

THE CARAVANERS

13

to Storchwerder, refreshed always and sometimes pleased as well.

The last of these visits was to Frau von Eckthum and her brother Graf Flitz von Flitzburg, who, as is well known, being himself unmarried, lives with her and looks after the estate left by the deceased Eckthum, thereby stepping into shoes so comfortable that they may more properly be spoken of as slippers. All had gone well up to that, nor was I conscious till much later that that had not gone well too; for only on looking back do we see the distance we have come and the way in which the road, at first so promising, led us before we knew where we were into a wilderness plentiful in stones. During our first four visits we had naturally talked about our plan to take a trip in August in Italy. Our friends, obviously surprised, and with the expression on their faces that has its source in thoughts of legacies, first enthusiastically applauded and then pointed out that it would be hot. August, they said, would be an impossible month in Italy: go where we would we should not meet a single German. This had not struck us before, and after our first disappointment we willingly listened to their advice rather to choose Switzerland, with its excellent hotels and crowds of our countrymen. Several times in the course of these conversations did we try to explain the honeymoon nature of