"You do not understand women. Anything is better than indifference. When you see that you are disliked, then refuse to go away. It is the very moment to remain. Do not submit to dislike. Revenge yourself."

"I will try," said Orsino, considerably amused.

"Upon me?"

"Since you advise it——"

"Have I said that I detest you?"

"More or less."

"It was only by way of illustration to my argument. I was not serious."

"You have not a serious character, I fancy," said Orsino.

"Do you dare to pass judgment on me after an hour's acquaintance?"

"Since you have judged me! You have said five times that I am enthusiastic."

"That is an exaggeration. Besides, one cannot say a true thing too often."

"How you run on, Madame!"

"And you—to tell me to my face that I am not serious! It is unheard of. Is that the way you talk to your compatriots?"

"It would not be true. But they would contradict me, as you do. They wish to be thought gay."

"Do they? I would like to know them."

"Nothing is easier. Will you allow me the honour of undertaking the matter?"

They had reached the door of Madame d'Aragona's hotel. She stood still and looked curiously at Orsino.

"Certainly not," she answered, rather coldly. "It would be asking too much of you—too much of society, and far too much of me. Thanks. Good-bye."

"May I come and see you?" asked Orsino.

He knew very well that he had gone too far, and his voice was correctly contrite.

"I daresay we shall meet somewhere," she answered, entering the hotel.

CHAPTER IV.

The rage of speculation was at its height in Rome. Thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands of persons were embarked in enterprises which soon afterwards ended in total ruin to themselves and in very serious injury to many of the strongest financial bodies in the country. Yet it is a fact worth recording that the general principle upon which affairs were conducted was an honest one. The land was a fact, the buildings put up were facts, and there was actually a certain amount of capital, of genuine ready money, in use. The whole matter can be explained in a few words.

The population of Rome had increased considerably since the Italian occupation, and house-room was needed for the newcomers. Secondly, the partial execution of the scheme for beautifying the city had destroyed great numbers of dwellings in the most thickly populated parts, and more house-room was needed to compensate the loss of habitations, while extensive lots of land were suddenly set free and offered for sale upon easy conditions in all parts of the town.

Those who availed themselves of these opportunities before the general rush began, realised immense profits, especially when they had some capital of their own to begin with. But capital was not indispensable. A man could buy his lot on credit; the banks were ready to advance him money on notes of hand, in small amounts at high interest, wherewith to build his house or houses. When the building was finished the bank took a first mortgage upon the property, the owner let the house, paid the interest on the mortgage out of the rent and pocketed the difference, as clear gain. In the majority of cases it was the bank itself which sold the lot of land to the speculator. It is clear therefore that

the only money which actually changed hands was that advanced in small sums by the bank itself.

As the speculation increased, the banks could not of course afford to lock up all the small notes of hand they received from various quarters. This paper became a circulating medium as far as Vienna, Paris and even London. The crash came when Vienna, Paris and London lost faith in the paper, owing, in the first instance, to one or two small failures, and returned it upon Rome; the banks, unable to obtain cash for it at any price, and being short of ready money, could then no longer discount the speculator's further notes of hand; so that the speculator found himself with half-built houses upon his hands which he could neither let, nor finish, nor sell, and owing money upon bills which he had expected to meet by giving the bank a mortgage on the now valueless property.

That is what took place in the majority of cases, and it is not necessary to go into further details, though of course chance played all the usual variations upon the theme of ruin.

What distinguishes the period of speculation in Rome from most other manifestations of the kind in Europe is the prominent part played in it by the old land-holding families, a number of which were ruined in wild schemes which no sensible man of business would have touched. This was more or less the result of recent changes in the laws regulating the power of persons making a will.

Previous to 1870 the law of primogeniture was as much respected in Rome as in England, and was carried out with considerably greater strictness. The heir got everything, the other children got practically nothing but the smallest pittance. The palace, the gallery of pictures and statues, the lands, the villages and the castles, descended in unbroken succession from eldest son to eldest son, indivisible in principle and undivided in fact.

The new law requires that one half of the total property shall be equally distributed by the testator amongst

all his children. He may leave the other half to any one he pleases, and as a matter of practice he of course leaves it to his eldest son.

Another law, however, forbids the alienation of all collections of works of art either wholly or in part, if they have existed as such for a certain length of time, and if the public has been admitted daily or on any fixed days, to visit them. It is not in the power of the Borghese, or the Colonna, for instance, to sell a picture or a statue out of their galleries, nor to raise money upon such an object by mortgage or otherwise.

