THE PAINTER OF PARMA;

— OR, —

THE MAGIC OF A MASTERPIECE.

"Oh, Isabel! You will not tell him what I have——"

"Hush! I shall tell him nothing. He is nothing to me; he has never been anything more than one among hundreds of friends—all held equal in my regard. Madelon, do you be true to me and I will be true to you. And now I will tell you what had moved me so deeply when you came into the painting-room. Signor Zanoni had been telling me the story of his life. It was the most affecting story I ever heard. I gave him my sympathy; and I gave to sympathy my tears. Don't you borrow one bit of trouble. The signor is the very soul of truth and honor, and you should know whether I am capable of protecting my own good name and reputation.

"There! Not another word on the subject. You will be ready to set forth, as I have said."

The duenna promised; and shortly afterward the princess left her.

An hour later, and while the aged companion was getting ready to accompany her mistress, Marquis Steffano sought her again.

"Oh, Singor Marquis!" the poor woman cried, when he had reminded her of the signs he had detected in her face and in her manner, and had driven her into a corner where she must make answer, "I assure you, on my word, it was nothing. The dear princess has explained it all, and——"

"Ha! Did you tell her——"

"I told her nothing. It was she who first spoke of it to me. She said it all; and I only answered her questions—no more. That is true, signor."

"Madelon, look me in the eye! Now, tell me what was it the princess asked you?"

"She asked me how she had looked when I came into the painting-room where she and Signor Zanoni were; and I told her."

And then the Marquis went on; nor did he give it up until he had gained from the utterly bewildered and demoralized woman the whole story. She told him about the pallor and tears; and she even told that the girl had been evidently startled at the interruption, and had tried to hide her face; but to be sure she did not know she was telling it. Also she let out the condition in which she found the artist; and, in her endeavor to picture his kindness and solicitude and his anxiety in the princess's behalf, she so far overdid it as to betray more to her eager listener than she had ever thought or conceived of.

"But, Signor Marquis," she cried, in the end, laying her hand upon his arm, "remember this—she explained it all. There was no harm, no thought of evil; all was clear and simple, and only a man whose own heart was bad could see anything wrong in it."

"You dear old saint!' said Steffano, with a light, coarse laugh, "it is all right. Bless you! I see nothing out of the way in any of it—nothing at all. I am glad you have told me, for now my mind is easy. Ah! you are in a hurry. Well, I have but one more word to say. Don't you borrow any trouble, and don't you interfere. Be sure the dear princess is able to take care of herself. Of course you may see what they do; the very nature of your office requires you to do that, but you will not interfere. Should you do so it could only irritate Isabel and would do no good. You understand me?'

"Yes, Marquis, I think I do."

"Then I will leave you to go your way. And once more, my good Madelon, I think you will find it for your interest to keep the knowledge of our conference to yourself."

She signified that she should do so; and upon that he left her, and made his way to his own apartments, where, if we follow him, we may discover what he meant by the strange course he appears to have entered upon.

His apartments were on the second floor of a wing of the ducal palace, overlooking the river. They had been furnished by the duke expressly for his brother's use. No pains, no expense of labor or money, had been spared. They were, in fact, more sumptuous, more tastefully arranged, more beautifully decorated, and more comfortably furnished than were those of the duke himself. Antonio had been content to take the quarters of his father and of his father's father; to take them as they had taken them; and he deemed them good enough. During the few brief years of his married life he had thought of building an entirely new section for his dearly beloved wife and himself, but her early death had put an end to the dream.

In introducing the duke to the reader we made no mention of his having been married. He took to himself a wife; a young and beautiful girl, whom he loved dearly, and who had loved him equally as well, two years before he assumed the ducal scepter. One short year she lived to lighten the cares of office and to brighten and bless his life, and then death took her from him. He had never thought of marriage again.

Steffano reached the apartment which he made his common reception and lounging room, and there threw himself into a chair.

"Now, my dear count, I think I have you on the hip!" he exclaimed aloud, at the same time smiting his hand upon his knee. As sure as faith, the princess has fallen in love with the painter. I knew she would. Zounds! think of the offers of marriage that have been made her—the wealthiest nobles of Italy and the handsomest; and many of them young at that. Why has she refused them, turning from them as though they were obnoxious? It was not because she had not the heart for love. No; for I can swear her heart is a very magazine of inflammable material, wanting only the spark to fire it. At first I was surprised, puzzled; I could not understand, but I can see now. She was waiting for her ideal—for the man who combined with manly beauty the gift of intellect; who could soar with her into the mystic realms of art and literature and science.

