

Fenimore Cooper

The Wing-and-Wing

*“Know,
Without star or angel for their guide,
Who worship God shall find him.”*

Young

Preface

It is difficult to say of which there is most in the world, a blind belief in religious dogmas, or a presumptuous and ignorant cavilling on revelation. The impression has gone abroad, that France was an example of the last, during the height of her great revolutionary mania; a charge that was scarcely true, as respects the nation, however just it might be in connection with her bolder and more unquiet spirits. Most of the excesses of France, during that momentous period, were to be attributed to the agency of a few, the bulk of the nation having little to do with any part of them, beyond yielding their physical and pecuniary aid to an audacious and mystifying political combination. One of the baneful results, however, of these great errors of the times, was the letting loose of the

audacious from all the venerable and healthful restraints of the church, to set them afloat on the sea of speculation and conceit. There is something so gratifying to human vanity in fancying ourselves superior to most around us, that we believe few young men attain their majority without imbibing more or less of the taint of unbelief, and passing through the mists of a vapid moral atmosphere, before they come to the clear, manly, and yet humble perceptions that teach most of us, in the end, our own insignificance, the great benevolence as well as wisdom of the scheme of redemption, and the philosophy of the Christian religion, as well as its divinity.

Perhaps the greatest stumbling-block of the young is a disposition not to yield to their belief unless it conforms to their own crude notions of propriety and reason. If the powers of man were equal to analyzing the nature of the Deity, to comprehending His being, and power, and motives, there would be some little show of sense in thus setting up the pretence of satisfying our judgments in all things, before we yield our credence to a religious system. But the first step we take brings with it the instructive lesson of our incapacity, and teaches the wholesome lesson of humility. From arrogantly claiming a right to worship a deity we comprehend, we soon come to feel that the impenetrable veil that is cast around the Godhead is an indispensable condition of our faith, reverence, and

submission, A being that can be comprehended is not a being to be worshipped.

In this book, there is an attempt to set these conflicting tendencies in a full but amicable contrast to each other, We believe there is nothing in the design opposed to probability; and it seems to us, that the amiable tenderness of a confiding but just-viewing female heart might, under the circumstances, be expected to manifest the mingled weakness and strength that it has here been our aim to portray.

We acknowledge a strong paternal feeling in behalf of this book, placing it very high in the estimate of its merits, as compared with other books from the same pen: a species of commendation that need wound no man.

Perhaps some knowledge of Italian character is necessary to enjoy the *vice-governatore* (veechy-gov-er-na-to-re), and the *podesta*; but we confess they have given us, in reading over these pages for the first time since they were written, quite as much amusement as if they were altogether from an unknown hand.

As for the Mediterranean, that unrivalled sea, its pictures always afford us delight. The hue of the water; the delicious and voluptuous calm; the breathings of the storm from the Alps and Apennines; the noble mountain-sides basking in the light of the region or shrouded in mists that increase their grandeur; the

picturesque craft; the islands, bays, rocks, volcanoes, and the thousand objects of art, contribute to render it the centre of all that is delightful and soothing to both the mind and the senses.

The reader will recollect the painful history of Caraccioli. We have taken some liberties with his private history, admitting frankly that we have no other authority for them than that which we share in common with all writers of romance. The grand-daughter we have given the unfortunate admiral is so much in accordance with Italian practices that no wrong is done to the *morale* of Naples, whatever may be the extent of the liberty taken with the individual.

Nelson seems to have lived and died under the influence of the unprincipled woman who then governed him with the arts of a siren. His nature was noble, and his moral impressions, even, were not bad; but his simple and confiding nature was not equal to contending with one as practised in profligacy as the woman into whose arms he was thrown, at a most evil moment for his reputation.

There is nothing more repugnant to the general sense of rights, than the prostitution of public justice to the purposes of private vengeance.

Such would seem to have been the reason of the very general odium attached to the execution of Admiral Prince Caraccioli, who was the victim of circumstances, rather than the promoter of treason. The

whole transaction makes a melancholy episode in the history of modern Europe.

We have made such use of it as is permitted to fiction, neither neglecting the leading and known facts of the event, nor adhering to the minuter circumstances more closely than the connection of our tale demanded.

Chapter I

*“Filled with the face of heaven, which from
afar
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change: a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new color as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till — 'tis gone — and
all is grey.”*

Childe Harold

The charms of the Tyrrhenian Sea have been sung since the days of Homer.

That the Mediterranean generally, and its beautiful boundaries of Alps and Apennines, with its deeply indented and irregular shores, forms the most delightful region of the known earth, in all that relates to climate, productions, and physical formation, will be

readily enough conceded by the traveller. The countries that border on this midland water, with their promontories buttressing a mimic ocean — their mountain-sides teeming with the picturesque of human life — their heights crowned with watch-towers — their rocky shelves consecrated by hermitages, and their unrivalled sheet dotted with sails, rigged, as it might be, expressly to produce effect in a picture, form a sort of world apart, that is replete with charms which not only fascinate the beholder, but which linger in the memories of the absent like visions of a glorious past.



Our present business is with this fragment of a creation that is so eminently beautiful, even in its worst aspects, but which is so often marred by the passions of man, in its best. While all admit how much nature has done for the Mediterranean, none will deny that, until quite recently, it has been the scene of more ruthless violence, and of deeper personal wrongs, perhaps, than any other portion of the globe. With different races, more widely separated by destinies than even by origin, habits, and religion, occupying its northern and southern shores, the outwork, as it might be, of Christianity and Mohammedanism, and of an antiquity that defies history, the bosom of this blue expanse has mirrored more violence, has witnessed more scenes of slaughter, and heard more shouts of victory, between the days of Agamemnon and Nelson, than all the rest of the dominions of Neptune together. Nature and the passions have united to render it like the human countenance, which conceals by its smiles and godlike expression the furnace that so often glows within the heart, and the volcano that consumes our happiness. For centuries, the Turk and the Moor rendered it unsafe for the European to navigate these smiling coasts; and when the barbarian's power temporarily ceased, it was merely to give place to the struggles of those who drove him from the arena.

The circumstances which rendered the period that occurred between the years 1790 and 1815 the most

eventful of modern times are familiar to all; though the incidents which chequered that memorable quarter of a century have already passed into history. All the elements of strife that then agitated the world appear now to have subsided as completely as if they owed their existence to a remote age; and living men recall the events of their youth as they regard the recorded incidents of other centuries. Then, each month brought its defeat or its victory; its account of a government overturned, or of a province conquered. The world was agitated like men in a tumult. On that epoch the timid look back with wonder; the young with doubt; and the restless with envy.

The years 1798 and 1799 were two of the most memorable of this ever-memorable period; and to that stirring and teeming season we must carry the mind of the reader in order to place it in the midst of the scenes it is our object to portray.

Toward the close of a fine day in the month of August, a light, fairy-like craft was fanning her way before a gentle westerly air into what is called the Canal of Piombino, steering easterly. The rigs of the Mediterranean are proverbial for their picturesque beauty and quaintness, embracing the xebeque, the felucca, the polacre, and the bombardà, or ketch; all unknown, or nearly so, to our own seas; and occasionally the lugger. The latter, a species of craft, however, much less common in the waters of Italy than

in the Bay of Biscay and the British Channel, was the construction of the vessel in question; a circumstance that the mariners who eyed her from the shores of Elba deemed indicative of mischief. A three-masted lugger, that spread a wide breadth of canvas, with a low, dark hull, relieved by a single and almost imperceptible line of red beneath her channels, and a waist so deep that nothing was visible above it but the hat of some mariner taller than common, was considered a suspicious vessel; and not even a fisherman would have ventured out within reach of a shot, so long as her character was unknown. Privateers, or corsairs, as it was the fashion to term them (and the name, with even its English signification, was often merited by their acts), not unfrequently glided down that coast; and it was sometimes dangerous for those who belonged to friendly nations to meet them, in moments when the plunder that a relic of barbarism still legalizes had failed.

The lugger was actually of about one hundred and eighty tons admeasurement, but her dark paint and low hull gave her an appearance of being much smaller than she really was; still, the spread of her canvas, as she came down before the wind, wing-and-wing, as seamen term it, or with a sail fanning like the heavy pinions of a sea-fowl, on each side, betrayed her pursuits; and, as has been intimated, the mariners on the shore who watched her movements shook their heads in distrust as

they communed among themselves, in very indifferent Italian, concerning her destination and object. This observation, with its accompanying discourse, occurred on the rocky bluff above the town of Porto Ferrajo, in the Island of Elba, a spot that has since become so renowned as the capital of the mimic dominion of Napoleon. Indeed, the very dwelling which was subsequently used by the fallen emperor as a palace stood within a hundred yards of the speakers, looking out toward the entrance of the canal, and the mountains of Tuscany; or rather of the little principality of Piombino, the system of merging the smaller in the larger states of Europe not having yet been brought into extensive operation. This house, a building of the size of a better sort of country residence of our own, was then, as now, occupied by the Florentine governor of the Tuscan portion of the island. It stands on the extremity of a low rocky promontory that forms the western ramparts of the deep, extensive bay, on the side of which, ensconced behind a very convenient curvature of the rocks, which here incline westward in the form of a hook, lies the small port, completely concealed from the sea, as if in dread of visits like those which might be expected from craft resembling the suspicious stranger. This little port, not as large in itself as a modern dock in places like London or Liverpool, was sufficiently protected against any probable dangers, by suitable batteries; and as for the elements, a

vessel laid upon a shelf in a closet would be scarcely more secure. In this domestic little basin, which, with the exception of a narrow entrance, was completely surrounded by buildings, lay a few feluccas, that traded between the island and the adjacent main, and a solitary Austrian ship, which had come from the head of the Adriatic in quest of iron.

At the moment of which we are writing, however, but a dozen living beings were visible in or about all these craft. The intelligence that a strange lugger, resembling the one described, was in the offing, and had drawn nearly all the mariners ashore; and most of the habitues of the port had followed them up the broad steps of the crooked streets which led to the heights behind the town; or to the rocky elevation that overlooks the sea from northeast to west. The approach of the lugger produced some such effect on the mariners of this unsophisticated and little frequented port, as that of the hawk is known to excite among the timid tenants of the barn-yard. The rig of the stranger had been noted two hours before by one or two old coasters, who habitually passed their idle moments on the heights, examining the signs of the weather, and indulging in gossip; and their conjectures had drawn to the Porto Ferrajo mall some twenty men, who fancied themselves, or who actually were, *cognoscenti* in matters of the sea. When, however, the low, long, dark hull, which upheld such wide sheets of canvas, became

fairly visible, the omens thickened, rumors spread, and hundreds collected on the spot, which, in Manhattanese parlance, would probably have been called a battery. Nor would the name have been altogether inappropriate, as a small battery was established there, and that, too, in a position which would easily throw a shot two-thirds of a league into the offing; or about the distance that the stranger was now from the shore.

Tommaso Tonti was the oldest mariner of Elba, and luckily, being a sober, and usually a discreet man, he was the oracle of the island in most things that related to the sea. As each citizen, wine-dealer, grocer, innkeeper, or worker in iron, came up on the height, he incontinently inquired for Tonti, or 'Maso, as he was generally called; and getting the bearings and distance of the gray-headed old seaman, he invariably made his way to his side, until a group of some two hundred men, women, and children had clustered near the person of the *pilota*, as the faithful gather about a favorite expounder of the law, in moments of religious excitement. It was worthy of remark, too, with how much consideration this little crowd of gentle Italians treated their aged seaman, on this occasion; none bawling out their questions, and all using the greatest care not to get in front of his person, lest they might intercept his means of observation. Five or six old sailors, like himself, were close at his side; these, it is true, did not hesitate to speak as became their

experience. But Tonti had obtained no small part of his reputation by exercising great moderation in delivering his oracles, and perhaps by seeming to know more than he actually revealed.

He was reserved, therefore; and while his brethren of the sea ventured on sundry conflicting opinions concerning the character of the stranger, and a hundred idle conjectures had flown from mouth to mouth, among the landsmen and females, not a syllable that could commit the old man escaped his lips. He let the others talk at will; as for himself, it suited his habits, and possibly his doubts, to maintain a grave and portentous silence.

We have spoken of females; as a matter of course, an event like this, in a town of some three or four thousand souls, would be likely to draw a due proportion of the gentler sex to the heights. Most of them contrived to get as near as possible to the aged seaman, in order to obtain the first intelligence, that it might be the sooner circulated; but it would seem that among the younger of these there was also a sort of oracle of their own, about whose person gathered a dozen of the prettiest girls; either anxious to hear what Ghita might have to say in the premises, or, perhaps, influenced by the pride and modesty of their sex and condition, which taught them to maintain a little more reserve than was necessary to the less refined portion of their companions. In speaking of condition, however,

the words must be understood with an exceedingly limited meaning. Porto Ferrajo had but two classes of society, the tradespeople and the laborers; although there were, perhaps, a dozen exceptions in the persons of a few humble functionaries of the government, an avvocato, a medico, and a few priests. The governor of the island was a Tuscan of rank, but he seldom honored the place with his presence; and his deputy was a professional man, a native of the town, whose original position was too well known to allow him to give himself airs on the spot where he was born. Ghita's companions, then, were daughters of shopkeepers, and persons of that class who, having been taught to read, and occasionally going to Leghorn, besides being admitted by the deputy to the presence of his housekeeper, had got to regard themselves as a little elevated above the more vulgar curiosity of the less cultivated girls of the port. Ghita herself, however, owed her ascendancy to her qualities, rather than to the adventitious advantage of being a grocer's or an innkeeper's daughter, her origin being unknown to most of those around her, as indeed was her family name. She had been landed six weeks before, and left by one who passed for her father, at the inn of Christoforo Dovi, as a boarder, and had acquired all her influence, as so many reach notoriety in our own simple society, by the distinction of having travelled; aided, somewhat, by her strong sense, great decision of character, perfect

modesty and propriety of deportment, with a form which was singularly graceful and feminine, and a face that, while it could scarcely be called beautiful, was in the highest degree winning and attractive. No one thought of asking her family name; and she never appeared to deem it necessary to mention it.

Ghita was sufficient; it was familiar to every one; and, although there were two or three others of the same appellation in Porto Ferrajo, this, by common consent, got to be *the* Ghita, within a week after she had landed.

Ghita, it was known, had travelled, for she had publicly reached Elba in a felucca, coming, as was said, from the Neapolitan states. If this were true, she was probably the only person of her sex in the town who had ever seen Vesuvius, or planted her eyes on the wonders of a part of Italy that has a reputation second only to that of Rome. Of course, if any girl in Porto Ferrajo could imagine the character of the stranger it must be Ghita; and it was on this supposition that she had unwittingly, and, if the truth must be owned, unwillingly, collected around her a *clientelle* of at least a dozen girls of her own age, and apparently of her own class. The latter, however, felt no necessity for the reserve maintained by the curious who pressed near 'Maso; for, while they respected their guest and friend, and would rather listen to her surmises than to those of any other person, they had such a prompting desire to

hear their own voices that not a minute escaped without a question, or a conjecture, both volubly and quite audibly expressed. The interjections, too, were somewhat numerous, as the guesses were crude and absurd. One said it was a vessel with despatches from Livorno, possibly with "His Eccellenza" on board; but she was reminded that Leghorn lay to the north, and not to the west. Another thought it was a cargo of priests, going from Corsica to Rome; but she was told that priests were not in sufficient favor just then in France, to get a vessel so obviously superior to the ordinary craft of the Mediterranean, to carry them about. While a third, more imaginative than either, ventured to doubt whether it was a vessel at all; deceptive appearances of this sort not being of rare occurrence, and usually taking the aspect of something out of the ordinary way.

"*Si,*" said Annina, "but that would be a miracle, Maria; and why should we have a miracle, now that Lent and most of the holidays are past? *I* believe it is a real vessel."

The others laughed, and, after a good deal of eager chattering on the subject, it was quite generally admitted that the stranger was a *bona fide* craft, of some species or another, though all agreed she was not a felucca, a bombardarda, or a sparannara. All this time Ghita was thoughtful and silent; quite as much so, indeed, as Tommaso himself, though from a very different motive. Notwithstanding all the gossip, and

the many ludicrous opinions of her companions, her eyes scarcely turned an instant from the lugger, on which they seemed to be riveted by a sort of fascination. Had there been one there sufficiently unoccupied to observe this interesting girl, he might have been struck with the varying expression of a countenance that was teeming with sensibility, and which too often reflected the passing emotions of its mistress's mind. Now an expression of anxiety, and even of alarm, would have been detected by such an observer, if acute enough to separate these emotions, in the liveliness of sentiment, from the more vulgar feelings of her companions; and now, something like gleamings of delight and happiness flashed across her eloquent countenance. The color came and went often; and there was an instant, during which the lugger varied her course, hauling to the wind, and then falling off again, like a dolphin at its sports, when the radiance of the pleasure that glowed about her soft blue eyes rendered the girl perfectly beautiful. But none of these passing expressions were noticed by the garrulous group around the stranger female, who was left very much to the indulgence of the impulses that gave them birth, unquestioned, and altogether unsuspected.

Although the cluster of girls had, with feminine sensitiveness, gathered a little apart from the general crowd, there were but a few yards between the spot where it stood and that occupied by 'Maso; so that,

when the latter spoke, an attentive listener among the former might hear his words. This was an office that Tonti did not choose to undertake, however, until he was questioned by the podesta, Vito Viti, who now appeared on the hill in person, puffing like a whale that rises to breathe, from the vigor of his ascent.

“What dost thou make of her, good ’Maso?” demanded the magistrate, after he had examined the stranger himself some time in silence, feeling authorized, in virtue of his office, to question whom he pleased.

“Signore, it is a lugger,” was the brief, and certainly the accurate reply.

“Aye, a lugger; we all understand that, neighbor Tonti; but what sort of a lugger? There are felucca-luggers, and polacre-luggers, and bombard-a-luggers, and all sorts of luggers; which sort of lugger is this?”

“Signor Podesta, this is not the language of the port. We call a felucca, a felucca; a bombard-a, a bombard-a; a polacre, a polacre; and a lugger, a lugger. This is therefore a lugger.”

’Maso spoke authoritatively, for he felt that he was now not out of his depth, and it was grateful to him to let the public know how much better he understood all these matters than a magistrate. On the other hand, the podesta was nettled, and disappointed into the bargain, for he really imagined he was drawing nice

distinctions, much as it was his wont to do in legal proceedings; and it was his ambition to be thought to know something of everything.

“Well, Tonti,” answered Signor Viti, in a protecting manner, and with an affable smile, “as this is not an affair that is likely to go to the higher courts at Florence, your explanations may be taken as sufficient, and I have no wish to disturb them — a lugger is a lugger.”

“Si, Signore; that is just what we say in the port. A lugger is a lugger.”

“And yonder strange craft, you maintain, and at need are ready to swear, is a lugger?”

Now ’Maso seeing no necessity for any oath in the affair, and being always somewhat conscientious in such matters, whenever the custom-house officers did not hold the book, was a little startled at this suggestion, and he took another and a long look at the stranger before he answered.

“Si, Signore,” he replied, after satisfying his mind once more, through his eyes, “I *will* swear that the stranger yonder is a lugger.”

“And canst thou add, honest Tonti, of what nation? The *nation* is of as much moment in these troubled times, as the *rig*.”

“You say truly, Signor Podesta; for if an Algerine, or a Moor, or even a Frenchman, he will be an unwelcome visitor in the Canal of Elba. There are

many different signs about him, that sometimes make me think he belongs to one people, and then to another; and I crave your pardon if I ask a little leisure to let him draw nearer, before I give a positive opinion.”

