

THE SCALLYWAG

nature to those poor souls who slink along timidly through the back alleys of life, and fear to tread with a free and open footstep the main highways of respectable humanity. Not that, on the other hand, there was anything mean or small in Paul Gascoyne's face or bearing; on the contrary, he looked every inch a man, and, to those who can see below the surface, a gentleman also. He was tall and well built, with handsome features and copious black hair, that showed off his fine eyes and high white forehead to great advantage. But the day of small things had weighed upon him heavily: the iron of poverty and ancestral care had entered into his soul. The sordid shifts and petty subterfuges of a life far harder than that of his companions and fellow-students had left their mark deep upon his form and features. He was, in short, what Armitage had called him, in spite of his good looks—an obvious scallywag, nothing more or less: a person rightly or wrongly conscious that, by accident or demerit, he fills a minor place in the world's esteem and the world's consideration.

He stood and gazed out of the window abstractedly, reflecting to himself, after all, that a climb up those glorious gray crags to Sant' Agnese would be far from unpleasant, even though clogged by a golden-haired Pennsylvanian, no doubt wealthy, if only—when suddenly Thistleton recalled him to himself by adding in an afterthought: 'And we've got to order our donkeys early, for donkeys, too, will be at a premium on Saturday. Political economy very much to the front. Supply and demand again unequally balanced.'

Paul glanced up at the silent rocks once more—great lonely tors that seemed to pierce the blue with their gigantic *aiguilles*—and answered quietly, 'I think I shall walk, for my own part, Thistleton. It can't be more than a couple of thousand feet or so up, and half a dozen miles across country as the crow flies. Just about enough to give one an appetite for one's lunch when one gets there.'

'Ah, but the pretty American's commands are absolute—every man Jack to ride his own donkey. They say it's such fun going up in a body like so many fools; and if everybody's going to make himself a fool for once, I don't object to bearing my part in it.' And the blonde young man leaned back in his easy-chair and stuck his boots on the