

CHAPTER LXXII.

SIGNOR PISTOLA, to whom we can give no other name than that by which Consuelo had designated him—for we have found nothing interesting enough in his character to induce us to make any enquiries concerning him—had seen, from the place where he lay hid, the berlin stop at the cries of the fugitives. The other nameless person, whom with Consuelo we shall term the silent man, had made the same observation from the top of the hill, and ran to tell Mayer what he had seen, and to concert with him the plans for their escape. Before the baron had crossed the rivulet, Pistola had gained some distance, and had hidden himself in the woods. He allowed the horsemen to pass him, and then fired two pistol shots at them deliberately from behind. One ball passed through the baron's hat, the other slightly wounded the servant's horse. The baron turned his charger, caught sight of the man, galloped up to him, and stretched him on the ground by a pistol shot, where he left him, rolling among the thorns with fearful imprecations, to follow Joseph, who reached M. Mayer's carriage nearly at the same moment with the count's berlin. The latter had already leaped to the ground; but Mayer and the silent man had already taken to flight with the horse, without taking time to attempt the concealment of the carriage. The first care of the conquerors was to force the lock of the compartment in which the prisoner was confined. Consuelo joyfully assisted in cutting the cords and removing the gag of the unhappy wretch, who no sooner felt himself delivered than he cast himself at the feet of his liberators, thanking God and them. But so soon as he saw the baron he fancied he had fallen from Charybdis into Scylla. "Ah, Monsieur Baron de Trenck!" cried he, "do not destroy me—do not give me up. Mercy mercy! for a poor deserter, who is the father of a family. I am no more a Prussian than you, Monsieur Baron. Like you, I am an Austrian subject, and I implore you not to have me arrested. Oh! have mercy upon me!"

"Have mercy upon him, Monsieur le Baron Trenck," cried Consuelo without having any idea to whom she was speaking, or what was the subject of debate.

"I pardon you," replied the baron; "but on the condition that you bind yourself by the most solemn oaths, never to confess that you owe your life and liberty to me." And as he spoke thus, the baron, drawing a handkerchief from his pocket, wrapped up his face carefully, only suffering one eye to be seen beneath it.

"Are you wounded?" asked the count.

"No," replied he, slouching his hat over his face; "but if we meet these pretended brigands, I have no desire to be recognised by them. I do not stand too well, as it is, on the papers of our most gracious sovereign, and this is all that would be necessary to ruin me."

"I understand what you mean," answered the count; "but be under no apprehensions. I take everything upon myself."

"That would be quite enough to save a deserter from the cat-o'-nine tails or the gallows, but not to preserve me from disgrace. But it does not matter. No one knows what will happen next. A man ought to oblige his fellow at all hazards. Come, poor devil; can you keep your feet? Not too well, I see. Are you wounded?"

"In several places—but I do not feel it now."

"In a word, can you manage to crawl away?"

"Oh! yes, monsieur aid-de-camp."

"Do not call me so, fellow. Be silent, and begone. and let us, my dear count, do the same. I shall not be easy till I am out of this wood. I have knocked over one of his recruiters—if the king should learn it, I should be in a nice place, should I not? Yet, after all, I laugh at it," he added, shrugging up his shoulders.

"Alas!" said Consuelo, while Joseph passed his gourd of wine to the deserter—"if he is abandoned here, he will be retaken instantly. His feet are still swelled in consequence of his ligatures, and he can hardly use his hands. See how pale and exhausted he is."

"We will not abandon him," said the count, who could not keep his eyes off Consuelo.—"Franz," he added, speaking to his servant, "dismount from your horse; and do you," turning to the deserter—"get upon his back. I give him to you, and this also,"—throwing him his purse. "Are you strong enough to make good your way to Austria?"

"Oh! yes, monseigneur."

"Do you intend to go to Vienna?"

"Yes, Monseigneur."

"Do you wish to take service again?"

"Yes, monseigneur, if it be not under his Majesty of Prussia."

"Go then to her Majesty, the Queen Empress; she receives every one once a week. Tell her that the Count Hoditz makes her a present of a fine grenadier, perfectly disciplined in the Prussian style."

"I go, monseigneur."

"And take care you be not so unlucky as to mention, monsieur, the baron's name, or I will have you taken by my people, and sent back into Prussia."

"I would rather die at once. Oh! if those wretches had left me the use of my hands, I would have killed myself when I was retaken."

"Be off."

"Yes, monseigneur."

He finished the contents of the gourd, returned it to Joseph, without knowing who it was that had rendered him so important a service, prostrated himself before the count and the baron, and at a gesture of impatience made by the latter, signed the cross, kissed the earth, and mounted his horse by the aid of the servants, for he was still unable to move his feet; but no sooner was he in the saddle, than recovering his faculties, he set spurs to his horse, and went off at a hard gallop on the southern road.

"This, at all events, will complete my ruin, should it ever be discovered that I allowed you to do this. It is all one," he added. "The idea of making a present to Maria Theresa of one of Frederick's grenadiers, is delightful. The same madcap who sent bullets to the Hulus of the Empress, will send them next to the King of Prussia's body-guard. Faithful subjects, and well-chosen soldiers on my honor!"

"The sovereigns will be none the worse served. But now, then, what are we to do with these children?"

"We can say, with the grenadier," replied Consuelo, "if you abandon us we are lost."

"I do not think," replied the count, who spoke with a sort of

affectation of chivalry, "that we have given you any reason, thus far, to doubt our sentiments of humanity. We are about to carry you so far, that you will need no farther protection. My servant, whom I have dismounted, will ride on the rumble of the carriage," said he, addressing the baron, and immediately added—"do not you prefer the society of these children to that of the footman, whom we shall be obliged to admit into the carriage, and whose presence will greatly constrain us?"

"Unquestionably," replied the baron. "Artists, however poor they may be, are never out of place in any society. Who knows, if he who has just picked up his violin among those bushes, and who is bringing it back with such an air of triumph, may not be a Tartini in disguise. "Now, troubadour," said he to Joseph, who had just repossessed himself of his knapsack, his instrument, and his manuscripts on the field of battle, "come with us, and, at your first night's lodging, you shall sing us this glorious combat, in which we have encountered no one to whom to speak."