As this request was reasonable, no objection was raised. The podesta turned aside, and observing Ghita, who had visited his niece, and of whose intelligence he entertained a favorable opinion, he drew nearer to the girl, determined to lose a moment in dignified trifling.

“Honest ’Maso, poor fellow, is sadly puzzled,” he observed, smiling benevolently, as if in pity for the pilot’s embarrassment; “he wishes to persuade us that the strange craft yonder is a lugger, though he cannot himself say to what country she belongs!”

“It is a lugger, Signore,” returned the girl, drawing a long breath, as if relieved by hearing the sound of her own voice.

“How! dost thou pretend to be so skilled in vessels as to distinguish these particulars at the distance of a league?”

“I do not think it a league, Signore — not more than half a league; and the distance lessens fast, though the wind is so light. As for knowing a lugger from a felucca, it is as easy as to know a house from a church, or one of the reverend padri, in the streets, from a mariner.”

“Aye, so I would have told ’Maso on the spot, had the obstinate old fellow been inclined to hear me.

The distance is just about what you say; and nothing is easier than to see that the stranger is a lugger. As to the nation..."

"That may not be so easily told, Signore, unless the vessel show us her nag."

"By San Antonio! thou art right, child; and it is fitting she should show us her flag. Nothing has a right to approach so near the port of his Imperial and Royal Highness, that does not show its flag, thereby declaring its honest purpose and its nation. My friends, are the guns in the battery loaded as usual?"

The answer being in the affirmative, there was a hurried consultation among some of the principal men in the crowd, and then the podesta walked toward the government-house with an important air. In five minutes, soldiers were seen in the batteries, and preparations were made for levelling an eighteen-pounder in the direction of the stranger. Most of the females turned aside, and stopped their ears, the battery being within a hundred yards of the spot where they stood; but Ghita, with a face that was pale certainly, though with an eye that was steady, and without the least indications of fear, as respected herself, intensely watched every movement. When it was evident the artillerists were about to fire, anxiety induced her to break silence.

"They surely will not aim *at* the lugger!" she exclaimed. "*That* cannot be necessary, Signor Podesta,

to make the stranger hoist his flag. Never have I seen *that* done in the south.”

“You are unacquainted with our Tuscan bombardiers, Signorina,” answered the magistrate, with a bland smile, and an exulting gesture. “It is well for Europe that the grand duchy is so small, since such troops might prove even more troublesome than the French!”

Ghita, however, paid no attention to this touch of provincial pride, but, pressing her hands on her heart, she stood like a statue of suspense, while the men in the battery executed their duty. In a minute the match was applied, and the gun was discharged. Though all her companions uttered invocations to the saints, and other exclamations, and some even crouched to the earth in terror, Ghita, the most delicate of any in appearance, and with more real sensibility than all united expressed in her face, stood firm and erect. The flash and the explosion evidently had no effect on her; not an artillerist among them was less unmoved in frame, at the report, than this slight girl. She even imitated the manner of the soldiers, by turning to watch the flight of the shot, though she clasped her hands as she did so, and appeared to wait the result with trembling. The few seconds of suspense were soon past, when the ball was seen to strike the water fully a quarter of a mile astern of the lugger, and to skip along the placid sea for twice that distance further, when it sank to the bottom by its

own gravity.

“Santa Maria be praised!” murmured the girl, a smile half pleasure, half irony, lighting her face, as unconsciously to herself she spoke, “these Tuscan artillerists are no fatal marksmen!”

“That was most dexterously done, bella Ghita!” exclaimed the magistrate, removing his two hands from his ears; “that was amazingly well aimed!

Another such shot as far ahead, with a third fairly between the two, and the stranger will learn to respect the rights of Tuscany. What say'st thou now, honest 'Maso — will this lugger tell us her country, or will she further brave our power?”

“If wise, she will hoist her ensign; and yet I see no signs of preparations for such an act.”

Sure enough the stranger, though quite within effective range of shot from the heights, showed no disposition to gratify the curiosity, or to appease the apprehensions, of those in the town. Two or three of her people were visible in her rigging, but even these did not hasten their work, or in any manner seem deranged at the salutation they had just received. After a few minutes, however, the lugger jibed her mainsail, and then hauled up a little, so as to look more toward the headland, as if disposed to steer for the bay, by doubling the promontory. This movement caused the artillerists to suspend their own, and the lugger had fairly come within a mile of the cliffs, ere she lazily

turned aside again, and shaped her course once more in the direction of the entrance of the Canal. This drew another shot, which effectually justified the magistrate's eulogy, for it certainly flew as much ahead of the stranger as the first had flown astern.

"There, Signore," cried Ghita eagerly, as she turned to the magistrate, "they are about to hoist their ensign, for now they know your wishes.

The soldiers surely will not fire again!"

"That would be in the teeth of the law of nations, Signorina, and a blot on Tuscan civilization. Ah! you perceive the artillerists are aware of what you say, and are putting aside their tools. Cospetto! 'tis a thousand pities, too, they couldn't fire the third shot, that you might see it strike the lugger; as yet you have only beheld their preparations."

"It is enough, Signor Podesta," returned Ghita, smiling, for she could smile now that she saw the soldiers intended no further mischief; "we have all heard of your Elba gunners, and what I *have* seen convinces me of what they can do, when there is occasion. Look, Signore! the lugger is about to satisfy our curiosity."

Sure enough, the stranger saw fit to comply with the usages of nations.

It has been said, already, that the lugger was coming down before the wind wing-and-wing, or with a sail expanded to the air on each side of her hull, a

disposition of the canvas that gives to the felucca, and to the lugger in particular, the most picturesque of all their graceful attitudes. Unlike the narrow-headed sails that a want of hands has introduced among ourselves, these foreign, we might almost say classical, mariners send forth their long pointed yards aloft, confining the width below by the necessary limits of the sheet, making up for the difference in elevation by the greater breadth of their canvas. The idea of the felucca's sails, in particular, would seem to have been literally taken from the wing of the large sea-fowl, the shape so nearly corresponding that, with the canvas spread in the manner just mentioned, one of those light craft has a very close resemblance to the gull or the hawk, as it poises itself in the air or is sweeping down upon its prey. The lugger has less of the beauty that adorns a picture, perhaps, than the strictly latine rig; but it approaches so near it as to be always pleasing to the eye, and, in the particular evolution described, is scarcely less attractive. To the seaman, however, it brings with it an air of greater service, being a mode of carrying canvas that will buffet with the heaviest gales or the roughest seas, while it appears so pleasant to the eye in the blandest airs and smoothest water.

The lugger that was now beneath the heights of Elba had three masts, though sails were spread only on the two that were forward. The third mast was stepped on the taffrail; it was small, and carried a little sail, that,

in English, is termed a jigger, its principal use being to press the bows of the craft up to the wind, when close-hauled, and render her what is termed weatherly. On the present occasion, there could scarcely be said to be anything deserving the name of wind, though Ghita felt her cheek, which was warmed with the rich blood of her country, fanned by an air so gentle that occasionally it blew aside tresses that seemed to vie with the floss silk of her native land. Had the natural ringlets been less light, however, so gentle a respiration of the sea air could scarcely have disturbed them. But the lugger had her lightest duck spread — reserving the heavier canvas for the storms — and it opened like the folds of a balloon, even before these gentle impulses; occasionally collapsing, it is true, as the ground-swell swung the yards to and fro, but, on the whole, standing out and receiving the air as if guided more by volition than any mechanical power. The effect on the hull was almost magical; for, notwithstanding the nearly imperceptible force of the propelling power, owing to the lightness and exquisite mould of the craft, it served to urge her through the water at the rate of some three or four knots in the hour; or quite as fast as an ordinarily active man is apt to walk. Her motion was nearly unobservable to all on board, and might rather be termed gliding than sailing, the ripple under her cut-water not much exceeding that which is made by the finger as it is moved swiftly through the element;

still the slightest variation of the helm changed her course, and this so easily and gracefully as to render her deviations and inclinations like those of the duck. In her present situation, too, the jigger, which was brailed, and hung festooned from its light yard, ready for use, should occasion suddenly demand it, added singularly to the smart air which everything wore about this craft, giving her, in the seaman's eyes, that particularly knowing and suspicious look which had awakened 'Maso's distrust.

The preparations to show the ensign, which caught the quick and understanding glance of Ghita, and which had not escaped even the duller vision of the artillerists, were made at the outer end of this jigger-yard, A boy appeared on the taffrail, and he was evidently clearing the ensign-halyards for that purpose. In half a minute, however, he disappeared; then a flag rose steadily, and by a continued pull, to its station. At first the bunting hung suspended in a line, so as to evade all examination; but, as if everything on board this light craft were on a scale as airy and buoyant as herself, the folds soon expanded, showing a white field, traversed at right angles with a red cross, and having a union of the same tint in its upper and inner corner.

"*Inglese!*" exclaimed 'Maso, infinitely aided in this conjecture by the sight of the stranger's ensign — "Si, Signore; it is an Englishman; I *thought* so, from the first, but as the lugger is not a common rig for vessels

of that nation, I did not like to risk anything by saying it.”

“Well, honest Tommaso, it is a happiness to have a mariner as skilful as yourself, in these troublesome times, at one's elbow! I do not know how else we should ever have found out the stranger's country. An Inglese!

Corpo di Bacco! Who would have thought that a nation so maritime, and which lies so far off, would send so small a craft this vast distance!

Why, Ghita, it is a voyage from Elba to Livorno, and yet, I dare say England is twenty times further.”

“Signore, I know little of England, but I have heard that it lies beyond our own sea. This is the flag of the country, however; for *that* have I often beheld. Many ships of that nation come upon the coast, further south.”

“Yes, it is a great country for mariners; though they tell me it has neither wine nor oil. They are allies of the emperor, too; and deadly enemies of the French, who have done so much harm in upper Italy. That is something, Ghita, and every Italian should honor the flag. I fear the stranger does not intend to enter our harbor!”

“He steers as if he did not, certainly, Signor Podesta,” said Ghita, sighing so gently that the respiration was audible only to herself.

“Perhaps he is in search of some of the French, of

which they say so many were seen, last year, going east.”

“Aye, that was truly an enterprise!” answered the magistrate, gesticulating on a large scale, and opening his eyes by way of accompaniments. “General Bonaparte, he who had been playing the devil in the Milanese and the states of the Pope, for the last two years, sailed, they sent us word, with two or three hundred ships, the saints at first knew whither. Some said, it was to destroy the holy sepulchre; some to overturn the Grand Turk; and some thought to seize the islands. There was a craft in here, the same week, which said he had got possession of the Island of Malta; in which case we might look out for trouble in Elba. I had my suspicions, from the first!”

“All this I heard at the time, Signore, and my uncle probably could tell you more — how we all felt at the tidings!”

“Well, that is all over now, and the French are in Egypt. Your uncle, Ghita, has gone upon the main, I hear?” this was said inquiringly, and it was intended to be said carelessly; but the podesta could not prevent a glance of suspicion from accompanying the question.

“Signore, I believe he has, but I know little of his affairs. The time has come, however, when I ought to expect him. See, Eccellenza,” a title that never failed to mollify the magistrate, and turn his attention from others entirely to himself, “the lugger really appears

disposed to look into your bay, if not actually to enter it!"

This sufficed to change the discourse. Nor was it said altogether without reason; the lugger, which by this time had passed the western promontory, actually appearing disposed to do as Ghita conjectured. She jibed her mainsail — brought both sheets of canvas on her larboard side, and luffed a little, so as to cause her head to look toward the opposite side of the bay, instead of standing on, as before, in the direction of the canal. This change in the lugger's course produced a general movement in the crowd, which began to quit the heights, hastening to descend the terraced streets, in order to reach the haven. 'Maso and the podesta led the van, in this descent; and the girls, with Ghita in their midst, followed with equal curiosity, but with eager steps. By the time the throng was assembled on the quays, in the streets, on the decks of feluccas, or at other points that commanded the view, the stranger was seen gliding past, in the centre of the wide and deep bay, with his jigger hauled out, and his sheets aft, looking up nearly into the wind's eye, if that could be called wind which was still little more than the sighing of the classical zephyr. His motion was necessarily slow, but it continued light, easy, and graceful. After passing the entrance of the port a mile or more, he tacked and looked up toward the haven. By this time, however, he had got so near in to the western cliffs, that

their lee deprived him of all air; and, after keeping his canvas open half an hour in the little roads, it was all suddenly drawn to the yards, and the lugger anchored.

Chapter II

*“His stock, a few French phrases, got by
heart,
With much to learn, but nothing to impart;
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wanderer into foreign lands.”*

Cowper

It was now nearly dark, and the crowd, having satisfied its idle curiosity, began slowly to disperse. The Signor Viti remained till the last, conceiving it to be his duty to be on the alert in such troubled times; but, with all his bustling activity, it escaped his vigilance and means of observation to detect the circumstance that the stranger, while he steered into the bay with so much confidence, had contrived to bring up at a point where not a single gun from the batteries could be brought to bear on him; while his own shot, had he been disposed to hostilities, would have completely raked the little haven. But Vito Viti, though so enthusiastic an admirer of the art, was no gunner himself, and little liked to dwell on the effect of shot, except as it applied to others, and not at all to himself.



Of all the suspicious, apprehensive, and curious, who had been collected in and about the port, since it was known the lugger intended to come into the bay, Ghita and 'Maso alone remained on watch, after the vessel was anchored. A loud hail had been given by those intrusted with the execution of the quarantine laws, the great physical bugbear and moral mystification of the Mediterranean; and the questions put had been answered in a way to satisfy all scruples for the moment. The "From whence came ye?" asked, however, in an Italian idiom, had been answered by "Inghilterra, touching at Lisbon and Gibraltar," all

regions beyond distrust, as to the plague, and all happening, at that moment, to give clean bills of health. But the name of the craft herself had been given in a way to puzzle all the proficient in Saxon English that Porto Ferrajo could produce. It had been distinctly enough pronounced by some one on board, and, at the request of the quarantine department, had been three times slowly repeated, very much after the following form; viz.:

“*Come chiamate il vostro bastimento?*”

“The Wing-and-Wing.”

“*Come!*”

“The Wing-and-Wing.”

A long pause, during which the officials put their heads together, first to compare the sounds of each with those of his companions' ears, and then to inquire of one who professed to understand English, but whose knowledge was such as is generally met with in a linguist of a little-frequented port, the meaning of the term.

“Ving-y-ving!” growled this functionary, not a little puzzled “what ze devil sort of name is zat! Ask zem again.”

“*Come si chiama la vostra barca, Signori Inglesi?*” repeated he who hailed.

“*Diabie!*” growled one back, in French; “she is called ze Wing-and-Wing — 'Ala e Ala,'” giving a very literal translation of the name, in Italian. “*Ala e ala!*”

repeated they of the quarantine, first looking at each other in surprise, and then laughing, though in a perplexed and doubtful manner; "Ving-y-Ving!"

This passed just as the lugger anchored and the crowd had begun to disperse. It caused some merriment, and it was soon spread in the little town that a craft had just arrived from Inghilterra, whose name, in the dialect of that island, was "Ving-y-Ving," which meant "*Ala e ala*" in Italian, a cognomen that struck the listeners as sufficiently absurd. In confirmation of the fact, however, the lugger hoisted a small square flag at the end of her main-yard, on which were painted, or wrought, two large wings, as they are sometimes delineated in heraldry, with the beak of a galley between them; giving the whole conceit something very like the appearance that the human imagination has assigned to those heavenly beings, cherubs. This emblem seemed to satisfy the minds of the observers, who were too much accustomed to the images of art, not to obtain some tolerably distinct notions, in the end, of what "*Ala e ala*" meant.

But 'Maso, as has been said, remained after the rest had departed to their homes and their suppers, as did Ghita. The pilot, for such was Tonti's usual appellation, in consequence of his familiarity with the coast, and his being principally employed to direct the navigation of the different craft in which he served, kept his station on board a felucca to which he

belonged, watching the movements of the lugger; while the girl had taken her stand on the quay, in a position that better became her sex, since it removed her from immediate contact with the rough spirits of the port, while it enabled her to see what occurred about the Wing-and-Wing. More than half an hour elapsed, however, before there were any signs of an intention to land; but, by the time it was dark, a boat was ready, and it was seen making its way to the common stairs, where one or two of the regular officials were ready to receive it.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the forms of the pratique officers. These troublesome persons had their lanterns, and were vigilant in examining papers, as is customary; but it would seem the mariner in the boat had everything *en regle*, for he was soon suffered to land. At this instant, Ghita passed near the group, and took a close and keen survey of the stranger's form and face, her own person being so enveloped in a mantle as to render a recognition of it difficult, if not impossible.

The girl seemed satisfied with this scrutiny, for she immediately disappeared. Not so with 'Maso, who by this time had hurried round from the felucca, and was at the stairs in season to say a word to the stranger.

"Signore," said the pilot, "his Eccellenza, the podesta, has bidden me say to you that he expects the honor of your company at his house, which stands so near us, hard by here, in the principle street, as will

make it only a pleasure to go there; I know he would be disappointed, if he failed of the happiness of seeing you.”

“His Excellenza is a man not to be disappointed,” returned the stranger, in very good Italian, “and five minutes shall prove to him how eager I am to salute him”; then turning to the crew of his boat, he ordered them to return on board the lugger, and not to fail to look out for the signal by which he might call them ashore.

’Maso, as he led the way to the dwelling of Vito Viti, would fain ask a few questions, in the hope of appeasing certain doubts that beset him.

“Since when, Signor Capitano,” he inquired, “have you English taken to sailing luggers? It is a novel rig for one of your craft.”

“Corpo di Bacco!” answered the other, laughing, “friend of mine, if you can tell the precise day when brandy and laces were first smuggled from France into my country, I will answer your question. I think you have never navigated as far north as the Bay of Biscay and our English Channel, or you would know that a Guernsey-man is better acquainted with the rig of a lugger than with that of a ship.”

“Guernsey is a country I never heard of,” answered ’Maso simply; “is it like Holland — or more like Lisbon?”

“Very little of either. Guernsey is a country that

was once French, and where many of the people still speak the French language, but of which the English have been masters this many an age. It is an island subject to King George, but which is still half Gallic in names and usages. This is the reason why we like the lugger better than the cutter, which is a more English rig.”

’Maso was silent, for, if true, the answer at once removed many misgivings. He had seen so much about the strange craft which struck him as French, that doubts of her character obtruded; but if her captain’s account could only be substantiated, there was an end of distrust. What could be more natural than the circumstance that a vessel fitted out in an island of French origin should betray some of the peculiarities of the people who built her?

The podesta was at home, in expectation of this visit, and ’Maso was first admitted to a private conference, leaving the stranger in an outer room. During this brief conference, the pilot communicated all he had to say — both his suspicions and the seeming solution of the difficulties; and then he took his leave, after receiving the boon of a paul. Vito Viti now joined his guest, but it was so dark, lights not having yet been introduced, that neither could distinguish the other’s countenance.

“Signor Capitano,” observed the magistrate, “the deputy-governor is at his residence, on the hill, and he

will expect me to do him the favor to bring you thither, that he may do you the honors of the port.”

This was said so civilly, and was, in itself, both so reasonable and so much in conformity with usage, that the other had not a word to say against it. Together, then, they left the house, and proceeded toward the government-dwelling — a building which has since become celebrated as having been the residence of a soldier who came so near subjugating Europe. Vito Viti was a short, pursy man, and he took his time to ascend the stairs-resembling street; but his companion stepped from terrace to terrace with an ease and activity that, of themselves, would have declared him to be young, had not this been made apparent by his general bearing and his mien, as seen through the obscurity.

