

## CHAPTER VII.

*Barry leads a Garrison Life, and finds many Friends there.*

AFTER the war our regiment was garrisoned in the capital, the least dull, perhaps, of all the towns of Prussia: but that does not say much for its gaiety. Our service, which was always severe, still left many hours of the day disengaged, in which we might take our pleasure had we the means of paying for the same. Many of our mess got leave to work in trades; but I had been brought up to none: and besides, my honour forbade me; for as a gentleman, I could not soil my fingers by a manual occupation. But our pay was barely enough to keep us from starving; and as I have always been fond of pleasure, and as the position in which we now were, in the midst of the capital, prevented us from resorting to those means of levying contributions which are always pretty feasible in war-time, I was obliged to adopt the only means left me of providing for my expenses: and in a word became the *Ordonnanz*, or confidential military gentleman, of my captain. I spurned the office four years previously, when it was made to me in the English service; but the position is very different in a foreign country; besides, to tell the truth, after five years in the ranks, a man's pride will submit to many rebuffs which would be intolerable to him in an independent condition.

The captain was a young man and had distinguished himself during the war, or he would never have been advanced to rank so early. He was, moreover, the nephew and heir of the Minister of Police, Monsieur de Potzdorff, a relationship which no doubt aided in the young gentleman's promotion. Captain de Potzdorff was a severe officer enough on parade or in barracks, but he was a person easily led by flattery. I won his heart in the first place by my manner of tying my hair in queue (indeed, it was more neatly dressed than that of any man in the regiment), and subsequently gained his confidence by a thousand little arts and compliments, which as a gentleman myself I knew how to employ. He was a man of pleasure, which he pursued more openly than most men in the stern Court of the King; he was generous and careless with his purse, and he had a great affection for Rhine wine: in all which qualities I sincerely sympathised with him; and from which I, of course, had my profit. He was

disliked in the regiment, because he was supposed to have too intimate relations with his uncle the Police Minister; to whom, it was hinted, he carried the news of the corps.

Before long I had ingratiated myself considerably with my officer, and knew most of his affairs. Thus I was relieved from many drills and parades, which would otherwise have fallen to my lot, and came in for a number of perquisites; which enabled me to support a genteel figure and to appear with some *éclat* in a certain, though it must be confessed very humble, society in Berlin. Among the ladies I was always an especial favourite, and so polished was my behaviour amongst them, that they could not understand how I should have obtained my frightful nickname of the Black Devil in the regiment. "He is not so black as he is painted," I laughingly would say; and most of the ladies agreed that the private was quite as well-bred as the captain: as indeed how should it be otherwise, considering my education and birth?

When I was sufficiently ingratiated with him, I asked leave to address a letter to my poor mother in Ireland, to whom I had not given any news of myself for many many years; for the letters of the foreign soldiers were never admitted to the post, for fear of appeals or disturbances on the part of their parents abroad. My captain agreed to find means to forward the letter, and as I knew that he would open it, I took care to give it him unsealed; thus showing my confidence in him. But the letter was, as you may imagine, written so that the writer should come to no harm were it intercepted. I begged my honoured mother's forgiveness for having fled from her; I said that my extravagance and folly in my own country I knew rendered my return thither impossible; but that she would, at least, be glad to know that I was well and happy in the service of the greatest monarch in the world, and that the soldier's life was most agreeable to me: and, I added, that I had found a kind protector and patron, who I hoped would some day provide for me as I knew it was out of her power to do. I offered remembrances to all the girls at Castle Brady, naming them from Biddy to Becky downwards, and signed myself, as in truth I was, her affectionate son, Redmond Barry, in Captain Potzdorff's company of the *Bilowisch* regiment of foot in garrison at Berlin. Also I told her a pleasant story about the King kicking the Chancellor and three judges downstairs, as he had done one day when I was on guard



at Potsdam, and said I hoped for another war soon, when I might rise to be an officer. In fact, you might have imagined my letter to be that of the happiest fellow in the world, and I was not on this head at all sorry to mislead my kind parent.