"You may quiz me as much as you please," said the count, when they were installed in the back of the carriage—the young people occupying the front seat—while the berlin was rolling as fast as it could, on the road to Austria; "you who have robbed the gallows of its game, by your pistol shot."

"I am very much afraid that I did not kill him dead, and that I shall meet him some day or other at the door of Frederick's cabinet. Then I shall have much pleasure in making my exploit over to you."

"I, who have not so much as seen the enemy, envy you your plot sincerely," said the count. "I had taken quite a fancy for the adventure, and I should have had much pleasure in punishing the scoundrels as they deserve. To come and seize deserters, and levy recruits in the territories of Bavaria, which is now the faithful ally of Maria Theresa, is a piece of insolence which has hitherto wanted even a name."

"It would be a ready-made cause of war, if the kings were not tired of fighting, and if the times were not peaceful just now. You will therefore oblige me greatly, by giving no currency to this adventure, not only on account of my sovereign, who would owe me very little favor for the part I have borne in it, but also on account of the mission with which I am charged to your empress. I should find her, I fancy, very ill-disposed to receive me, if I should approach her, when she had just heard of such an act of impertinence on the part of my government."

"Fear nothing from me," said the count. "You know I am not a very zealous subject, because I am not an ambitious courtier."

"And what ambition would you have any longer? Love and fortune have both crowned your every wish; while I—ah! how different are our fortunes hitherto, notwithstanding the analogy which they present at the first aspect."

As he spoke the baron drew from his breast a miniature, set with diamonds, and began contemplating it with eyes of tenderness, uttering deep sighs, which had very nearly set Consuelo laughing; for she did not think so indiscreet a passion in very good taste, and could not help internally making merry with that ultra-aristocratic manner.

"My dear baron," said the count, lowering his voice, while Consuelo did her utmost to avoid showing that she understood him, "I beseech you to grant the confidence with which you have honored

me, to no other person; and more especially, to show that portrait to no other. Put it back into its case, and remember that this boy understands French, as well as you or I."

"By the way," said the baron, shutting up the miniature which Consuelo had carefully avoided seeing, "what the devil could our friends the recruiters have wanted to do with these two little boys? Tell us, what did they promise, to induce you to go with them?"

"In truth," said the count, "I never thought of that; but it is strange enough, that they who never desire to enlist others than men in the prime and strength of manhood, and that too of gigantic stature, should have desired to enrol two little boys."

Thereupon Joseph related how Mayer, as he called himself, had pretended to be a professor of music, and had constantly talked to them of Dresden, and an engagement in the Elector's chapel.

"Oh! now I see; and I would lay a wager that I know this Mayer," said the baron. "He must be a fellow of the name of N**, formerly a band-master, and now a recruiter of music for the Prussian regiments. Our countrymen have such hard heads that there is no getting them to play in time or tune; and if his Majesty, who has a nicer ear than the late king his father, did not draw his clarions, fifes and trumpets from Bohemia or Hungary, he would scarce get a band at all. The good professor of brass-flourishes thought to make a nice present to his master, bringing him back not only a deserter but two intelligent-looking little musicians; and the false pretext of offering them Dresden and the luxuries of a court was not a bad falsehood to begin with. But had you once got to Dresden, my lads, willing or unwilling, you would have been incorporated in the band of some infantry regiment or other, only until the end of your days."

"I know not what sort of fate should have awaited us," replied Consuelo. "I have heard tell of the abominations of that military rule; of the ill-faith and cruelty with which recruits are raised. And I see, by the manner in which those villains treated that unhappy grenadier, that what I heard was in no sort exaggerated. Oh! this Frederick the Great!"

"Learn young man," replied the baron, with an ironical emphasis, "that his majesty is ignorant of the means, and is acquainted only with the results."

"By which he profits, caring nothing for aught else," cried Consuelo, fired by an irrepressible indignation. "Oh! I know it, Monsieur Baron. I know that kings are innocent of all the crimes which are committed for their pleasure."

"The lad has wit," said the count, laughing; "but have a care, my pretty little drummer, and remember that you are speaking in the presence of a superior officer of the regiment to which perhaps you would have belonged."

"Knowing how to be silent myself, Monsieur Count, I never entertain a doubt of the discretion of others."

"Do you hear him, baron? He promises you that silence, which you never thought of asking of him. Come, he is a charming lad."

"And I trust myself to him with all my heart," said the baron. "Count, you ought to enroll him yourself, and offer him as a page to her highness."

"It is done, if he consents," said the count laughing. "Will you accept this engagement, which is very much lighter than that in the Prussian service? Ah! my lad, there is no question of blowing into

brass, beating to arms before daybreak, being caned, or eating bread made of pounded bricks, but of carrying the train and fan of an admirably beautiful and gracious lady, of dwelling in a fairy palace, of being president over sports and frolics, and playing your part in concerts worth fifty times those of Frederick the Great. Are you tempted? At all events, do not take me for a second M. Mayer."

"And who is this gracious and magnificent highness, whom I shall be called upon to serve?" asked Consuelo with a smile.

"It is the dowager Margravine of Bareith, Princess of Culmbach, my wife," replied Count Hoditz. "She is now Chatelaine of Roswald, in Moravia."