Andrea Barrofoli, the vice-governatore, was a very different sort of person from his friend the podesta. Although little more acquainted with the world, by practice, the vice-governatore was deeply read in books; owing his situation, in short, to the circumstance of his having written several clever works, of no great reputation, certainly, for genius, but which were useful in their way, and manifested scholarship. It is very seldom that a man of mere letters is qualified for public life; and yet there is an affectation, in all governments, most especially in those which care little for literature in general, of considering some professions of respect for it necessary to their

own characters. Andrea Barrofaldi had been inducted into his present office without even the sentimental profession of never having asked for it. The situation had been given to him by the Fossombrone of his day, without a word having been said in the journals of Tuscany of his doubts about accepting it, and everything passed, as things are apt to pass when there are true simplicity and good faith at the bottom, without pretension or comment.

He had now been ten years in office, and had got to be exceedingly expert in discharging all the ordinary functions of his post, which he certainly did with zeal and fidelity. Still, he did not desert his beloved books, and, quite apropos of the matter about to come before him, the Signor Barrofaldi had just finished a severe, profound, and extensive course of study in geography.

The stranger was left in the ante-chamber, while Vito Viti entered an inner room, and had a short communication with his friend, the vice-governatore. As soon as this was ended, the former returned, and ushered his companion into the presence of the substitute for the grand duke. As this was the sailor's first appearance within the influence of a light sufficiently strong to enable the podesta to examine his person, both he and Andrea Barrofaldi turned their eyes on him with lively curiosity, the instant the rays of a strong lamp enabled them to scrutinize his appearance. Neither was disappointed, in one sense, at least; the

countenance, figure, and mien of the mariner much more than equalling his expectations.

The stranger was a man of six-and-twenty, who stood five feet ten in his stockings, and whose frame was the very figure of activity, united to a muscle that gave very fair indications of strength. He was attired in an undress naval uniform, which he wore with a smart air, that one who understood these matters, more by means of experience, and less by means of books, than Andrea Barroaldi, would at once have detected did not belong to the manly simplicity of the English wardrobe. Nor were his features in the slightest degree those of one of the islanders, the outline being beautifully classical, more especially about the mouth and chin, while the cheeks were colorless, and the skin swarthy. His eye, too, was black as jet, and his cheek was half covered in whiskers of a hue dark as the raven's wing. His face, as a whole, was singularly beautiful — for handsome is a word not strong enough to express all the character that was conveyed by a conformation that might be supposed to have been copied from some antique medal, more especially when illuminated by a smile that, at times, rendered the whole countenance almost as bewitching as that of a lovely woman. There was nothing effeminate in the appearance of the young stranger, notwithstanding; his manly, though sweet voice, well-knit frame, and firm look affording every pledge of resolution and spirit.

Both the vice-governatore and the podesta were struck with the unusual personal advantages and smart air of the stranger, and each stood looking at him half a minute in silence, after the usual salutations had passed, and before the party were seated. Then, as the three took chairs, on a motion from Signor Barrofaldi, the latter opened the discourse.

“They tell me that we have the honor to receive into our little haven a vessel of Inghilterra, Signor Capitano,” observed the vice-governatore, earnestly regarding the other through his spectacles as he spoke, and that, too, in a manner not altogether free from distrust.

“Signer Vice-governatore, such is the flag under which I have the honor to serve,” returned the mariner.

“You are an Inglese, yourself, I trust, Signor Capitano — what name shall I enter in my book, here?”

“Jaques Smeet,” answered the other, betraying what might have proved two very fatal shibboleths, in the ears of those who were practised in the finesse of our very unmusical language, by attempting to say “Jack Smith.”

“Jaques Smeet,” repeated the vice-governatore — “that is, Giacomo, in our Italian...”

“No... no... Signore,” hastily interrupted Captain Smeet; “not Jaqueomo, but Jaques — Giovanni turned into Jaques by the aid of a little salt water.”

“Ah! — I begin to understand you, Signore; you

English have this usage in your language, though *you* have softened the word a little, in mercy to our ears. But we Italians are not afraid of such sounds; and I know the name. — 'Giac Smeet' — Il Capitano Giac Smeet — I have long suspected my English master of ignorance, for he was merely one of our Leghorn pilots, who has sailed in a bastimento de guerra of your country — he called your honorable name 'Smees,' Signore."

"He was very wrong, Signor Vice-governatore," answered the other, clearing his throat by a slight effort; "we always call our family 'Smeet.'"

"And the name of your lugger, Signor Capitano Smeet?" suspending his pen over the paper in expectation of the answer.

"Ze Ving-and-Ving"; pronouncing the *w*'s in a very different way from what they had been sounded in answering the hails.

"Ze Ving-y-Ving," repeated Signor Barrofaldi, writing the name in a manner to show it was not the first time he had heard it; "ze Ving-y-Ving; that is a poetical appellation, Signor Capitano; may I presume to ask what it signifies?"

"*Ala e ala*, in your Italian, *Mister* Vice-governatore. When a craft like mine has a sail spread on each side, resembling a bird, we say, in English, that she marches 'Ving-and-Ving,'"

Andrea Barrofaldi mused, in silence, near a

minute. During this interval, he was thinking of the improbability of any but a bona-fide Englishman's dreaming of giving a vessel an appellation so thoroughly idiomatic, and was fast mystifying himself, as so often happens by tyros in any particular branch of knowledge, by his own critical acumen. Then he half whispered a conjecture on the subject to Vito Viti, influenced quite as much by a desire to show his neighbor his own readiness in such matters, as by any other feeling. The podesta was less struck by the distinction than his superior; but, as became one of his limited means, he did not venture an objection.

“Signor Capitano,” resumed Andrea Barrofaldi, “since when have you English adopted the rig of the lugger? It is an unusual craft for so great a naval nation, they tell me.”

“Bah! I see how it is, Signor Vice-governatore — you suspect me of being a Frenchman, or a Spaniard, or something else than I claim to be. On this head, however, you may set your heart at rest, and put full faith in what I tell you. My name is Capitaine Jaques Smeet; my vessel is ze Ving-and-Ving; and my service that of the king of England.”

“Is your craft, then, a king's vessel; or does she sail with the commission of a corsair?”

“Do I look like a corsair, Signor?” demanded le Capitaine Smeet, with an offended air; “I have reason to feel myself injured by so unworthy an imputation!”

“Your pardon, Signor Capitano Smees — but our duty is a very delicate one, on this unprotected island, in times as troubled as these in which we live. It has been stated to me, as coming from the most experienced pilot of our haven, that your lugger has not altogether the appearance of a vessel of the Inglese, while she has many that belong to the corsairs of France; and a prudent caution imposes on me the office of making certain of your nation. Once assured of that, it will be the delight of the Elbans to prove how much we honor and esteem our illustrious allies.”

“This is so reasonable, and so much according to what I do myself, when I meet a stranger at sea,” cried the captain, stretching forth both arms in a frank and inviting manner, “that none but a knave would object to it. Pursue your own course, Signor Vice-governatore, and satisfy all your scruples, in your own manner. How shall this be done — will you go on board ze Ving-and-Ving, and look for yourself — send this honorable magistrate, or shall I show you my commission? Here is the last, altogether at your service, and that of his Imperial Highness, the Grand Duke.”

“I flatter myself with having sufficient knowledge of Inghilterra, Signor Capitano, though it be by means of books, to discover an impostor, could I believe you capable of appearing in so unworthy a character; and that, too, in a very brief conversation. We bookworms,” added Andrea Barrofoli, with a glance of triumph at

his neighbor, for he now expected to give the podesta an illustration of the practical benefits of general learning, a subject that had often been discussed between them, "we bookworms can manage these trifles in our own way; and if you will consent to enter into a short dialogue on the subject of England, her habits, language, and laws, this question will be speedily put at rest."

"You have me at command; and nothing would delight me more than to chat for a few minutes about that little island. It is not large, Signore, and is doubtless of little worth; but, as my country, it is much in my eyes."

"This is natural. And now, Signor Capitano," added Andrea, glancing at the podesta, to make sure that he was listening, "will you have the goodness to explain to me what sort of a government this Inghilterra possesses — whether monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy?"

"Peste! — that is not so easily answered. There is a king, and yet there are powerful lords; and a democracy, too, that sometimes gives trouble enough. Your question might puzzle a philosopher, Signor Vice-governatore."

"This may be true enough, neighbor Vito Viti, for the constitution of Inghilterra is an instrument of many strings. Your answer convinces me you have thought on the subject of your government, Capitano, and I

honor a reflecting man in all situations in life. What is the religion of the country?"

"Corpo di Bacco! that is harder to answer than all the rest! We have as many religions in England as we have people. It is true the law says one thing on this head, but then the men, women, and children say another.

Nothing has troubled me more than this same matter of religion."

"Ah! you sailors do not disquiet your souls with such thoughts, if the truth must be said. Well, we will be indulgent on this subject — though, out of doubt, you and all your people are Luterani?"

"Set us down as what you please," answered the captain, with an ironical smile. "Our fathers, at any rate, were all good Catholics once. But seamanship and the altar are the best of friends, living quite independent of each other."

"That I will answer for. It is much the same here, caro Vito Viti, though our mariners do burn so many lamps and offer up so many aves."

"Your pardon, Signor Vice-governatore," interrupted the Signor Smeet, with a little earnestness; "this is the great mistake of your seamen in general. Did they pray less, and look to their duties more, their voyages would be shorter, and the profits more certain."

"Scandalous!" exclaimed the podesta, in hotter

zeal than it was usual for him to betray.

“Nay, worthy Vito Viti, it is even so,” interrupted the deputy, with a wave of the hand that was as authoritative as the concession was liberal, and indicative of a spirit enlightened by study; “the fact must be conceded. There is the fable of Hercules and the wagoner to confirm it. Did our men first strive, and then pray, more would be done than by first praying and then striving; and now, Signor Capitano, a word on your language, of which I have some small knowledge, and which, doubtless, you speak like a native.”

“Sairtain *lee*,” answered the captain, with perfect self-composure, changing the form of speech from the Italian to the English with a readiness that proved how strong he felt himself on this point; “one cannot fail to speak ze tongue of his own muzzair.”

This was said without any confusion of manner, and with an accent that might very well mislead a foreigner, and it sounded imposing to the vice-governatore, who felt a secret consciousness that he could not have uttered such a sentence to save his own life, without venturing out of his depth; therefore, he pursued the discourse in Italian.

“Your language, Signore,” observed Andrea Barroaldi, with warmth, “is no doubt a very noble one, for the language in which Shakespeare and Milton wrote cannot be else; but you will permit me to say that it has a uniformity of sound, with words of different

letters, that I find as unreasonable as it is embarrassing to a foreigner.”

“I have heard such complaints before,” answered the captain, not at all sorry to find the examination which had proved so awkward to himself likely to be transferred to a language about which he cared not at all, “and have little to say in its defence. But as an example of what you mean...”

“Why, Signore, here are several words that I have written on this bit of paper, which sound nearly alike, though, as you perceive, they are quite differently spelled. Bix, bax, box, bux, and bocks,” continued Andrea, endeavoring to pronounce, “big,” “bag,” “bog,” “bug,” and “box,” all of which, it seemed to him, had a very close family resemblance in sound, though certainly spelled with different letters; “these are words, Signore, that are enough to drive a foreigner to abandon your tongue in despair.”

“Indeed they are; and I often told the person who taught me the language...”

“How! did you not learn your own tongue as we all get our native forms of speech, by ear, when a child?” demanded the vice-governatore, his suspicions suddenly revived.

“Without question, Signore, but I speak of books, and of learning to read. When 'big,' 'bag,' 'bog,' 'bug,' and 'box,'” reading from the paper in a steady voice, and a very tolerable pronunciation, “first came before

me, I felt all the embarrassment of which you speak.”

“And did you only pronounce these words when first taught to read them?”

This question was awkward to answer; but Vito Viti began to weary of a discourse in which he could take no part, and most opportunely he interposed an objection of his own.

“Signor Barrofaldis,” he said, “stick to the lugger. All our motives of suspicion came from Tommaso Tonti, and all of his from the rig of Signor Smees’ vessel. If the lugger can be explained, what do we care about bixy, buxy, boxy!”

The vice-governatore was not sorry to get creditably out of the difficulties of the language, and, smiling on his friend, he made a gentle bow of compliance. Then he reflected a moment, in order to plan another mode of proceeding, and pursued the inquiry.

“My neighbor Vito Viti is right,” he said, “and we will stick to the lugger. Tommaso Tonti is a mariner of experience, and the oldest pilot of Elba. He tells us that the lugger is a craft much in use among the French, and not at all among the English, so far as he has ever witnessed.”

“In that Tommaso Tonti is no seaman. Many luggers are to be found among the English; though more, certainly, among the French. But I have already given the Signor Viti to understand that there is such an

island as Guernsey, which was once French, but which is now English, and that accounts for the appearances he has observed. We are Guernsey-men — the lugger is from Guernsey — and, no doubt, we have a Guernsey look. This is being half French, I allow.”

“That alters the matter altogether. Neighbor Viti, this is all true about the island, and about its habits and its origin; and if one could be as certain about the names, why, nothing more need be said. Are Giac Smees, and Ving-y-Ving, Guernsey names?”

“They are not particularly so,” returned the sailor, with difficulty refraining from laughing in the vice-governatore's face; “Jaques Smeet' being so English, that we are the largest family, perhaps, in all Inghilterra. Half the nobles of the island are called Smeet', and not a few are named Jaques. But little Guernsey was conquered; and our ancestors who performed that office brought their names with them, Signore. As for Ving-and-Ving, it is *capital* English.”

“I do not see, Vito, but this is reasonable. If the capitano, now, only had his commission with him, you and I might go to bed in peace, and sleep till morning.”

“Here, then, Signore, are your sleeping potions,” continued the laughing sailor, drawing from his pocket several papers. “These are my orders from the admiral; and, as they are not secret, you can cast your eyes over them. This is my commission, Signor Vice-governatore — this is the signature of the English minister of

marine — and here is my own, 'Jaques Smeet' as you see, and here is the order to me, as a lieutenant, to take command of the Ving-and-Ving.”

All the orders and names were there, certainly, written in a clear, fair hand, and in perfectly good English. The only thing that one who understood the language would have been apt to advert to, was the circumstance that the words which the sailor pronounced “Jaques Smeet” were written, plainly enough, “Jack Smith” — an innovation on the common practice, which, to own the truth, had proceeded from his own obstinacy, and had been done in the very teeth of the objections of the scribe who forged the papers. But Andrea was still too little of an English scholar to understand the blunder, and the Jack passed, with him, quite as currently as would “John,” “Edward,” or any other appellation. As to the Wing-and-Wing, all was right; though, as the words were pointed out and pronounced by both parties, one pertinaciously insisted on calling them “Ving-and-Ving,” and the other, “Ving-y-Ving.” All this evidence had a great tendency toward smoothing down every difficulty, and Maso Tonti's objections were pretty nearly forgotten by both the Italians, when the papers were returned to their proper owner.

“It was an improbable thing that an enemy, or a corsair, would venture into this haven of ours, Vito Viti,” said the vice-governatore, in a self-approving

manner; "we have a reputation for being vigilant, and for knowing our business, as well as the authorities of Livorno, or Genova, or Napoli."

"And that too, Signore, with nothing in the world to gain but hard knocks and a prison," added the Captain Smeet', with one of his most winning smiles — a smile that even softened the heart of the podesta, while it so far warmed that of his superior as to induce him to invite the stranger to share his own frugal supper. The invitation was accepted as frankly as it had been given, and, the table being ready in an adjoining room, in a few minutes Il Capitano Smees and Vito Viti were sharing the vice-governatore's evening meal.

From that moment, if distrust existed any longer in the breasts of the two functionaries of Porto Ferrajo, it was so effectually smothered as to be known only to themselves. The light fare of an Italian kitchen, and the light wines of Tuscany, just served to strengthen the system and enliven the spirits; the conversation becoming general and lively, us the business of the moment proceeded. At that day, tea was known throughout southern Europe as an ingredient only for the apothecary's keeping; nor was it often to be found among his stores; and the *convives* used, as a substitute, large draughts of the pleasant mountain liquors of the adjacent main, which produced an excitement scarcely greater, while it may be questioned if it did as much injury to the health. The stranger, however, both ate and

drank sparingly, for, while he affected to join cordially in the discourse and the business of *restoration*, he greatly desired to be at liberty to pursue his own designs.

Andrea Barrofoli did not let so excellent an opportunity to show his acquirements to the podesta go by neglected. He talked much of England, its history, its religion, government, laws, climate, and industry; making frequent appeals to the Capitano Smees for the truth of his opinions. In most cases the parties agreed surprisingly, for the stranger started with a deliberate intention to assent to everything; but even this compliant temper had its embarrassments, since the vice-governatore so put his interrogatories as occasionally to give to acquiescence the appearance of dissent. The other floundered through his difficulties tolerably well, notwithstanding; and so successful was he, in particular, in flattering Andrea's self-love by expressions of astonishment that a foreigner should understand his own country so well — better, indeed, in many respects, than he understood it himself — and that he should be so familiar with its habits, institutions, and geography, that, by the time the flask was emptied, the superior functionary whispered to his inferior, that the stranger manifested so much information and good sense, he should not be surprised if he turned out, in the long run, to be some secret agent of the British government, employed to make philosophical inquiries as to the trade and navigation of Italy, with a view to improve the business relations between the two countries.

“You are an admirer of nobility, and a devotee of aristocracy,” added Andrea Barrofaldis, in pursuit of the subject then in hand; “if the truth were known, a scion of some Noble house yourself, Signor?”

“I? — Peste! — I hate an aristocrat, Signor Vice-governatore, as I do the devil!”

This was said just after the freest draught the stranger had taken, and with an unguarded warmth that he himself immediately regretted.

“This is extraordinary, in an Inglese! Ah — I see how it is — you are in the *opposizione*, and find it necessary to say this. It is most extraordinary, good Vito Viti, that these Inglese are divided into two political *castes*, that contradict each other in everything. If one maintains that an object is white, the other side swears it is black; and so *vice versa*. Both parties profess to love their country better than anything else; but the one that is out of power abuses even power itself, until it falls into its own hands.”

“This is so much like Giorgio Grondi's course toward me, Signore, that I could almost swear he was one of these very *opposizione*! I never approve of a thing that he does not condemn, or condemn that he does not approve. Do you confess this much, Signor Capitano?”

“Il vice-governatore knows us better than we know ourselves, I fear.

There is too much truth in his account of our

politics; but, Signori,” rising from his chair, “I now crave your permission to look at your town, and to return to my vessel. The darkness has come, and discipline must be observed.”

As Andrea Barrofaldis had pretty well exhausted his stores of knowledge, no opposition was made; and, returning his thanks, the stranger took his departure, leaving the two functionaries to discuss his appearance and character over the remainder of the flask.

Chapter III

*“There's Jonathan, that lucky lad,
Who knows it from the root, sir; —
He sucks in all that's to be had,
And always trades for boot, sir.”*

14,763d verse of Yankee Doodle

Il Capitano Smeets' was not sorry to get out of the government house — palazzo, as some of the simple people of Elba called the unambitious dwelling. He had been well badgered by the persevering erudition of the vice-governatore; and, stored as he was with nautical anecdotes and a tolerable personal acquaintance with sundry seaports, for any expected occasion of this sort, he had never anticipated a conversation which would aspire as high as the institutions, religion, and laws of his adopted country. Had the worthy Andrea heard the

numberless maledictions that the stranger muttered between his teeth, as he left the house, it would have shocked all his sensibilities, if it did not revive his suspicions.

