

THE PAINTER OF PARMA; - OR, - THE MAGIC OF A MASTERPIECE.

Thereupon he told the story of the picture of St. Cecilia, giving it very nearly as we know it. He only enlarged upon the base and treacherous manner in which the painter had made return to the duke for his generous patronage. Instead of painting on his picture as he should have done, he had simply put a few outlines on his canvas sufficient to hoodwink his kind patron should he call to see how he was progressing, and had then bent all his energies to the winning of the princess's love. She was young and unsuspecting and entirely inexperienced, and ignorant of the wiles of the world, and she had so far fallen a victim to his diabolical arts as to become completely unnerved in body and her reason unbalanced.

"I came at length to know that something was wrong," he went on. We give his story the more particularly here, because the same was to be the testimony that should prove conclusive at the coming trial. "I asked the aged duenna—a faithful old woman, who always accompanied her to the painting-room," the marquis continued, "what was the matter with her mistress? She could tell me only that the painter spent his time in talking instead of painting; and that her mistress was often in tears; and when I asked her what was said, it came out that she—the faithful old guardian—sent on purpose to protect the girl from the possibility of scandal—was always sent out from the room, into a distant apartment, while the artist pretended to paint.

"At length I asked the princess herself what was the matter with her. She answered me only with bitter sobbing and weeping, and, as true as I stand here, noble signors, she told me she would rather die than live. Only her words were a thousand times more terrible than I can picture them.

"Finally, the poor count, heart-broken and racked with agony, came to me, and asked me what he should do. The trouble would end, he feared, in the death of the girl he so fondly loved, or in her flight with the painter, for we were assured, the wretch had boldly planned to steal her away from guardian and friends and bear her to a distant clime! I advised him—the count—to seek an interview with this man—Zanoni, his name—and expostulate with him, to tell him, plainly, that if he did not at once desist complaint would be made to the duke. For, signors, you will understand, thus far my noble brother had been kept in ignorance of the whole matter.

"This afternoon as Count Denaro and myself were taking a stroll on the river's bank, just beyond the city wall, toward the north, we chanced, most unexpectedly, to come upon the painter, Zanoni—to meet him face to face! We stopped him and Denaro spoke. No man could have spoken more kindly, or more touchingly. He begged and he besought.

"But why go on. From this beginning and our own knowledge of the man, we can imagine the closing of the romance as he gave it. Never had those grave and reverend fathers heard anything more horrible, more contumacious, more wicked.

Forthwith the chief justice called the members of his council there present to order, and declared the tribunal organized for preliminary business.

Sufficient of Stefano's narrative for a formal complaint was entered on the record, and filled out in duplicate for service; an officer was summoned and directed to proceed to the prison, only a few steps away, and to give to the keeper the order for the safe-keeping of Juan Zanoni, under charge of the willful murder of a noble of Parma; with a further order that Juan Zanoni, aforesaid, should be present before the Council of Twenty, on the morrow at ten of the clock, in the forenoon, for trial. It was a formal document with much legal verbiage, but that was its meaning and intent.

And the Marquis Stefano having seen this all done, having gone with the officer to the prison to assure himself that his dreaded enemy was safe under lock and key, and having seen the order of the council duly served, went home to rest.

But the chances are that the prisoner with the fiat of the dread tribunal hanging over his head will rest more peacefully than will he.

CHAPTER XV.

Antonio, Duke of Parma, was an early riser. On the morning next following the events last recorded he rang for his valet shortly after sunrise, and the June day was not an hour old when he was dressed and his toilet complete for the duties that were to follow.

The cloud that had come upon his brow with the first reflections of his waking hour grew darker and more gloomsome as he approached the breakfast table. Ordinarily his dear ward had been as early up as himself, and his chief delight and blessing of the day had been his hour of sweet communion with her at the morning meal, for she had scarcely ever failed of being in her place at the head of the board, with her warm and loving smile to give him cheerful greeting as he entered.

But on this morning her place was vacant. Instead of her happy, beaming welcome he met the servile salute of a servant, and he sank wearily into his seat to eat alone. He had partaken of all the food he could bear—and that but slight in quantity—and had called for wine in place of the rich chocolate, which was his usual breakfast beverage, when the page, Filippo, entered, the picture of consternation

ails you? What has happened?" And the duke turned quickly in his seat, with an unnamable dread striking to his heart.