I was sure my letter was read, for Captain Potzdorff began asking me some days afterwards about my family, and I told him the circumstances pretty truly, all things considered. I was a cadet of a good family, but my mother was almost ruined and had barely enough to support her eight daughters, whom I named. I had been to study for the law at Dublin, where I had got into debt and bad company, had killed a man in a duel, and would be hanged or imprisoned by his powerful friends, if I returned. I had enlisted in the English service, where an opportunity for escape presented itself to me such as I could not resist; and hereupon I told the story of Mr. Fakenham of Fakenham in such a way as made my patron to be convulsed with laughter, and he told me afterwards that he had repeated the story at Madame de Kamake's evening assembly, where all the world was anxious to have a sight of the young Engländer.

"Was the British Ambassador there?" I asked, in a tone of the greatest alarm, and added, "For Heaven's sake, sir, do not tell my name to him, or he might ask to have me delivered up: and I have no fancy to go to be hanged in my dear native country." Potzdorff, laughing, said he would take care that I should remain where I was, on which I swore eternal gratitude to him.

Some days afterwards, and with rather a grave face, he said to me, "Redmond, I have been talking to our colonel about you, and as I wondered that a fellow of your courage and talents had not been advanced during the war, the general said they had had their eye upon you: that you were a gallant soldier, and had evidently come of a good stock; that no man in the regiment had had less fault found with him; but that no man merited promotion less. You were idle, dissolute, and unprincipled; you had done a deal of harm to the men; and, for all your talents and bravery, he was sure would come to no good."

"Sir!" said I, quite astonished that any mortal man should have formed such an opinion of me, "I hope General Bilow is mistaken regarding my character. I have fallen into bad company, it is true; but I have only done as other soldiers have

done; and, above all, I have never had a kind friend and protector before, to whom I might show that I was worthy of better things. The general may say I am a ruined lad, and send me to the d—1: but be sure of this, I would go to the d—1 to serve *you*." This speech I saw pleased my patron very much; and, as I was very discreet and useful in a thousand delicate ways to him, he soon came to have a sincere attachment for me. One day, or rather night, when he was *tête-à-tête* with the lady of the Tabaks Rath von Dose for instance, I— But there is no use in telling affairs which concern nobody now.

Four months after my letter to my mother, I got, under cover to the Captain, a reply, which created in my mind a yearning after home, and a melancholy which I cannot describe. I had not seen the dear soul's writing for five years. All the old days, and the fresh happy sunshine of the old green fields in Ireland, and her love, and my uncle, and Phil Purcell, and everything that I had done and thought, came back to me as I read the letter; and when I was alone I cried over it, as I hadn't done since the day when Nora jilted me. I took care not to show my feelings to the regiment or my captain: but that night, when I was to have taken tea at the Garden-house outside Brandenburg Gate, with Fräulein Lottchen (the Tabaks Rätthinn's gentlewoman of company), I somehow had not the courage to go; but begged to be excused, and went early to bed in barracks, out of which I went and came now almost as I willed, and passed a long night weeping and thinking about dear Ireland.

Next day, my spirits rose again and I got a ten-guinea bill cashed, which my mother sent in the letter, and gave a handsome treat to some of my acquaintance. The poor soul's letter was blotted all over with tears, full of texts, and written in the wildest incoherent way. She said she was delighted to think I was under a Protestant prince, though she feared he was not in the right way: that right way, she said, she had the blessing to find, under the guidance of the Reverend Joshua Jowls, whom she sat under. She said he was a precious chosen vessel; a sweet ointment and precious box of spikenard; and made use of a great number more phrases that I could not understand; but one thing was clear in the midst of all this jargon, that the good soul loved her son still, and thought and prayed day and night for her wild Redmond. Has it not come across many a poor fellow, in a solitary night's watch, or in sorrow, sickness,



or captivity, that at that very minute, most likely, his mother is praying for him? I often have had these thoughts; but they are none of the gayest, and it's quite as well that they don't come to you in company; for where would be a set of jolly fellows then?—as mute as undertakers at a funeral, I promise you. I drank my mother's health that night in a bumper, and lived like a gentleman whilst the money lasted. She pinched herself to give it me, as she told me afterwards; and Mr. Jowls was very wroth with her.