It was now night; but a starry, calm, voluptuous evening, such as are familiar to those who are acquainted with the Mediterranean and its shores. There was scarcely a breath of wind, though the cool air, that appeared to be a gentle respiration of the sea, induced a few idlers still to linger on the heights, where there was a considerable extent of land that might serve for a promenade. Along this walk the mariner proceeded, undetermined, for the moment, what to do next. He had scarcely got into the open space, however, before a female, with her form closely enveloped in a mantle, brushed near him, anxiously gazing into his face. Her motions were too quick and sudden for him to obtain a look in return; but, perceiving that she held her way along the heights, beyond the spot most frequented by the idlers, he followed until she stopped.

“Ghita!” said the young man, in a tone of delight, when he had got near enough to the female to recognize a face and form she no longer attempted to conceal; “this *is* being fortunate, indeed, and saves a vast deal of trouble. A thousand, thousand thanks, dearest Ghita, for this one act of kindness. I might have brought trouble on you, as well as on myself, in striving to find your residence.”



“It is for that reason, Raoul, that I have ventured so much more than is becoming in my sex, to meet you. A thousand eyes, in this gossiping little town, are on your lugger, at this moment, and be certain they will also be on its captain, as soon as it is known he has landed. I fear you do not know for what you and your people are suspected, at this very instant!”

“For nothing discreditable, I hope, dear Ghita, if

it be only not to dishonor your friends!”

“Many think, and say, you are Frenchmen, and that the English flag is only a disguise.”

“If that be all, we must bear the infamy,” answered Raoul Yvard, laughing. “Why, this is just what we are to a man, a single American excepted, who is an excellent fellow to make out British commissions, and help us to a little English when harder pushed than common; and why should we be offended, if the good inhabitants of Porto Ferrajo take us for what we are?”

“Not offended, Raoul, but endangered. If the vice-governatore gets this notion, he will order the batteries to fire upon you, and will destroy you as an enemy.”

“Not he, Ghita. He is too fond of le Capitaine Smeet', to do so cruel a thing; and then he must shift all his guns, before they will hurt *le Feu-Follet* where she lies. I never leave my little Jack-o'-Lantern¹ within reach of an enemy's hand. Look here, Ghita; you can see her through this opening in the houses — that dark spot on the bay, there — and you will perceive no gun from any battery in Porto Ferrajo can as much as frighten, much less harm her.”

“I know her position, Raoul, and understand why you anchored in that spot. I knew, or thought I knew you, from the first moment you came in plain sight; and

¹ The English of *Feu Follet*.

so long as you remained outside, I was not sorry to look on so old a friend — nay, I will go further, and say I rejoiced, for it seemed to me you passed so near the island just to let some whom you knew to be on it understand you had not forgotten them; but when you came into the bay, I thought you mad!”

“Mad I should have been, dearest Ghita, had I lived longer without seeing you. What are these *miserables* of Elbans, that I should fear them! They have no cruiser — only a few feluccas — all of which are not worth the trouble of burning. Let them but point a finger at us, and we will tow their Austrian polacre out into the bay, and burn her before their eyes. *Le Feu-Follet* deserves her name; she is here, there, and everywhere, before her enemies suspect her.”

“But her enemies suspect her now, and you cannot be too cautious. My heart was in my throat a dozen times, while the batteries were firing at you this evening.”

“And what harm did they? they cost the Grand Duke two cartridges, and two shot, without even changing the lugger's course! You have seen too much of these things, Ghita, to be alarmed by smoke and noise.”

“I have seen enough of these things, Raoul, to know that a heavy shot, fired from these heights, would have gone through your little *Feu-Follet*, and, coming out under water, would have sunk you to the bottom of

the Mediterranean.”

“We should have had our boats, then,” answered Raoul Yvard, with an indifference that was not affected, for reckless daring was his vice, rather than his virtue; “besides, a shot must first hit before it can harm, as the fish must be taken before it can be cooked. But enough of this, Ghita; I get quite enough of shot, and ships, and sinkings, in everyday life, and, now I have at last found this blessed moment, we will not throw away the opportunity by talking of such matters...”

“Nay, Raoul, I can think of nothing else, and therefore can talk of nothing else. Suppose the vice-governatore should suddenly take it into his head to send a party of soldiers to le Feu-Follet, with orders to seize her — what would then be your situation?”

“Let him; and I would send a boat's crew to his palazzo, here” — the conversation was in French, which Ghita spoke fluently, though with an Italian accent — “and take him on a cruise after the English and his beloved Austrians! Bah! — the idea will not cross his constitutional brain, and there is little use in talking about it. In the morning, I will send my prime minister, mon Barras, mon Carnot, mon Cambaceres, mon Ithuel Bolt, to converse with him on politics and religion.”

“Religion,” repeated Ghita, in a saddened tone; “the less you say on that holy subject, Raoul, the better

I shall like it, and the better it will be for yourself, in the end. The state of your country makes your want of religion matter of regret, rather than of accusation, but it is none the less a dreadful evil.”

“Well, then,” resumed the sailor, who felt he had touched a dangerous ground, “we will talk of other things. Even supposing we are taken, what great evil have we to apprehend? We are honest corsairs, duly commissioned, and acting under the protection of the French Republic, one and undivided, and can but be made prisoners of war. That is a fortune which has once befallen me, and no greater calamity followed than my having to call myself *le Capitaine Smeet*’, and finding out the means of mystifying *le vice-gouverneur*.”

Ghita laughed, in spite of the fears she entertained, for it was one of the most powerful of the agencies the sailor employed in making others converts to his opinions, to cause them to sympathize with his light-hearted gayety, whether it suited their natural temperaments or not. She knew that Raoul had already been a prisoner in England two years, where, as he often said himself, he stayed just long enough to acquire a very respectable acquaintance with the language, if not with the institutions, manners, and religion, when he made his escape aided by the American called Ithuel Bolt, an impressed seaman of our own Republic, who, fully entering into all the plans imagined by his more enterprising friend and

fellow-sufferer, had cheerfully enlisted in the execution of his future schemes of revenge. States, like powerful individuals in private life, usually feel themselves too strong to allow any considerations of the direct consequences of departures from the right to influence their policy; and a nation is apt to fancy its power of such a character, as to despise all worldly amends, while its moral responsibility is divided among too many to make it a matter of much concern to its particular citizens. Nevertheless, the truth will show that none are so low but they may become dangerous to the highest; and even powerful communities seldom fail to meet with their punishment for every departure from justice. It would seem, indeed, that a principle pervades nature, which renders it impossible for man to escape the consequences of his own evil deeds, even in this life; as if God had decreed the universal predominance of truth and the never-failing downfall of falsehood from the beginning; the success of wrong being ever temporary, while the triumph of the right is eternal. To apply these consoling considerations to the matter more immediately before us:

The practice of impressment, in its day, raised a feeling among the seamen of other nations, as well as, in fact, among those of Great Britain herself, that probably has had as much effect in destroying the prestige of her nautical invincibility, supported, as was that prestige, by a vast existing force, as any other one cause whatever. It

was necessary to witness the feeling of hatred and resentment that was raised by the practice of this despotic power, more especially among those who felt that their foreign birth ought at least to have insured them immunity from the abuse, in order fully to appreciate what might so readily become its consequences. Ithuel Bolt, the seaman just mentioned, was a proof, in a small way, of the harm that even an insignificant individual can effect, when his mind is fully and wholly bent on revenge. Ghita knew him well; and, although she little liked either his character or his appearance, she had often been obliged to smile at the narrative of the deceptions he practised on the English, and of the thousand low inventions he had devised to do them injury. She was not slow, now, to imagine that his agency had not been trifling in carrying on the present fraud.

“You do not openly call your lugger le Feu-Follet, Raoul,” she answered, after a minute's pause; “that would be a dangerous name to utter, even in Porto Ferrajo. It is not a week since I heard a mariner dwelling on her misdeeds, and the reasons that all good Italians have to detest her.

It is fortunate the man is away, or he could not fail to know you.”

“Of that I am not so certain, Ghita. We alter our paint often, and, at need, can alter our rig. You may be certain, however, that we hide our Jack-o'-Lantern, and sail under another name. The lugger, now she is in the

English service, is called the 'Ving-and-Ving.'"

"I heard the answer given to the hail from the shore, but it sounded different from this."

"Non — Ving-and-Ving. Ithuel answered for us, and you may be sure he can speak his own tongue. Ving-and-Ving is the word, and he pronounces it as I do."

"Ving-y-Ving!" repeated Ghita, in her pretty Italian tones, dropping naturally into the vice-governatore's fault of pronunciation — "it is an odd name, and I like it less than Feu-Follet."

"I wish, dearest Ghita, I could persuade you to like the name of Yvard," rejoined the young man, in a half-reproachful, half-tender manner, "and I should care nothing for any other. You accuse me of disrespect for priests; but no son could ever kneel to a father for his blessing, half so readily or half so devoutly, as I could kneel with thee before any friar in Italy, to receive that nuptial benediction which I have so often asked at your hand, but which you have so constantly and so cruelly refused."

"I am afraid the name would not then be Feu-Follet, but Ghita-Folie," said the girl, laughing, though she felt a bitter pang at the heart, that cost her an effort to control; "no more of this now, Raoul; we may be observed and watched; it is necessary that we separate."

A hurried conversation, of more interest to the

young couple themselves than it would prove to the reader, though it might not have been wholly without the latter, but which it would be premature to relate, now followed, when Ghita left Raoul on the hill, insisting that she knew the town too well to have any apprehensions about threading its narrow and steep streets, at any hour, by herself. This much, in sooth, must be said in favor of Andrea Barrofoldi's administration of justice; he had made it safe for the gentle, the feeble, and the poor, equally, to move about the island by day or by night; it seldom happening that so great an enemy to peace and tranquillity appeared among his simple dependants, as was the fact at this precise moment.

In the mean time, there was not quite as much tranquillity in Porto Ferrajo as the profound silence which reigned in the place might have induced a stranger to imagine. Tommaso Tonti was a man of influence, within his sphere, as well, as the vice-governatore; and having parted from Vito Viti, as has been related, he sought the little *clientelle* of padroni and piloti, who were in the habit of listening to his opinions as if they were oracles. The usual place of resort of this set, after dark, was a certain house kept by a widow of the name of Benedetta Galopo, the uses of which were plainly enough indicated by a small bush that hung dangling from a short pole, fastened above the door. If Benedetta knew anything of the proverb that "good wine needs no bush," she had not sufficient

faith in the contents of her own casks to trust to their reputation; for this bush of hers was as regularly renewed as its withering leaves required. Indeed, it was a common remark among her customers, that her bush was always as fresh as her face, and that the latter was one of the most comely that was to be met with on the island; a circumstance that aided much indifferent wine in finding a market.

Benedetta bore a reasonably good name, nevertheless, though it was oftener felt, perhaps, than said, that she was a confirmed coquette. She tolerated 'Maso principally on two accounts; because, if he were old and unattractive in his own person, many of his followers were among the smartest seamen of the port, and because he not only drank his full proportion, but paid with punctuality. These inducements rendered the pilot always a welcome guest at La Santa Maria degli Venti, as the house was called, though it had no other sign than the often-renewed bush already mentioned.

At the very moment, then, when Raoul Yvard and Ghita parted on the hill, 'Maso was seated in his usual place at the table in Benedetta's upper room, the windows of which commanded as full a view of the lugger as the hour permitted; that craft being anchored about a cable's length distant, and, as a sailor might have expressed it, just abeam. On this occasion he had selected the upper room, and but three companions, because it was his wish that as few should enter into his

counsels as at all comported with the love of homage to his own experience. The party had been assembled a quarter of an hour, and there had been time to cause the tide to ebb materially in the flask, which, it may be well to tell the reader at once, contained very little less than half a gallon of liquor, such as it was.

“I have told it all to the podesta,” said ’Maso, with an important manner, as he put down his glass, after potation the second, which quite equalled potation the first in quantity; “yes, I have told it all to Vito Viti, and no doubt he has told it to Il Signor Vice-governatore, who now knows as much about the whole matter as either of us four.

Cospetto! — to think such a thing dare happen in a haven like Porto Ferrajo! Had it come to pass over on the other side of the island, at Porto Longone, one wouldn't think so much of it, for *they* are never much on the lookout: but to take place here, in the very capital of.

Elba, I should as soon have expected it in Livorno!”

“But, ’Maso,” put in Daniele Bruno, in the manner of one who was a little sceptical, “I have often seen the pavilion of the Inglese, and this is as much like that which all their frigates and corvettes wear, as one of our feluccas is like another. The flag, at least, is right.”

“What signifies a flag, Daniele, when a French

hand can hoist an English ensign as easily as the king of Inghilterra himself? If that lugger was not built by the Francese, you were not built by an Italian father and mother. But I should not think so much of the hull, for that may have been captured, as the English take many of their enemies on the high seas; but look at the rigging and sails — Santa Maria! I could go to the shop of the very sailmaker, in Marseilles, who made that foresail! His name is Pierre Benoit, and a very good workman he is, as all will allow who have had occasion to employ him.”

This particularity greatly aided the argument; common minds being seldom above yielding to the circumstances which are so often made to corroborate imaginary facts. Tommaso Tonti, though so near the truth as to his main point — the character of the visitor — was singularly out as to the sail, notwithstanding; le Feu-Follet having been built, equipped, and manned at Nantes, and Pierre Benoit never having seen her or her foresail either; but it mattered not, in the way of discussion and assertion, one sailmaker being as good as another, provided he was French.

“And have you mentioned t his to the podesta?” inquired Benedetta, who stood with the empty flask in her hand, listening to the discourse; “I should think that sail would open his eyes.”

“I cannot say I have; but then I told him so many other things more to the point, that he cannot do less

than believe this, when he hears it.

Signor Viti promised to meet me here, after he has had a conversation with the vice-governatore; and we may now expect him every minute.”

“Il Signor Podesta will be welcome,” said Benedetta, wiping off a spare table, and bustling round the room to make things look a little smarter than they ordinarily did; “he may frequent grander wine-houses than this, but he will hardly find better liquor.”

“Poverina! — Don't think that the podesta comes here on any such errand; he comes to meet *me*,” answered 'Maso, with an indulgent smile; “he takes his wine too often on the heights, to wish to come as low as this after a glass. Friends of mine (*amigi mii*), there is wine up at that house, that, when the oil is once out of the neck of the flask², goes down a man's throat as smoothly as if it were all oil itself! I could drink a flask of it without once stopping to take breath. It is that liquor which makes the nobles so light and airy.”

“I know the washy stuff,” put in Benedetta, with more warmth than she was used to betray to her customers; “well may you call it smooth, a good spring running near each of the wine-presses that have made it. I have seen some of it that even oil would not float on!”

² It is a practice in Tuscany to put a few drops of oil in the neck of each flask of the more delicate wines, to exclude the air.

This assertion was a fair counterpoise to that of the sail, being about as true. But Benedetta had too much experience in the inconstancy of men, not to be aware that if the three or four customers who were present should seriously take up the notion that the island contained any better liquor than that she habitually placed before them, her value might be sensibly diminished in their eyes. As became a woman who had to struggle singly with the world, too, her native shrewdness taught her, that the best moment to refute a calumny was to stop it as soon as it began to circulate, and her answer was as warm in manner as it was positive in terms. This was an excellent opening for an animated discussion, and one would have been very likely to occur, had there not fortunately been steps heard without, that induced 'Maso to expect the podesta. Sure enough, the door opened, and Vito Viti appeared, followed, to the astonishment of all the guests, and to the absolute awe of Benedetta, by the vice-governatore himself.

The solution of this unexpected visit is very easily given. After the departure of the Capitano Smees, Vito Viti returned to the subject of

'Maso's suspicions, and by suggesting certain little circumstances in the mariner's manner, that he had noted during the interview, he so far succeeded in making an impression on himself, that, in the end, his own distrust revived, and with it that of the

deputy-governor. Neither, however, could be said to be more than uneasy, and the podesta happening to mention his appointment with the pilot, Andrea determined to accompany him, in order to reconnoitre the strange craft in person. Both the functionaries wore their cloaks, by no means an unusual thing in the cool night air of the coast, even in midsummer, which served them for all the disguise that circumstances required.

“Il Signor Vice-governatore!” almost gasped Benedetta, dusting a chair, and then the table, and disposing the former near the latter by a sort of mechanical process, as if only one errand could ever bring a guest within her doors; “your eccellenza is most welcome; and it is an honor I could oftener ask. We are humble people down here at the water side, but I hope we are just as good Christians as if we lived upon the hill.”

“Doubt it not, worthy Bettina...”

“My name is Benedetta, at your eccellenza's command-Benedittina if it please the vice-governatore; but not Bettina. We think much of our names, down here at the water side, eccellenza.”

“Let it be so, then, good Benedetta, and I make no doubt you are excellent Christians. — A flask of your wine, if it be convenient.”

The woman dropped a curtsey that was full of gratitude; and the glance of triumph that she cast at her

other guests may be said to have terminated the discussion that was about to commence, as the dignitaries appeared. It disposed of the question of the wine at once, and for ever silenced cavilling. If the vice-governatore could drink her liquor, what mariner would henceforth dare calumniate it!

“Eccellenza, with a thousand welcomes,” Benedetta continued, as she placed the flask on the table, after having carefully removed the cotton and the oil with her own plump hand; this being one of half a dozen flasks of really sound, well-flavored, Tuscan liquor, that she kept for especial occasions; as she well might, the cost being only a paul, or ten cents for near half a gallon; “Eccellenza, a million times welcome.

This is an honor that don't befall the Santa Maria degli Venti more than once in a century; and you, too, Signor Podesta, once before only have you ever had leisure to darken my poor door.”

“We bachelors” — the podesta, as well as the vice-governor, belonged to the fraternity — “we bachelors are afraid to trust ourselves too often in the company of a sprightly widow like yourself, whose beauty has rather improved than lessened by a few years.”

This brought a coquettish answer, during which time Andrea Barrofoli, having first satisfied himself that the wine might be swallowed with impunity, was occupied in surveying the party of silent and humble

mariners, who were seated at the other table. His object was to ascertain how far he might have committed himself, by appearing in such a place, when his visit could not well be attributed to more than one motive. 'Maso he knew, as the oldest pilot of the place, and he had also some knowledge of Daniele Bruno; but the three other seamen were strangers to him.

"Inquire if we are among friends, here, and worthy subjects of the Grand Duke, all," observed Andrea to Vito Viti, in a low voice.

"Thou hearest, 'Maso," observed the podesta; "canst thou answer for all of thy companions?"

"Every one of them, Signore: this is Daniele Bruno, whose father was killed in a battle with the Algerines, and whose mother was the daughter of a mariner, as well known in Elba as..."

"Never mind the particulars, Tommaso Tonti," interrupted the vice-governatore — "it is sufficient that thou knowest all thy companions to be honest men, and faithful servants of the *sovrano*. You all know, most probably, the errand which has brought the Signor Viti and myself to this house, to-night?"

The men looked at each other, as the ill-instructed are apt to do, when it becomes necessary to answer a question that concerns many; assisting the workings of their minds, as it might be, with the aid of the senses; and then Daniele Bruno took on himself the office of spokesman.

