

Fourier and Bradlaugh to think that society ought to maintain at ease his ugly idleness, but who could not for the life of him tell you the name of a field flower, or say by heart a line of Tasso. The town-youth of Italy is for the most part lazy, conceited, ready to sponge on any relative rather than work; and I believe this to be in a great measure owing to the military service, which takes the young men from their trades and occupations, and from their home life, at the most critical time of their existence, and takes them into the coarse and noisy life of barracks; always a debasing one in time of peace.

As for De Amicis' military sketches, they are pretty and tender tales written from an optimist's point of view; but they are laughed at by Italian officers as "rose-water"—*anglied*, humbug. Moreover, the opinion of no Piedmontese is to be taken seriously as of any political worth; the Piedmontese have got all the plums out of the cake, and naturally declare and believe that no cake was ever better mixed, or better baked, or more excellent for digestion.

If I did not know the language of the country I live in, I should not have as much brains as the dullest green parrot, for I could read and write Italian when I was a child, and I have now lived, as I have said before, ten years in Italy, with many of its country people in my employ. All the abuses I have described in the "Village Commune" I have drawn from facts; and I may add that one of the most famous of the Liberals thanked me for the book, and added, with a sigh, how difficult it was to introduce any reform against the temper of apathy and interested egotism which marks alike the highest and the lowest officials of the land. When an honest minister does come into office, depression and weariness settle down on him at sight of the Augean stable of corruption he has to cleanse, and the net-work of "wire-pulling" wound around all public life. Endless and unscrupulous office-seeking replaces all statesmanship and stifles all parliamentary life.

It may be said that this is a matter of opinion not capable of mathematical demonstration. But I have never heard anyone qualified to judge deny that this is the true description of the body politic of Montecitorio. It is a great pity that in England the old kind of "No Popery" feeling tinges the views of so many, inasmuch that they believe because Rome has been taken from the Popes, all the cardinal virtues and eternal felicity must needs have entered in the breach made by Porta Pia. Your contributor attributes to me "violent partisanship." Of what? Certainly not of the *Progressisti*. As certainly not of the *Papalini*. Of what then? Of the entire people?

I am happy to accept the indictment. Nevertheless, though I do charge the nobility with supineness and too great indifference, the statement that I hate the upper classes will surprise my Italian friends, and is distinctly false. It is not the aristocracy who furnishes either the *impiegati*—or the ministries—on whom my work of the "Village Commune" declares war.

I will add, in conclusion, that the assumption that the *borgo* of Santa Rosalea is the *borgo* of Siqua, is incorrect. Siqua was once and for all described in my novel which bears its name, and Santa Rosalea is sketched from a much less picturesque and less historically interesting place.

Oct. 14, 1881.

I beg to remain, sir, yours obediently,

OUIDA.

## ERRATA IN "CIVILIZATION AND EQUALITY" IN THE OCT. NO.

Page 653, line	I should read "when he learns I am able to accept it, I am," &c.
" 658 "	9 from bottom, for "defence" read "difference."
" 659 "	11, for "only" read "really."
" "	24, delete "very."
" 661 "	10, for "original source" read "material."
" "	27, for "would" read "could."
" 662 "	17 from bottom, for "burdens" read "bewilders."
" 663 "	10 " for "commonly" read "conceivably."
" "	9 " for "It is quite true" read "It is true indeed."
" 666 "	4 " should read "Even that is doubtful," replied Seacorts; "but, at all events, it was desire for," &c.
" 667 "	22 " for "It is as," read "It is a."
" "	20 " for "product" read "production."
" "	12 " for "make" read "create."
" "	7 " for "genius" read "genesis."
" 668 "	7 " for "impossible" read "possible."
" 669 "	12, for "The shaft that you thought meant for," read "The shaft that was aimed at."
" "	28, for "doing" read "attempting."
" 672 "	26, for "cheering" read "cherishing."