Although the good soul's money was very quickly spent, I was not long in getting more; for I had a hundred ways of getting it, and became a universal favourite with the Captain and his friends. Now, it was Madame von Dose who gave me a Frederic-d'or for bringing her a bouquet or a letter from the Captain; now it was, on the contrary, the old Privy Councillor who treated me with a bottle of Rhenish, and slipped into my hand a dollar or two, in order that I might give him some information regarding the *liaison* between my captain and his lady. But though I was not such a fool as not to take his money, you may be sure I was not dishonourable enough to betray my benefactor; and he got very little out of *me*. When the Captain and the lady fell out, and he began to pay his addresses to the rich daughter of the Dutch Minister, I don't know how many more letters and guineas the unfortunate Tabaks Rätthin handed over to me, that I might get her lover back again. But such returns are rare in love, and the Captain used only to laugh at her stale sighs and entreaties. In the house of Mynheer Van Guldensack I made myself so pleasant to high and low, that I came to be quite intimate there: and got the knowledge of a state secret or two, which surprised and pleased my captain very much. These little hints he carried to his uncle, the Minister of Police, who, no doubt, made his advantage of them; and thus I began to be received quite in a confidential light by the Potzdorff family, and became a mere nominal soldier, being allowed to appear in plain clothes (which were, I warrant you, of a neat fashion), and to enjoy myself in a hundred ways, which the poor fellows my comrades envied. As for the sergeants, they were as civil to me as to an officer: it was as much as their stripes were worth to offend a person who had the ear of the Minister's nephew. There was in my company a young fellow by the name of Kurz, who was six feet high in spite of his name, and whose life I had saved in some affair of

the war. What does this lad do, after I had recounted to him one of my adventures, but call me a spy and informer, and beg me not to call him *du* any more, as is the fashion with young men when they are very intimate. I had nothing for it but to call him out; but I owed him no grudge. I disarmed him in a twinkling; and as I sent his sword flying over his head, said to him, "Kurz, did ever you know a man guilty of a mean action who can do as I do now?" This silenced the rest of the grumblers; and no man ever sneered at me after that.

No man can suppose that to a person of my fashion the waiting in antechambers, the conversation of footmen and hangers-on, was pleasant. But it was not more degrading than the barrack-room, of which I need not say I was heartily sick. My protestations of liking for the army were all intended to throw dust into the eyes of my employer. I sighed to be out of slavery. I knew I was born to make a figure in the world. Had I been one of the Neiss garrison, I would have cut my way to freedom by the side of the gallant Frenchman; but here I had only artifice to enable me to attain my end, and was not I justified in employing it? My plan was this: I may make myself so necessary to M. de Potzdorff, that he will obtain my freedom. Once free, with my fine person and good family, I will do what ten thousand Irish gentlemen have done before, and will marry a lady of fortune and condition. And the proof that I was, if not disinterested, at least actuated by a noble ambition, is this. There was a fat grocer's widow in Berlin with six hundred thalers of rent, and a good business, who gave me to understand that she would purchase my discharge if I would marry her; but I frankly told her that I was not made to be a grocer, and thus absolutely flung away a chance of freedom which she offered me.

And I was grateful to my employers; more grateful than they to me. The Captain was in debt, and had dealings with the Jews, to whom he gave notes of hand payable on his uncle's death. The old Herr von Potzdorff, seeing the confidence his nephew had in me, offered to bribe me to know what the young man's affairs really were. But what did I do? I informed Monsieur George von Potzdorff of the fact; and we made out, in concert, a list of little debts, so moderate, that they actually appeased the old uncle instead of irritating, and he paid them, being glad to get off so cheap.

And a pretty return I got for this fidelity. One morning, the



old gentleman being closeted with his nephew (he used to come to get any news stirring as to what the young officers of the regiment were doing: whether this or that gambled; who intrigued, and with whom; who was at the ridotto on such a night; who was in debt, and what not; for the King liked to know the business of every officer in his army), I was sent with a letter to the Marquis d'Argens (that afterwards married Mademoiselle Cochois the actress), and, meeting the Marquis at a few paces off in the street, gave my message, and returned to the Captain's lodging. He and his worthy uncle were making my unworthy self the subject of conversation.

"He is noble," said the Captain.

"Bah!" replied the uncle (whom I could have throttled for his insolence). "All the beggarly Irish who ever enlisted tell the same story."

"He was kidnapped by Galgenstein," resumed the other.

"A kidnapped deserter," said M. Potzdorff; "*la belle affaire!*"

"Well, I promised the lad I would ask for his discharge; and I am sure you can make him useful."

"You *have* asked his discharge," answered the elder, laughing.