Yet these works of art figure at a very high valuation in the total property of which the testator must divide one half amongst his children, though in point of fact they yield no income whatever. But it is of no use to divide them, since none of the heirs could be at liberty to take them away nor realise their value in any manner.

The consequence is, that the principal heir, after the division has taken place, finds himself the nominal master of certain enormously valuable possessions, which in reality yield him nothing or next to nothing. He also foresees that in the next generation the same state of things will exist in a far higher degree, and that the position of the head of the family will go from bad to worse until a crisis of some kind takes place.

Such a case has recently occurred. A certain Roman prince is bankrupt. The sale of his gallery would certainly relieve the pressure, and would possibly free him from debt altogether. But neither he nor his creditors can lay a finger upon the pictures, nor raise a centime upon them. This man, therefore, is permanently reduced to penury, and his creditors are large losers, while he is still *de jure* and *de facto* the owner of property probably sufficient to cover all his obligations. Fortunately, he chances to be childless, a fact consoling, perhaps, to the philanthropist, but not especially so to the sufferer himself.

It is clear that the temptation to increase "distributa-

ble" property, if one may coin such an expression, is very great, and accounts for the way in which many Roman gentlemen have rushed headlong into speculation, though possessing none of the qualities necessary for success, and only one of the requisites, namely, a certain amount of ready money, or free and convertible property. A few have been fortunate, while the majority of those who have tried the experiment have been heavy losers. It cannot be said that any one of them all has shown natural talent for finance.

Let the reader forgive these dry explanations if he can. The facts explained have a direct bearing upon the story I am telling, but shall not, as mere facts, be referred to again.

I have already said that Ugo Del Ferice had returned to Rome soon after the change, had established himself with his wife, Donna Tullia, and was at the time I am speaking about, deeply engaged in the speculations of the day. He had once been tolerably popular in society, having been looked upon as a harmless creature, useful in his way and very obliging. But the circumstances which had attended his flight some years earlier had become known, and most of his old acquaintances turned him the cold shoulder. He had expected this and was neither disappointed nor humiliated. He had made new friends and acquaintances during his exile, and it was to his interest to stand by them. Like many of those who had played petty and dishonourable parts in the revolutionary times, he had succeeded in building up a reputation for patriotism upon a very slight foundation, and had found persons willing to believe him a sufferer who had escaped martyrdom for the cause, and had deserved the crown of election to a constituency as a just reward of his devotion. The Romans cared very little what became of him. The old Blacks confounded Victor Emmanuel with Garibaldi, Cavour with Persiano, and Silvio Pellico with Del Ferice in one sweeping condemnation, desiring nothing so much as never to hear the

hated names mentioned in their houses. The Grey party, being also Roman, disapproved of Ugo on general principles and particularly because he had been a spy, but the Whites, not being Romans at all and entertaining an especial detestation for every distinctly Roman opinion, received him at his own estimation, as society receives most people who live in good houses, give good dinners and observe the proprieties in the matter of visiting-cards. Those who knew anything definite of the man's antecedents were mostly persons who had little histories of their own, and they told no tales out of school. The great personages who had once employed him would have been magnanimous enough to acknowledge him in any case, but were agreeably disappointed when they discovered that he was not amongst the common herd of pension hunters, and claimed no substantial rewards save their politeness and a line in the visiting lists of their wives. And as he grew in wealth and importance they found that he could be useful still, as bank directors and members of parliament can be, in a thousand ways. So it came to pass that the Count and Countess Del Ferice became prominent persons in the Roman world.

Ugo was a man of undoubted talent. By his own individual efforts, though with small scruple as to the means he employed, he had raised himself from obscurity to a very enviable position. He had only once in his life been carried away by the weakness of a personal enmity, and he had been made to pay heavily for his caprice. If Donna Tullia had abandoned him when he was driven out of Rome by the influence of the Saracinesca, he might have disappeared altogether from the scene. But she was an odd compound of rashness and foresight, of belief and unbelief, and she had at that time felt herself bound by an oath she dared not break, besides being attached to him by a hatred of Giovanni Saracinesca almost as great as his own. She had followed him and had married him without hesitation; but she had kept the undivided possession of her fortune while allowing