"Ha! and she has found him! Perdition seize the fellow! I hate him, and I owe him deadly vengeance; aye, and I mean to pay him too! Yet I must admit he is the handsomest man I ever saw, and I doubt not he is wonderfully well educated. I' faith, I know him to be a finished swordsman, and I am willing to believe he is brave and gallant. Yet, oh, how I hate him! Let him serve my purpose with Isabel, and we will make an end of him. I must bring about a meeting between him and Denaro. If I can only stir the count up to make an attack, the painter may fight. Per Bacco! He must be a different man from what I take him to be if he will not fight. Aye—I have it. He disarmed me because much wine had shaken my nerves. Guiseppe will be steady and cool; and the man who meets him at sword-play must look to himself. I think if the painter were pushed hard—if a man like Guiseppe Denaro were to openly insult him and attack him; or even were he to grossly insult and challenge him, the fellow would fight, notwithstanding the terrible penalty the law would inflict upon him in case he should kill his antagonist. And if they should fight, though the count would give his opponent warm work, yet, in the end, I am very sure the painter would kill him."

"San Marco!" he exclaimed, with a start that shook his frame at every joint, "what a consummation that would be! Zanoni shall kill Count Denaro, and then the headsman will kill Zanoni! And then, ah! and then——"

He rose from his seat at this point and paced to and fro a time in silence. At length he stopped near the center of the room and finished the sentence which he had broken off so abruptly.

"And then, my charming cousin—cousin! Ho! ho! that is good! I wonder, if our genealogical line could be traced, how far we should be found removed? Oh, but she is beautiful, and she is wealthy, and her wealth I sorely need. Ah! let the duke but know that she has really and truly given her love to the painter, and let that painter kill our gallant count; then the executioner removes the painter; and behold, she is mine! Mine, as sure as fate! With those two removed, let me convince Antonio that the girl had really loved the plebeian—that she had been ready and willing to flee with him to a foreign land—and he will give me her hand, I am sure.

"Yes, I want her money. I doubt if there is an heiress in the dukedom so wealthy. Her estate of Varona is worth more than a million crowns. I heard the duke speaking of the income of that estate; he set it at more than 50,000 scudi. Mercy on us! What a left for me! And, by heaven! I can bring it to pass! Let me but catch the fair princess in the trap and I will venture the rest. And now, to prove it, there must be a way. Aye, and I will find it."

He then resumed his seat and bent his head upon his hand; and thus he sat for a long time, buried in profoundest thought.

Suddenly he started as though a petard had bursted at his feet—started first to an upright posture in his seat; his hands half raised and tightly closed; his sensual lips compressed; his eyes, with a wild, frightened glare, grazing straight into vacancy, as though a ghost had appeared in that direction. Anon he arose to his feet and smote his hands together.

"Holy Mother! What can it mean? Is it a wild fancy—a freak of imagination—or is it real? By San Marco! I must know. Which way shall I turn? I wonder what Antonio could tell me? Shall I venture? Pshaw! what danger can impend?"

A few minutes he passed to and fro the length of the room, and then went out, taking his way toward the audience chamber. It was time for the duke to have finished the hearings for the day, and he hoped to find him in his private closet. He was not disappointed. This closet was a small apartment, forming an ante-room to the large chamber of audience, whither committees sometimes repaired for consultation, and where the duke might confer with one or more interested persons on a subject not for the public.

And here Steffano found his grace, engaged in working over his minutes of the business of the day, and alone.

"Antonio, do I disturb you? If I do hesitate not to say so."

"Not at all, Steffano, if you will not detain me long."

"Only a few minutes."

"All right. Sit down—there. Now go on. What is it?"

"I will tell you," the marquis gave just a moment to the arranging of his thoughts, and then went on: "Last evening at the theater I was appealed to by three young ladies to enlighten them on what they deemed an important point. They were admirers, it proved, of the works of Signor Zanoni, the painter, and they had had a dispute with regard to the land or realm that gave him birth. One said he was born in Milan; and another said in Rome; and another declared it to have been Genoa; while a forth, who was not present, had been positive that Italy was not his native land at all, but that he had first seen the light in Spain. Of course I could not decide for them, but I told them that I thought I could find the solution, and, if I did, I would inform them.

"So, brother, I have come to you, thinking you might possibly know something about it."

