effect of contrast, we may have greater pleasure in beholding the severe beauty and majestic grace of the noble composition on the opposite façade, of which we spoke. Ah, Signore Pittore, have we detected you in your pleasant deceit?"

With such banter and many smiles, they passed round to the Merceria, sportively leading Giorgione in the midst. Though his cheek had turned pale as death, and he made no answer to their remarks, the merriment of the moment was so prevalent that they did not notice him. Had they watched his countenance, they might have observed that he looked like one who had been smitten by the sudden hearing of evil tidings, or astonished by some frightful vision. When he stood before the noble painting by his rival, he examined

it long and closely. Still, he spoke no word. His friends, crowding around him, began to pour forth a fluent torrent of compliments and praise. They wondered that he gave neither word nor smile in reply. A silence fell among them, and then, turning away from them he said, in a low voice, "The work is worthy of all the praise you give it—yet it is not mine, but my master's!"

Giorgione then departed, without further speech, leaving his friends standing in the Merceria, wonder-stricken at his words. Speedily they began to conjecture who could be the artist. Not one of them mentioned the name of Titian, so completely was it hidden in obscurity.

While they were thus employed, a cavalier approached, and one of them turning to him, asked, "Perhaps you can inform us, Signore, who has painted this façade? We believed it to be the work of Giorgione, whom we well know, and who has just quitted us. He gave

the artist the highest praise, but has not named him."

They received for answer the avowal that the painting was by Tiziano Vecelli.

Moncenigo exclaimed, "Venice has good cause to be proud of such a painter. What say you, Signori, shall we seek him out and pay him the compliments which such merit well deserves? The only difficulty will be to ascertain where he may be found."

They all assented—except the pupils of Giorgione, who silently withdrew, unwilling to do honour to their master's rival.

"The Painter is at hand," said the cavalier. "You speak with him even now."

Many a hand was stretched forth to give him a greeting. Many a tongue grew eloquent while thanking him for showing them what Art could do. The two who had originally seen the Judith, and brought the others to view it, came forward and requested to be admitted to his friendship. One of them said, "It is clear

that we have now *two* great painters in Venice instead of *one*. I am the Signore Contarini, and am happy to engage the exercise of your art in my behalf."

"And in me," said the other, "Titian may know the Signore Andrea Moncenigo, with an equal desire to obtain some of the fruits of that genius which has executed this Judith with a success greater than any we have ever seen."

Others of the party also expressed their wish to employ Titian's pencil, and the Signori Contarini and Moncenigo accompanied him home, where they not only became liberal purchasers, but commissioned him to execute other paintings for them. In all companies they spoke of his extraordinary merits, and thus the tide was fairly turned.

In a few days, all Venice thronged to see Titian's painting on the Fondaco. Commission followed commission faster than he could execute them. Mindful of what had been his own

condition, a short time before, he sought out certain obscure artists, whom he had known in his evil fortunes, to assist him, and paid them liberally for their services. Now that his reputation was fully established, the Seigniory took credit that they had been his earliest patrons, and invited him to execute several public works—the honour, in such cases, being greater than the reward. But what to him was wealth? —he had now achieved Fame! Grateful to that Providence in whom, through the greatest depth of his despair, he had reposed firm trust, Titian pursued his triumphs without ostentation—for Genius is humblest when it most succeeds.

When Signore Barberigo returned from Rome, at the close of the year 1507, he found Titian in the bloom of a renown which, from that hour, has advanced with advancing time. How sincerely that true and tried friend rejoiced in the altered circumstances of the Painter, we need not say; and it is only jus-

tice to declare that Titian never forgot how much and how kindly he had been benefited by his friendship, at a time when, but for its active exercise, he would have abandoned the art he was to elevate and the country his genius was to honour. To the other and later friend, who had foretold the exact time when his fortunate star would be "lord in th' ascendant," he was grateful for the interest in his welfare which had been testified in such a singular manner. As Agrippa shunned converse upon the subject, Titian refrained from allusions to it, but, to the hour of his death, continued to wonder at the peculiarity and fidelity of the predictions—for year after year saw them in gradual process of fulfilment.

It remains but to be added, in connexion with the painting of the Fondaco di Tedeschi, that Giorgione's mortification was considerable, for he refused to see his most intimate friends for a long time, and wholly discontinued all

intercourse with Titian, yet ever admitted his high desert, saying, "He was a Painter even from his mother's womb!"*

* Giorgione died early in 1511, aged 33.

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