him a liberal use of her income. In return, she claimed a certain liberty of action when she chose to avail herself of it. She would not be bound in the choice of her acquaintances nor criticised in the measure of like or dislike she bestowed upon them. She was by no means wholly bad, and if she had a harmless fancy now and then, she required her husband to treat her as above suspicion. On the whole, the arrangement worked very well. Del Ferice, on his part, was unswervingly faithful to her in word and deed, for he exhibited in a high degree that unfaltering constancy which is bred of a permanent, unalienable, financial interest. Bad men are often clever, but if their cleverness is of a superior order they rarely do anything bad. It is true that when they yield to the pressure of necessity their wickedness surpasses that of other men in the same degree as their intelligence. Not only honesty, but all virtue collectively, is the best possible policy, provided that the politician can handle such a tremendous engine of evil as goodness is in the hands of a thoroughly bad man.

Those who desired pecuniary accommodation of the bank in which Del Ferice had an interest, had no better friend than he. His power with the directors seemed to be as boundless as his desire to assist the borrower. But he was helpless to prevent the foreclosure of a mortgage, and had been moved almost to tears in the expression of his sympathy with the debtor and of his horror at the hard-heartedness shown by his partners. To prove his disinterested spirit it only need be said that on many occasions he had actually come forward as a private individual and had taken over the mortgage himself, distinctly stating that he could not hold it for more than a year, but expressing a hope that the debtor might in that time retrieve himself. If this really happened, he earned the man's eternal gratitude; if not, he foreclosed indeed, but the loser never forgot that by Del Ferice's kindness he had been offered a last chance at a desperate moment. It could not be said to be Del

Ferice's fault that the second case was the more frequent one, nor that the result to himself was profit in either event.

In his dealings with his constituency he showed a noble desire for the public welfare, for he was never known to refuse anything in reason to the electors who applied to him. It is true that in the case of certain applications, he consumed so much time in preliminary enquiries and subsequent formalities that the applicants sometimes died and sometimes emigrated to the Argentine Republic before the matter could be settled; but they bore with them to South America—or to the grave—the belief that the Onorevole Del Ferice was on their side, and the instances of his prompt, decisive and successful action were many. He represented a small town in the Neapolitan Province, and the benefits and advantages he had obtained for it were numberless. The provincial high road had been made to pass through it; all express trains stopped at its station, though the passengers who made use of the inestimable privilege did not average twenty in the month; it possessed a Piazza Vittorio Emmanuela, a Corso Garibaldi, a Via Cavour, a public garden of at least a quarter of an acre, planted with no less than twenty-five acacias and adorned by a fountain representing a desperate-looking character in the act of firing a finely executed revolver at an imaginary oppressor. Pigs were not allowed within the limits of the town, and the uniforms of the municipal brass band were perfectly new. Could civilisation do more? The bank of which Del Ferice was a director bought the octroi duties of the town at the periodical auction, and farmed them skilfully, together with those of many other towns in the same province.

So Del Ferice was a very successful man, and it need scarcely be said that he was now not only independent of his wife's help but very much richer than she had ever been. They lived in a highly decorated, detached modern house in the new part of the city. The gilded

gate before the little plot of garden, bore their intertwined initials, surmounted by a modest count's coronet. Donna Tullia would have preferred a coat of arms, or even a crest, but Ugo was sensitive to ridicule, and he was aware that a count's coronet in Rome means nothing at all, whereas a coat of arms means vastly more than in most cities.

Within, the dwelling was somewhat unpleasantly gorgeous. Donna Tullia had always loved red, both for itself and because it made her own complexion seem less florid by contrast, and accordingly red satin predominated in the drawing-rooms, red velvet in the dining-room, red damask in the hall and red carpets on the stairs. Some fine specimens of gilding were also to be seen, and Del Ferice had been one of the first to use electric light. Everything was new, expensive and polished to its extreme capacity for reflection. The servants wore vivid liveries and on formal occasions the butler appeared in short-clothes and black silk stockings. Donna Tullia's equipage was visible at a great distance, but Del Ferice's own coachman and groom wore dark green with black epaulettes.

On the morning which Orsino and Madame d'Aragona had spent in Gouache's studio the Countess Del Ferice entered her husband's study in order to consult him upon a rather delicate matter. He was alone, but busy as usual. His attention was divided between an important bank operation and a petition for his help in obtaining a decoration for the mayor of the town he represented. The claim to this distinction seemed to rest chiefly on the petitioner's unasked evidence in regard to his own moral rectitude, yet Del Ferice was really exercising all his ingenuity to discover some suitable reason for asking the favour. He laid the papers down with a sigh as Donna Tullia came in.

