

"It is pleasant to find one's self so good a judge of character," said Mr. Trefalden, advancing with outstretched hand. "I felt sure you would be true to time, Saxon—so sure, that I had sent the eggs away to be poached—and here they are! Come, sit down, I hope you're hungry."

"Indeed I am," replied Saxon, making a vigorous onslaught upon the loaf.

"You seem to have brought the mountain air in with you," said Mr. Trefalden, with a half-ferocious glance at his fresh young cheek and breezy curls. "It is a glorious morning for walking."

"That it is, and I have been up to some of the high pastures in search of one of our goats. It was so clear at six o'clock that I saw the Garmisch quite plainly."

"What is the Garmisch—a mountain?"

"Yes—a splendid mountain; the highest in the Canton Glarus."

"What wine do you prefer, Saxon?"

"Oh, either, thank you. I like the one as well as the other."

Mr. Trefalden raised his eyes from the carte des vins.

"What 'one' and what 'other' do you mean?" asked he.

"The red and the white."

"You mean vin ordinaire?"

"Certainly. Why not?"

Mr. Trefalden shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't drink vinegar myself," said he, "and I should not choose to place it before you. We will try a bottle of our host's Château Margaux. I suppose you like that?"

"I don't know," replied Saxon. "I never tasted it."

"Have you ever tasted champagne?"

"Never."

"Would you like to do so?"

"Indeed I don't care. I like one thing just as well as another. These cutlets are capital."

Mr. Trefalden looked at his cousin with an expression of mingled wonder and compassion.

"My dear boy," said he, "what have you done, that you should only like one thing as well as another?"

Saxon looked puzzled.

"It is a shocking defect either of constitution or education," continued Mr. Trefalden, gravely. "You must try to get over it. Don't laugh. I am perfectly serious. Here, taste this pâté, and tell me if you like it only as well as the cutlets."

Saxon tasted it, and made a wry face.

"What is it made of?" said he. "What are those nasty black things in it?"

"It is a pâté de foie gras," replied Mr. Trefalden, pathetically, "and those nasty black things are truffles—the greatest delicacies imaginable."

Saxon laughed heartily, poured some claret into a tumbler, and put out his hand for the water-bottle.

"You are not going to mix that Château Margaux," cried Mr. Trefalden.

"Why not?"

"Because it is sacrilege to spoil the flavour."

"But I am thirsty."

"So much the better. Your palate is all the more susceptible. Try the first glass pure, at all events."

Saxon submitted, and emptied his glass at a draught.

"That is delicious," said he.

"You really think so?"

"Unquestionably."

"You prefer it to the vin ordinaire?"

"I do indeed."

Mr. Trefalden drew a deep breath of satisfaction.

"Allons!" said he. "Then there is some little hope for you, Saxon, after all."

"But—"

"But what?"

Saxon blushed and hesitated.

"But I am not sure," said he, "that I prefer it to the vin d'Asti."

Mr. Trefalden leaned back in his chair and groaned aloud.

"I'm sure I'm very sorry," laughed Saxon, with a comic look, half shy, half penitent. "But—but it isn't my fault, is it?"

Before Mr. Trefalden could reply to this appeal, there was a rustling of silk, and a sound of voices in the corridor, and a lady and gentleman entered the salon, conversing earnestly. Seeing others in the room, they checked themselves. In the same instant Mr. Trefalden, who sat partly turned towards the door, rose and exclaimed:

"Mademoiselle Colonna!"

The lady put out her hand.

"You here, Mr. Trefalden?" said she. "Padre mio, you remember, Mr. Trefalden?"

The gentleman who held his hat in one hand and a bundle of letters and papers in the other, bowed somewhat distantly, and said he believed he had had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Trefalden before.

"Yes, at Castletowers," replied the lawyer.

The gentleman's dark face lighted up instantly, and, laying his hat aside, he also advanced to shake hands.

"Forgive me," he said, "I did not remember that you were a friend of Lord Castletowers. Have you seen him lately? I hope you are well. This is a charming spot. Have you been here long? We have only this moment arrived."

He asked questions without waiting for replies, and spoke hurriedly and abstractedly, as if his thoughts were busy elsewhere all the time. Both his accent and his daughter's were slightly foreign, but his was more foreign than hers.

"I only came yesterday" replied Mr. Trefalden, "and I propose to stay here for a week or two. May one venture to hope that you are about to do the same?"

The young lady shook her head. Her father had already moved away to the opposite side of the room, and was examining his letters.

"We are only waiting to breakfast while our vetturino feeds his horses," said she, "and we hope to reach Chur in time for the mid-day train."

"A short sojourn," said Mr. Trefalden.

"Yes; I am sorry for it. We have travelled by this road very often, and always in haste. The place, I am sure, would repay investigation. It is very beautiful."

"You come from Italy, I suppose?"

"Yes, from Milan."

"And are, of course, devoted as ever to the good cause?"

Her eyes seemed to flash and dilate as she lifted them suddenly upon her interrogator.

"You know, Mr. Trefalden," said she, "that we live for no other. But why do you call it the 'good' cause? You have never joined us—you have never helped us. I had no idea that you deemed it a good cause."