Consuelo had heard the Canoness Wenceslawa de Rudolstadt relate the genealogies, alliances, and anecdotal history of all the principalities and aristocracies, both great and small, of Germany and the circumjacent countries, above a hundred times; and among others that of the Count Hoditz Roswald—a very rich Moravian lord, exiled and abandoned by a father irritated at his conduct—an adventurer widely known throughout Europe; and to conclude, the high chamberlain, lover, and ultimately husband of the Margravine, dowager of Bareith, whom he had secretly married, carried off to Vienna, and thence into Moravia, where having recently inherited from his father, he had been recently put in possession of a splendid fortune. The canoness had often dwelt on the details of this story, which she regarded as especially scandalous, because the Margravine was a sovereign princess, and the count no more than a private gentleman; and to declaim against all *mesalliances* and love marriages, was a very favorite subject with her. On her side, Consuelo, who was anxious to understand and to be well informed concerning the prejudices of the noble caste, took heed of all their legends, and forgot none of them. The very first time the name of the Count Hoditz had been mentioned before her, she had been struck by a vague reminiscence, and now she had clearly before her mind's eye, all the circumstances of the life, and romantic marriage of the celebrated adventurer; of the Baron Trenck, who was only then on the verge of his memorable misfortunes, and who could not even presage the horrors that were to befall him, she had never even heard tell. She listened, therefore to the count, as he descanted with vanity enough on the circumstances of his newly acquired wealth. Laughed at and despised for a long time in the small, but haughty courts of Germany, Hoditz had blushed for years at being considered a poor devil of an adventurer, enriched by his wife. The inheritor of enormous wealth, he now looked upon himself as completely restored, while he displayed the pomp and luxury of a monarch on the estate of his Moravian county; and complacently produced his new titles for the respectful or curious consideration of the second-rate crowned heads, who were immeasurably poorer than himself. Full of kind considerations and delicate attentions to a wife, who was much older than himself; whether that princess had the good principles and good taste of the king, which led her to wink at the occasional infidelity of her illustrious husband, or that she thought that, owing his nobility to her, he could never close his eyes upon the decline of her beauty, she took no heed of his fancies.

After travelling a few leagues, they found a relay of horses ready for the illustrious travellers; Consuelo and Joseph now proposed to get down and take their leave, but their patrons objected, saying that

they were still liable to the attempts of the recruiters, with whom the country is overrun.

"You know nothing," said Trenck to them—and he by no means exaggerated—"of this able and formidable class. On whatever spot of civilized Europe you set foot, if you are poor and defenceless, if you possess either strength or talent, you are exposed to the deceit or the violence of these men. They know all the frontier passes—all the mountain roads, all the byways, all the suspicious lodgings, all the villains whose aid they can depend upon in cases of necessity, even to the strong hand. They speak all languages, all provincial dialects, for they have visited all nations, and dwell after their fashions in all trades. They are excellent riders, runners, swimmers; they can throw themselves over precipices like actual banditti. They are, as a rule, all brave, all seasoned to fatigue, clever and impudent liars, vindictive, pliable, and cruel. They are the very refuse of the human race, by whom the military organization of the late king of Prussia, William the First, profited as the most useful purveyors to its power, and the most important auxiliaries of its discipline. They would catch him a deserter in the extremity of Siberia, or would seek him in the hottest of the enemy's fire, for the mere pleasure of bringing him back to Prussia, and having him hanged *in terrorem*. They tore a priest from the altar, because he was five feet ten in height; they stole a physician from the princess electoral; they drove the old Margrave of Bareith half frantic ten times over, by carrying off from him his whole army, twenty or thirty thousand strong, without his daring to demand explanations; they made a French gentleman, who was going to see his wife and children in the environs of Strasburgh, a soldier to the day of his death; they have taken Russians from the Czarina Elizabeth, Hulus from the Mareschal of Saxony, Pandours from Maria Theresa, magnates of Hungary, Polish lords, Italian singers, women of all nations, compulsory wives, like the Sabines of old, for the common soldiers. Everything is game that falls into their net. Besides their appointments, and the expenses of their journeys, which are paid most liberally, they receive a premium *per capita* furnished; nay, more, by the inch and barleycorn of height of each recruit."

"Yes," said Consuelo, "they furnish human flesh, at so much the ounce weight. Ah! your great king is but an ogre! But rest easy, Monsieur Baron. Be you assured that you did a good action, when you restored our poor deserter to liberty. For me, I had rather undergo all the penalties that awaited him, than say one word that should injure you."

Trenck, whose fiery spirit was but slenderly tempered by prudence, and whose temper was already soured by the incomprehensible cruelties and injustice of Frederick toward him, felt a bitter pleasure in revealing to Count Hoditz the crimes of that government, whose accomplice and servant he had been in days of prosperity, when his conscience was less easily pricked than at present. Now persecuted in secret, though ostensibly owing to the confidence of the king his honorable diplomatic mission to the court of Maria Theresa, he began to detest his master, and to suffer his opinions to appear too plainly. He related to the count the sufferings, the slavery, and the despair of the Prussian army, which, precious in war, was so dangerous in time of peace, that it had become necessary, in order to keep it under any sort

have recourse to a system of

unexampled barbarity. He related the epidemic of suicide which had spread through the army, and the crimes committed by soldiers otherwise honest and religious men, for the mere purpose of getting themselves condemned to death, and of so escaping a life too horrible for endurance. Would you believe that the ranks which are under surveillance, are those most anxiously desired? For you must know that these ranks, under surveillance, are composed of foreign recruits, of men carried off from their own homes, or of young Prussians, who, during the earlier part of a career, which is only to end with life, are a prey for the most part to absolute despair. These are divided into ranks, and whether in peace or in war, are made to march before a line of men more resigned to their fate and more determined, who have orders to fire upon them at the slightest indication of their flying, or attempting to desert. If the rank charged with this execution neglect their duty, the rear rank, which is composed of men yet more insensible and cruel—for there are such among the old hardened soldiers and the volunteers, most of whom are scoundrels—has orders to fire on both indiscriminately. Thus every rank in the army has, on the day of battle, an enemy in front and an enemy in the rear, nowhere equals, comrades, or brothers in arms, but everywhere violence, dismay and death! "It is thus," said the great Frederick, "that an invincible soldiery is formed." Well! a place in these front ranks is envied and sought out by the young Prussian soldier; and so soon as he is stationed in one of these, without entertaining the slightest hope of escape, he disbands and throws away his arms to draw upon himself the fire of his comrades. This movement of despair has saved many, who, risking all to gain all, succeed in escaping, and often pass over to the enemy. The king is not in the slightest doubt as to the detestation in which the army hold himself and his yoke of iron; and you are, perhaps, acquainted with the anecdote relating to himself and to his nephew, the Duke of Brunswick, who was present at one of his great reviews, and appeared never to wax weary of admiring the admirable combination, and superb manoeuvres of his troops. "The discipline and the working of such a mass of fine-looking men, appears to surprise you," said Frederick. "But there is something that surprises me much more." "What is that?" asked the young duke. "It is that you and I should be in safety in the midst of them," answered the king.