"Good morning, my angel," he said suavely, as he pointed to a chair at his side—the one usually occupied at this hour by seekers for financial support. "Have you rested well?"

He never failed to ask the question.

"Not badly, not badly, thank Heaven!" answered Donna Tullia. "I have a dreadful cold, of course, and a headache—my head is really splitting."

"Rest—rest is what you need, my dear——"

"Oh, it is nothing. This Durakoff is a great man. If he had not made me go to Carlsbad—I really do not know. But I have something to say to you. I want your help, Ugo. Please listen to me."

Ugo's fat white face already expressed anxious attention. To accentuate the expression of his readiness to listen, he now put all his papers into a drawer and turned towards his wife.

"I must go to the Jubilee," said Donna Tullia, coming to the point.

"Of course you must go——"

"And I must have my seat among the Roman ladies."

"Of course you must," repeated Del Ferice with a little less alacrity.

"Ah! You see. It is not so easy. You know it is not. Yet I have as good a right to my seat as any one—better perhaps."

"Hardly that," observed Ugo with a smile. "When you married me, my angel, you relinquished your claims to a seat at the Vatican functions."

"I did nothing of the kind. I never said so, I am sure."

"Perhaps if you could make that clear to the majorduomo——"

"Absurd, Ugo. You know it is. Besides, I will not beg. You must get me the seat. You can do anything with your influence."

"You could easily get into one of the diplomatic tribunes," observed Ugo.

"I will not go there. I mean to assert myself. I am a Roman lady and I will have my seat, and you must get it for me."

"I will do my best. But I do not quite see where I

am to begin. It will need time and consideration and much tact."

"It seems to me very simple. Go to one of the clerical deputies and say that you want the ticket for your wife——"

"And then?"

"Give him to understand that you will vote for his next measure. Nothing could be simpler, I am sure."

Del Ferice smiled blandly at his wife's ideas of parliamentary diplomacy.

"There are no clerical deputies in the parliament of the nation. If there were the thing might be possible, and it would be very interesting to all the clericals to read an account of the transaction in the Osservatore Romano. In any case, I am not sure that it will be much to our advantage that the wife of the Onorevole Del Ferice should be seen seated in the midst of the Black ladies. It will produce an unfavourable impression."

"If you are going to talk of impressions——" Donna Tullia shrugged her massive shoulders.

"No, my dear. You mistake me. I am not going to talk of them, because, as I at once told you, it is quite right that you should go to this affair. If you go, you must go in the proper way. No doubt there will be people who will have invitations but will not use them. We can perhaps procure you the use of such a ticket."

"I do not care what name is on the paper, provided I can sit in the right place."

"Very well," answered Del Ferice. "I will do my best."

"I expect it of you, Ugo. It is not often that I ask anything of you, is it? It is the least you can do. The idea of getting a card that is not to be used is good; of course they will all get them, and some of them are sure to be ill."

Donna Tullia went away satisfied that what she wanted would be forthcoming at the right moment.

What she had said was true. She rarely asked anything of her husband. But when she did, she gave him to understand that she would have it at any price. It was her way of asserting herself from time to time. On the present occasion she had no especial interest at stake and any other woman might have been satisfied with a seat in the diplomatic tribune, which could probably have been obtained without great difficulty. But she had heard that the seats there were to be very high and she did not really wish to be placed in too prominent a position. The light might be unfavourable, and she knew that she was subject to growing very red in places where it was hot. She had once been a handsome woman and a very vain one, but even her vanity could not survive the daily shock of the looking-glass torture. To sit for four or five hours in a high light, facing fifty thousand people, was more than she could bear with equanimity.

Del Ferice, being left to himself, returned to the question of the mayor's decoration which was of vastly greater importance to him than his wife's position at the approaching function. If he failed to get the man what he wanted, the fellow would doubtless apply to some one of the opposite party, would receive the coveted honour and would take the whole voting population of the town with him at the next general election, to the total discomfiture of Del Ferice. It was necessary to find some valid reason for proposing him for the distinction. Ugo could not decide what to do just then, but he ultimately hit upon a successful plan. He advised his correspondent to write a pamphlet upon the rapid improvement of agricultural interests in his district under the existing ministry, and he even went so far as to enclose with his letter some notes on the subject. These notes proved to be so voluminous and complete that when the mayor had copied them he could not find a pretext for adding a single word or correction. They were printed upon excellent paper, with ornamental mar-

gins, under the title of "Onward, Parthenope!" Of course every one knows that Parthenope means Naples, the Neapolitans and the Neapolitan Province, a siren of that name having come to final grief somewhere between the Chiatamone and Posilippo. The mayor got his decoration, and Del Ferice was re-elected; but no one has inquired into the truth of the statements made in the pamphlet upon agriculture.