The page told him that the Count Guiseppe Denaro was dead, and that the painter, Zanoni, had been arrested and was then in prison for killing him.

"No! No! You have blundered, boy! There is a mistake in this. Denaro is dead! Zanoni his slayer! Oh, it can not be!"

But the lad was confident. He had been told by the officer who had made the arrest, Sergeant Batista. "And," the old sergeant appeared to add, "the old sergeant appeared to me to be very sorry; and he asked me if I would inform your excellency as soon as I could. That is why I made bold to seek you here."

"Oh!" exclaimed the duke, with anger and sharp agony in his voice, "this is the handiwork of Stefano! I know it! I know it!"

"Sire, the sergeant said the marquis was his accuser."

"And if there was trouble, if there was a conflict, the marquis was present."

"Yes, sire, he was."

"Oh, I was sure of it! They were together yesterday. The count was gloomy and troubled, while the marquis added fresh fuel to whatever of wrathful fire might have slumbered in his bosom."

Thus speaking, the duke speedily left the room and in a very few minutes was on his way to the prison. He had inquired for his brother before leaving the palace, and had been informed that he had not arisen. At the office of the prison he found the keeper, Maracchini, of whom he learned all that had been done in the council on the previous evening; and when he had heard, he groaned in bitterness of spirit. It was wonderful what a hold this painter had taken on his feelings. Never was a heart torn by more widely varied and conflicting feelings.

Towards two principal points did his thoughts converge; between those two points his feelings fought fierce battle. First, his great affection for Zanoni as a man and as a friend. He had come to esteem him highly, to take delight in his conversation, and he had gained from his rich stores of knowledge much and valuable information. Then his skill as an artist and the beautiful works he had hoped to obtain from his brush. Even the "St. Cecilia" could not be finished—the picture upon which he had based so much of his joy and happiness in the coming time. Alas! he must give that up; give up all, in short, he had expected or hoped for from the painter's matchless skill.

But there was another side. If Zanoni lived—continued to live in Parma—what of the Princess Isabel? She was lost to him, as sure as fate! He knew her so well; he had seen so deeply into her heart and character—into the secret springs of her life—that he was well assured if the painter remained free to do his will he would take the beautiful girl to himself; she would flee with him far away and become his wife! Could he endure this?

"Can I sit down and see my child—the one thing on earth that claims my undivided love, the light and joy of my life, the sunshine and blessing of my home—can I see her torn from me, and that, too, by a plebeian who must flee with her a criminal? Aye, criminals, both! Shall it be? No! A thousand times no!"

Such were the feelings—such the conflicting emotions that fought bitter fight in the duke's breast as he sought the prisoner. We shall not wonder, remembering his birth, the ancient lineage of his ancestry, and the position he had been called to occupy in the state, that the feelings of the patrician—the true guardian—together with the great love of his heart, held the ascendency.

Was it fate that had come to his aid at this momentous period? At all events, this event, terrible though it was, had cut the gordian knot. All complications arising from Count Denaro's persistent suit were at an end; and no more had he to fear or dread his ward's love for the painter. It was horrible; if he could have prevented it he would have done so with all his heart; but, since it had come to pass, he would accept it as a fortunate release from the very worst and most complicated trouble that had ever come upon him.

The keeper from the prison had a written order from the council that no one under any pretext whatever without permit from the president, should be allowed to see or speak with the prisoner, Zanoni. But the duke could not be affected by that. His right could not be denied. When the Council of Twenty was in secret session, with the black curtain before their door, the duke might not enter into their presence; but beyond that there was not another department in the city; there was no place, public or private, which he might not enter at will.

"I trust your excellency will pardon me," the keeper said, as they moved on their way to the place where the prisoner was confined. "For I have to confess to you that I have allowed the man unusual privileges for one under such a charge. But, on his arrival, there was in existence no legal order for his arrest or detention; and, further, I felt sympathy for him. At all events, you will find him, not in a prison dungeon, but in one of my own family apartments."