"Baron, my dear baron," replied the Count Hoditz, "this is the reverse of the medal. Nothing is done miraculously among men. How should Frederick be the greatest captain of his day, if he were as gentle as a dove? Hold!—say no more; or you will compel me, who am his natural enemy, to take his part against you, who are his aid-de-camp and his favorite."

"According to the mode in which he treats his favorites, when he is in a whimsical humor," replied Trenck, "it is easy to judge how he treats his slaves. But, as you say, let us speak of him no more; for when I do think, a sort of devilish desire seizes me to return into the woods, and strangle with my own hands his zealous purveyors of human flesh, whom I spared through a cowardly prudential policy."

The generous indignation of the baron charmed Consuelo; she listened eagerly to his animated pictures of Prussian military life; and being ignorant that some personal resentment was intermingled with his spirited vehemence, she looked on it as the evidence of a truly great soul. And in truth, there was much real greatness of soul

in Trenck's feelings. Proud as he was handsome, that youth was never meant to grovel; and, in this respect there was a vast difference between him and the chance companion of his journey, the rich and superb Count Hoditz. The latter having been during his whole boyhood the terror and despair of his preceptors, had been at last given up to himself, and although he had now passed the age of noisy outbreaks, he preserved in his manners and deportment something boyish which stood in strange contrast to his herculean stature, and his fine features, something faded by forty years of toils and debaucheries. The superficial knowledge which he displayed from time to time, he had derived only from romances, fashionable philosophy, and constant attendance at the theatre. He prided himself on being an artist, yet wanted both the discernment and depth of an artist, in every respect. Notwithstanding all this, his air of nobility, his exquisite affability, his delicate and lively ideas soon acted on young Haydn's imagination, who preferred him to the baron, perhaps not a little on account of the superior degree of attention paid to the latter by Consuelo.

The baron on the contrary had studied in earnest, and if the glare of courts and the heat of youth had at times dazzled him as to the true weight and worth of human dignities, he had ever preserved within his inmost soul that independence of sentiment and equity of character which serious reading and noble instincts, developed by education, are wont to bestow. His proud character had failed to resist the petrifying influences of the caresses and flatteries of power but it had remained unsubdued by the attempts to bend, so that at the least touch of injustice, it had arisen against the blow only the more fierce and fiery. The handsome page of Frederick had only touched his lip with the poisoned chalice; but love, a true, a rash, and impassioned love, had reanimated his audacity and his perseverance. Touched to the most feeling nerve of his heart, he had raised his head, and face to face, defied the tyrant who had desired to bring him to his knees.

At the date of our tale, he seemed not to have passed his twentieth year at the farthest. A forest of dark hair which he had refused to sacrifice to the childish discipline of Frederick, overshadowed his broad forehead. His figure was superb, his eyes sparkling, his moustache as black as ebony; his hand as white as alabaster, though strong as that of a Greek athlete, his voice as fresh and manly as his features, his ideas and his hopes of love. Consuelo pondered over that mysterious love, which was forever on his lips; and which, the more she observed him, she thought the less ridiculous, on account of the blending of natural vehemence, and of distrust but too well founded which set a perpetual warfare between himself and his fortunes. She even felt an inexpressible curiosity to know the mistress of that young man's secret thoughts, and surprised herself sending up sincere prayers for the success and triumph of the lovers. She did not find the day so long as she had expected to in a tiresome situation, *vis-à-vis* to two persons of a rank so different from her own. She had acquired in Venice the comprehension, and at Riesenberg, the practice, of politeness, of the gentle manners, and well-toned conversation, which are the bright side of what was called in those days, exclusively good company.

While holding herself on her reserve, and only speaking when spoken to she felt much at her ease, and made her reflections inter-

nally on all that passed before her eyes. Neither the baron nor the count appeared to suspect her disguise. The first, paid in fact little or no attention, either to her or to Joseph. If he addressed a few words to them, he continued the conversation, turning round to the count; and indeed, while talking with enthusiasm, he very often seemed to forget him also, and to converse with his own thoughts, like a soul which feeds itself on its own fires. As to the count, he was by turns as grave as a crowned head, and as frivolous as a French marchioness. He drew his tablets from his pocket and took notes with all the gravity of a diplomatist; and again he hummed them over in tune, so that Consuelo perceived them to be little poems in gallant and high-flown French. Then he would read them over to the baron, who lauded them to the skies without listening to them; and again he would ask Consuelo good-naturedly, what was her opinion of them. "How do you like them, my little friend? You understand French, don't you?"

Consuelo, who was annoyed by this false condescension, which seemed anxious to dazzle her, could not resist her desire to point out two or three errors in one of his quatrains on beauty. Her mother had taught her to pronounce and enunciate clearly the languages which she sang herself with ease, and even with elegance. Consuelo, studious, and seeking for harmony in everything, according to the dictates of her own highly musical organization, had found in books the key and rule to all these divers languages. She had above all examined into their prosody, by exercising herself in the translation of their lyric poetry, and adjusting foreign words to national airs, so as to make herself fully acquainted with rhythm and accent. She had thus arrived at a full understanding of the rules of versification in several languages, and it was no difficult task to her to point out the errors of the Moravian Poet. Astonished at her knowledge, yet unable to bring himself to mistrust his own, Hoditz consulted the baron concerning the opinions of the little musician, to which he was perfectly capable of giving the preference. From that moment the count occupied himself entirely with Consuelo, though he still did not appear to suspect her real age or sex. He only asked, where he had been educated, to understand so well the rules of Parnassus.

"At the free school of the Venetian chapters."

"It seems to me that they carry their schoolings farther there than they do in Germany. And where was your comrade instructed?"

"In the cathedral at Vienna," said Joseph.

"My children," said the count, "I think that you both possess intelligence and aptitude in a high degree. At our first halting stage, I will examine you in music, and if you come up to the promise given by your countenances and manners, I engage you for my orchestra, or my theatre of Roswald. I will actually present you to the princess, my wife. Aha! what say you to that? It will be a veritable fortune ready made for two lads like you."

