

The Earl replied that Mr. Trefalden would probably put in at Marsala for fresh water.

"Milord carries no arms, no gunpowder, no munitions of war?"

"Only the brass swivel which the signor capitano perceives on deck, and its appurtenances."

The Neapolitan explained that he was under the necessity of requesting permission to glance into the hold, which was accordingly opened for his inspection. He then asked leave to see the cabin, and went down, accompanied by Trefalden and Castletowers, leaving his lieutenant on deck.

"Our friend Sir Thomas Wyld," said the Earl, with an introductory wave of the hand.

Colonna, who was still lying on the sofa, with his pipe in his mouth, and an "old Times" supplement in his hand, lifted up his head at these words, rose lazily, made a very stiff bow, and said nothing. The Neapolitan commander returned the bow, made some pleasant remark on the gentilezza of the pretty little cabin, and again apologised for the trouble he had given.

The present insurrection, he explained, compelled his Majesty's government to keep strict watch upon all vessels sailing towards Sicily. It was not an agreeable service for the officers of his Majesty's navy; but it was a very necessary one. He believed that he had now but one duty left to perform. He must trouble milords to hear him read a little proclamation containing the description of one Giulio Colonna, a noted political offender, for whose apprehension his Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies offered a reward of two thousand piastres. The said Giulio Colonna, he might add, was supposed to be even now on his way to Palermo.

He then drew a paper from his pocket-book, and, removing his hat, read aloud in the name of his sovereign a very minute and accurate inventory of Signor Colonna's outward man, describing his eyes, nose, mouth, teeth, hair, beard, moustache, height, and complexion; to all of which Signor Colonna listened with a placid composure that might have deceived Mephistopheles himself.

"What is all that about?" said he in English, when the officer had finished reading. "I do not understand Italian, you know."

Saxon could hardly forbear laughing outright, while Castletowers gravely translated the proclamation for the benefit of the supposed Sir Thomas.

Colonna smiled, and shrugged his shoulders. "Pshaw!" said he. "A hopeless quest. They might as well try to catch a swallow on the wing!"

Whereupon the Signor capitano, understanding the tone and gesture, though not the words, drew himself up, and replied, with some little assumption of dignity, that the man in question was a notorious traitor, and certain to fall into the hands of justice before long.

He then left the cabin somewhat less graciously than he had entered it, and Lord Castletowers, following him upon deck, took occasion to apologise for his friend.

"Sir Thomas is brusque," he said; "but then the English *are* brusque."

To which the Neapolitan replied by a well-turned compliment to himself, and took his leave. He then returned to his ship, followed by his lieutenant; the ladder was drawn up; final salutations were exchanged; the steam frigate hove off with a fiery panting at her heart; and in a few minutes the strip of blue sea between the two vessels had widened to the space of half a mile.

"Hurra!" shouted the Earl. "Come up, Sir Thomas Wyld, and join me in three cheers for Francesco Secondo! You are safely past Scylla this time."

"And Charybdis," replied Colonna, divesting himself of Saxon's blue coat, and answering from below. "Do you know why I did not come on deck?"

"No."

"Because I caught a glimpse of that lieutenant's face as he jumped on board."

"Do you know him?"

"Perfectly. His name is Galeotti. He used

to profess liberalism a dozen years ago; and he was my secretary in Rome in forty-eight."

CHAPTER LIX. PALERMO.

A gigantic curve of rippling blue sea—an irregular crescent of amber sand, like a golden scimitar laid down beside the waves—a vast area of cultivated slopes, rising terrace above terrace, plateau beyond plateau, all thick with vineyards, villas, and corn-slopes—here and there a solitary convent with its slender bell-tower peeping over the tree-tops—great belts of dusky olives, and, higher still, dense coverts of chestnut and ilex—around and above all, circling in the scene from point to point, an immense amphitheatre of mountains, all verdure below, all barrenness above, whose spurs strike their roots into the voluptuous sea, and whose purple peaks stand in serrated outline against the soft blue sky.

"The bay of Palermo!"

Such was the exclamation that burst from the lips of the two younger men as the Albula rounded the headland of St. Gallo about four o'clock in the afternoon of the day following their encounter with the Neapolitan frigate. Colonna, who had been waiting on deck for the last hour, silent and expectant, held out his arms, as if he would fain have embraced the glorious panorama, and murmured something which might have been a salutation or a prayer.

"Yes, the bay of Palermo!" repeated Lord Castletowers, with enthusiasm. "The loveliest bay in Europe, let the Neapolitan say what he will! That furthest point is Cefala—here is the Monte Pellegrino, crowned with the shrine of Santo Rosalia—yonder, in that mountain gorge, lies Monreale; and this part which we are now passing is called the Colca d'Oro. See, there are the domes of Palermo already coming into sight!"