“Signore, vostro eccellenza, we think we do,” answered the man. “Our fellow, ’Maso here, has given us to understand that he suspects the Inglese that is anchored in the bay to be no Inglese at all, but either a pirate or a Frenchman. The blessed Maria preserve us! but in these troubled times it does not make much difference which.”

“I will not say as much as that, friend — for one would be an outcast among all people, while the other would have the rights which shield the servants of civilized nations,” returned the scrupulous and just-minded functionary. “The time was when His Imperial Majesty, the emperor, and his illustrious brother, our sovereign, the Grand Duke, did not allow that the republican government of France was a lawful government; but the fortune of war removed his scruples, and a treaty of peace has allowed the contrary. Since the late alliance, it is our duty to consider all Frenchmen as enemies, though it by no means follows that we are to consider them as pirates.”

“But their corsairs seize all our craft, Signore, and treat their people as if they were no better than dogs; then, they tell me that they are not Christians — no, not even Luterani or heretics!”

“That religion does not flourish among them, is true,” answered Andrea, who loved so well to discourse on such subjects, that he would have stopped to reason on religion or manners with the beggar to whom he

gave a pittance, did he only meet with encouragement; “but it is not as bad in France, on this important head, as it has been; and we may hope that there will be further improvement in due time.”

“But, Signor Vice-governatore,” put in ’Maso, “these people have treated the holy father and his states in a way that one would not treat an Infidel or a Turk!”

“Aye, that is it, Signori,” observed Benedetta — “a poor woman cannot go to mass without having her mind disturbed by the thoughts of the wrongs done the head of the church. Had these things come from Luterani, it might have been borne; but they say the Francese were once all good Catholics!”

“So were the Luterani, bella Benedetta, to their chief schismatic and leader, the German monk himself.”

This piece of information caused great surprise, even the podesta himself turning an inquiring glance at his superior, as much as to acknowledge his own wonder that a Protestant should ever have been anything but a Protestant — or rather, a Lutheran anything but a Lutheran — the word Protestant being too significant to be in favor among those who deny there were any just grounds for a protest at all. That Luther had ever been a Romanist was perfectly wonderful, even in the eyes of Vito Viti.

“Signore, you would hardly mislead these honest people, in a matter as grave as this!” exclaimed the

podesta.

“I do but tell you truth; and one of these days you shall hear the whole story, neighbor Viti. 'Tis worth an hour of leisure to any man, and is very consoling and useful to a Christian. But whom have you below, Benedetta — I hear steps on the stairs, and wish not to be seen.”

The widow stepped promptly forward to meet her new guests, and to show them into a commoner room, below stairs, when her movement was anticipated by the door's opening, and a man's standing on the threshold. It was now too late to prevent the intrusion, and a little surprise at the appearance of the new-comer held all mute and observant for a minute.

The person who had followed his ears, and thus reached the sanctum sanctorum of Benedetta, was no other than Ithuel Bolt, the American seaman, already named in the earlier part of this chapter. He was backed by a Genoese, who had come in the double capacity of interpreter and boon companion. That the reader may the better understand the character he has to deal with, however, it may be necessary to digress, by giving a short account of the history, appearance, and peculiarities of the former individual.

Ithuel Bolt was a native of what, in this great Union, is called the Granite State, Notwithstanding he was not absolutely made of the stone in question, there was an absence of the ordinary symptoms of natural

feeling about him, that had induced many of his French acquaintances in particular to affirm that there was a good deal more of marble in his moral temperament, at least, than usually fell to the lot of human beings. He had the outline of a good frame, but it was miserably deficient in the filling up. The bone predominated; the sinews came next in consideration, nor was the man without a proper share of muscle; but this last was so disposed of as to present nothing but angles, whichever way he was viewed. Even his thumbs and fingers were nearer square than round; and his very neck, which was bare, though a black silk kerchief was tied loosely round the throat, had a sort of pentagon look about it, that defied all symmetry or grace. His stature was just six feet and an inch, when he straightened himself; as he did from time to time, seemingly with a desire to relieve a very inveterate stoop in his shoulders; though it was an inch or two less in the position he most affected. His hair was dark, and his skin had got several coats of confirmed brown on it, by exposure, though originally rather fair; while the features were good, the forehead being broad and full, and the mouth positively handsome. This singular countenance was illuminated by two keen, restless, whitish eyes, that resembled, not spots on the sun, but rather suns on a spot.

Ithuel had gone through all the ordinary vicissitudes of an American life, beneath those pursuits which are commonly thought to be confined to the class

of gentlemen. He had been farmer's boy, printer's devil, schoolmaster, stage-driver, and tin-pedlar, before he ever saw the sea.

In the way of what he called "chores," too, he had practised all the known devices of rustic domestic economy; having assisted even in the washing and house-cleaning, besides having passed the evenings of an entire winter in making brooms.

Ithuel had reached his thirtieth year before he dreamed of going to sea.

An accident, then, put preferment in this form before his eyes, and he engaged as the mate of a small coaster, for his very first voyage.

Fortunately, the master never found out his deficiencies, for Ithuel had a self-possessed, confident way with him, that prevented discovery, until they were outside of the port from which they sailed, when the former was knocked overboard by the main boom, and drowned. Most men, so circumstanced, would have returned, but Bolt never laid his hand to the plough and looked back. Besides, one course was quite easy to him as another. Whatever he undertook he usually completed, in some fashion or other, though it were often much better had it never been attempted.

Fortunately it was summer, the wind was fair, and the crew wanted little ordering; and as it was quite a matter of course to steer in the right direction, until the schooner was carried safely into her proper port, she

arrived safely; her people swearing that the new mate was the easiest and *cleverest* officer they had ever sailed with. And well they might, for Ithuel took care not to issue an order until he had heard it suggested in terms by one of the hands; and then he never failed to repeat it, word for word, as if it were a suggestion of his own. As for the reputation of "cleverest" officer, which he so easily obtained, it will be understood, of course, that the term was used in the provincial signification that is so common in the part of the world from which Ithuel came. He was "clever" in this sense, precisely in proportion as he was ignorant. His success, on this occasion, gained him friends, and he was immediately sent out again as the regular master of the craft, in which he had so unexpectedly received his promotion. He now threw all the duty on the mate; but so ready was he in acquiring, that by the end of six months he was a much better sailor than most Europeans would have made in three years. As the pitcher that goes too often to the well is finally broken, so did Ithuel meet with shipwreck, at last, in consequence of gross ignorance on the subject of navigation. This induced him to try a long voyage, in a more subordinate situation, until in the course of time he was impressed by the commander of an English frigate, who had lost so many of his men by the yellow fever that he seized upon all he could lay his hands on, to supply their places, even Ithuel being acceptable in such a strait.

Chapter IV

*“The ship is here put in,
A Veronese; Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,
Is come on shore.”*

Othello

The glance which Ithuel cast around him was brief, but comprehensive. He saw that two of the party in the room were much superior to the other four, and that the last were common Mediterranean mariners. The position which Benedetta occupied in the household could not be mistaken, for she proclaimed herself its mistress by her very air; whether it were in the upper or in the lower room.

“Vino,” said Ithuel, with a flourish of the hand, to help along his Italian, this and one or two more being the only words of the language he ventured to use directly, or without calling in the assistance of his interpreter; “vino — vino, vino, Signora.”

“Sì, sì, sì, Signore,” answered Benedetta, laughing, and this with her meaning eyes so keenly riveted on the person of her new guest, as to make it very questionable whether she were amused by anything but his appearance; “your eccellenza shall be served; but whether at a paul or a half-paul the flask, depends on your own pleasure. We keep wine at both

prices, and,” glancing toward the table of Andrea Barroaldi, “usually serve the first to signori of rank and distinction.”



“What does the woman say?” growled Ithuel to his interpreter, a Genoese, who, from having served several years in the British navy, spoke English with a very tolerable facility; “you know what we want, and just tell her to hand it over, and I will fork out her St. Paul without more words. What a desperate liking your folks have for saints, Philip-o” — for so Ithuel pronounced Filippo, the name of his companion —

“what a desperate liking your folks have for saints, Philip-o, that they must even call their money after them.”

“It not so in America, Signor Bolto?” asked the Genoese, after he had explained his wishes to Benedetta, in Italian; “It no ze fashion in your country to honor ze saints?”

“Honor the saints!” repeated Ithuel, looking curiously round him, as he took a seat at a third table, shoving aside the glasses at the same time, and otherwise disposing of everything within reach of his hand, so as to suit his own notions of order, and then leaning back on his chair until the two ends of the uprights dug into the plaster behind him, while the legs on which the fabric was poised cracked with his weight; “honor the saints! we should be much more like to dishonor them! What does any one want to honor a saint for? A saint is but a human — a man like you and me, after all the fuss you make about 'em. Saints abound in my country, if you'd believe people's account of themselves.”

“Not quite so, Signor Bolto. You and me no great saint. Italian honor saint because he holy and good.”

By this time Ithuel had got his two feet on the round of his seat, his knees spread so as to occupy as much space as an unusual length of leg would permit, and his arms extended on the tops of two chairs, one on each side of him, in a way to resemble what is termed a

spread eagle.

Andrea Barrofaldis regarded all this with wonder. It is true, he expected to meet with no great refinement in a wine-house like that of Benedetta; but he was unaccustomed to see such nonchalance of manner in a man of the stranger's class, or, indeed, of any class; the Italian mariners present occupying their chairs in simple and respectful attitudes, as if each man had the wish to be as little obtrusive as possible. Still he let no sign of his surprise escape him, noting all that passed in a grave but attentive silence. Perhaps he saw traces of national peculiarities, if not of national history, in the circumstances.

“Honor saint because he holy and good!” said Ithuel, with a very ill-concealed disdain — “why, that is the very reason why we *don't* honor 'em. When you honor a holy man, mankind may consait you do it on that very account, and so fall into the notion you worship him, which would be idolatry, the awfulest of all sins, and the one to which every ra'al Christian gives the widest bairth. I would rather worship this flask of wine any day, than worship the best saint on your parsons' books.”

As Filippo was no casuist, but merely a believer, and Ithuel applied the end of the flask to his mouth, at that moment, from an old habit of drinking out of jugs and bottles, the Genoese made no answer; keeping his eyes on the flask, which, by the length of time it

remained at the other's mouth, appeared to be in great danger of being exhausted; a matter of some moment to one of his own relish for the liquor.

“Do you call *this* wine!” exclaimed Ithuel, when he stopped literally to take breath; “there isn't as much true granite in a gallon on't as in a pint of our cider. I could swallow a butt, and then walk a plank as narrow as your religion, Philip-o!”

This was said, nevertheless, with a look of happiness which proved how much the inward man was consoled by what it had received, and a richness of expression about the handsome mouth, that denoted a sort of consciousness that it had been the channel of a most agreeable communication to the stomach. Sooth to say, Benedetta had brought up a flask at a paul, or at about four cents a bottle; a flask of the very quality which she had put before the vice-governatore; and this was a liquor that flowed so smoothly over the palate, and of a quality so really delicate, that Ithuel was by no means aware of the potency of the guest which he had admitted to his interior.

All this time the vice-governatore was making up his mind concerning the nation and character of the stranger. That he should mistake Bolt for an Englishman was natural enough, and the fact had an influence in again unsettling his opinion as to the real flag under which the lugger sailed, Like most Italians of that day, he regarded all the families of the northern

hordes as a species of barbarians — an opinion that the air and deportment of Ithuel had no direct agency in changing; for, while this singular being was not brawlingly rude and vulgar, like the coarser set of his own countrymen, with whom he had occasionally been brought in contact, he was so manifestly uncivilized in many material points, as to put his claim to gentility much beyond a cavil, and that in a negative way.

“You are a Genoese?” said Andrea to Filippo, speaking with the authority of one who had a right to question.

“Signore, I am, at your eccellenza's orders, though in foreign service at this present moment.”

“In what service, friend? I am in authority, here in Elba, and ask no more than is my duty.”

“Eccellenza, I can well believe this,” answered Filippo, rising and making a respectful salutation, and one, too, that was without any of the awkwardness of the same act in a more northern man, “as it is to be seen in your appearance. I am now in the service of the king of England.”

Filippo said this steadily, though his eyes dropped to the floor under the searching scrutiny they endured. The answer of the vice-governatore was delivered coolly, though it was much to the point.

“You are happy,” he said, “in getting so honorable masters; more especially as your own country has again fallen into the hands of the French.

Every Italian heart must yearn for a government that has its existence and its motives on this side of the Alps.”

“Signore, we are a republic to-day, and ever have been, you know.”

“Aye — such as it is. But your companion speaks no Italian — he is an Inglese?”

“No, Signore — an Americano; a sort of an Inglese, and yet no Inglese, after all. He loves England very little, if I can judge by his discourse.”

“Un’ Americano!” repeated Andrea Barrofaldis; “Americano!” exclaimed Vito Viti; “Americano!” said each of the marines in succession, every eye turning with lively curiosity toward the subject of the discourse, who bore it all with appropriate steadiness and dignity. The reader is not to be surprised that an American was then regarded with curiosity, in a country like Italy; for, two years later, when an American ship of war anchored suddenly before the town of Constantinople, and announced her nation, the authorities of the Sublime Porte were ignorant that such a country existed. It is true, Leghorn was beginning to be much frequented by American ships, in the year 1799; but even with these evidences before their eyes, the people of the very ports into which these traders entered were accustomed to consider their crews a species of Englishmen, who managed to sail the vessels

for the negroes at home³. In a word, two centuries and a half of national existence, and more than half a century of national independence, have not yet sufficed to teach all the inhabitants of the old world, that the great modern Republic is peopled by men of a European origin, and possessing white skins. Even of those who are aware of the fact, the larger proportion, perhaps, have obtained their information through works of a light character, similar to this of our own, rather than by the more legitimate course of regular study and a knowledge of history.

“Si” repeated Ithuel, with emphasis, as soon as he heard his nationality thus alluded to, and found all eyes on himself — “Si, oon Americano — I'm not ashamed of my country; and if you're any way partic'lar in such matters, I come from New Hampshire — or, what we call the Granite state.

Tell 'em this, Philip-o, and let me know their ideas, in answer.”

Filippo translated this speech as well as he could, as he did the reply; and it may as well be stated here,

³ As recently as 1828, the author of this book was at Leghorn. The Delaware, so, had just left there; and speaking of her appearance to a native of the place, who supposed the writer to be an Englishman, the latter observed: “Of course, her people were all blacks.” “I thought so, too, signore, until I went on board the ship,” was the answer; “but they are as white as you and I are.”

once for all, that in the dialogue which succeeded, the instrumentality of this interpreter was necessary that the parties might understand each other. The reader will, therefore, give Filippo credit for this arrangement, although we shall furnish the different speeches very much as if the parties fully comprehended what was said.

“*Uno stato di granito!*” repeated the vice-governatore, looking at the podesta with some doubt in the expression of his countenance — “it must be a painful existence which these poor people endure, to toil for their food in such a region. Ask him, good Filippo, if they have any wine in his part of the world.”

“Wine!” echoed Ithuel; “tell the Signore that we shouldn't call this stuff wine at all. Nothing goes down our throats that doesn't rasp like a file, and burn like a chip of Vesuvius. I wish, now, we had a drink of New England rum here, in order to show him the difference. I despise the man who thinks all his own things the best, just because they're his'n; but taste *is* taste, a'ter all, and there's no denying it.”

“Perhaps the Signor Americano can give us an insight into the religion of his country — or are the Americani pagans? I do not remember, Vito, to have read anything of the religion of that quarter of the world.”

“Religion too! — well, a question like this, now, would make a stir among our folks in New Hampshire!

Look here, Signore; we don't call your ceremonies, and images, and robes, and ringing of bells, and bowing and scraping, a religion at all; any more than we should call this smooth liquor, wine."

Ithuel was more under the influence of this "smooth liquor" than he was aware of, or he would not have been so loud in the expression of his dissent; as experience had taught him the necessity of reserve on such subjects, in most Catholic communities. But of all this the Signor Barrofaldis was ignorant, and he made his answer with the severity of a good Catholic, though it was with the temper of a gentleman.

"What the Americano calls our ceremonies, and images, and ringing of bells, are probably not understood by him," he said; "since a country as little civilized as his own cannot very well comprehend the mysteries of a profound and ancient religion."

"Civilized! I calculate that it would *stump* this part of the world to produce such a civilization as our very youngest children are brought up on. But it's of no use *talking*, and so we will *drink*."

Andrea perceiving, indeed, that there was not much use in *talking*, more especially as Filippo had been a good deal mystified by the word "*stump*," was now disposed to abandon the idea of a dissertation on "religion, manners, and laws," to come at once to the matter that brought him into the present company.

"This Americano is also a servant of the English

king, it would seem," he carelessly remarked; "I remember to have heard that there was a war between his country and that of the Inglesi, in which the French assisted the Americani to obtain a sort of national independence. What that independence is, I do not know; but it is probable that the people of the New World are still obliged to find mariners to serve in the navy of their former masters."

Ithuel's muscles twitched, and an expression of intense bitterness darkened his countenance. Then he smiled in a sort of derision, and gave vent to his feelings in words.

"Perhaps you're right, Signore; perhaps this is the ra'al truth of the matter; for the British *do* take our people just the same as if they had the best right in the world to 'em. After all, we *may* be serving our masters; and all we say and think at home about independence is just a flash in the pan! Notwithstanding, some on us contrive, by hook or by crook, to take our revenge when occasion offers; and if I don't sarve master John Bull an ill turn, whenever luck throws a chance in my way, may I never see a bit of the old State again — granite or rotten wood."

This speech was not very closely translated, but enough was said to awaken curiosity in the vice-governatore, who thought it odd one who served among the English should entertain such feelings toward them. As for Ithuel himself, he had not observed

his usual caution; but, unknown to himself, the oily wine had more “granite” in it than he imagined, and then he seldom spoke of the abuse of impressment without losing more or less of his ordinary self-command.

“Ask the Americano when he first entered into the service of the king of Inghilterra,” said Andrea, “and why he stays in it, if it is unpleasant to him, when so many opportunities of quitting it offer?”

“I never entered,” returned Ithuel, taking the word in its technical meaning; “they pressed me, as if I had been a dog they wanted to turn a spit, and kept me seven long years fighting their accursed battles, and otherwise sarving their eends. I was over here, last year, at the mouth of the Nile, and in that pretty bit of work — and off Cape St. Vincent, too — and in a dozen more of their battles, and sorely against my will, on every account. This was hard to be borne, but the hardest of it has not yet been said; nor do I know that I shall tell on't at all.”

“Anything the Americano may think proper to relate will be listened to with pleasure.”

Ithuel was a good deal undecided whether to go on or not; but taking a fresh pull at the flask, it warmed his feelings to the sticking point.

“Why, it was adding insult to injury. It's bad enough to injure a man, but when it comes to insulting him into the bargain, there must be but little grit in his

natur' if it don't strike fire."

"And yet few are wronged who are not calumniated," observed the philosophical vice-governatore. "This is only too much the case with our Italy, worthy neighbor Vito Viti."

"I calculate the English treat all mankind alike, whether it's in Italy or Ameriky," for so Ithuel would pronounce this word, notwithstanding he had now been cruising in and near the Mediterranean several years; "but what I found hardest to be borne was their running their rigs on me about my language and ways, which they were all the time laughing at as Yankee conversation and usages, while they pretended that the body out of which all on it come was an English body, and so they set it up to be shot at, by any of their inimies that might happen to be jogging along our road. Then, squire, it is generally consaited among us in Ameriky, that we speak much the best English a-going; and sure am I, that none on us call a 'hog' an "og,' an 'anchor' a 'hanchor,' or a 'horse' an

"orse.' What is thought of that matter in this part of the world, Signor Squire?"