Consuelo was taken with a great desire to laugh at the idea of the count undertaking to examine herself and Haydn in music. And it was only by dint of a great effort that she could stifle her entertainment by affecting to bow most respectfully. Joseph perceiving the advantageous consequences to himself of his second proposal, thanked him and did not refuse. The count resumed his tablets and read to Consuelo half of a singularly hideous Italian operetta, full of barbarisms, which he proposed to set to music himself, and to have per-

formed on his wife's birthday by his own actors, in his own theatre, in his own castle, or to speak more correctly, in his own royal residence; for considering himself a prince, by right of marriage with the Margravine, he spoke of himself in no other capacity.

Consuelo touched Joseph from time to time with her elbow, in order to draw his attention to the blunders of the count, and utterly wearied out with his absurdity, could not help wondering to herself whether that famous beauty, the hereditary Margravine of Bareith, and princess dowager of Culmbach, must be a very silly sort of person, despite all her titles, her gallantries, and her years, to suffer herself to be seduced by madrigals so poor as these.

As he read and declaimed aloud, the count kept swallowing sugar plums to moisten his throat, and continually offered them to the young travellers, who being desperately hungry, as having eaten nothing since the preceding day, took those suckshaws which were more suitable to provoke than to satiate the appetite, for want of anything better, thinking continually that it was no easy matter to determine whether the count's sweetmeats or his rhymes were the least unpalatable viands.

At length, when the day was closing, the forts and steeples of that town of Passau, which that very morning Consuelo scarcely hoped ever to see, began to be apparent on the horizon. That sight, after so many trials and dangers as they had undergone, was almost as delightful to her, as would have been at another moment that of Venice, and as they crossed the Danube she could not resist the temptation of giving Joseph a push with her hand.

"Is he your brother?" asked the count, who had never before thought of enquiring.

"Yes, monseigneur," Consuelo made answer at once, in order to get rid of his inquisitive questions.

"You are not at all like each other, nevertheless," said the count.

"It is not so uncommon a thing for children to be unlike their fathers," replied Joseph merrily.

"Were you brought up together?"

"No, monseigneur—in a wandering life like ours, one is brought up as he can, and when he can."

"I know not why I think so," said the count to Consuelo, lowering his voice as he spoke, "but I cannot but believe that you are well born. Everything in your appearance and language announces something of natural distinction."

"I know not how I was born," she answered with a light laugh. "But I suppose I was born a musician from father to son, for there is nothing on earth that I love but music."

"Wherefore are you dressed as a Moravian peasant?"

"Because my travelling clothes being worn out, I bought the first I could find at a fair."

"Have you been in Moravia, then?—Perhaps you have, even to Roswald?"

"Near it, monseigneur—yes, I have," said Consuelo mischievously—"I perceived from afar off, and without daring to approach them, your superb demesnes, your statues, cascades, gardens, mountains—nay! but I know not what marvels—in truth, a very fairy palace."

"You have seen all that!" said the count, astonished, and forgetting that Consuelo, having heard him describing all the delights of his residence, during two whole hours, could have no difficulty in describing it on his authority without risk of discovery."

"That must assuredly then give you a desire to return thither."
 "I am dying with a wish to do so, since I have had the good fortune to become known to you," said Consuelo, who wanted to pay him off by a little mockery for the reading of his opera which he had inflicted on her.

She leaped lightly out of the barque in which they crossed over crying out with an exaggerated German accent—"O, Passau, I salute thee."

The berlin carried them to the house of a rich lord, a friend to the count, who was absent for the moment, but whose house was ready for their occupation. They were expected, and the servants were already busy preparing supper, which was almost immediately set on the table. The count, who took great pleasure in the society of his little musician, as he called Consuelo, would have desired to bring her to table, but the fear of annoying the baron prevented him; Consuelo and Joseph were, however, well contented to eat in the offices, and made no difficulty about sitting down with the servants. Joseph indeed had never been treated with more respect by the great nobles who had employed him at their feasts; and although the sense of his art had elevated his heart enough to enable him to perceive the outrage that was done him, he never forgot, and that without feeling any shame of it, that his mother had been the cook of the Count Harrach, the lord of his village. Even at a later day, when his genius was fully expanded, Haydn was but a little better appreciated by his protectors, as a man, although as an artist he was admired all over Europe. He was eight-and-twenty years in the service of the Prince Esterhazy, and when we say in the service, we do not mean in the quality of musician only. Paër saw him with a napkin under his arm and a sword by his side, waiting behind his master's chair, and performing all the duties of a *maitre d'hotel*, that is to say of first valet, according to the custom of the age and the country.

Consuelo on the contrary, had never eaten with servants since her journeys as a child with her mother the Zingara. She amused herself much with the fine airs which these village lackeys assumed, who held themselves degraded by the company of the two little strollers, and who not only put them at the worst end of the table, but served them with the worst morsels. Their good appetite, and natural frugality caused them however to think these excellent, and their good-humor having disarmed the pride of the serving men, they were requested to make some music to amuse messieurs, the lackeys, at their dessert. Joseph at once avenged himself of their previous grudge by playing the violin very obligingly, and Consuelo herself, no longer feeling anything of her sufferings and agitations of the morning, began to sing, when word was brought that the count and the baron wanted some music for their own diversion. There was no possibility of refusing. After the aid which the two lords had given them, Consuelo would have considered any hesitation on her part a piece of gross ingratitude, and moreover to make a pretext of fatigue or hoarseness would not have answered, since their voices rising from the offices to the parlor had doubtless long since reached the ears of the masters.

She followed Joseph, therefore, who like herself had made up his mind to play his part to his best during their pilgrimage; and when they had entered a handsome dining-room where, by the light of twenty wax candles, the two nobles sat leaning their elbows on the board, with their last bottle of Hungary wine before them, they stood at the

door like musicians of low grade, and began to sing the little Italian duets which they had studied together in the mountains. "Attention! Joseph," cried Consuelo, mischievously. "Remember that Monsieur le Comte wishes to examine us; let us try to acquit ourselves creditably."

The count was much flattered by this reflection; the baron had placed the portrait of his mysterious dulcinea on his reversed plate, and did not appear at all disposed to listen.

