

give him a situation in some *déjána*, perhaps, with a salary of about four pounds a year. Rather small, isn't it? But that's often the case with the price of blood. Didn't Judas bargain for thirty pieces of silver?"

"Well," said Henslowe, after a brief pause, "perhaps, after all, it's just as well."

"Just as well!" cried Garth. "What! just as well! That's cool, too; and what's going to become of me, I should like to know, when the great business of my life's broken up?"

"Oh, as for that, a Sicilian revolution is hardly a business, and a man like you can easily find something else."

Garth shook his head.

"It's not so easy, I can tell you," said he, "for a man like me to find a congenial occupation that suits his nature, and doesn't offend his conscience. You see, I've lived a roving life. I've tried different countries—Greece, Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Corsica—all, and I wasn't exactly satisfied with any of them. At length I settled down in Sicily. I found the people enterprising; ingenious, warm-hearted, and oppressed by a miserable government. I got mixed up with the Republicans there more and more until at length the establishment of the Sicilian Republic became the chief end of my life. And all the time I always had an idea that the eye of England was upon us. That's what I used to tell them. That's what I firmly believed. That's what brought me here! And this is the end? I never was so infernally humbugged in all my life. Englishmen care for nothing except business and money-making."

"Well, and why should they?" asked Henslowe. "There, don't fire up; I know exactly all that you're going to say; but the fact is the average Briton has only a very misty notion about other countries, and though he may feel a vague sort of sympathy with the cause of revolution in the abstract, yet he don't feel enough to assist with his purse. But never mind this just now. I've come to you about a little matter of my own. It isn't of much consequence, and yet, perhaps, after all, it may turn out to be of much greater consequence than it seems."

"A matter of your own," said Garth. "Out with it, my son; I should like to hear something that would drive Sicily out of my thoughts for a few minutes."

"Well," said Henslowe, "it's a curious sort of thing, and perhaps there isn't anything in it after all, but it's taken hold of me in such a manner that I swear I haven't been able to think of anything else ever since I first came across it."

"But what is it all anyway," asked Garth.

"Well, it's a manuscript," said Henslowe. "I found it in my father's desk. It consists of several sheets—quite old—and seems to me to be very important. I don't know how it may strike you, but for my part, I can't help feeling as though I'm on the verge of some great discovery. If so, my fortune's made, and if you like, you can help me, and go halves."

"But, stop: wait a bit," said Garth; "don't go on too fast. All this is beyond me, and I can't make head or tail of it. In the first place, what is this manuscript? is it in English, or some foreign language? and what is it about?"

"Oh, I'll show you it; of course," said Henslowe. "That's what I came here for. And I've brought it with me. Wait a moment. Here it is."

With these words, Henslowe drew from his pocket a parcel which was folded up in brown paper. This he opened, and brought forth another parcel also done up in brown paper. This wrapper he proceeded to remove. He did this with a tender care and deliberation which showed the high value he attached to its contents. At length the manuscript was disclosed, and this Henslowe unfolded and laid open before Garth, upon the small deal table; and then, having smoothed away the wrinkles, stepped back to watch the effect which might be produced.

Garth drew his chair up closer and proceeded to examine the manuscript.

The manuscript consisted of a sheet and a half of foolscap paper, covered with writing in a crabbed yet quite distinct hand. The paper was yellow and the ink was faded from age. The edges were worn away, and the corners also. The paper was in three half sheets, or separate leaves, having evidently fallen apart, for the lines of the folds were also deeply worn, and in some places here the paper could no longer hold together. There were also marks all over the manuscript which showed unmis-

takably that it had been much fingered, examined, and pondered over. From certain marks it also was evident that facsimile impressions had been taken from it, by tracing or some such mode. Here and there certain words were underlined, while down the margin of all the sheets were figures intended to number the lines, which figures had been made by some later hand than that which had written the manuscript. The first page contained thirty-seven of these lines; the second, thirty-six; the third, thirty-eight; the fourth, thirty-four; the fifth, thirty-six, and the sixth, thirty-five, making in all two hundred and sixteen lines.

All this was visible to Garth at the first survey which he made. The survey was made in silence; and turning over the pages he took one rapid glance over all.