"We are not critics in your language, but it is reasonable to suppose that the English speak their own tongue better than any other people.

That much must be conceded to them, at least, Signor Bolto."

"I shall acknowledge no such advantage as

belonging to them. I have not been to school for nothing; not I. The English call c-l-e-r-k, clark; and c-u-c-u-m-b-e-r, cowcumber; and a-n-g-e-l, aingel; and no reasoning can convince me that's right. I've got a string of words of this sort, that they pronounce out of all reason, that's as long as a pair of leading-lines, or a ship's tiller-rope. You must know, Signor Squire, I kept school in the early part of my life."

"*Non e possibile!*" exclaimed the vice-governatore, astonishment actually getting the better of his habitual good breeding; "you must mean, Signor Americano, that you gave lessons in the art of rigging and sailing luggers."

"You never was more mistaken, Signore. I taught on the general system, all sorts of things in the edication way; and had one of my scholars made such a blunder as to say 'clark,' or 'aingel,' or 'harth,' or

'cowcumber,' he wouldn't have heard the last of it, for that week, at least. But I despise an Englishman from the very bottom of my soul; for heart isn't deep enough for my feelings."

Absurd as Ithuel's critical dissertations must appear to all who have any familiarity with real English, they were not greatly below many criticisms on the same subject that often illustrate the ephemeral literature of the country; and, in his last speech, he had made a provincial use of the word "despise," that is getting to be so common as almost to supplant the true

signification. By “despising,” Ithuel meant that he “hated”; the passion, perhaps, of all others, the most removed from the feeling described by the word he had used, inasmuch as it is not easy to elevate those for whom we have a contempt, to the level necessary to be hated.

“Notwithstanding, the Inglese are not a despicable people,” answered Andrea, who was obliged to take the stranger literally, since he knew nothing of his provincial use of terms; “for a nation of the north, they have done marvellous things of late years, especially on the ocean.”

This was more than Ithuel could bear. All his personal wrongs, and sooth to say they had been of a most grievous nature, arose before his mind, incited and inflamed by national dislike; and he broke out into such an incoherent tirade of abuse, as completely set all Filippo's knowledge of English at fault, rendering a translation impossible. By this time, Ithuel had swallowed so much of the wine, a liquor which had far more body than he supposed, that he was ripe for mischief, and it was only his extreme violence that prevented him from betraying more than, just at the moment, would have been prudent. The vice-governatore listened with attention, in the hope of catching something useful; but it all came to his ears a confused mass of incoherent vituperation, from which he could extract nothing. The scene, consequently, soon

became unpleasant, and Andrea Barrofaldis took measures to put an end to it.

Watching a favorable occasion to speak, he put in a word, as the excited Bolt paused an instant to take breath.

“Signore,” observed the vice-governatore, “all this may be very true; but as coming from one who serves the Inglese, to one who is the servant of their ally, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, it is quite as extraordinary as it is uncalled for; and we will talk of other things. This lugger, on board which you sail, is out of all question English, notwithstanding what you tell us of the nation.”

“Aye, *she* is English,” answered Ithuel, with a grim smile, “and a pretty boat she is. But then it is no fault of hers, and what can't be cured must be endured. A Guernsey craft, and a desperate goer, when she wakes up and puts on her travelling boots.”

“These mariners have a language of their own,” remarked, Andrea to Vito Viti, smiling as in consideration of Ithuel's nautical habits; “to you and me, the idea of a vessel's using boots, neighbor, seems ridiculous; but the seamen, in their imaginations, bestow all sorts of objects on them. It is curious to hear them converse, good Vito; and now I am dwelling here on our island, I have often thought of collecting a number of their images, in order to aid in illustrating the sort of literature that belongs to their calling. This

idea of a lugger's putting on her boots is quite heroic."

Now Vito Viti, though an Italian with so musical a name, was no poet, but a man so very literal, withal, as to render him exceedingly matter of fact in most of his notions. Accordingly, he saw no particular beauty in the idea of a vessel's wearing boots; and, though much accustomed to defer to the vice-governatore's superior knowledge and more extensive reading, he had the courage, on this occasion, to put in an objection to the probability of the circumstance mentioned.

"Signor Vice-governatore," he replied, "all is not gold that glitters.

Fine words sometimes cover poor thoughts, and, I take it, this is an instance of what I mean. Long as I have lived in Porto Ferrajo, and that is now quite fifty years, seeing that I was born here, and have been off the island but four times in my life — and long, therefore, as I have lived here, I never saw a vessel in the harbor that wore boots, or even shoes."

"This is metaphorical, good Vito, and must be looked at in a poetical point of view. Homer speaks of goddesses holding shields before their favorite warriors; while Ariosto makes rats and asses hold discourse together, as if they were members of an academy. All this is merely the effect of imagination, Signore; and he who has the most is the aptest at inventing circumstances, which, though not strictly true, are vastly agreeable."

“As for Homer and Ariosto, Signor Vice-governatore, I doubt if either ever saw a vessel with a boot on, or if either ever knew as much about craft in general as we who live here in Porto Ferrajo. Harkee, friend Filippo, just ask this Americano if, in his country, he ever saw vessels wear boots. Put the question plainly, and without any of your accursed poetry.”

Filippo did as desired, leaving Ithuel to put his own construction on the object of the inquiry; all that had just passed being sealed to him, in consequence of its having been uttered in good Tuscan.

“Boots!” repeated the native of the Granite state, looking round him drolly; “perhaps not exactly the foot-part, and the soles, for they ought, in reason, to be under water; but every vessel that isn't coppered shows her *boot-top* — of *them*, I'll swear I've seen ten thousand, more or less.”

This answer mystified the vice-governatore, and completely puzzled Vito Viti. The grave mariners at the other table, too, thought it odd, for in no other tongue is the language of the sea as poetical, or figurative, as in the English; and the term of *boot-top*, as applied to a vessel, was Greek to them, as well as to the other listeners. They conversed among themselves on the subject, while their two superiors were holding a secret conference on the other side of the room, giving the American time to rally his recollection, and remember

the precise circumstances in which not only he himself, but all his shipmates, were placed. No one could be more wily and ingenious than this man, when on his guard, though the inextinguishable hatred with which he regarded England and Englishmen had come so near causing him to betray a secret which it was extremely important, at that moment, to conceal. At length a general silence prevailed, the different groups of speakers ceasing to converse, and all looking towards the vice-governatore, as if in expectation that he was about to suggest something that might give a turn to the discourse. Nor was this a mistake, for, after inquiring of Benedetta if she had a private room, he invited Ithuel and the interpreter to follow him into it, leading the way, attended by the podesta. As soon as these four were thus separated from the others, the door was closed, and the two Tuscans came at once to the point.

“Signor Americano,” commenced the vice-governatore, “between those who understand each other, there is little need of many words. This is a language which is comprehended all over the world, and I put it before you in the plainest manner, that we may have no mistake.”

“It is tolerable plain, sartain!” exclaimed Ithuel — “two — four — six — eight — ten — all good-looking gold pieces, that in this part of the world you call *zecchini* — or sequins, as we name

’em, in English. What have I done, Signor Squire,

or what am I to do for these twenty dollars? Name your terms; this working in the dark is ag'in the grain of my natur'!"

"You are to tell the *truth*; we suspect the lugger of being French; and by putting the proof in our hands, you will make us your friends, and serve yourself."

Andrea Barrovaldi knew little of America and Americans, but he had imbibed the common European notion that money was the great deity worshipped in this hemisphere, and that all he had to do was to offer a bribe, in order to purchase a man of Ithuel's deportment and appearance.

In his own island ten sequins would buy almost any mariner of the port to do any act short of positive legal criminality; and the idea that a barbarian of the west would refuse such a sum, in preference to selling his shipmates, never crossed his mind. Little, however, did the Italian understand the American. A greater knave than Ithuel, in his own way, it was not easy to find; but it shocked all his notions of personal dignity, self-respect, and republican virtue, to be thus unequivocally offered a bribe; and had the lugger not been so awkwardly circumstanced, he would have been apt to bring matters to a crisis at once by throwing the gold into the vice-governatore's face; although, knowing where it was to be found, he might have set about devising some means of cheating the owner out of it at the very next instant. Boon or bribe, directly or

unequivocally offered in the shape of money, as coming from the superior to the inferior, or from the corrupter to the corrupted, had he never taken, and it would have appeared in his eyes a species of degradation to receive the first, and of treason to his nationality to accept the last; though he would lie, invent, manage, and contrive, from morning till night, in order to transfer even copper from the pocket of his neighbor to his own, under the forms of opinion and usage. In a word, Ithuel, as relates to such things, is what is commonly called law-honest, with certain broad salvoes, In favor of smuggling of all sorts, in foreign countries (at home he never dreamed of such a thing), custom-house oaths, and legal trickery; and this is just the class of men apt to declaim the loudest against the roguery of the rest of mankind. Had there been a law giving half to the informer, he might not have hesitated to betray the lugger, and all she contained, more especially in the way of regular business; but he had long before determined that every Italian was a treacherous rogue, and not at all to be trusted like an American rogue; and then his indomitable dislike of England would have kept him true in a case of much less complicated risk than this. Commanding himself, however, and regarding the sequins with natural longing, he answered with a simplicity of manner that both surprised and imposed on the vice-governatore.

“No — no — Signor Squire,” he said; “in the first

place, I've no secret to tell; and it would be a trickish thing to touch your money and not give you its worth in return; and then the lugger is Guernsey built, and carries a good King George's commission. In my part of the world we never take gold unless we sell something of equal value. Gifts and begging we look upon as mean and unbecoming, and the next thing to going on to the town as a pauper; though if I can serve you lawfully, like, I'm just as willing to work for *your* money as for that of any other man. I've no preference for king's in that partic'lar."

All this time Ithuel held out the sequins, with a show of returning them, though in a very reluctant manner, leaving Andrea, who comprehended his actions much better than his words, to understand that he declined selling his secret.

"You can keep the money, friend," observed the vice-governatore, "for when we give, in Italy, it is not our practice to take the gift back again. In the morning, perhaps, you will remember something that it may be useful for me to know."

"I've no occasion for gifts, nor is it exactly accordin' to the Granite rule to accept 'em," answered Ithuel, a little sharply. "Handsome conduct is handsome conduct; and I call the fellow-creetur' that would oppress and overcome another with a gift, little better than an English aristocrat. Hand out the dollars in the way of trade, in as large amounts as you will, and I will

find the man, and that, too, in the lugger, who will see you out in't to your heart's content. Harkee, Philip-o; tell the gentleman, in an undertone, like, about the three kegs of tobacco we got out of the Virginy ship the day we made the north end of Corsica, and perhaps that will satisfy him we are not his enemies. There is no use in bawling it out so that the woman can hear what you say, or the men who are drinking in the other room."

"Signor Ithuello," answered the Genoese, in English, "it will not do to let these gentlemen know anything of them kegs — one being the deputy-governor and the other a magistrate. The lugger will be seized for a smuggler, which will be the next thing to being seized for an enemy."

"Yet I've a longing for them 'ere sequins, to tell you the truth, Philip-o! I see no other means of getting at 'em, except it be through them three kegs of tobacco."

"Why you don't take 'em, when the Signore put 'em into your very hand?"

All you do is put him in your pocket, and say, 'Eccellenza, what you please to wish?'"

"That isn't Granite, man, but more in the natur' of you Italians. The most disgraceful thing on 'airth is a paupe" — so Ithuel pronounced "pauper" — "the next is a street-beggar; after him comes your chaps who takes sixpences and shillin's, in the way of small gifts; and last of all an Englishman. All these I despise; but

let this Signore say but the word, in the way of trade, and he'll find me as ready and expairt as he can wish. I'd defy the devil in a trade!"

Filippo shook his head, positively declining to do so foolish a thing as to mention a contraband article to those whose duty it would be to punish a violation of the revenue laws. In the meanwhile the sequins remained in the hands of Andrea Barrofaldi, who seemed greatly at a loss to understand the character of the strange being whom chance had thus thrown in his way. The money was returned to his purse, but his distrust and doubts were by no means removed.

"Answer me one thing, Signor Bolto," asked the vice-governatore, after a minute of thought; "if you hate the English so much, why do you serve in their ships? why not quit them on the first good occasion? The land is as wide as the sea, and you must be often on it."

"I calculate, Signor Squire, you don't often study charts, or you wouldn't fall into such a consait. There's twice as much water as solid ground on this 'airth, to begin with; as in reason there ought to be, seeing that an acre of good productive land is worth five or six of oceans; and then you have little knowledge of my character and prospects to ask such a question. I sarve the king of England to make him pay well for it. If you want to take an advantage of a man, first get him in debt; then you can work your will on him in the most

profitable and safe manner!”

All this was unintelligible to the vice-governatore, who, after a few more questions and answers, took a civil leave of the strangers, intimating to Benedetta that they were not to follow him back into the room he had just quitted.

As for Ithuel, the disappearance of the two gentlemen gave him no concern; but as he felt that it might be unsafe to drink any more wine, he threw down his reckoning, and strolled into the street, followed by his companion. Within an hour from that moment, the three kegs of tobacco were in the possession of a shopkeeper of the place, that brief interval sufficing to enable the man to make his bargain, and to deliver the articles, which was his real object on shore. This little smuggling transaction was carried on altogether without the knowledge of Raoul Yvard, who was to all intents and purposes the captain of his own lugger, and in whose character there were many traits of chivalrous honor, mixed up with habits and pursuits that would not seem to promise qualities so elevated. But this want of a propensity to turn a penny in his own way was not the only distinguishing characteristic between the commander of the little craft and the being he occasionally used as a mask to his true purposes.

Chapter V

*“The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship; — But, hark! a sail!”*

Cassio

Whatever may have been the result of the vice-governatore's further inquiries and speculations that night, they were not known. After consuming an hour in the lower part of the town, in and around the port, he and the podesta sought their homes and their pillows, leaving the lugger riding quietly at her anchor in the spot where she was last presented to the reader's attention. If Raoul Yvard and Ghita had another interview, too, it was so secretly managed as to escape all observation, and can form no part of this narrative.

A Mediterranean morning, at midsummer, is one of those balmy and soothing periods of the day that affect the mind as well as the body.

Everywhere we have the mellow and advancing light that precedes the appearance of the sun — the shifting hues of the sky — that pearly softness that seems to have been invented to make us love the works of God's hand and the warm glow of the brilliant sun; but it is not everywhere that these fascinating changes occur, on a sea whose blue vies with the darkest depths of the void of space, beneath a climate that is as winning as the scenes it adorns, and amid mountains

whose faces reflect every varying shade of light with the truth and the poetry of nature. Such a morning as this last was that which succeeded the night with which our tale opened, bringing with it the reviving movements of the port and town. Italy, as a whole, is remarkable for an appearance of quiet and repose that are little known in the more bustling scenes of the greedier commerce of our own quarter of the world, or, indeed, in those of most of the northern nations of Europe.

There is in her aspect, modes of living, and even in her habits of business, an air of decayed gentility that is wanting to the ports, shops, and marts of the more vulgar parts of the world; as if conscious of having been so long the focus of human refinement, it was unbecoming, in these later days, to throw aside all traces of her history and power.

Man, and the climate, too, seem in unison; one meeting the cares of life with a *far niente* manner that is singularly in accordance with the dreamy and soothing atmosphere he respires.

Just as day dawned, the fall of a billet of wood on the deck of the Feu-Follet gave the first intimation that any one was stirring in or near the haven. If there had been a watch on board that craft throughout the night — and doubtless such had been the case — it had been kept in so quiet and unobtrusive a manner as to render it questionable to the jealous eyes which had been

riveted on her from the shore until long past midnight. Now, however, everything was in motion, and in less than five minutes after that billet of wood had fallen from the hands of the cook, as he was about to light his galley fire, the tops of the hats and caps of some fifty or sixty sailors were seen moving to and fro, just above the upper edge of the bulwarks. Three minutes later, and two men appeared near the knight-heads, each with his arms folded, looking at the vessel's hawse, and taking a survey of the state of the harbor, and of objects on the surrounding shore.

The two individuals who were standing in the conspicuous position named were Raoul Yvard himself, and Ithuel Bolt. Their conversation was in French, the part borne by the last being most execrably pronounced, and paying little or no attention to grammar; but it is necessary that we should render what was said by both into the vernacular, with the peculiarities that belonged to the men.

“I see only the Austrian that is worth the trouble of a movement,” quietly observed Raoul, whose eye was scanning the inner harbor, his own vessel lying two hundred yards without it, it will be remembered — “and she is light, and would scarce pay for sending her to Toulon. These feluccas would embarrass us, without affording much reward, and then their loss would ruin the poor devils of owners, and bring misery into many a family.”

“Well, that's a new idee, for a privateer!” said Ithuel sneeringly; “luck's luck, in these matters, and every man must count on what war turns up. I wish you'd read the history of *our* revolution, and then you'd ha' seen that liberty and equality are not to be had without some ups and downs in fortin's and chances.”

“The Austrian *might* do,” added Raoul, who paid little attention to his companion's remarks, “if he were a streak or two lower in the water — but, after all, E-too-ell,” — for so he pronounced the other's name — “I do not like a capture that is made without any *eclat*, or spirit, in the attack and defence.”

“Well,” — this word Ithuel invariably pronounced, “wa-a-l” — “well, to my notion, the most profitable and the most agreeable battles are the shortest; and the pleasantest victories are them in which there's the most prize money, Howsever, as that brig is only an Austrian, I care little what you may detairmine to do with her; was she English, I'd head a boat myself, to go in and tow her out here, expressly to have the satisfaction of burning her. English ships make a cheerful fire!”

“And that would be a useless waste of property, and perhaps of blood, and would do no one any good, Etoo *ell*.”

“But it would do the accursed English *harm*, and that counts for a something, in my reckoning. Nelson wasn't so over-scrupulous, at the Nile, about burning

your ships, Mr. Rule..."

"*Tonnerre!* why do you always bring in that *malheureux* Nile? — Is it not enough that we were beaten — disgraced — destroyed — that a friend must tell us of it so often?"

"You forget, Mr. Rule, that I was an *inimy*, *then*" returned Ithuel, with a grin and a grim smile. "If you'll take the trouble to examine my back, you'll find on it the marks of the lashes I got for just telling my Captain that it was ag'in the grain for me, a republican as I was by idee and natur', to fight other republicans. He told me he would first try the grain of my skin, and see how that would agree with what he called my duty; and I must own, he got the best on't; I fit like a tiger ag'in you, rather than be flogged twice the same day. Flogging on a sore back is an awful argument!"

"And now has come the hour of revenge, *pauvre Etooell*; this time you are on the right side, and may fight with heart and mind those you so much hate."

A long and gloomy silence followed, during which Raoul turned his face aft, and stood looking at the movements of the men as they washed the decks, while Ithuel seated himself on a knight-head, and his chin resting on his hand, he sat ruminating, in bitterness of spirit, like Milton's devil, in some of his dire cogitations, on the atrocious wrong of which he had really been the subject. Bodies of men are proverbially heartless. They commit injustice without reflection, and

vindicate their abuses without remorse. And yet it may be doubtful if either a nation or an individual ever tolerated or was an accessory in a wrong, that the act, sooner or later, did not recoil on the offending party, through that mysterious principle of right which is implanted in the nature of things, bringing forth its own results as the seed produces its grain, and the tree its fruits; a supervision of holiness that it is usual to term (and rightly enough, when we remember who created principles) the providence of God. Let that people dread the future, who, in their collective capacity, systematically encourage injustice of any sort; since their own eventual demoralization will follow as a necessary consequence, even though they escape punishment in a more direct form.