Consuelo was on her guard against displaying either the full compass of her voice or the full extent of her resources. Her pretended sex did not admit of tones so soft and liquid, nor was her assumed age consistent with such an amount of talent and science. She counterfeited a boy's voice, somewhat hoarse and deteriorated by premature exertion. It, moreover, amused her to imitate the artless inaccuracies, and tamerities of misapplied ornaments, which she had so often heard committed by children in the streets of Venice. But, although she desported herself wondrously in that species of musical parody, there was so much natural taste in her whimsicalities, and the duet was sung with so much spirit and concert, that the baron, who really was a musician, and of a fine artistic organization, replaced his miniature in his bosom, raised his head, fidgetted in his chair, and ended by clapping his hands violently, and crying out that it was the truest and most feeling music he had ever heard. Count Hoditz, however, whose head was full of Fuchs, Rameau, and his classic authors, did not equally appreciate either the style of the composition or the method of rendering it. He thought in his own mind that the baron was a northern barbarian, and that his two proteges were sufficiently intelligent scholars, but that by his own lessons he should have to elevate them out of the mire of ignorance. It was his mania to form his artists by his own teaching, and he said with a sentimental shake of the head, "There is something pretty good in this—but there will be very much to correct. Well! well! we will soon arrange all that!" He pictured to himself that Joseph and Consuelo were already his own private property, and a portion of his choir. He afterwards begged Haydn to play on the violin—and as he had no interest in the concealment of his talent, he played admirably well an air of his own composition, which was particularly well adapted to the instrument. This time the count was very well pleased. "As for you," said he; "your place is already found. You shall be my first violin—you will suit me then exactly. But you must practice also on the *viola d'amour*; I prefer the *viola d'amour* to any instrument—I will teach you how to play it."

"Is Monsieur le Baron also well pleased with my comrade's music?" asked Consuelo of Trenck, who had again relapsed into deep thought.

"So well pleased," he answered; "that in case of my making any stay in Vienna, I will have no master but him."

"I will teach you the *viola d'amour*," said the count; "and I ask the refusal."

"I prefer the violin, and this teacher," said the baron, who, absent-minded as he was, showed a most magnanimous sincerity;—and with the words he took up the violin and played some passages of the piece which Joseph had just given, with much purity and correct expression. Then returning the instrument, he said with unfeigned modesty—"I only played it to let you see that I am fitted only to become

your scholar; but that with attention and obedience I am capable of learning."

Consuelo asked him to play something more, and he did so at once, without any affectation. He had talent, taste, and intelligence, and Hoditz praised the composition of his piece extravagantly.

"It is not very good," said Trenck carelessly; "for it is my own. But I like it, because it pleased my princess."

The count made a hideous grimace, as if to warn Trenck of his inadvertency; but he took not the slightest notice, but buried in his own thoughts, drew the bow backward and forward over the strings for a few moments, and then rising, laid the violin on the table and, drawing his hand across his brow, strode to and fro for a minute or two, then coming up to the count, he said to him:

"I am compelled to wish you good night, my dear count; for being compelled to set out at daybreak, I ordered my carriage to be ready to take me up here at three in the morning. Since you propose to stay here all the morning, in all probability we shall not meet again till we reach Vienna. I shall be truly glad to see you again then, and to thank you for the agreeable termination of the journey, which I have made in your company. Truly and from my heart, I am devoted to you through life."

They pressed each the other's hand several times; but before he left the room the baron drew near to Joseph, and handed him some gold pieces, saying: "This is on account of the lessons which I shall ask you to give me at Vienna.—You will find me at the Prussian ambassador's." Then he gave Consuelo a little nod of the head, saying: "As for you, if I ever find you as drummer or trumpeter in my regiment, we will desert together—do you understand me?" and thereupon he left the apartment, after having bowed once again to Count Hoditz.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

So soon as the Count Hoditz found himself alone with his musicians, he felt himself more at his ease, and became very communicative. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to play the part of chapel master, or director of an opera; and he wanted Consuelo to begin her musical education without further delay. "Come hither," said he, "and sit down. We have it all to ourselves now, and no one can listen or attend who is not half a league absent from all the rest of the world.—Sit down you, also," said he to Joseph—"and take advantage of the lesson. You do not know how to make the smallest *trill*," said he again, addressing the great cantatrice. "Listen, this is the way it is done"—and he sang a very common-place passage, introducing two or three of those ornaments into it, in the vulgar style imaginable. Consuelo amused herself by repeating the phrase, substituting a descending for an ascending trill.

"It is not so!" cried the count in a stentorian voice, slapping his hand upon the table. "You did not listen to me."

He began again; and again Consuelo sang the ornaments false, in a manner much more desperately than she had done the first time, keeping her gravity, and affecting to make the greatest efforts of at-

ention and exertion. Joseph was choking with suppressed laughter and pretended to be seized with a fit of coughing, in order to conceal it.

"La-la-la—trala—trala!" sang the count, mocking his inept scholar, and fidgetting on his chair with all the symptoms of a violent indignation, which he really did not feel in the slightest degree, but which he thought it necessary to assume for the support of the power, and magisterial dignity of his manner.

Consuelo made fun of him for a good quarter of an hour, and then, when she was fairly tired, sang the *trill* with all the clearness and power of which she was capable.

"Bravo! bravissimo!" cried the count, leaning back in his chair—"At last, that is perfect. I was sure I could teach it to you. Let any one bring me the first peasant I can find, and I am sure of forming him, and teaching him in a single day all that others would fail to do in a year. Once more sing that phrase, and carefully mark all the notes, but so lightly that you shall scarce seem to touch them. That is much better—that cannot be improved. We shall make something of you, I see"—and the count wiped his brow, although there was not a drop of moisture on it.

"Now," he resumed—"the cadence *with a fall and turn of the pipe!*" and he set her the example with one of those every-day abilities which the worst singers acquire, merely from hearing superior artists, in whom they admire only their *tours de force*, and to whom they think themselves fully equal—because they can imitate them in these. Consuelo again diverted herself by putting the count into one of his cold-blooded fits of affected passion which he loved to display whenever he mounted his hobby, and concluded by giving a cadence so perfect and so long drawn out, that he was forced to cry—

"Enough! enough! It is done; you have got it now. I was very sure that I should give you the key to it. Now, then, let us pass to the *roulade*. You learn with marvellous ease—I wish that I always had pupils as promising as you are."