It is clear that a man who was capable of taking so much trouble for so small a matter would not disappoint his wife when she had set her heart upon such a trifle as a ticket for the Jubilee. Within three days he had the promise of what he wanted. A certain lonely lady of high position lay very ill just then, and it need scarcely be explained that her confidential servant fell upon the invitation as soon as it arrived and sold it for a round sum to the first applicant, who happened to be Count Del Ferice's valet. So the matter was arranged, privately and without scandal.

All Rome was alive with expectation. The date fixed was the first of January, and as the day approached the curious foreigner mustered in his thousands and tens of thousands and took the city by storm. The hotels were thronged. The billiard tables were let as furnished rooms, people slept in the lifts, on the landings, in the porters' lodges. The thrifty Romans retreated to roofs and cellars and let their small dwellings. People reaching the city on the last night slept in the cabs they had hired to take them to St. Peter's before dawn. Even the supplies of food ran low and the hungry fed on what they could get, while the delicate of taste very often did not feed at all. There was of course the usual scare about a revolutionary demonstration, to which the natives paid very little attention, but which delighted the foreigners.

Not more than half of those who hoped to witness the ceremony saw anything of it, though the basilica will hold some eighty thousand people at a pinch, and

the crowd on that occasion was far greater than at the opening of the Œcumenical Council in 1869.

Madame d'Aragona had also determined to be present, and she expressed her desire to Gouache. She had spoken the strict truth when she had said that she knew no one in Rome, and so far as general accuracy is concerned it was equally true that she had not fixed the length of her stay. She had not come with any settled purpose beyond a vague idea of having her portrait painted by the French artist, and unless she took the trouble to make acquaintances, there was nothing attractive enough about the capital to keep her. She allowed herself to be driven about the town, on pretence of seeing churches and galleries, but in reality she saw very little of either. She was preoccupied with her own thoughts and subject to fits of abstraction. Most things seemed to her intensely dull, and the unhappy guide who had been selected to accompany her on her excursions, wasted his learning upon her on the first morning, and subsequently exhausted the magnificent catalogue of impossibilities which he had concocted for the especial benefit of the uncultivated foreigner, without eliciting so much as a look of interest or an expression of surprise. He was a young and fascinating guide, wearing a white satin tie, and on the third day he recited some verses of Stecchetti and was about to risk a declaration of worship in ornate prose, when he was suddenly rather badly scared by the lady's yellow eyes, and ran on nervously with a string of deceased popes and their dates.

"Get me a card for the Jubilee," she said abruptly.

"An entrance is very easily procured," answered the guide. "In fact I have one in my pocket, as it happens. I bought it for twenty francs this morning, thinking that one of my foreigners would perhaps take it of me. I do not even gain a franc—my word of honour."

Madame d'Aragona glanced at the slip of paper.

"Not that," she answered. "Do you imagine that I will stand? I want a seat in one of the tribunes."

The guide lost himself in apologies, but explained that he could not get what she desired.

"What are you for?" she inquired.

She was an indolent woman, but when by any chance she wanted anything, Donna Tullia herself was not more restless. She drove at once to Gouache's studio. He was alone and she told him what she needed.

"The Jubilee, Madame? Is it possible that you have been forgotten?"

"Since they have never heard of me! I have not the slightest claim to a place."

"It is you who say that. But your place is already secured. Fear nothing. You will be with the Roman ladies."

"I do not understand——"

"It is simple. I was thinking of it yesterday. Young Saracinesca comes in and begins to talk about you. There is Madame d'Aragona who has no seat, he says. One must arrange that. So it is arranged."

"By Don Orsino?"

"You would not accept? No. A young man, and you have only met once. But tell me what you think of him. Do you like him?"

"One does not like people so easily as that," said Madame d'Aragona. "How have you arranged about the seat?"

"It is very simple. There are to be two days, you know. My wife has her cards for both, of course. She will only go once. If you will accept the one for the first day, she will be very happy."

"You are angelic, my dear friend! Then I go as your wife?" She laughed.