"Bon Dieu! You are a model of probity! You'll never succeed to my place, George, if you are no wiser than you are just now. Make the fellow as useful to you as you please. He has a good manner and a frank countenance. He can lie with an assurance that I never saw surpassed, and fight, you say, on a pinch. The scoundrel does not want for good qualities; but he is vain, a spendthrift, and a *bavard*. As long as you have the regiment *in terrorem* over him, you can do as you like with him. Once let him loose, and the lad is likely to give you the slip. Keep on promising him; promise to make him a general, if you like. What the deuce do I care? There are spies enough to be had in this town without him."

It was thus that the services I rendered to M. Potzdorff were qualified by that ungrateful old gentleman; and I stole away from the room extremely troubled in spirit, to think that another of my fond dreams was thus dispelled; and that my hopes of getting out of the army, by being useful to the Captain, were entirely vain. For some time my despair was such, that I thought of marrying the widow; but the marriages of privates are never allowed without the direct permission of the King; and it was a matter of very great doubt whether his Majesty

would allow a young fellow of twenty-two, the handsomest man of his army, to be coupled to a pimplefaced old widow of sixty, who was quite beyond the age when her marriage would be likely to multiply the subjects of His Majesty. This hope of liberty was therefore vain; nor could I hope to purchase my discharge, unless any charitable soul would lend me a large sum of money; for, though I made a good deal, as I have said, yet I have always had through life an incorrigible knack of spending, and (such is my generosity of disposition) have been in debt ever since I was born.

My captain, the sly rascal! gave me a very different version of his conversation with his uncle to that which I knew to be the true one; and said smilingly to me, "Redmond, I have spoken to the Minister regarding thy services,\* and thy fortune is made. We shall get thee out of the army, appoint thee to the police bureau, and procure for thee an inspectorship of customs; and, in fine, allow thee to move in a better sphere than that in which Fortune has hitherto placed thee."

Although I did not believe a word of this speech, I affected to be very much moved by it, and of course swore eternal gratitude to the Captain for his kindness to the poor Irish castaway.

"Your service at the Dutch Minister's has pleased me very well. There is another occasion on which you may make yourself useful to us; and if you succeed, depend on it your reward will be secure."

"What is the service, sir?" said I; "I will do anything for so kind a master."

"There is lately come to Berlin," said the Captain, "a gentleman in the service of the Empress-Queen, who calls himself the Chevalier de Balibari, and wears the red riband and star of

\* The service about which Mr. Barry here speaks has, and we suspect purposely, been described by him in very dubious terms. It is most probable that he was employed to wait at the table of strangers in Berlin, and to bring to the Police Minister any news concerning them which might at all interest the Government. The great Frederick never received a guest without taking these hospitable precautions; and as for the duels which Mr. Barry fights, may we be allowed to hint a doubt as to a great number of these combats? It will be observed, in one or two other parts of his Memoirs, that whenever he is at an awkward pass, or does what the world does not usually consider respectable, a duel, in which he is victorious, is sure to ensue; from which he argues that he is a man of undoubted honour.



the Pope's order of the Spur. He speaks Italian or French indifferently; but we have some reason to fancy this Monsieur de Balibari is a native of your country of Ireland. Did you ever hear such a name as Balibari in Ireland?"

"Balibari? Balyb——?" A sudden thought flashed across me. "No, sir," said I, "I never heard the name."

"You must go into his service. Of course you will not know a word of English: and if the Chevalier asks as to the particular of your accent, say you are a Hungarian. The servant who came with him will be turned away to-day, and the person to whom he has applied for a faithful fellow will recommend you. You are a Hungarian; you served in the Seven Years' War. You left the army on account of weakness of the loins. You served Monsieur de Quellenberg two years; he is now with the army in Silesia, but there is your certificate signed by him. You afterwards lived with Doctor Mopsius, who will give you a character, if need be; and the landlord of the 'Star' will, of course, certify that you are an honest fellow: but his certificate goes for nothing. As for the rest of your story, you can fashion that as you will, and make it as romantic or as ludicrous as your fancy dictates. Try, however, to win the Chevalier's confidence by provoking his compassion. He gambles a great deal, and *wins*. Do you know the cards well?"

"Only a very little, as soldiers do."