Consuelo, who began to feel sleep and fatigue gaining upon her, greatly abridged the lesson of the *roulade*. She performed all those which the rich pedagogue prescribed to her, with perfect docility, in how bad taste they were soever; and she even allowed her fine voice to resound naturally—no longer fearing to betray herself, when she saw that the count was determined to attribute to himself alone, and his instructions, all the sudden brilliance and celestial purity which her voice displayed more and more, at each succeeding minute.

"How his voice clears up, as I show him how he ought to open his mouth and throw out his voice!" said he to Joseph, as he turned round with an air of triumph. "Distinctness in teaching, perseverance, and example, these are the three things by which singers and orators are made in a very short time. We will take another lesson to-morrow, for we have ten lessons to take, at the end of which you will know how to sing. We have the *appoggiatura*, the *flatte*, the sustained part of the voice, and the perfect part of the voice, the fall, the tender inflexion, the gay marked quaver, and the cadence in diesis, &c., &c. Now go to bed—I have ordered rooms to be prepared for you in this palace. I remain here on business until noon to-morrow; you will breakfast and follow me to Vienna. Consider yourselves from this moment as being in my service; and as a beginning, go, Joseph, and tell my valet-de-chambre to come and light me to my

room. Do you," he continued, addressing Consuelo, "stay here—I am not quite satisfied with your last roudade; pray repeat it."

But scarcely had Joseph left the room, before the count caught both Consuelo's hands with very expressive glances, and tried to draw her toward him. Interrupted in her roudade, Consuelo gazed at him in great amazement, believing that he wanted to make her beat time; but she jerked her hands away from him very abruptly, and retreated to the end of the table, as soon as she saw his sparkling eyes and meaning smile.

"What, are you going to play the prude?" said the count, resuming his indolent and haughty air. "Well, pretty one, you have got a little lover, hey? He is very ugly, poor fellow, and I hope from this day forth you will think no more about him. Your fortune is made if you do not hesitate about it, for I detest long delays. You are a lovely girl, full of cleverness and gentleness; you please me very much, and from the first moment when I set eyes on you, I saw that you were not made to ramble about the country with that little rogue. However, I will take care of him too; I will have him taken to Roswald, and charge myself with his future destinies. As for you, you shall go to Vienna; I will provide suitable lodgings for you, and what is more, if you continue prudent and modest, I will bring you out in the great world. As soon as you know something about music, you shall be the *prima donna* at my theatre, and you shall see your little chance companion, when I bring you to my residence. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, Monsieur le Comte," replied Consuelo with perfect gravity, making him a very low bow, "I understand you perfectly."

Joseph came back at that moment with the valet de chambre, carrying a flambeau in each hand. And the count made his exit, after giving Joseph a little tap on the cheek, and Consuelo a glance of intelligence.

"He is certainly a finished ass," said Joseph to his comrade, as soon as they were left alone.

"Much more finished than you can imagine," she replied very pensively.

"All one for that. He is the best man in the world, and will be of great use to me in Vienna."

"Aye! at Vienna, of as much use as you will, Beppo; but at Passau, he will not be of the least use to us in the world. I can tell you that, Joseph. Where is our baggage?"

"In the kitchen. I am going to fetch them up-stairs to our rooms, which are charming, as they tell me. You will get a good night's rest at last."

"Good, Joseph," said Consuelo shrugging up her shoulders. "Come," she resumed, "go as quick as you can, make up your package, and give up your pretty room and the good bed, in which you have been looking forward to so sweet a sleep. We leave this house this moment; do you hear me? Make haste, or they will have shut the gates."

Haydn thought he was dreaming. "Ah! indeed, very likely," said he. "I suppose these great lords are recruiters also—hey?"

"I am much more afraid of the Hoditz, than I was of the Mayer," said Consuelo impatiently. "Come, bestir yourself, do not hesitate, or I leave you, and set forth alone."

There was so much determined energy in Consuelo's face and voice

that Haydn bewildered and annoyed as he was, obeyed her in haste. He returned in less than three minutes with the knapsack containing their clothes and their music; and in three minutes more, undiscovered by any one, they had left the palace, and were away to the suburb, at the farthest end of the town.

They entered an inferior sort of inn, and hired two miserable little rooms, paying for them in advance, so that they might be able to start as early as they would, without delay.

"Will you not, at least, tell me the meaning of this new alarm?" asked Haydn, as he wished Consuelo good evening at her chamber door.

"Sleep in peace," said she, "and learn in two words that we have now nothing to fear. Monsieur Le Comte has discovered with his eagle-eye, that I am not of his sex, and has done me the honor of making me a proposal, excessively flattering to my self-esteem. Good night, my friend. We will decamp before dawn. I will knock at your door to awaken you."

On the following day, the rising sun shone on our friends as they sailed down the rapid current of the Danube with delight as pure, and hearts as lively as the waves of that noble river. They had paid their passage to an old boatman who was taking down his barque-load of manufactures to Lintz. He was a fine old man, with whom they had no fault to find, and who did not annoy them with his conversation. He did not understand a syllable of Italian, and he took no other passengers, inasmuch as his boat was already sufficiently loaded. And this at length gave them that security of mind, and repose of body, of which they stood so much in need, in order to enjoy properly the beautiful and momentarily changing scenery which this fine navigation afforded to them. The weather was lovely. There was a nice clean little hold to the boat, into which Consuelo could descend if she desired to rest her eyes from the glare of the sunlight on the waters; but she was so much inured to the open air, and the broad sunshine, that she preferred lounging among the bales on deck, deliciously occupied with watching the trees and rocks on the shore, as they appeared to glance by them. She could play and sing at her ease with Haydn; and the comical recollection of Hoditz the *melo-maniac*, or *maestro-maniac*, as Joseph styled him, added much to the gaiety of their warblings. Joseph took him off to admiration, and felt a sort of spiteful pleasure at the thought of his discomfiture. Their songs and merriment charmed and enlivened the old navigator, who was, like every German of the lower orders, passionately fond of music. He also sang them several airs, in which they discovered a certain nautical expression, which Consuelo learned of him, as well as the words; and they completely won his heart by treating him to the best at the first landing place, where they lay to, in order to take in their provisions for the day's journey; and that day was the pleasantest and the most peaceful they spent, since the beginning of their pilgrimage.