"I am glad you did it, signor; very glad," he said, and the ring of his voice told of his sincerity. "I think I should have asked the favor, as a favor to myself, with his solemn promise not to attempt escape."

"Oh, he promised that, excellency. I never would have done it without. Ah! Here we are. You will find the bell-cord in a front corner. You can ring when you wish to retire."

With this the keeper turned the key in the simple lock in the door, and opened the way, and in a moment more the duke stood in Zanoni's presence. He found him pacing to and fro, with his head bent, and his arms folded over his bosom. The room was light and airy, with nothing in sight that could remind one of a prison.

Zanoni looked up quickly on hearing his door move on its hinges, and when he beheld the duke his first feeling was of joy and gladness. It was not the gleaming of a hope of life, but it was the sight of a friend, and the thought that he might hear from his loved one. As soon as the keeper had closed and relocked the door, the prisoner, with a faint smile of welcome, moved out a chair, and waited for his visitor to be seated.

But the duke would not sit until he had taken the painter's hand. The prisoner had not expected such a mark of esteem, yet he was not inclined to make too much of it.

"Signor Zanoni, I am more deeply grieved than I can tell in thus finding you in such a situation." This Antonio said while holding the painter's hand. When he had taken the proffered seat the other replied:

"My lord Duke, I knew you would be grieved; and I may say to you, I also believed, when you should come to know all the circumstances, that you would deeply sympathize with me. Have you seen your brother, the Marquis Stefano?"

"No; I left the palace before he was up."

"Then you have heard nothing of the affair which brought me hither."

"Only what the keeper told me. He told me, I think, all he knew."

"Doubtless; but that could have been very little. I wish you would listen to the story from my lips."

"That is precisely what I have come to do. But, signor, before you begin your narrative, will you be seated? I shall understand you better so."

The prisoner, expressing his gratitude for the favor thus shown, moved a chair near to the man who was to listen, and seated himself.

"My lord," he said, in opening, "will you tell me if you have had given you any account of a meeting previous to this last affair between the Marquis Stefano and myself?"

"You allude to your meeting by the river when you disarmed him?"

"Yes."

"I had the particulars from—from one who knew the story well." The duke struggled a moment, as though to put back an emotion that gave him trouble. He had hesitated, and even stammered, with the name of the princess on his lips; but he was resolved that he would hesitate no more. He would be frank and outspoken, and speak without further reserve than common propriety demanded. In his heart he believed the man before him to be one in whose honor and good faith he might safely confide.

"Signor Zanoni," he added, after a little hesitation—his manner having plainly showed that he intended to speak further—"I will be entirely frank with you. It was the Princess Isabel who told me the story, so you can judge whether I heard correctly or not."

"You heard the simple truth, sire; and if she told you all, then you will be in a measure prepared for the story I shall now tell. I beg that you will be patient and listen attentively."

The prisoner changed his position slightly in his seat, and, having given a little time to reflection, he turned his earnest, truthful gaze full upon his hearer's face, and commenced his narrative.

He told how, as he stood in front of his studio, on turning his eyes in the direction he had proposed to go, he had seen the marquis and the count standing in his way; he told how he had resolved to avoid them, and how he had changed the direction of his walk for that purpose. So he went on to the point, near the orange grove, where the twain he had hoped to escape came upon him and stopped him.

From this he told slowly, carefully and critically, repeating the exact language used, and picturing with dramatic force the various situations. He gave exactly the part Stefano had taken in the affair, hesitating not at all in placing the chief blame on his shoulders, and so he went on to the point where Denaro had drawn his rapier. Here he told how he had done all in his power to get away from them without further trouble. He had begged of them to remember that the deed on the count's part would be downright murder, let the result be what it might, if they fought.

"I bade him remember, if he should fall by my hand, the law would surely kill me. And then the marquis interposed again, solemnly swearing that if I should kill the count, he would himself aid me to escape."

Then followed an account of the conflict. "My lord, I tell you the simple truth when I tell you that I risked my own life in sparing my antagonist, for a long time. In the use of the rapier he was no more to me than a very child might have been. I held his life at my point from the beginning. Besides his lack of true skill, his mad passion unnerved him. In the end, when I had resolved to wrest his weapon from his grasp, or to break it at the guard, I suddenly and unexpectedly found myself half way over the edge of the breast wall that shuts in the river at that point."