"I had thought you more expert. You must find out if the Chevalier cheats; if he does, we have him. He sees the English and Austrian envoys continually, and the young men of either Ministry sup repeatedly at his house. Find out what they talk of; for how much each plays, especially if any of them play on parole: if you can read his private letters, of course you will; though about those which go to the post, you need not trouble yourself; we look at them there. But never see him write a note without finding out to whom it goes, and by what channel or messenger. He sleeps with the keys of his despatch-box on a string round his neck. Twenty Frederics, if you get an impression of the keys. You will, of course, go in plain clothes. You had best brush the powder out of your hair, and tie it with a riband simply; your moustache you must of course shave off."

With these instructions, and a very small gratuity, the Captain left me. When I again saw him, he was amused at the change in my appearance. I had, not without a pang (for they were as

black as jet, and curled elegantly), shaved off my moustaches; had removed the odious grease and flour, which I always abominated, out of my hair; had mounted a demure French grey coat, black satin breeches, and a maroon plush waistcoat, and a hat without a cockade. I looked as meek and humble as any servant out of place could possibly appear; and I think not my own regiment, which was now at the review at Potsdam, would have known me. Thus accoutred, I went to the "Star Hotel," where this stranger was,—my heart beating with anxiety, and something telling me that this Chevalier de Balibari was no other than Barry, of Ballybarry, my father's eldest brother, who had given up his estate in consequence of his obstinate adherence to the Romish superstition. Before I went in to present myself, I went to look in the *remises* at his carriage. Had he the Barry arms? Yes, there they were: argent, a bend gules, with four escallops of the field,—the ancient coat of my house. They were painted in a shield about as big as my hat, on a smart chariot handsomely gilded, surmounted with a coronet, and supported by eight or nine Cupids, cornucopias, and flower-baskets, according to the queer heraldic fashion of those days. It must be he! I felt quite faint as I went up the stairs. I was going to present myself before my uncle in the character of a servant!

"You are the young man whom M. de Seebach recommended?"

I bowed, and handed him a letter from that gentleman, with which my captain had taken care to provide me. As he looked at it I had leisure to examine him. My uncle was a man of sixty years of age, dressed superbly in a coat and breeches of apricot-coloured velvet, a white satin waistcoat embroidered with gold like the coat. Across his breast went the purple riband of his order of the Spur; and the star of the order, an enormous one, sparkled on his breast. He had rings on all his fingers, a couple of watches in his fobs, a rich diamond *solitaire* in the black riband round his neck, and fastened to the bag of his wig; his ruffles and frills were decorated with a profusion of the richest lace. He had pink silk stockings rolled over the knee, and tied with gold garters; and enormous diamond buckles to his red-heeled shoes. A sword mounted in gold, in a white fish-skin scabbard; and a hat richly laced, and lined with white feathers, which were lying on a table beside him, completed the costume



of this splendid gentleman. In height he was about my size, that is, six feet and half an inch; his cast of features singularly like mine, and extremely *distingué*. One of his eyes was closed with a black patch, however; he wore a little white and red paint, by no means an unusual ornament in those days; and a pair of moustaches, which fell over his lip and hid a mouth that I afterwards found had rather a disagreeable expression. When his beard was removed, the upper teeth appeared to project very much; and his countenance wore a ghastly fixed smile, by no means pleasant.

It was very imprudent of me; but when I saw the splendour of his appearance, the nobleness of his manner, I felt it impossible to keep disguise with him; and when he said, "Ah, you are a Hungarian, I see!" I could hold no longer.

"Sir," said I, "I am an Irishman, and my name is Redmond Barry, of Ballybarry." As I spoke, I burst into tears; I can't tell why; but I had seen none of my kith or kin for six years, and my heart longed for some one.

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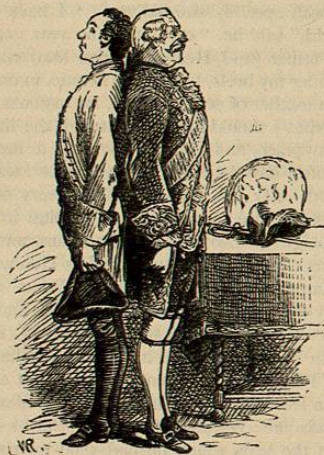
## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Barry bids Adieu to the Military Profession.*

You who have never been out of your country, know little what it is to hear a friendly voice in captivity; and there's many a man that will not understand the cause of the burst of feeling which I have confessed took place on my seeing my uncle. He never for a minute thought to question the truth of what I said. "Mother of God!" cried he, "it's my brother Harry's son." And I think in my heart he was as much affected as I was at thus suddenly finding one of his kindred; for he, too, was an exile from home, and a friendly voice, a look, brought the old country back to his memory again, and the old days of his boyhood. "I'd give five years of my life to see them again," said he, after caressing me very warmly. "What?" asked I. "Why," replied he, "the green fields, and the river, and the old round tower, and the burying-place at Ballybarry. 'Twas a shame for your father to part with the land, Redmond, that went so long with the name."