"And there," said Colonna, pointing to a flag flapping languidly from the battlements of a little tower close down upon the strand, "there, Heaven be praised, is the tricolor of Italy!"

To be continued.

ADDRESSES NOT REJECTED.

Odd addresses of letters passing through the Post Office have occasionally found publicity. We present our readers with a few that have not heretofore been in print; we should add that a district office in London, England, had the honour of sending them to their destination:—

"Guys hospital Charity
Ward day nurse from
No 6 with a bad ankle."

"Missis Carr to be left
at Mister Leshmar
sent telrs gersery."

We venture to assert that Mr. Leshmar *Saint Hiliers, Jersey*, may congratulate himself upon this missive reaching him:

"To Mrs. Dinis Mahony Grayhound
Fullum fields Vollum Green or There Abouts."
If any person amongst our readers knows anything of the extreme western portion of London, they may perhaps identify an old friend in *Fulham fields or Walham green*.

We hope the following did not go astray:

"For henry Mercor
Queen Victoria Steem Ship
No 1 Transport Malt or
on Ealus ware."

We trust the "good ship" was at *Malta*, for we certainly despair of the letter having reached the "elsewhere."

It will be remembered that Sam Weller ended his valentine with a verse, and so we'll conclude with one poetical specimen; the writer, (it will be observed from the italics,) has taken great care to blend the useful with the ornamental:—

"To Miss Bayman at Romford this letter's consigned,
Mr. Postman make haste and convey it;
A confectioner's shop in the market you'll find,
So pray do no longer delay it;
But hasten with speed,
And bear it away;
The postage is settled,
There's nothing to pay."

STEEL PENS.

STEEL pens for writing were first made in England by Mr. Wise in 1803. For a considerable time they were manufactured with flat checks, and a patent was taken out for them in this form in 1812. Dr. Wollaston's rhodium pen, and the iridium pen of others, were both flat. About the year 1824, Mr. Perry began to make steel pens on an improved plan, and, six years after, they were manufactured in Birmingham, where some of the largest and finest steel pen establishments are now flourishing. At first they were neither good nor cheap. Pens very inferior to those we now buy at a shilling a gross, were displayed ostentatiously on cardboard squares, and sold at half a crown a dozen. Many large fortunes were made, and numberless patents were taken out. Every possible shape and quality became the subject of a patent, and not half of those proposed were ever manufactured. A pen-maker, who was fast becoming a millionaire, once showed a friend a collection of patented pens, which he had never made nor intended to make. "I buy the designs and models," he said, "of the designers. Then I patent them, and put them to bed. They are well worth manufacturing; indeed, many of them are better than anything in the market. But if I were to bring them out, they would only damage the sale of those I am producing by the million, while I should be at the cost of new machinery. So I let them sleep on; and if I do not wake them, no one else, you see, can." This was a trait of commercial policy well deserving consideration in connection with the subject of patents.

Swedish iron is said to be the best material for pens. It is converted into steel on the old plan in a furnace, or by the new process of Mr. Bessemer, and subsequently hardened by tilling, casting into ingots, and rolling it into thin sheets. The consumption of steel in this way is enormous. As much as four and twenty years ago, it amounted to 120 tons annually, and was equivalent to about two hundred millions of pens. This quantity is now greatly increased in consequence of the penny postage, and the improvements in steel pen manufacture. Some idea of it may be gathered from the fact, that pens may now be bought by the trade at fourpence a gross, the box included, and that there are houses which produce twenty, thirty, and even fifty thousand pens daily throughout the year. The art of pen-making has never been brought to greater perfection than in the manufacture of lithographic "crowquill" steel pens. They are very small, as the term indicates, and are adapted to the finest shading. Their chief use is in lithographic ink on "transfer paper," which has the remarkable property of discharging all its inked lines on the stone, so as to make a complete transfer of the writing or drawing.

The process by which steel pens are made is too long and complicated to be described in this place; but there is one step in it which particularly strikes every visitor of a Birmingham or Sheffield factory. After a great deal of hard treatment they have undergone in the rolling-mill and the cutting-press, in the punching, slitting, and curving, in the oven and the cylinder, the pens have acquired a disagreeable roughness, which must be removed. For this purpose they are put into huge tin cans with a quantity of sawdust. The cans are made to revolve rapidly by steam, and the pens cleanse and smooth each other by friction, while the sawdust takes up all the impurities disengaged. Thus Hallam used to say that the form and gloss, the picturesque of man and man, are merged and ground in the social mill of great cities, where we are all unconsciously employed in rubbing down each other's angles.

He that gets out of debt, grows rich.
When all sins grow old, covetousness is young.
A cool mouth and warm feet live long.
Not a long day, but a good heart, rids work.
He loseth nothing, that loseth not God.
Quick believers need broad shoulders