"You see," said Henslowe, who stood watching him, "I want you to read it and give me your calm, unbiased opinion. There's a chance to make a fortune out of it, I think, or at any rate a stroke for a fortune. For my part, my position is such that I'm anxious to try anything. You know how it is with me, what I am—only a poor artist, poor in pocket, and poor too, I fear, in ability. I've no friends, no prospects, no future, and therefore, as is natural, I feel a good bit excited about this. Still I don't feel inclined to trust my own judgment altogether. Now, you've got a cool head on your shoulders, at least, for other people's affairs, and you're just the man that's able to give an impartial opinion, so I should like to know what you honestly think about it."

Henslowe spoke this in a rapid, feverish way, and with an anxious look; but Garth did not see him, nor did he appear to have heard one word of what had been said. His mind was completely engrossed by the manuscript. The first survey which he had taken of it had at once attracted his whole attention, and more. There was on his face something that looked like nothing less than amazement. Bending his head low he narrowly scrutinized the paper itself, and then turned it over till he reached the end, as though he were looking to see whether the handwriting was uniform or not. After this he looked back to the beginning. Then he frowned heavily, and once more looked at the end. Then he looked away with an absorbed and abstracted gaze, with his eyes on vacancy, and a heavy frown on his brow.

"In—fernally queer!" he murmured—"Landsdowne! Landsdowne Hall!—and Brother Claudian!—most infernally queer."

These words were not addressed to any one, for Garth was evidently lost in his own thoughts. Upon Henslowe the effect of them was extreme surprise. He had expected from Garth a cool, calm perusal of the manuscript, and a judicial summing up of its contents. Instead of this, he saw, even before Garth had read it—at the very first sight of it—a great and unusual excitement. This excitement also had been caused apparently by the mere sight of some names—Landsdowne, and Brother Claudian—which names he had seen at the beginning and end of the paper. Yet what could Garth possibly know about names like these belonging to a period far anterior?

To Henslowe all this was unaccountable, yet at the same time the evident emotion of Garth served to give the manuscript additional value in his eyes, since it formed an unintentional testimony to its mysterious importance. So he now watched Garth more narrowly and earnestly than ever, not saying a single word, feeling as though his friend might be the actual master of the secret which had been baffling him, and might be able to clear up the whole mystery.

After a brief period of reflection, Garth once more turned his eyes toward the paper. Leaning his elbows on the table he held his head in his hands, so that his face was not visible to Henslowe, but the profound absorption of the reader in his task showed how deep was its interest in his eyes. Now, whether that interest arose from the contents of the paper itself, or from some other additional knowledge of Garth, was out of Henslowe's power to answer.

## CHAPTER II.

### CONTENTS OF THE MANUSCRIPT OF BROTHER CLAUDIAN.

"To my beloved Friend & Preserver Ruperte Baron Landsdowne of Landsdowne Hall."

"BELOVED FRIEND.—It dothe not neede wordes to make knowne to you y<sup>r</sup> stronge affec-

tion & gratitudo w<sup>h</sup> mye hart feeleth for y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> to xprese as is seemlye emptye words w<sup>h</sup> bee verilye weake & in mye case y<sup>r</sup> is a dette beyonde wordes since it involveth Life itselfe. For it was by your heroick daringe intrepdedde courage & calm fortitudo y<sup>r</sup> mye Life hath been safed & though y<sup>r</sup> be manye in whose eyen y<sup>r</sup> life of Brother Claudian, unworthy member of the Holy Societas of Jesus is lesse y<sup>r</sup> nothing yet y<sup>r</sup> be others who value him more pretioslye—but most of all in safing him y<sup>r</sup> bath been done an act of pious love to y<sup>r</sup> dear mother of us all y<sup>r</sup> Holy Mater Ecclesia. Thus in y<sup>r</sup> extreme of peril you risked all to safe me though in so doing you risked rank, possessions yea & Life itselfe.