He then began to ask me concerning myself, and I gave him

my history at some length; at which the worthy gentleman laughed many times, saying, that I was a Barry all over. In the middle of my story he would stop me, to make me stand back to back, and measure with him (by which I ascertained that our heights were the same, and that my uncle had a stiff knee, moreover, which made him walk in a peculiar way), and uttered, during the course of the narrative, a hundred exclamations of pity, and kindness, and sympathy. It was "Holy Saints!" and "Mother of Heaven!" and "Blessed Mary!"



continually; by which, and with justice, I concluded that he was still devotedly attached to the ancient faith of our family.

It was with some difficulty that I came to explain to him the last part of my history, viz., that I was put into his service as a watch upon his actions, of which I was to give information in a certain quarter. When I told him (with a great deal of hesitation) of this fact, he burst out laughing, and enjoyed the joke amazingly. "The rascals!" said he; "they think to catch me, do they? Why, Redmond, my chief conspiracy is a faro-bank. But the King is so jealous, that he will see a spy in every person



who comes to his miserable capital in the great sandy desert here. Ah, my boy, I must show you Paris and Vienna!"

I said there was nothing I longed for more than to see any city but Berlin, and should be delighted to be free of the odious military service. Indeed, I thought, from his splendour of appearance, the knickknacks about the room, the gilded carriage in the *remise*, that my uncle was a man of vast property; and that he would purchase a dozen, nay, a whole regiment of substitutes, in order to restore me to freedom.

But I was mistaken in my calculations regarding him, as his history of himself speedily showed me. "I have been beaten about the world," said he, "ever since the year 1742, when my brother your father (and Heaven forgive him) cut my family estate from under my heels, by turning heretic, in order to marry that scold of a mother of yours. Well, let bygones be bygones. 'Tis probable that I should have run through the little property as he did in my place, and I should have had to begin a year or two later the life I have been leading ever since I was compelled to leave Ireland. My lad, I have been in every service; and, between ourselves, owe money in every capital in Europe. I made a campaign or two with the Pandours under Austrian Trenck. I was captain in the Guard of His Holiness the Pope, I made the campaign of Scotland with the Prince of Wales—a bad fellow, my dear, caring more for his mistress and his brandy-bottle than for the crowns of the three kingdoms. I have served in Spain and in Piedmont; but I have been a rolling stone, my good fellow. Play—play has been my ruin; that and beauty" (here he gave a leer which made him, I must confess, look anything but handsome; besides, his rouged cheeks were all beslobbered with the tears which he had shed on receiving me). "The women have made a fool of me, my dear Redmond. I am a soft-hearted creature, and this minute, at sixty-two, have no more command of myself than when Peggy O'Dwyer made a fool of me at sixteen."

"Faith sir," says I, laughing, "I think it runs in the family!" and described to him, much to his amusement, my romantic passion for my cousin, Nora Brady. He resumed his narrative.

"The cards now are my only livelihood. Sometimes I am in luck, and then I lay out my money in these trinkets you see. It's property, look you, Redmond; and the only way I have found or keeping a little about me. When the luck goes against

me, why, my dear, my diamonds go to the pawnbrokers, and I wear paste. Friend Moses the goldsmith will pay me a visit this very day; for the chances have been against me all the week past, and I must raise money for the bank to-night. Do you understand the cards?"

I replied that I could play as soldiers do, but had no great skill.

"We will practise in the morning, my boy," said he, "and I'll put you up to a thing or two worth knowing."

Of course I was glad to have such an opportunity of acquiring knowledge, and professed myself delighted to receive my uncle's instruction.