And he told how, in his struggle to save himself from the water, he had sprang forward at the very moment while the count was making a furious lunge. The fatal result no human could could have foreseen nor prevented. "My lord, the feelings, I experienced when I knew that my weapon had

unmistakable death-damp on his marble brow—I will not attempt to tell. The first event that awoke me to sense of my surroundings was the calling of the marquis upon a number of soldiers who chanced to stand near to arrest me—to arrest me and bear me away at once to prison. And he told them I had willfully and wickedly murdered the noble count. To Be Continued.

QUEEN VICTORIA ABROAD.

The first trip abroad which the Queen and the Prince Consort made was in 1843 to the Chateau d'Eu, Normandy, where King Louis Philippe and his Queen entertained them. The following anecdotes will show that formality was altogether laid on one side. When the French King went on board the English vessel to welcome his Royal guests he surprised come his Royal guests he surprised the Queen Victoria by lifting her in his arms, saluting her on each cheek, and then carrying her off to the French barge. The British sailors fingered their cutlasses uneasily and wondered whether a "rescue" would be in order, until at length it dawned upon them that this was merely a Frenchman's gallantry.

On another occasion when they were all going for a drive, and the Queen had taken her seat, Prince Albert stood back and said to the French King that he could not precede his Majesty. "But there is nothing of majesty necessary here; get up," was the King's reply; and when the Prince Consort still demurred on the ground that there would be no room beside the Queen, Louis Philippe rejoined, "True, true, I am a little stout, but I will sit sideways."

Another morning the King sent for M. Auber, the composer, and said, "Eh bien! M. Auber, we must have by to-morrow night, or Wednesday morning at farthest, an ode to celebrate and commemorate the auspicious visit of her Britannic Majesty to Eu." M. Auber pleaded that the time was too short, that he had no theme, and finally that he had no poem. "No poem! A la bonne heure. Let us have a poet forthwith." So a poet was found, and was put under lock and key until such time as he had completed the required poem.

The next continental jaunt was undertaken in 1845, when the Royal party crossed to Antwerp, and while in Belgium were received by the King and Queen of that country. They then journeyed to Cologne, stopping by the way at Aix-la-Chapelle for lunch with the burgo-master, and were the guests of the King of Prussia at his palace at Bruhl. When the King was showing his guests through the palace her Majesty was astonished to behold a splendid portrait of the Prince of Wales, which the Prussian King had procured as a pleasant surprise for his visitors. In honour of England's Queen and her Royal Consort, Cologne was illuminated and its citizens kept holiday.

The Queen and Prince Albert "did" the Rhine as far as Mayence pretty thoroughly, and at this last named place were tendered a novel entertainment. The garrison of Mayence turned out at night, surrounded the Queen's hotel, and serenaded her; the men carried torches, while the bands played the National anthem. At Coburg the Grand Duke of Saxe-Coburg placed the palace at Rosenau at the disposal of the Queen and Prince Albert, and there, the birthplace of the Prince Consort, the Royal couple spent a happy two weeks. After a short stay at the old town of Saxe-Gotha and a glance at Frankfort, they retraced their steps to Antwerp, and then, instead of crossing direct to England, a call was made on the King and Queen of the French La Ville d'Eu.

In the summer of 1855, the year of the first Paris Exhibition, we find her Majesty and the Prince Consort going for another trip, this time to Paris, to visit Napoleon and Eugenie at St. Cloud. It was a return visit, for earlier in the year the Emperor and Empress had been staying at Windsor. Not until after the lamented death of her Royal Consort did the Queen again journey abroad. In 1863, travelling incognito as the Duchess of Lancaster, she paid a visit to the King and Queen of Belgium, and then went on to Rosenau, where in 1845 she had stayed with Prince Albert. Again in 1865 accompanied by the Princesses Louise, Helena, and Beatrice, and Prince Leopold, her Majesty sojourned at Rosenau, and was present at the unveiling of the bronze statue of the Prince Consort in the market place of Coburg. The statue represents the Prince in the robes of the Garter, and was the work of Mr. Theed.