"Beloved Friende y<sup>r</sup> sandes of y<sup>r</sup> life y<sup>r</sup> you safed are nearly run out, it hath onlye gained a short yeare more & in these laste houres mye minde hath turned much toward you. For I think of you as one of y<sup>r</sup> faithfulle among y<sup>r</sup> faithlesse & as a valyant son of ye Holy Ecclesia among her bitter enemyes. Y<sup>r</sup> time may come beloved Friende when your enemyes may triumph over you, and punish you sore for your faith and servitium to your King and your God. Theyre are traytours in every campe & you may have your Judas, & beloved friende it is out of mye deep affectio & gratitudo y<sup>r</sup> mye minde hath recalled a certayne thyng y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> occurred in mye earlye dayes & y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> may be important for you, & sholde y<sup>r</sup> day of exilium ever come to you or youres, & sholde you be banished, your property confiscate & povertye oppress you, this may afford you y<sup>r</sup> means of a reinstauratio of your fortunes & of giving back to you all w<sup>h</sup> you may have lost.

"Reade yfore these wordes well & marke y<sup>r</sup> well & preserve y<sup>r</sup> documentum, & if y<sup>r</sup> time ever comyth (y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> may y<sup>r</sup> Holy Santes prohibe it) y<sup>r</sup> your servitium for God & King sholde be punish by y<sup>r</sup> usurper & you sholde become an exul & a pauper & in sore need, y<sup>r</sup> perhaps y<sup>r</sup> testamentum may redeem your life from desperatio. Heare yfore w<sup>h</sup> I have to telle.

"It is 36 yeares y<sup>r</sup> I was in Cadiz when y<sup>r</sup> arrived a flete with prisoners captos at sea. These were all pyrates of y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> some had been hanged & y<sup>r</sup> survivors were brought ashore & some were hanged ashore & others were spared for a time, not y<sup>r</sup> they were less guilty but because they were diseased & some even on y<sup>r</sup> point of death. Among whom was an Englishman of whom I heard tell, & being a countryman I deemed it my officium to visit him & see if I might not reclaim y<sup>r</sup> wandering sheepe before it was too late. I therefore visited him & felt a true gaudium, that though in extremes almost, he yet was not a heretic, but desired to confess, & receive absolutio. His faithe was verily but weake & had well-nigh been destroyed by a life of mortal sin, but in these last houres y<sup>r</sup> was a manifestatio of true penitentia & my ministratio was grateful. He listened eagerly to my wordes & made his confessio & showed true penitentia for the transgressions of his life. He also told me all y<sup>r</sup> historia of his life, w<sup>h</sup> had been a long cursus of sin & iniquitas; what I am about to tell is no violatio of the arcanum of the confessional, but is y<sup>r</sup> voluntoria made in many colloquia, when it was as I may say not so much Priest & Penitens y<sup>r</sup> talked as homo & homo.

"His name was John Clark. About 30 yeares before this he left England (circa A. D. MDCL.) & went in a shippe to America, & y<sup>r</sup> shippe was wracked & he with some mates in a boat was picked up by a shippe of y<sup>r</sup> Buccanneers who took them all to their settlement in y<sup>r</sup> insula Hispaniola, & there Clarke & his companions all joined y<sup>r</sup> Buccanneers, & took y<sup>r</sup> sacramentum or oath of fidelitas & made abjuratio of all other ties & bonds, & then after y<sup>r</sup> followed a cursus of bloodshed & rapine & crimes unspeakable. At last on one occasio y<sup>r</sup> shippe in y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> he sailed gave chase to a Spanish gallone y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> they knew to be a treasure shippe from y<sup>r</sup> Havanas, y<sup>r</sup> w<sup>h</sup> they chased for many days & approached y<sup>r</sup> coast of Spain. But y<sup>r</sup> Buccanneers kept her off from a port & in a storm pursued her through the straits & into y<sup>r</sup> Mediterranean, where after two days they made an attack in a calm & captured her. The spolia were incalculabilia for y<sup>r</sup> gallone had y<sup>r</sup> whole of one yeare's revenue of Mexico.

"Now y<sup>r</sup> sacramentum of y<sup>r</sup> Buccanneers bound every one to y<sup>r</sup> strictest fidelitas toward his comrades & y<sup>r</sup> was always an aequale divisio of spolia. But on y<sup>r</sup> occasio y<sup>r</sup> spolia were of so great a magnitudo y<sup>r</sup> nothing like it had been known ever before, & y<sup>r</sup> Capitano was a man of very great ambitio & avaritia—who the day

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