"Indeed, Steffano," returned the duke thoughtfully, and with a touch of real interest in tone and manner, "I know nothing regarding it. I know that he has lived for a little time at Florence; and I think he spent a year, or more, in Venice; but he came from Rome when he came hither; and I have always heard him speak of Rome as his home. But," he added, after a little pause, during which he appeared to be taxing his memory, "since you have mentioned Spain, I call to mind that there is, in certain words on his tongue, a decided Spanish accent. Aye!"—with a brightening of the eyes and a quick flushing of the cheeks—"and I now remember another thing: I have heard him speak of Spanish art as of an old-time acquaintance; and—I am very sure his first lessons in painting were from a pupil of Murillo's and at Madrid."

"Madrid!" echoed the marquis, with a start that shook him from top to toe.

"Yes. But—why does it startle you so strangly?" And the duke regarded him curiously.

Steffano laughed. It cost him an effort, but he managed to carry it off without breaking down.

"It struck me as it did, because of a remarkable story—a story with a ghost in it—which one of the ladies told last evening, about a celebrated painter of that very city.

At this juncture they were interrupted by the entrance of a secretary.

"You will have to excuse me for the present," Antonio said. "But," he added, after his brother had arisen, "we may decide, I think, wherever the man of whom we have been speaking may have first seen the light, that he spent a goodly portion of his youth—perhaps to adult manhood—in Spain. At all events, I safely say, he received his first lesson in the art there."

And with that the marquis withdrew. The moment he found himself safely alone he stopped, with an expression on his dark face and a far-away look in his wide-open staring eyes, as though he saw, in the dim distance, an object that terrified him.

"It can not be!" he said to himself, after a time of thought. "No, no—the grave swallowed him up long ago! Pshaw! I am growing nervous. A draught of wine will do me good."

CHAPTER V.

Juan Zanoni had arranged his easel so as to bring his canvas into a proper light; had mixed upon his palette the colors he would wish to use, and was standing before the picture, his eyes seemingly fixed upon it, but without seeing it. It was not the face there outlined that he saw, nor yet the face that had been its model; but another, and a different—a face to him with an apotheosis; and, think and struggle as he would, he could not drive it from his thoughts, from his inner consciousness. It was fixed there and it would not be eliminated.

Something told him that he would not much longer be permitted to copy from the dear face of the Princess Isabel. His deep and all absorbing love—the love that had become a part of his life—this had first led him to the belief, and the adventure of the previous evening had confirmed it. If the Count Denaro had seriously objected to her visiting his studio—of course the subject had been mooted and others had spoken of it. The influence of Steffano Farnese could not be great, yet as a brother of the girl's guardian—also as a relative of the loved one herself—his opposition would have its weight.

Naturally, the conflict with the marquis would be talked about and would reach the ear of the duke. A seeming fight with deadly weapons, and one of the parties a brother of the reigning prince, would be sure to take wings and to assume startling proportions Zanoni's fear was that, in whatever shape the story might reach the ears of the duke, the name of his beautiful ward would be mixed up with it. That, alone would be sufficient to put a stop to the lady's visits, and, perhaps to her sittings; though his grace might ask him—the artist—to take his work to the palace.

The painter's thoughts were wandering—now upon the fray on the river's bank, and, anon, to the apotheosized face—when the princess and her duenna arrived.

Zanoni was master of himself in the old servitor's presence; and Isabel, meeting his calm, friendly look, was equally calm and tranquil.

And here the artist received a lesson. He caught the quick, sharp look of the duenna—caught her eyes, with a tell-tale light in them, fixed on himself; then they shot toward the princess, with a penetrating gaze, again, upon himself, after which she seemed to be trying to see both at one and the same time. Had she said to him: "I must watch you, because I have been bidden," she would not have betrayed her purpose more plainly.

However, the princess got rid of her after a time—sent her off into the waiting-room, and the door was closed between them, with a heavy curtain hung against it.

"I suppose I can sit," the fair model said, trying to smile as she spoke.

"Yes—certainly. We have nothing to do now with the position."

Thus speaking Zanoni took up the palette and two or three brushes; but he did not offer to touch the color he had so carefully prepared. A little while he stood, with the implements of his calling in his hands; then a perceptible tremor shook his frame; his lips quivered, his eyes grew strangely bright with a warm and liquid light. Tears were gathering in spite of his utmost endeavor to keep them back. At length the spell was broken. He laid the palette and pencils back on the table and turned toward the sitter.