The Chevalier's account of himself rather disagreeably affected me. All his show was on his back, as he said. His carriage, with the fine gilding, was a part of his stock in trade. He *had* a sort of mission from the Austrian Court:—it was to discover whether a certain quantity of alloyed ducats which had been traced to Berlin, were from the King's treasury. But the real end of Monsieur de Balibari was play. There was a young *attaché* of the English embassy, my Lord Deuceace, afterwards Viscount and Earl of Crabs in the English peerage, who was playing high; and it was after hearing of the passion of this young English nobleman that my uncle, then at Prague, determined to visit Berlin and engage him. For there is a sort of chivalry among the knights of the dice-box: the fame of great players is known all over Europe. I have known the Chevalier de Casanova, for instance, to travel six hundred miles, from Paris to Turin, for the purpose of meeting Mr. Charles Fox, then only my Lord Holland's dashing son, afterwards the greatest of European orators and statesmen.

It was agreed that I should keep my character of valet; that in the presence of strangers I should not know a word of English; that I should keep a good look-out on the trumps when I was serving the champagne and punch about; and, having a remarkably fine eyesight and a great natural aptitude, I was speedily able to give my dear uncle much assistance against his opponents at the green table. Some prudish persons may affect indignation at the frankness of these confessions, but Heaven pity them! Do you suppose that any man who has lost or won a hundred thousand pounds at play will not take the advantages which his neighbour enjoys? They are all the same. But it is



only the clumsy fool who *cheats*; who resorts to the vulgar expedients of cogged dice and cut cards. Such a man is sure to go wrong some time or other, and is not fit to play in the society of gallant gentlemen; and my advice to people who see such a vulgar person at his pranks is, of course, to back him while he plays, but never—never to have anything to do with him. Play grandly, honourably. Be not, of course, cast down at losing; but above all, be not eager at winning, as mean souls are. And, indeed, with all one's skill and advantages, winning is often problematical; I have seen a sheer ignoramus that knows no more of play than of Hebrew, blunder you out of five thousand pounds in a few turns of the cards. I have seen a gentleman and his confederate play against another and *his* confederate. One never is secure in these cases: and when one considers the time and labour spent, the genius, the anxiety, the outlay of money required, the multiplicity of bad debts that one meets with (for dishonourable rascals are to be found at the play-table, as everywhere else in the world), I say, for my part, the profession is a bad one; and, indeed, have scarcely ever met a man who, in the end, profited by it. I am writing now with the experience of a man of the world. At the time I speak of I was a lad, dazzled by the idea of wealth, and respecting, certainly too much, my uncle's superior age and station in life.

There is no need to particularise here the little arrangements made between us; the play-men of the present day want no instruction, I take it, and the public have little interest in the matter. But simplicity was our secret. Everything successful is simple. If, for instance, I wiped the dust off a chair with my napkin, it was to show that the enemy was strong in diamonds; if I pushed it, he had ace, king; if I said, "Punch or wine, my Lord?" hearts was meant; if "Wine or punch?" clubs. If I blew my nose, it was to indicate that there was another confederate employed by the adversary; and *then*, I warrant you, some pretty trials of skill would take place. My Lord Deuceace, although so young, had a very great skill and cleverness with the cards in every way; and it was only from hearing Frank Punter, who came with him, yawn three times when the Chevalier had the ace of trumps, that I knew we were Greek to Greek, as it were.

My assumed dulness was perfect; and I used to make Monsieur de Potzdorff laugh with it, when I carried my little reports to him at the Garden-house outside the town where he gave me

rendezvous. These reports, of course, were arranged between me and my uncle beforehand. I was instructed (and it is always far the best way) to tell as much truth as my story would possibly bear. When, for instance, he would ask me, "What does the Chevalier do of a morning?"

"He goes to church regularly" (he was very religious), "and after hearing mass comes home to breakfast. Then he takes an airing in his chariot till dinner, which is served at noon. After dinner he writes his letters, if he have any letters to write: but he has very little to do in this way. His letters are to the Austrian envoy, with whom he corresponds, but who does not acknowledge him; and being written in English, of course I look over his shoulder. He generally writes for money. He says he wants it to bribe the secretaries of the Treasury, in order to find out really where the alloyed ducats come from; but, in fact, he wants it to play of evenings, when he makes his party with Calsabigi, the lottery-contractor, the Russian *attachés*, two from the English embassy, my Lords Deuceace and Punter, who play a *jeu d'enfer*, and a few more. The same set meet every night at supper: there are seldom any ladies; those who come are chiefly French ladies, members of the *corps de ballet*. He wins often, but not always. Lord Deuceace is a very fine player. The Chevalier Elliot, the English Minister, sometimes comes, on which occasion the secretaries do not play. Monsieur de Balibari dines at the missions, but *en petit comité*, not on grand days of reception. Calsabigi, I think, is his confederate at play. He has won lately; but the week before last he pledged his *solitaire* for four hundred ducats."