"Capital Baron de Trenck!" said Joseph, as he changed for small coins one of the brilliant pieces of gold which that noble had given him. "It is to him that I owe the ability to preserve the divine Porporina from weariness, hunger, danger, and all the ills which misery carries in its train. And yet I did not like him at first sight, that excellent and noble baron."

"I know it," said Consuelo, "you preferred the count to him. I am happy now that he limited himself to promises, and that he did not corrupt our hands by his benefits."

"After all is said," replied Haydn, "we owe him nothing. Who was it that first determined, and first had spirit enough to fight the recruiters? The baron of course. The count cared nothing about it and only did so through complaisance, and because he thought it the fashion to do so. Who was it that ran all the risks, and received a bullet through his hat, and very close to his brains? The baron again. Who was it that wounded, and perhaps killed the infamous Pistola? The baron once more. Who was it that saved the deserter, to his own cost perhaps, and at the risk of incurring the wrath of his terrible master? Last of all, who was it that respected you without pretending to recognise your sex, and both understood and appreciated the beauty of your Italian airs, and the good taste of your manner of singing?"

"Not to say the genius of Master Joseph Haydn?" added Consuelo, with a sly smile. "The baron—still the baron."

"Undoubtedly," said Haydn, paying her back for the malice of her observation; "and it is perhaps very fortunate for a noble and well-beloved absentee, of whom I have heard speak, that the declaration of love to the divine Porporina came from the ridiculous count, instead of from the brave and seductive baron."

"Beppo!" replied Consuelo, with a wan and mournful smile, "the absent are never wronged but by ungrateful and coward hearts. Therefore it is, that the baron, himself generous and sincere, who is deeply in love with his mysterious beauty, could never think of paying court to me. I ask you yourself, could you so easily sacrifice the love of your betrothed, and the faith of your heart, to a fancy for the first comer?"

Beppo sighed deeply. "A passion for you, by whomsoever nourished, could not be termed a *fancy for the first comer*," said he, "and the baron would have been perfectly excusable for forgetting all his past and present loves on seeing you."

"You are becoming quite gallant and flattering, Beppo. I see that you have profited by the society of Monsieur le Comte. But I trust that you may never marry a Margravine, and learn how love is regarded by those who marry for money."

They arrived at Lintz that night, and slept there, careless and fearless, until the morrow. So soon as Joseph was awakened, he hurried to buy shoes, linen, and several little articles of masculine attire for himself, as well as for Consuelo, who was now enabled to make herself brave and a *beau*, as Consuelo said in fine, to walk about the town and its neighborhood. The old boatman had told them that if he could get a freight for Mœlk, he would take them on board, the next day, and carry them yet twenty leagues further down the Danube. They passed that day, therefore, at Lintz, amused themselves with climbing the hill, examining the strong castles at the bottom and on the top of it, whence they could survey the majestic windings of the river, through the fertile plains of Austria. From that elevation they descried what greatly delighted them, the triumphal entry, namely, of Count Hoditz driving into the town. They recognised both the carriage and the liveries, and amused themselves by making low bows quite down to the ground, without the possibility of being seen by him. Toward evening they came down again to the shore, and found their boat laden with freight for Mœlk; whereupon they joyfully made a new bargain with their old steersman, embarked before daybreak, and saw the stars serenely burning far above their

heads, while the reflection of those stars ran in long silvery wakes over the moving mirror of the ripples. This day was not less delightful than the preceding. Joseph had but one regret, in the thought that they were hourly drawing nearer to Vienna, and that their journey, the sufferings and the sorrows of which he had all forgotten, in the memory of its last delicious instants, was drawing to its end.

At Mœlk they had to part from the brave old pilot, and that not without regret. They did not find in any of the vessels, which were in readiness to convey them farther down the stream, any which offered the same conditions of solitude and security. Consuelo felt herself entirely refreshed, recruited, and proof against all future accidents. She proposed to Joseph to resume their pedestrian habits until something new should occur. They had still twenty leagues to go, and this mode of procedure was not certainly the most rapid. The truth is, Consuelo, though she strove hard to persuade herself that she was all anxiety to resume the dress of her sex, and the proprieties of her station, was as little anxious, at the bottom of her heart, as was Joseph himself to see the end of their expedition. She was too thoroughly an artist, to the inmost nerve of her organization, not to love the liberty, the adventurous risks, the deeds of courage or address, and the constant and varied spectacle which the foot passenger alone enjoys in perfection; not to love, in a word, all the romantic activity and vicissitude of a wandering and solitary existence.

CHAPTER LXXIV.

THE first day of this, their new start, as our travellers crossed a little stream, by a wooden bridge, they saw a poor mendicant who held a little girl in her arms, and who was huddled up beside the parapet, stretching out her hand for charity to the passengers. The child was pale and suffering, the woman haggard and shivering with fever. Consuelo was deeply touched by sympathy and pity at this scene, which strongly reminded her of herself and her mother. "This is as we were once," said she to Joseph, who understood her at half a word, and who stopped with her to examine and question the mendicant.

"Alas!" said she, "it is but a few days, and I was very happy. I am a peasant, from the vicinity of Harmanitz in Bohemia. I had married, five years ago, a fine stout cousin of my own, who was the most laborious of mechanics, and the best of husbands. At the end of a year, my poor Karl, who had gone to cut wood in the mountains, suddenly disappeared, without any person being able to conjecture what had become of him. At once, I fell into the depths of poverty and of sorrow. I thought my husband had fallen from some precipice and been devoured by wolves. Although it was often in my power to marry a second time, the uncertainty of his fate, and the love which I still felt for him, did not permit me to entertain such a thought. Oh! well was I recompensed, my children. Last year, some one knocked at my door one night; I opened it, and fell on my knees at seeing my dear husband before me. But, gracious heavens! in what a condition. He looked like a phantom. He was withered,