"Princess! I can not! I can not! My hand will not obey my will to paint. Pardon me! Oh, pardon! but I must speak." He stood before her with his hands clasped gazing at her through tears that were well-nigh ready to fall.

"Dea: Princess! Wildly, passionately, madly—yet, oh! how deeply and truly—loved! With this, perhaps, last avowal from my lips, shall we regard the words spoken yesterday as having never found utterance? Shall we be as we were before? Reflect, think of it all; look at the situation calmly and understandingly,—at your exalted situation; at my lowly, humble lot, my poverty and my garb of toil. Remember, too, that were we to think of marriage we must leave the land that gave you birth. To me it would be nothing, the wandering to another clime, but oh, think of what it would mean for you! Isabel, I must not; I dare not. I will leave Parma; I can not live here when—when—"

To be Continued.

UNCLE SAM'S TOMMY ATKINS.

He is Few in Numbers but a Fine Fellow Physically.

We are so accustomed to thinking and speaking of the United States as a "Great Power" that it is apt to be forgotten that Uncle Sam's army numbers barely 25,000 men of all arms. There is no reserve, and the State militia, answering roughly to our volunteers are neither in the pay nor under the control of the Federal authorities.

The army proper is scattered over a space of country nearly the size of Europe; and is broken up into isolated detachments of one and two companies each. The men are used to guerilla Indian warfare, and are excellent scouts and generally first-rate shots. Of battalion drill, however, they know little, never having had the opportunity of practising it; the same may be said of brigade or divisional movements. This is scarcely surprising, for it is rare, indeed, that two regiments lie within manoeuvring

DISTANCE OF ONE ANOTHER.

Physically, the Yankee "Tommy Atkins" is a fine fellow enough; deep-chested, bull-throated, and hard as nails. You will never find, in a United States regiment, the under-sized weaklings so common in many armies. The reason is that the high rate of pay attract to the colours many more recruits than are actually required, of whom, of course, only the best are enlisted. Formerly men of any nationality were accepted, provided they fulfilled the necessary physical requirements and were willing to take the oath of allegiance. Of late years, however, only American-born citizens are supposed to be sworn in. Nevertheless fully 50 per cent. are of foreign extraction.

The term of enlistment is for five years, the pay for the first two years being at the rate of $13 (£2 12s.)c a month. During his third year of service the soldier gets $14, $15 during his fourth and $16 during his fifth; while, should he decide to re-engage for another five years, his pay is raised to $20, (£4) a month. Corporals and sergeants get $2 and $5 a month extra respectively. In addition to his ordinary pay, which, it should be borne in mind, is subject to no deduction whatever, each man is credited on enlistment with a sum of $200. (£40) "clothing allowance." This sum is supposed to provide him with uniform, blankets, and underclothing during his five years' service, and he receives in cash, when taking his discharge any balance he

MAY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SAVE.

In addition he gets about £12 "deferred pay," and a considerable sum for travelling expenses to the place where he joined.

Discipline is very strict. All offences are punishable by court-martial; individual officers having no power, as in the British service, to "tell off" an offender. There are no military prisons attached to the frontier posts, and the offender is kept in the guard-room at night, and sent out to do "fatigue duty" about the camp by day. To prevent his running away a thirty-two pound shot is fastened by a chain to his left leg; and, in addition, a sentry, armed with a loaded rifle, is placed over him, with instructions to shoot him if he attempts to run.

As has already been stated, the men are, almost without exception, excellent shots. The reason for this is not far to seek. Stationed for the most part in a wild and unsettled country, rifle-practice, confined with us, so far as the individual soldier is concerned, to a few weeks in each year, is with them unceasing. There are no costly ranges to maintain, nor is it necessary to erect butts. The target, a paper one on a framework of iron, is set up outside the fort stockade, and the squads go down and blaze away their hundreds of rounds before breakfast. Besides this there is usually more or less game in the vicinity, and hunting parties are constantly being organized.

This, then, is the type of man who will find himself face to face with the troops of Spain, and that the Yankee will, man for man, more than hold his own no one who knows him can for a moment doubt.

AN ECONOMICAL STOVE.

Young Husband—Well, my dear, did you succeed in finding a stove to suit you?

Young Wife—Indeed, I did. Such good luck! I got a stove that will never cost us a cent for coal. The dealer said it was a self-feeder.

AN EVIDENT SCARCITY.

Jinks—Has there been any scarcity of money in Europe since the war with Spain began?