We shall not stop to relate the moody musings of the New Hampshire man.

Unnurtured, and, in many respects, unprincipled as he was, he had his clear conceptions of the injustice of which he had been one among thousands of other victims; and, at that moment, he would have held life itself as a cheap sacrifice, could he have had his fill of revenge. Time and again, while a captive on board the English ship in which he had been immured for years, had he meditated the desperate expedient of blowing up the vessel; and had not the means been wanting, mercenary and selfish as he ordinarily seemed, he was every way equal to executing so dire a scheme, in order

to put an end to the lives of those who were the agents in wronging him, and his own sufferings, together. The subject never recurred to his mind without momentarily changing the current of its thoughts, and tinging all his feelings with an intensity of bitterness that it was painful to bear. At length, sighing heavily, he rose from the knight-head, and turned toward the mouth of the bay, as if to conceal from Raoul the expression of his countenance. This act, however, was scarcely done, ere he started, and an exclamation escaped him that induced his companion to turn quickly on his heel and face the sea. There, indeed, the growing light enabled both to discover an object that could scarcely be other than one of interest to men in their situation.

It has been said already that the deep bay, on the side of which stands the town of Porto Ferrajo, opens to the north, looking in the direction of the headland of Piombino. On the right of the bay, the land, high and broken, stretches several miles ere it forms what is called the Canal, while, on the left, it terminates with the low bluff on which stands the residence then occupied by Andrea Barroffaldi; and which has since become so celebrated as the abode of one far greater than the worthy vice-governatore. The haven lying under these heights, on the left of the bay and by the side of the town, it followed, as a matter of course, that the anchorage of the lugger was also in this quarter of the bay, commanding a clear view to the north, in the

direction of the main land, as far as the eye could reach. The width of the Canal, or of the passage between Elba and the Point of Piombino, may be some six or seven miles; and at the distance of less than one mile from the northern end of the former stands a small rocky islet, which has since become known to the world as the spot on which Napoleon stationed a corporal's guard, by way of taking possession, when he found his whole empire dwindled to the sea-girt mountains in its vicinity. With the existence and position of this island both Raoul and Ithuel were necessarily acquainted, for they had seen it and noted its situation the previous night, though it had escaped their notice that, from the place where the Feu-Follet had brought up, it was not visible. In their first look to seaward, that morning, which was ere the light had grown sufficiently strong to render the houses on the opposite side of the bay distinct, an object had been seen in this quarter which had then been mistaken for the rock; but by this time the light was strong enough to show that it was a very different thing. In a word, that which both Raoul and Ithuel had fancied an islet was neither more nor less than a ship.

The stranger's head was to the northward, and his motion, before a light southerly air, could not have exceeded a knot an hour. He had no other canvas spread than his three topsails and jib; though his courses were hanging in the brails. His black hull was

just beginning to show its details; and along the line of light yellow that enlivened his side were visible the dark intervals of thirteen ports; a real gun frowning in each. Although the hammocks were not stowed, and the hammock-cloths had that empty and undressed look which is so common to a man-of-war in the night, it was apparent that the ship had an upper deck, with quarter-deck and fore-castle batteries; or, in other words, that she was a frigate. As she had opened the town of Porto Ferrajo several minutes before she was herself seen from the Feu Follet, an ensign was hanging from the end of her gaff, though there was not sufficient air to open its folds, in a way to let the national character of the stranger be known.

“Peste!” exclaimed Raoul Yvard, as soon as he had gazed a minute at the stranger in silence; “a pretty *cul de sac* are we in, if that gentleman should happen to be an Englishman! What say you, Etooell; can *you* make out anything of that ensign — your eyes are the best in the lugger?”

“It is too much for any sight to detairmine, at this distance, and that before the sun is risen; but, by having a glass ready, we shall soon know. Five minutes will bring us the Great Luminary, as our minister used to call him.”

Ithuel had descended from the bulwark while speaking; and he now went aft in quest of a glass, returning to his old station, bringing two of the

instruments; one of which he handed to his commander, while he kept the other himself. In another minute both had levelled their glasses at the stranger, whom each surveyed attentively, for some time, in profound silence.

“*Pardie!*” exclaimed Raoul, “that ensign is the tri-color, or my eyes are untrue to my own country. Let me see, Etooell; what ship of forty-two, or forty-four, has the republic on this coast?”

“Not *that*, Monsieur Yvard,” answered Ithuel, with a manner so changed, and an emphasis so marked, as at once to draw his companion's attention from the frigate to his own countenance; “not *that*, Monsieur Capitaing. It is not easy for a bird to forget the cage in which he was shut up for two years; if that is not the accursed Proserpine, I have forgotten the cut of my own jib!”

“La Proserpine!” repeated Raoul, who was familiar with his shipmate's adventures, and did not require to be told his meaning; “if you are not mistaken, Etooell, le Feu-Follet needs put her lantern under a shade.

This is only a forty, if I can count her ports.”

“I care nothing for ports or guns; it is the Proserpine; and the only harm I wish her is, that she were at the bottom of the ocean. The Proserpine, thirty-six, Captain Cuffe; though Captain Flog would have been a better name for him. Yes, the Proserpine,

thirty-six, Captain Cuffe, Heaven bless her!”

“Bah! — this vessel has forty-four guns — now I can see to count them; I make twenty-two of a side.”

“Aye, that's just her measure — a thirty-six on the list and by rate, and forty-four by count; twenty-six long eighteens below; twelve thirty-twos, carronades, on her quarter-deck; and four more carronades, with two barkers, for'ard. She'd just extinguish your Jack-o'-Lantern, Monsieur Rule, at one broadside; for what are ten twelve-pound carronades, and seventy men, to such a frigate?”

“I am not madman enough, Etooell, to dream of fighting a frigate, or even a heavy sloop-of-war, with the force you have just mentioned; but I have followed the sea too long to be alarmed before I am certain oL my danger. La Railleuse is just such a ship as that.”

“Hearken to reason, Monsieur Rule,” answered Ithuel earnestly; “La Railleuse, nor no other French frigate, would show her colors to an enemy's port; for it would be uselessly telling her errand. Now, an English ship might show a French ensign, for *she* always has it in her power to change it; and then *she* might be benefited by the cheat. The Proserpine is French built, and has French legs, too, boots or no boots” — here Ithuel laughed a little, involuntarily, but his face instantly became serious again — “and I have heard she was a sister vessel of the other. So much for size and appearance; but every shroud, and port, and sail, about

yonder craft, is registered on my back in a way that no sponge will ever wash out.”

“Sa-a-c-r-r-r-e,” muttered Raoul between his teeth; “Etoell, if an Englishman, he may very well take it into his head to come in here, and perhaps anchor within half-a-cable's length of us! What think you of that, *mon brave Americain?*” “That it may very well come to pass; though one hardly sees, either, what is to bring a cruiser into such a place as this. Every one hasn't the curiosity of a Jack-o'-Lantern.”

“*Mais que diable allait-il faire dans cette galere!* — *Bien*; we must take the weather as it comes; sometimes a gale, and sometimes a calm. As he shows his own ensign so loyally, let us return the compliment, and show ours. Hoist the ensign there aft.”

“Which one, Monsieur?” demanded an old, demure-looking quartermaster, who was charged with that duty, and who was never known to laugh; “the captain will remember we came into port under the *drapeau* of Monsieur Jean Bull.”

“*Bien* — hoist the *drapeau* of Monsieur Jean Bull again. We must brazen it out, now we have put on the mask. Monsieur Lieutenant, clap on the hawser, and run the lugger ahead, over her anchor, and see everything clear for spreading our pocket-handkerchiefs. No one knows when *le eu-Follet* may have occasion to wipe her face. Ah! — now, Etoell, we can make out his broadside fairly, he is

heading more to the westward.”

The two seamen levelled their glasses, and renewed their examinations.

Ithuel had a peculiarity that not only characterized the man, but which is so common among Americans of his class as in a sense to be national.

On ordinary occasions he was talkative, and disposed to gossip; but, whenever action and decision became necessary, he was thoughtful, silent, and, though in a way of his own, even dignified. This last fit was on him, and he waited for Raoul to lead the conversation. The other, however, was disposed to be as reserved as himself, for he quitted the knight-head, and took refuge from the splashing of the water used in washing the decks, in his own cabin.

Two hours, though they brought the sun, with the activity and hum of the morning, had made no great change in the relative positions of things within and without the bay. The people of le Feu-Follet had breakfasted, had got everything on board their little craft in its proper place, and were moody, observant, and silent. One of the lessons that Ithuel had succeeded in teaching his shipmates was to impress on them the necessity of commanding their voluble propensities if they would wish to pass for Englishmen. It is certain, more words would have been uttered in this little lugger in one hour, had her crew been indulged to the top of their bent, than would have been uttered in an English

first-rate in two; but the danger of using their own language, and the English peculiarity of grumness, had been so thoroughly taught them, that her people rather caricatured, than otherwise, *ce grand talent pour le silence* that was thought to distinguish their enemies. Ithuel, who had a waggery of his own, smiled as he saw the seamen folding their arms, throwing discontent and surliness into their countenances, and pacing the deck singly, as if misanthropical and disdainful to converse, whenever a boat came alongside from the shore. Several of these visitors arrived in the course of the two hours mentioned; but the sentinel at the gangway, who had his orders, repulsed every attempt to come on board, pretending not to understand French when permission was asked in that language.

Raoul had a boat's crew of four, all of whom had acquired the English, like himself, in a prison-ship, and with these men he now prepared to land; for, as yet, he had made little progress in the business which brought him into his present awkward predicament, and he was not a man to abandon an object so dear to him, lightly. Finding himself in a dilemma, he was resolved to make an effort to reap, if possible, some advantage from his critical situation. Accordingly, after he had taken his coffee and given his orders, the boat's crew was called, and he left the lugger's side. All this was done tranquilly, as if the appearance of the stranger in the offing gave no trouble to any in le Feu-Follet.

On this occasion the boat pulled boldly into the little harbor, its officer touching the shore at the common landing. Nor were the men in any haste to return. They lounged about the quay, in waiting for their captain, cheapening fruits, chatting with the women in such Italian as they could muster, and affecting to understand the French of the old sea-dogs that drew near them, all of whom knew more or less of that universal language, with difficulty. That they were the objects of suspicion, their captain had sufficiently warned them, and practice rendered them all good actors. The time they remained in waiting for Raoul was consequently spent in eluding attempts to induce them to betray themselves, and in caricaturing Englishmen. Two of the four folded their arms, endeavored to look surly, and paced the quay in silence, refusing even to unbend to the blandishments of the gentler sex, three or four of whom endeavored to insinuate themselves into their confidence by offerings of fruit and flowers.

“Amico,” said Annunziante, one of the prettiest girls of her class in Porto Ferrajo, and who had been expressly employed by Vito Viti to perform this office, “here are figs from the main land. Will you please to eat a few, that when you go back to Inghilterra you may tell your countrymen how we poor Elbans live?”

“Bad fig” — sputtered Jacques, Raoul's cockswain, to whom this offering was made, and

speaking in broken English; "better at 'ome. Pick up better in ze street of Portsmout'!"

"But, Signore, you need not look as if they would hurt you, or bite you; you can eat them and, take my word for it, you will find them as pleasant as the melons of Napoli!"

"No melon good but English melon. English melon plenty as pomme de terres — bah!"

"Yes, Signore, as the melons of Napoli," continued Annunziate, who did not understand a syllable of the ungracious answers she received;

"Signor Vito Viti, our podesta, ordered me to offer these figs to the forestieri — the Inglesi, who are in the bay..."

"God-dam," returned Jacques, in a quick, sententious manner, that was intended to get rid of the fair tormentor, and which, temporarily at least, was not without its effect.

But, leaving the boat's crew to be badgered in this manner until relief came, as will be hereafter related, we must follow our hero in his way through the streets of the town. Raoul, guided by an instinct, or having some special object before his eyes, walked swiftly up the heights, ascending to the promontory so often mentioned. As he passed, every eye was turned on him, for, by this time, the distrust in the place was general; and the sudden appearance of a frigate, wearing a French ensign, before the port, had given rise to

apprehensions of a much more serious nature than any which could possibly attend the arrival of a craft as light as the lugger, by herself. Vito Viti had long before gone up the street, to see the vice-governatore; and eight or ten of the principal men of the place had been summoned to a council, including the two senior military dignitaries of the island. The batteries, it was known, were manned; and although it would have puzzled the acutest mind of Elba to give a reason why the French should risk so unprofitable an attack as one on their principal port, long ere Raoul was seen among them such a result was not only dreaded, but in a measure anticipated with confidence. As a matter of course, then, every eye followed his movements as he went with bounding steps up the narrow terraces of the steep street, and the least of his actions was subjected to the narrowest and most jealous scrutiny.

The heights were again thronged with spectators of all ages and classes, and of both sexes. The mantles and flowing dresses of females prevailed as usual; for whatever is connected with curiosity is certain to collect an undue proportion of a sex whose imaginations are so apt to get the start of their judgments. On a terrace in front of the palace, as it was the custom to designate the dwelling of the governor, was the group of magnates, all of them paying the gravest attention to the smallest change in the direction of the ship, which had now become an object of general

solicitude and apprehension. So intent, indeed, were they in gazing at this apprehended enemy, that Raoul stood in front of Andrea Barrofaldis, cap in hand, and bowing his salutation, before his approach was even anticipated. This sudden and unannounced arrival created great surprise, and some little confusion; one or two of the group turning away instinctively, as it might be, to conceal the flushes that mounted to their cheeks at being so unexpectedly confronted by the very man whom the minute before they had been strongly denouncing.

“*Bon giorno*, Signor Vice-governatore,” commenced Raoul, in his gay, easy, and courteous manner, and certainly with an air that betrayed any feeling but those of apprehension and guilt; “we have a fine morning on the land, here; and apparently a fine frigate of the French republic in the offing yonder.”

“We were conversing of that vessel, Signor Smees,” answered Andrea, “as you approached. What, in your judgment, can induce a Frenchman to appear before our town in so menacing a manner?”

“Cospetto! you might as well ask me, Signore, what induces these republicans to do a thousand other out-of-the-way things. What has made them behead Louis XVI? What has made them overrun half of your Italy, conquer Egypt, and drive the Austrians back upon their Danube?”

“To say nothing of their letting Nelsoni destroy

them at Aboukir," added Vito Viti, with a grunt.

"True, Signore, or letting Nelson, my gallant countryman, annihilate them near the mouth of the Nile. I did not consider it proper to boast of English glory, though that case, too, may very well be included. We have several men in ze Ving-and-Ving who were in that glorious battle, particularly our sailing-master, Etoell Bolt, who was on board Nelson's own ship, having been accidentally sent on service from the frigate to which he properly belonged, and carried off expressly to share, as it might be, in the glory of this famous battle."

"I have seen the Signore," dryly remarked Andrea Barrofaldis — "*e uno Americano?*" "An American!" exclaimed Raoul, starting a little in spite of his assumed indifference of manner; "why, yes, I believe Bolt *was* born in America — English America, you know, Signori, and that is much the same thing as having been born in England herself. We look upon ze *Yankes* as but a part of our own people, and take them into our service most cheerfully."

"So the Signor Ituello has given us reason to believe; he is seemingly a great lover of the English nation."

Raoul was uneasy; for he was entirely ignorant of all that had passed in the wine-house, and he thought he detected irony in the manner of the vice-governatore.

"Certainly, Signore," he answered, however, with

unmoved steadiness; “certainly, Signore, the Americani adore Inghilterra; and well they may, considering all that great nation has done for them. But, Signor Vice-governatore, I have come to offer you the service of my lugger, should this Frenchman really intend mischief. We are small, it is true, and our guns are but light; nevertheless we may break the frigate's cabin-windows, while you are doing him still greater injury from these heights. I trust you will assign ze Ving-and-Ving some honorable station, should you come to blows with the republicans.”

“And what particular service would it be most agreeable to you to undertake, Signore?” inquired the vice-governatore, with considerate courtesy; “we are no mariners, and must leave the choice to yourself.

The colonello, here, expects some firing, and has his artillerists already at their guns.”

“The preparation of Porto Ferrajo is celebrated among the mariners of the Mediterranean, and, should the Frenchman venture within reach of your shot, I expect to see him unrigged faster than if he were in a dock-yard. As for ze leetl' Ving-and-Ving, in my opinion, while the frigate is busy with these batteries, it might be well for us to steer along the shore on the east side of the bay until we can get outside of her, when we shall have the beggars between two fires. That was just what Nelson did at Aboukir, Signor Podesta, a battle you seem so much to admire.”

“That would be a manoeuvre worthy of a follower of Nelsoni, Signore,” observed the colonel, “if the metal of your guns were heavier. With short pieces of twelve, however, you would hardly venture within reach of long pieces of eighteen; although the first should be manned by Inglese, and the last by Francese?”

“One never knows. At the Nile one of our fifties laid the Orient, a three-decker, athwart-hawse, and did her lots of injury. The vaisseau, in fact, was blown up. Naval combats are decided on principles altogether different from engagements on the land, Signor Colonello.”

“It must be so, truly,” answered the soldier; “but what means this movement? you, as a seaman, may be able to tell us, Capitano.”

This drew all eyes to the frigate again, where, indeed, were movements that indicated some important changes. As these movements have an intimate connection with the incidents of the tale, it will be necessary to relate them in a manner to render them more intelligible to the reader.

The distance of the frigate from the town might now have been five English miles. Of current there was none; and there being no tides in the Mediterranean, the ship would have lain perfectly stationary all the morning, but for a very light air from the southward. Before this air, however, she had moved to the

westward about a couple of miles, until she had got the government-house nearly abeam. At the same time she had been obliquely drawing nearer, which was the circumstance that produced the alarm. With the sun had risen the wind, and a few minutes before the colonel interrupted himself in the manner related, the topsails of the stranger had swelled, and he began to move through the water at the rate of some four or five knots the hour. The moment her people felt that they had complete command of their vessel, as if waiting only for that assurance, they altered her course and made sail. Putting her helm a-starboard, the ship came close by the wind, with her head looking directly in for the promontory, while her tacks were hauled on board, and her light canvas aloft was loosened and spread to the breeze. Almost at the same instant, for everything seemed to be done at once, and as by instinct, the French flag was lowered, another went up in its place, and a gun was fired to leeward — a signal of amity. As this second emblem of nationality blew out, and opened to the breeze, the glasses showed the white field and St. George's cross of the noble old ensign of England.

An exclamation of surprise and delight escaped the spectators on the promontory, as their doubts and apprehensions were thus dramatically relieved. No one thought of Raoul at that happy moment, though to him there was nothing of new interest in the affair, with the exception of the apparent intention of the stranger to

enter the bay. As le Feu-Follet lay in plain view from the offing, he had his doubts, indeed, whether the warlike appearance of that craft was not the true reason of this sudden change in the frigate's course. Still, lying as he did in a port hostile to France, there was a probability that he might yet escape without a very critical or close examination.

“Signor Smees, I felicitate you on this visit of a countryman,” cried Andrea Barrofaldis, a pacific man by nature, and certainly no warrior, and who felt too happy at the prospects of passing a quiet day, to feel distrust at such a moment; “I shall do you honor in my communications with Florence, for the spirit and willingness which you have shown in the wish to aid us on this trying occasion.”