Three years later the Queen, travelling as the Countess of Kent, and accompanied by Princess Louise, Princess Beatrice and Prince Leopold, made her first acquaintance with Switzerland. She travelled via Cherbourg and Paris, and at the latter place had a short interview with the Empress Eugenie. For more than a month the royal party stayed at Lucerne, and in spite of the great heat went up the Rigi, explored Mount Pilatus, and made innumerable excursions throughout that part of Switzerland. It was during this visit that the French papers invented the story of the attempted assassination of her

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER CURED.

Mrs. I ydia A. Fowler, Electric Street, Amherst, N.S., testifies to the good effects of the new specific for all heart and nerve troubles: "For some time past I have been troubled with a fluttering sensation in the region of my heart, followed by acute pains which gave me great distress and weakened me at times so that I could scarcely breathe. I was very much run down and felt nervous and irritable."



"I had taken a great many remedies without receiving any benefit, a friend induced me to try Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills. I had only been taking them a short time when I felt that they were doing me great good; so I continued their use and now feel all right. I can heartily recommend Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills for nervous prostration."

Mrs. Fowler adds: "My daughter, now fifteen years of age, was pale, weak and run down, and she also took Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills for some time, and is now strong, healthy and vigorous."

Milburn's Heart and Nerve Pills cure palpitation, smothering sensation, dizzy and faint spells, nervousness, weakness, female troubles, etc. Price 50c. a box or three boxes for \$1.25. Sold by all druggists. T. Milburn & Co., Toronto, Ont.

Mr. Melville Miller, Bonstorf, Ontario, says: "Laxa-Liver Pills made a new man of me. I was troubled with indigestion and pains in the small of my back, and after taking Laxa-Liver Pills for about three weeks they completely cured me." Price 25c., all druggists.

was the strange behaviour of a crafty man.

Our sovereign's next holiday was until the spring of 1876, when, with Princess Beatrice, she was the guest of the Earl and Countess of Lerins at Hohenlohe Villa, Baden-Baden. After leaving Baden-Baden she made a short stay at Coburg, and when returning to England, by way of Paris and Cherbourg, received President MacMahon at the French capital.

In 1879 the Queen went to Italy. Her headquarters were at Baveno, but she paid the King and Queen of Italy a visit at Monza. Next year she was again at Baden-Baden, whence she proceeded to Darmstadt, in order to be present at the confirmation of the late Princess Alice's two daughters, Balmoral, the Queen in 1882 journeyed to lovely Mentone, and there for a month took up her abode at the Chalet des Rosiers. It was on this occasion that the Monte Carlo authorities tried in vain to get the Queen to accept a magnificent basket of flowers.

In 1885 the Queen and Prince Consort were at Aix-les-Bains and Darmstadt. Two years later her Majesty went first to Cannes to visit the church of St. George, which had been erected to the memory of Prince Leopold, and then again to Aix-les-Bains. The following year her Majesty made her second visit to Italy, this time selecting Florence, and staying at the Villa Palmieri. On her way home she went to Berlin to see her son-in-law, the Emperor Frederick, who was then on his death-bed.

With her Majesty's journeyings since 1888 most people are familiar. In 1888 she was at Biarritz; in 1890 at Aix-les-Bains; in 1891 at Grasse; in 1892 at Hyeres; in 1893 and 1894 at Florence; while the last three springs she has gone to Nice.

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I have half a gross of empty bottles of my shelves. Everything my neighbors and friends would tell me to try I would try straight away to the drug store and purchase. I was in a terrible condition of dyspepsia and liver troubles and was getting worse all the time. I was so weak and buying one medicine and the other and receiving no benefit that I was about to give up all hope of ever getting better, when my husband brought me home a box of Dr. Ward's Blood and Nerve Pills, which he had been highly recommended to buy. I began using them at once, when, to my surprise, I felt better in a very short time, and continued them for about two weeks more which cured me entirely. I have the least sign of dyspepsia or liver trouble now, and have also gained several pounds weight. Signed, ANNIE E. GAUNTLETT, King Street, Berlin, Ont.

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