Winks—There was with me. I had to come back in the steerage.

THE WOUNDED IN BATTLE.

Surgeons Take as Big Chances as Anyone Else.

It has been calculated that in all the naval battles of the world since 1862 the proportion of persons killed and wounded in the first twenty minutes only of the engagement averaged 32 per cent.

This percentage certainly will be more than doubled in the sea fights of the present war. In a ship carrying 450 men, from 250 to 300 will be killed or disabled in the first quarter of an hour. To take an example. One shot fired by a Chinese ship at the battle of Yalu, striking a Japanese cruiser, fairly killed and wounded one hundred and two men. In the confusion, carnage, fire and terror there is no time to minister to the wounded.

For them, indeed, there is hardly any chance of escaping death. The deck being swept by a continuous storm of bursting projectiles, there is no opportunity to carry them below. While the combat is at long range, and the casualties few, they can be laid behind the turrets, but when the action is at close quarters, no attention can be paid to them.

It should be explained that in an engagement at close quarters the hatches are closed with so-called battle plates, and no wounded can possibly be passed below. Meanwhile all parts of the ship above the armour belt, which only extends four feet above the surface of the water, are being riddled by gun-fire, and the number of casualties is necessarily enormous.

In such an action at least one of the vessels engaged is likely to be sunk, and that means death to all on board of her. Her own boats have been knocked to splinters early in the combat, and the same fate has befallen the boats of her adversary, so that the latter, even if not otherwise occupied would not have any means of picking the drowning men up. These suggestions will make it evident that very little is to be done by the medical department in a modern sea fight. It is only after the conflict has come to an end that the surgeons, if they are still alive, find an opportunity to perform their duties.

Surgeons, though non-combatants, take as big chances as anybody in an up-to-date fight. In the battle above instanced, the compartment occupied by the doctor of a Japanese ship was cleaned out by an explosive shell, and he and all his wounded were utterly destroyed.

A BLACKSMITH'S STORY.

He Became So Run Down That Work Was Almost Impossible—His Whole Body Racked With Pain.

From the Bridgewater Enterprise.

Mr. Austin Fancy is a well known blacksmith living at Baker Settlement a hamlet about ten miles from Bridgewater, N.S. Mr. Fancy is well known in the locality in which he lives. He is another of the legion whose restoration to health adds to the popularity of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mr. Fancy related his story of illness and renewed health to a reporter of the Enterprise, as follows:—"During the last winter, owing, I suppose, to overwork and impure blood, I became very much reduced in flesh, and had severe pains in the muscles all over my body. I felt tired all the time, had no appetite, and often felt so low spirited that I wished myself in another world. Some of the time, necessity compelled me to undertake a little work in my blacksmith shop, but I was not fit for it, and after doing the job, would have to lie down; indeed I often felt like fainting. I was advised to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and after using a couple of boxes, I felt a decided relief. The pains began to abate, and I felt again as though life was not all dreariness. By the time I had used six boxes I was as well as ever, and able to do a hard day's work at the forge without fatigue and those who know anything about a blacksmith's work, will know what this means. Those who are not well, will make no mistake in looking for health through the medium of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure by going to the root of the disease. They renew and build up the blood, and strengthen the nerves, thus driving disease from the system. Avoid imitations by insisting that every box you purchase is enclosed in a wrapper bearing the full trade mark, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People."

HOW TO CURE CATARRH.

A Homely Remedy Within the Reach o Every Sufferer of This Dread Disease.

A New York gentleman who read that a Paris physician considered lemon juice a specific cure for nasal catarrh and who was a sufferer from this disease, has this to say about it:

I quartered a lemon and squeezed into a goblet the juice of one of the pieces through a coffee strainer to keep out the seeds and fibre, and added as much salt as could be piled on a silver quarter, filling the goblet with warm water. As it is a popular belief that if a disease of this nature is driven from one part of the system it reappears in another, I gargled and swallowed half a dozen mouthfuls to keep the throat and stomach free from infection, and snuffed the remainder vigorously up the nostrils, pressing a finger against the nostrils alternately during the operation. This was in the morning, just before my regular daily bath in tepid water. After the bath I now made it a rule to rub my chest, abdomen, throat and head with a coarse towel sufficiently to get up an active outside circulation. It is no wmonths since I have seen the slightest symptom of nasal catarrh, nor has the dreadful disease re-appeared in the stomach, the throat, or any other part of the system.