

EPILOGUE

THE SUICIDE

TO horse!" said the Emperor.

He corrected himself, on seeing the magnificent ass which they brought him:

"To donkey, rather! Waldemar, are you sure this animal is quiet to ride and drive?"

"I will answer for him as I would for myself, Sire," declared the count.

"In that case, I feel safe," said the Emperor, laughing. And, turning to the officers with him, "Gentlemen, to horse!"

The market-place of the village of Capri was crowded with sight-seers, kept back by a line of Italian carabinieri, and, in the middle, all the donkeys of the place, which had been requisitioned to enable the Emperor to go over that island of wonders.

"Waldemar," said the Emperor, taking the head of the cavalcade, "what do we begin with?"

"With Tiberius's Villa, Sire."

They rode under a gateway and then followed a roughly-paved path, rising gradually to the eastern promontory of the island.

The Emperor laughed and enjoyed himself and good-humoredly chaffed the colossal Count von Waldemar, whose feet touched the ground on either side of the unfortunate donkey borne down under his weight.

In three-quarters of an hour, they arrived first at