"Precisely. You will be Faustina Gouache instead of Madame d'Aragona."

"How delightful! By the bye, do not call me Madame d'Aragona. It is not my name. I might as well call you Monsieur de Paris, because you are a Parisian."

"I do not put Anastase Gouache de Paris on my cards," answered Gouache with a laugh. "What may I call you? Donna Maria?"

"My name is Maria Consuelo d'Aranjuez."

"An ancient Spanish name," said Gouache.

"My husband was an Italian."

"Ah! Of Spanish descent, originally of Aragona. Of course."

"Exactly. Since I am here, shall I sit for you? You might almost finish to-day."

"Not so soon as that. It is Don Orsino's hour, but as he has not come, and since you are so kind—by all means."

"Ah! Is he unpunctual?"

"He is probably running after those abominable dogs in pursuit of the feeble fox—what they call the noble sport."

Gouache's face expressed considerable disgust."

"Poor fellow!" said Maria Consuelo. "He has nothing else to do."

"He will get used to it. They all do. Besides, it is really the natural condition of man. Total idleness is his element. If Providence meant man to work, it should have given him two heads, one for his profession and one for himself. A man needs one entire and undivided intelligence for the study of his own individuality."

"What an idea!"

"Do not men of great genius notoriously forget themselves, forget to eat and drink and dress themselves like Christians? That is because they have not two heads. Providence expects a man to do two things at once—sing an air from an opera and invent the steam-engine at the same moment. Nature rebels. Then Providence and Nature do not agree. What becomes of religion? It is all a mystery. Believe me, Madame, art is easier than nature, and painting is simpler than theology."

Maria Consuelo listened to Gouache's extraordinary remarks with a smile.

"You are either paradoxical, or irreligious, or both," she said.

"Irreligious? I, who carried a rifle at Mentana? No, Madame, I am a good Catholic."

"What does that mean?"

"I believe in God, and I love my wife. I leave it to the Church to define my other articles of belief. I have only one head, as you see."

Gouache smiled, but there was a note of sincerity in the odd statement which did not escape his hearer.

"You are not of the type which belongs to the end of the century," she said.

"That type was not invented when I was forming myself."

"Perhaps you belong rather to the coming age—the age of simplification."

"As distinguished from the age of mystification—religious, political, scientific and artistic," suggested Gouache. "The people of that day will guess the Sphynx's riddle."

"Mine? You were comparing me to a sphynx the other day."

"Yours, perhaps, Madame. Who knows? Are you the typical woman of the ending century?"

"Why not?" asked Maria Consuelo with a sleepy look.

CHAPTER V.

There is something grand in any great assembly of animals belonging to the same race. The very idea of an immense number of living creatures conveys an impression not suggested by anything else. A compact herd of fifty or sixty thousand lions would be an appalling vision, beside which a like multitude of human beings would sink into insignificance. A drove of wild

cattle is, I think, a finer sight than a regiment of cavalry in motion, for the cavalry is composite, half man and half horse, whereas the cattle have the advantage of unity. But we can never see so many animals of any species driven together into one limited space as to be equal to a vast throng of men and women, and we conclude naturally enough that a crowd consisting solely of our own kind is the most imposing one conceivable.

It was scarcely light on the morning of New Year's Day when the Princess Sant' Ilario found herself seated in one of the low tribunes on the north side of the high altar in Saint Peter's. Her husband and her eldest son had accompanied her, and having placed her in a position from which they judged she could easily escape at the end of the ceremony, they remained standing in the narrow, winding passage between improvised barriers which led from the tribune to the door of the sacristy, and which had been so arranged as to prevent confusion. Here they waited, greeting their acquaintances when they could recognise them in the dim twilight of the church, and watching the ever-increasing crowd that surged slowly backward and forward outside the barrier. The old prince was entitled by an hereditary office to a place in the great procession of the day, and was not now with them.

Orsino felt as though the whole world were assembled about him within the huge cathedral, as though its heart were beating audibly and its muffled breathing rising and falling in his hearing. The unceasing sound that went up from the compact mass of living beings was soft in quality, but enormous in volume and sustained in tone, a great whispering which might have been heard a mile away. One hears in mammoth musical festivals the extraordinary effect of four or five thousand voices singing very softly; it is not to be compared to the unceasing whisper of fifty thousand men.

The young fellow was conscious of a strange, irregular thrill of enthusiasm which ran through him from time