“Signor Vice-governatore, do not trouble yourself to dwell on my poor services,” answered Raoul, scarce caring to conceal the smile that struggled about his handsome mouth; “think rather of those of these gallant signori, who greatly regret that an opportunity for gaining distinction has been lost. But here are signals that must be meant for us — I hope my stupid fellows will be able to answer them in my absence.”

It was fortunate for le Feu-Follet, perhaps, that her commander was not on board, when the stranger, the Proserpine, the very ship that Ithuel so well knew, made her number. The mystification that was to follow was in much better hands while conducted by the New

Hampshire man than it could possibly be in his own, Ithuel answered promptly, though what, he did not know himself; but he took good care that the flags he showed should become so entangled as not to be read by those in the frigate, while they had every appearance of being hoisted fearlessly and in good faith.

Chapter VI

“Are all prepared?”

*They are — nay more — embarked; the latest
boat*

*Waits but my chief — My sword and my
capote.”*

The Corsair

What success attended the artifice of Ithuel it was impossible to tell, so far as the frigate was concerned; though the appearance of mutual intelligence between the two vessels had a very favorable tendency toward removing suspicion from the lugger among those on shore. It seemed so utterly improbable that a French corsair could answer the signals of an English frigate that even Vito Viti felt compelled to acknowledge to the vice-governatore in a whisper that, so far, the circumstance was much in favor of the lugger's loyalty. Then the calm exterior of Raoul counted for something, more especially as he remained apparently an

unconcerned observer of the rapid approach of the ship.

“We shall not have occasion to use your gallant offer, Signor Smees,” said Andrea kindly, as he was about to retire into the house with one or two of his counsellors; “but we thank you none the less. It is a happiness to be honored with the visit of two cruisers of your great nation on the same day, and I hope you will so far favor me as to accompany your brother commander, when he shall do me the honor to pay the customary visit, since it would seem to be his serious intention to pay Porto Ferrajo the compliment of a call. Can you not guess at the name of the frigate?”

“Now I see she is a countryman, I think I can, Signore,” answered Raoul carelessly; “I take her to be la Proserpine, a French-built ship, a circumstance that first deceived me as to her character.”

“And the noble cavaliere, her commander — you doubtless know his name and rank?”

“Oh! perfectly; he is the son of an old admiral, under whom I was educated, though we happen ourselves never to have met. Sir Brown is the name and title of the gentleman.”

“Ah! that is a truly English rank, and name, too, as one might say.

Often have I met that honorable appellation in Shakespeare, and other of your eminent authors, Miltoni has a Sir Brown, if I am not mistaken, Signore?”

“Several of them, Signor Vice-governatore,” answered Raoul, without a moment's hesitation or the smallest remorse; though he had no idea whatever who Milton was; “Milton, Shakespeare, Cicero, and all our great writers, often mention Signori of this family.”

“Cicero!” repeated Andrea, in astonishment — “he was a Roman, and an ancient, Capitano, and died before Inghilterra was known to the civilized world.”

Raoul perceived that he had reached too far, though he was not in absolute danger of losing his balance. Smiling, as in consideration of the other's provincial view of things, he rejoined, with an *aplomb* that would have done credit to a politician, in an explanatory and half-apologetic tone.

“Quite true, Signor Vice-governatore, as respects him you mention,” he said; “but not true as respects Sir Cicero, my illustrious compatriot.

Let me see — I do not think it is yet a century since our Cicero died. He was born in Devonshire” — this was the county in which Raoul had been imprisoned — “and must have died in Dublin. Si — now I remember, it *was* in Dublin, that this virtuous and distinguished author yielded up his breath.”

To all this Andrea had nothing to say, for, half a century since, so great was the ignorance of civilized nations as related to such things, that one might have engrafted a Homer on the literature of England, in particular, without much risk of having the imposition

detected. Signor Barrofaldis was not pleased to find that the barbarians were seizing on the Italian names, it is true; but he was fain to set the circumstance down to those very traces of barbarism which were the unavoidable fruits of their origin. As for supposing it possible that one who spoke with the ease and innocence of Raoul was inventing as he went along, it was an idea he was himself much too unpractised to entertain; and the very first thing he did on entering the palace was to make a memorandum which might lead him, at a leisure moment, to inquire into the nature of the writings and the general merits of Sir Cicero, the illustrious namesake of him of Rome. As soon as this little digression terminated he entered the palace, after again expressing the hope that "Sir Smees" would not fail to accompany "Sir Brown," in the visit which the functionary fully expected to receive from the latter, in the course of the next hour of two. The company now began to disperse, and Raoul was soon left to his own meditations, which just at that moment were anything but agreeable.

The town of Porto Ferrajo is so shut in from the sea by the rock against which it is built, its fortifications, and the construction of its own little port, as to render the approach of a vessel invisible to its inhabitants, unless they choose to ascend to the heights and the narrow promenade already mentioned. This circumstance had drawn a large crowd upon the hill

again, among which Raoul Yvard now threaded his way, wearing his sea cap and his assumed naval uniform in a smart, affected manner, for he was fully sensible of all the advantages he possessed on the score of personal appearance. His unsettled eye, however, wandered from one pretty face to another in quest of Ghita, who alone was the object of his search and the true cause of the awkward predicament into which he had brought not only himself, but le Feu-Follet. In this manner, now thinking of her he sought, and then reverting to his situation in an enemy's port, he walked along the whole line of the cliff, scarce knowing whether to return or to seek his boat by doubling on the town, when he heard his own name pronounced in a sweet voice which went directly to his heart. Turning on his heel, Ghita was within a few feet of him.

“Salute me distantly and as a stranger,” said the girl, in almost breathless haste, “and point to the different streets, as if inquiring your way through the town. This is the place where we met last evening; but, remember, it is no longer dark.”

As Raoul complied with her desire any distant spectator might well have fancied the meeting accidental, though he poured forth a flood of expressions of love and admiration.

“Enough, Raoul,” said the girl, blushing and dropping her eyes, though no displeasure was visible on her serene and placid face, “another time I might

indulge you. How much worse is your situation now than it was last night! Then you had only the port to fear; now you have both the people of the port and this strange ship — an Inglese, as they tell me?”

“No doubt — la Proserpine, Etooell says, and he knows; you remember Etooell, dearest Ghita, the American who was with me at the tower — well, he has served in this very ship, and knows her to be la Proserpine, of forty-four.” Raoul paused a moment; then he added, laughing in a way to surprise his companion — “Qui — la Proserpine, le Capitaine Sir Brown!”

“What you can find to amuse you in all this, Raoul, is more than I can discover. Sir Brown, or sir anybody else, will send you again to those evil English prison-ships, of which you have so often told me; and there is surely nothing pleasant in *that* idea.”

“Bah! my sweet Ghita, Sir Brown, or Sir White, or Sir Black has not yet got me. I am not a child, to tumble into the fire because the leading-strings are off; and le Feu-Follet shines or goes out, exactly as it suits her purposes. The frigate, ten to one, will just run close in and take a near look, and then square away and go to Livorno, where there is much more to amuse her officers, than here in Porto Ferrajo.

This Sir Brown has his Ghita, as well as Raoul Yvard.”

“No, not a Ghita, I fear, Raoul,” answered the

girl, smiling in spite of herself, while her color almost insensibly deepened — “Livorno has few ignorant country girls, like me, who have been educated in a lone watch-tower on the coast.”

“Ghita,” answered Raoul, with feeling, “that poor lone watch-tower of thine might well be envied by many a noble dame at Roma and at Napoli; it has left thee innocent and pure — a gem that gay capitals seldom contain; or, if found there, not in its native beauty, which they sully by use.”

“What know'st thou, Raoul, of Roma and Napoli, and of noble dames and rich gems?” asked the girl, smiling, the tenderness which had filled her heart at that moment betraying itself in her eyes.

“What do I know of such things, truly! why, I have been at both places, and have seen what I describe. I went to Roma on purpose to see the Holy Father, in order to make certain whether our French opinions of his character and infallibility were true or not, before I set up in religion for myself.”

“And thou *didst* find him holy and venerable, Raoul,” interposed the girl, with earnestness and energy, for this was the great point of separation between them — “I *know* thou found'st him thus, and worthy to be the head of an ancient and true church. My eyes never beheld him; but this do I *know* to be true.”

Raoul was aware that the laxity of his religious opinions, opinions that he may be said to have inherited

from his country, as it then existed morally, alone prevented Ghita from casting aside all other ties, and following his fortunes in weal and in woe. Still he was too frank and generous to deceive, while he had ever been too considerate to strive to unsettle her confiding and consoling faith. Her infirmity even, for so he deemed her notions to be, had a charm in his eyes; few men, however loose or sceptical in their own opinions on such matters, finding any pleasure in the contemplation of a female infidel; and he had never looked more fondly into her anxious but lovely face than he did at this very instant, making his reply with a truth that bordered on magnanimity.

“*Thou art my religion, Ghita!*” he said; “in thee I worship purity and holiness and...”

“Nay — nay, Raoul, *do not* — refrain — if thou really lov'st me, utter not this frightful blasphemy; tell me, rather, if thou didst not find the holy father as I describe him?”

“I found him a peaceful, venerable, and, I firmly believe, a *good* old man, Ghita; but *only* a man. No infallibility could I see about him; but a set of roguish cardinals and other plotters of mischief, who were much better calculated to set Christians by the ears than to lead them to Heaven, surrounded his chair.”

“Say no more, Raoul — I will listen to no more of this. Thou knowest not these sainted men, and thy tongue is thine own enemy, without — hark! what

means that?"

"It is a gun from the frigate, and must be looked to; say, when and where do we meet again?"

"I know not, now. We have been too long, much too long, together as it is; and must separate. Trust to me to provide the means of another meeting; at all events, *we shall shortly be in our tower again.*"

Ghita glided away as she ceased speaking and soon disappeared in the town. As for Raoul, he was at a loss for a moment whether to follow or not; then he hastened to the terrace in front of the government-house again, in order to ascertain the meaning of the gun. The report had drawn others to the same place, and on reaching it the young man found himself in another crowd.

By this time the Proserpine, for Ithuel was right as to the name of the stranger, had got within a league of the entrance of the bay and had gone about, stretching over to its eastern shore, apparently with the intention to fetch fairly into it on the next tack. The smoke of her gun was sailing off to leeward in a little cloud, and signals were again flying at her main-royal-mast-head. All this was very intelligible to Raoul, it being evident at a glance that the frigate had reached in nearer both to look at the warlike lugger that she saw in the bay, and to communicate more clearly with her by signals. Ithuel's expedient had not sufficed; the vigilant Captain Cuffe, alias Sir Brown, who

commanded the Proserpine, not being a man likely to be mystified by so stale a trick. Raoul scarcely breathed as he watched the lugger in anticipation of her course.

Ithuel certainly seemed in no hurry to commit himself, for the signal had now been flying on board the frigate several minutes, and yet no symptoms of any preparation for an answer could be discovered. At length the halyards moved, and then three fair, handsome flags rose to the end of le Feu-Follet's jigger yard, a spar that was always kept aloft in moderate weather. What the signal meant Raoul did not know, for though he was provided with signals by means of which to communicate with the vessels of war of his own nation, the Directory had not been able to supply him with those necessary to communicate with the enemy. Ithuel's ingenuity, however, had supplied the deficiency. While serving on board the Proserpine, the very ship that was now menacing the lugger, he had seen a meeting between her and a privateer English lugger, one of the two or three of that rig which sailed out of England, and his observant eye had noted the flags she had shown on the occasion. Now, as privateersmen are not expected to be expert or even very accurate in the use of signals, he had ventured to show these very numbers, let it prove for better or worse. Had he been on the quarter-deck of the frigate, he would have ascertained, through the benedictions bestowed by Captain Cuffe, that his *ruse* had so far

succeeded as to cause that officer to attribute his unintelligible answer to ignorance, rather than to design.

Nevertheless, the frigate did not seem disposed to alter her course; for, either influenced by a desire to anchor, or by a determination to take a still closer look at the lugger, she stood on, nearing the eastern side of the bay, at the rate of some six miles to the hour.

Raoul Yvard now thought it time to look to the safety of le Feu-Follet in person. Previously to landing he had given instructions as to what was to be done in the event of the frigate's coming close in; but matters now seemed so very serious that he hurried down the hill, overtaking Vito Viti in his way, who was repairing to the harbor to give instructions to certain boatmen concerning the manner in which the quarantine laws were to be regarded, in an intercourse with a British frigate.

“You ought to be infinitely happy at the prospect of meeting an honorable countryman in this Sir Brown,” observed the short-winded podesta, who usually put himself out of breath both in ascending and descending the steep street, “for he really seems determined to anchor in our bay, Signor Smees.”

“To tell you the truth, Signor Podesta, I wish I was half as well persuaded that it *is* Sir Brown and la Proserpine as I was an hour ago.

I see symptoms of its being a republican, after all,

and must have a care for ze Ving-and-Ving.”

“The devil carry away all republicans, is my humble prayer, Signor Capitano; but I can hardly believe that so graceful and gracious-looking a frigate can possibly belong to such wretches.”

“Ah! Signore, if that were all, I fear we should have to yield the palm to the French,” answered Raoul, laughing; “for the best-looking craft in His Majesty's service are republican prizes. Even should this frigate turn out to be the Proserpine herself, she can claim no better origin.

But I think the vice-governatore has not done well in deserting the batteries, since this stranger does not answer our signals as she should. The last communication has proved quite unintelligible to him.”

Raoul was nearer to the truth than he imagined perhaps, for certainly Ithuel's numbers had made nonsense, according to the signal book of the Proserpine; but his confident manner had an effect on Vito Viti, who was duped by his seeming earnestness, as well as by a circumstance which, rightly considered, told as much against as it did in favor of his companion.

“And what is to be done, Signore?” demanded the podesta, stopping short in the street.

“We must do as well as we can, under the circumstances. My duty is to look out for ze Ving-and-Ving, and yours to look out for the town.

Should the stranger actually enter the bay and

bring his broadside to bear on this steep hill, there is not a chamber window that will not open on the muzzles of his guns. You will grant me permission to haul into the inner harbor, where we shall be sheltered by the buildings from his shot, and then perhaps it will be well enough to send my people into the nearest battery. I look for bloodshed and confusion ere long.”

All this was said with so much apparent sincerity that it added to the podesta's mystification. Calling a neighbor to him, he sent the latter up the hill with a message to Andrea Barrofaldis, and then he hurried down toward the port, it being much easier for him, just at that moment, to descend than to ascend. Raoul kept at his side, and together they reached the water's edge.

The podesta was greatly addicted to giving utterance to any predominant opinion of the moment, being one of those persons who *feel* quite as much as they *think*. On the present occasion he did not spare the frigate, for, having caught at the bait that his companion had so artfully thrown out to him, he was loud in the expression of his distrust. All the signalling and showing of colors he now believed to be a republican trick; and precisely in proportion as he became resentful of the supposed fraud of the ship, was he disposed to confide blindly in the honesty of the lugger. This was a change of sentiment in the magistrate; and, as in the case of all sudden but late conversions, he was in a humor to compensate for his

tardiness by the excess of his zeal. In consequence of this disposition and the character and loquacity of the man, all aided by a few timely suggestions on the part of Raoul, in five minutes it came to be generally understood that the frigate was greatly to be distrusted, while the lugger rose in public favor exactly in the degree in which the other fell. This interposition of Vito Viti's was exceedingly apropos, so far as le Feu-Follet and her people were concerned, inasmuch as the examination of and intercourse with the boat's crew had rather left the impression of their want of nationality in a legal sense, than otherwise. In a word, had not the podesta so loudly and so actively proclaimed the contrary, Tommaso and his fellows were about to report their convictions that these men were all bona fide wolves in sheep's clothing — alias Frenchmen.

“No, no — amici miei,” said Vito Viti, bustling about on the narrow little quay, “all is not gold that glitters, of a certainty; and this frigate is probably no ally, but an enemy. A very different matter is it with ze Ving-y-Ving and Il Signor Smees — we may be said to know *him* — have seen his papers, and the vice-governatore and myself have examined him, as it might be, on the history and laws of his island, for England is an island, neighbors, as well as Elba; another reason for respect and amity — but we have gone over much of the literature and history of Inghilterra together and find everything satisfactory and

right; therefore are we bound to show the lugger protection and love.”

“Most true, Signor Podesta,” answered Raoul from his boat; “and such being the case, I hasten to haul my vessel into the mouth of your basin, which I will defend against boats or any attempt of these rascally republicans to land.”

Waving his hand, the young sailor pulled quickly out of the crowded little port, followed by a hundred vivas. Raoul now saw that his orders had not been neglected. A small line had been run out from the lugger and fastened to a ring in the inner end of the eastern side of the narrow haven, apparently with the intention of hauling the vessel into the harbor itself. He also perceived that the light anchor, or large kedge, by which *le Feu-Follet* rode, was under foot, as seamen term it; or that the cable was nearly “up and down.” With a wave of the hand he communicated a new order, and then he saw that the men were raising the kedge from the bottom. By the time his foot touched the deck, indeed, the anchor was up and stowed, and nothing held the vessel but the line that had been run to the quay. Fifty pairs of hands were applied to this line, and the lugger advanced rapidly toward her place of shelter. But an artifice was practised to prevent her heading into the harbor's mouth, the line having been brought inboard abaft her larboard cathead, a circumstance which necessarily gave her a sheer in the contrary

direction, or to the eastward of the entrance. When the reader remembers that the scale on which the port had been constructed was small, the entrance scarce exceeding a hundred feet in width, he will better understand the situation of things. Seemingly to aid the movement, too, the jigger was set, and the wind being south, or directly aft, the lugger's motion was soon light and rapid. As the vessel drew nearer to the entrance, her people made a run with the line and gave her a movement of some three or four knots to the hour, actually threatening to dash her bows against the pier-head. But Raoul Yvard contemplated no such blunder. At the proper moment the line was cut, the helm was put a-port, the lugger's head sheered to starboard, and just as Vito Viti, who witnessed all without comprehending more than half that passed, was shouting his vivas and animating all near him with his cries, the lugger glided past the end of the harbor, on its outside, however, instead of entering it. So completely was every one taken by surprise by this evolution that the first impression was of some mistake, accident, or blunder of the helmsman, and cries of regret followed, lest the frigate might have it in her power to profit by the mishap. The flapping of canvas, notwithstanding, showed that no time was lost, and presently le Feu-Follet shot by an opening between the warehouses, under all sail. At this critical instant the frigate, which saw what passed, but which had been deceived like all

the rest, and supposed the lugger was hauling into the haven, tacked and came round with her head to the westward. But intending to fetch well into the bay, she had stretched so far over toward the eastern shore as, by this time, to be quite two miles distant; and as the lugger rounded the promontory close under its rocks, to avoid the shot of the batteries above, she left, in less than five minutes, her enemy that space directly astern. Nor was this all. It would have been dangerous to fire as well as useless, on account of the range, since the lugger lay nearly in a line between her enemy's chase guns and the residence of the vice-governatore. It only remained, therefore, for the frigate to commence what is proverbially "a long chase," viz. "a stern chase."

All that has just been related may have occupied ten minutes; but the news reached Andrea Barrofoli and his counsellors soon enough to allow them to appear on the promontory in time to see the *Ving-y-Ving* pass close under the cliffs beneath them, still keeping her English colors flying. Raoul was visible, trumpet in hand; but as the wind was light, his powerful voice sufficed to tell his story.

"Signori," he shouted, "I will lead the rascally republican away from your port in chase; *that* will be the most effectual mode of doing you a service."

These words were heard and understood, and a murmur of applause followed from some, while others thought the whole affair mysterious and questionable.