"Then you did me injustice," replied the lawyer, with an unembarrassed smile. "The liberty and unity of a great people must be a good cause. I should blush for my opinions if I did not think so."

"Then why not give us the support of your name?"

"Because it would bring no support with it. I am an obscure man. I have neither wealth nor influence."

"Even if that were so, it would be of little importance," said Mademoiselle Colonna, eagerly. "Every volunteer is precious—even the humblest and weakest. But you are neither, Mr. Trefalden. You are far from being an obscure man. You are a very brilliant man—nay, I mean no compliment. I only repeat what I have often heard. I know that you have talent, and I am sure you are not without influence. You would be a most welcome accession to our staff."

"Indeed, Mademoiselle Colonna, you over-estimate me in every way."

"I do not think so."

"I ought also to tell you, that I am a very busy man. My whole life is absorbed by my professional duties."

"It is always possible to find time for good deeds," replied the lady.

"I fear not always."

"Enfin, we are not exacting. To those friends who can give us but their names and their sympathies, we are grateful. You will be one of these, I am sure."

"It is better to give nothing, than to give that which is worthless," said Mr. Trefalden.

Mademoiselle Colonna met this reply with a slight curl of her lip, and another flash of her magnificent eyes.

"Those who are not for Italy are against her. Mr. Trefalden," she said coldly and turned away.

The lawyer recovered his position with perfect tact.

"I cannot allow Mademoiselle Colonna to mistake me a second time," he said. "If she does me the honour to value my poor name at more than its worth, I can but place it at her disposal."

"Are you sincere?" she said, quickly.

"Undoubtedly."

"You permit us the use of your name?"

Mr. Trefalden smiled and bent his head.

"Thanks in the name of the cause."

"But, signora—"

"But what?"

"You will forgive me if I desire to know in what manner you propose to make my name serviceable?"

"I shall enter it on our general committee list."

"Is that all?"

"All neither more nor less."

Mr. Trefalden's face showed neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction. It was perfectly placid and indifferent, like his smile. Mademoiselle Colonna looked at him as if she would read him through; but she could do nothing of the kind.

"If you repent of the permission you have granted," she began, "or object to the publicity of—"

"No, no," interposed the lawyer, with a little deprecatory raising of the hand; "not at all. It gives me much pleasure."

"If, then, on the contrary, you choose at any time to favour us with more active aid," continued she, "you need only write to my Father, or Lord Castletowers, or, indeed, any of the honorary secretaries, and your co-operation will meet with grateful and immediate acceptance. Till then, no demand will be made upon your time or patience."

Mr. Trefalden bowed.

"Have you many such drones in your hive, signora?" asked he.

"Hundreds."

"But they can only be incumbrances."

"Quite the contrary. They are of considerable value. Their names give weight to our cause in the eyes of the world; and the printed lists which contain them find their way into every court and cabinet in Europe. For instance, I have here a paper—"

She paused, glanced towards Saxon, and dropping her voice to a whisper, said:

"Your guide, I suppose? Does he understand English?"

"Perfectly," replied Mr. Trefalden, answering the second question, and taking no notice of the first.

"As well as you, or myself."

"Dio! Have I said too much? Is he safe?"

"I would answer for him with my head, if even he had understood the purport of our conversation—which he has not done."

"How can you be sure of that?"

"Because he is a wild mountaineer, and knows no more of politics than you, Signora Colonna, know of the common law of England."

The young lady took a folded paper from her pocket, and placed it in Mr. Trefalden's hand.

"Read that," she said. "It is from Rome. You are aware, of course, that Sardinia—"

Her voice fell again to a whisper; she drew the lawyer away to her father's table, spread the document before him, and proceeded to comment upon its contents.

This she did with great earnestness and animation, but in a tone of voice audible only to her listener. Mr. Trefalden was all attention. Signor Colonna, his thin hands twisted in his hair, and his elbows resting on the table, remained absorbed in his papers. Saxon, who had not presumed to lift his eyes from his plate while the lady stood near him, ventured to glance now and then towards the group at the further end of the room. Having looked once, he looked again, and could not forbear from looking. It was not at all strange that he should do so. On the contrary, it would have been strange if he had done otherwise; for Saxon Trefalden was gifted with a profound, almost a religious sense of beauty, and he had never in his life seen anything so beautiful as Olympia Colonna.

To be continued.

FORBIDDEN TOBACCO.—If tobacco have now intemperate devotees, at the outset it had intemperate enemies. King James the First's "Counterblast" is scarcely worth notice, because, had King James been wise, he would not have thrown stones at tobacco, nor at anything else. Snuffing was the form of tobacco-taking which seems to have excited the greatest aversion. The Sultan Mohammed the Fourth, of all people in the world, prohibited it in his dominions, under pain of death. The Grand Duke of Muscovy (Russia) was not then what it is now) pitilessly hung every wretch who was caught in the act of snuffing. The King of Persia commuted that punishment to the milder penalty of cutting off the snuffers' noses. James the First of England, and Christian the Fourth of Denmark, contented themselves with inflicting money fines, or simple whippings. Pope Urban the Eighth issued a Bull, excommunicating people who should indulge in snuff-taking in church. Detestable stories are also told of people who had so dried up their brains by taking snuff, that, after death, a little black lump was all that was found remain! he skull.