"Do he and the English *attachés* talk together in their own language?"

"Yes; he and the envoy spoke yesterday for half-an-hour about the new *danseuse* and the American troubles: chiefly about the new *danseuse*."

It will be seen that the information I gave was very minute and accurate, though not very important. But such as it was, it was carried to the ears of that famous hero and warrior the Philosopher of Sans Souci; and there was not a stranger who entered the capital but his actions were similarly spied and related to Frederick the Great.

As long as the play was confined to the young men of the different embassies, His Majesty did not care to prevent it; nay,



he encouraged play at all the missions, knowing full well that a man in difficulties can be made to speak, and that a timely *rouleau* of Frederics would often get him a secret worth many thousands. He got some papers from the French house in this way: and I have no doubt that my Lord Deuceace would have supplied him with information at a similar rate, had his chief not known the young nobleman's character pretty well, and had (as is usually the case) the work of the mission performed by a steady *roturier*, while the young brilliant bloods of the suite sported their embroidery at the balls, or shook their Mechlin ruffles over the green tables at faro. I have seen many scores of these young sprigs since, of these and their principals, and, *mon Dieu!* what fools they are! What dullards, what fribbles, what addle-headed simple coxcombs! This is one of the lies of the world, this diplomacy; or how could we suppose, that were the profession as difficult as the solemn red-box and tape-men would have us believe, they would invariably choose for it little pink-faced boys from school, with no other claim than mamma's title, and able at most to judge of a curricule, a new dance, or a neat boot?

When it became known, however, to the officers of the garrison that there was a faro-table in town, they were wild to be admitted to the sport; and, in spite of my entreaties to the contrary, my uncle was not averse to allow the young gentlemen their fling, and once or twice cleared a handsome sum out of their purses. It was in vain I told him that I must carry the news to my captain, before whom his comrades would not fail to talk, and who would thus know of the intrigue even without my information.

"Tell him," said my uncle.

"They will send you away," said I; "then what is to become of me?"

"Make your mind easy," said the latter, with a smile; "you shall not be left behind, I warrant you. Go take a last look at your barracks, make your mind easy; say a farewell to your friends in Berlin. The dear souls, how they will weep when they hear you are out of the country; and, as sure as my name is Barry, out of it you shall go!"

"But how, sir?" said I.

"Recollect Mr. Fakenham of Fakenham," said he knowingly.

"'Tis you yourself taught me how. Go get me one of my wigs.

Open my despatch-box yonder, where the great secrets of the Austrian Chancery lie; put your hair back off your forehead; clap me on this patch and these moustaches, and now look in the glass!"

"The Chevalier de Balibari," said I, bursting with laughter, and began walking the room in his manner with his stiff knee.

The next day, when I went to make my report to Monsieur de Potzdorff, I told him of the young Prussian officers that had been of late gambling; and he replied, as I expected, that the King had determined to send the Chevalier out of the country.

"He is a stingy curmudgeon," I replied; "I have had but three Frederics from him in two months, and I hope you will remember your promise to advance me!"

"Why, three Frederics were too much for the news you have picked up," said the Captain, sneering.

"It is not my fault that there has been no more," I replied. "When is he to go, sir?"

"The day after to-morrow. You say he drives after breakfast and before dinner. When he comes out to his carriage, a couple of gendarmes will mount the box, and the coachman will get his orders to move on."

"And his baggage, sir?" said I.

"Oh! that will be sent after him. I have a fancy to look into that red box which contains his papers, you say; and at noon, after parade, shall be at the inn. You will not say a word to any one there regarding the affair, and will wait for me at the Chevalier's rooms until my arrival. We must force that box. You are a clumsy hound, or you would have got the key long ago!"

I begged the Captain to remember me, and so took my leave of him. The next night I placed a couple of pistols under the carriage seat; and I think the adventures of the following day are quite worthy of the honours of a separate chapter.

#### CHAPTER IX.

*I appear in a Manner becoming my Name and Lineage.*

FORTUNE smiling at parting upon Monsieur de Balibari, enabled him to win a handsome sum with his faro-bank.

At ten o'clock the next morning, the carriage of the Chevalier de Balibari drew up as usual at the door of his hotel; and the