

THE WORKS

OF

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# IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS.

## SANDT AND KOTZEBUE.

*Sandt.* Generally men of letters in our days, contrary to the practice of antiquity, are little fond of admitting the young and unlearned into their studies or their society.

*Kotzebue.* They should rather those than others. The young *must* cease to be young, and the unlearned *may* cease to be unlearned. According to the letters you bring with you, sir, there is only youth against you. In the seclusion of a college life, you appear to have studied with much assiduity and advantage, and to have pursued no other courses than the paths of wisdom.

*Sandt.* Do you approve of the pursuit?

*Kotzebue.* Who does not?

*Sandt.* None, if you will consent that they direct the chase, bag the game, inebriate some of the sportsmen, and leave the rest behind in the slough. May I ask you another question?

*Kotzebue.* Certainly.

*Sandt.* Where lie the paths of wisdom? I did not expect, my dear sir, to throw you back upon your chair. I hope it was no rudeness to seek information from you?

*Kotzebue.* The paths of wisdom, young man, are those which lead us to truth and happiness.

*Sandt.* If they lead us away from fortune, from employments, from civil and political utility; if they cast us where the powerful persecute, where the rich trample us down, and where the poorer (at seeing it) despise us, rejecting our counsel and spurning our consolation; what valuable truth do they enable us to discover, or what rational happiness to expect? To say that wisdom leads to truth, is only to say that wisdom leads to wisdom; for such is truth. Nonsense is better than falsehood; and we come to that.

*Kotzebue.* How?

*Sandt.* No falsehood is more palpable than that wisdom leads to happiness; I mean in this world; in another we may well indeed believe that the words are constructed of very different materials. But here we are, standing on a barren molehill that crumbles and sinks under our tread; here

we are, and show me from hence, Von Kotzebue, a discoverer who has not suffered for his discovery, whether it be of a world or of a truth, whether a Columbus or a Galileo. Let us come down lower. Show me a man who has detected the injustice of a law, the absurdity of a tenet, the malversation of a minister or the impiety of a priest, and who has not been stoned, or hanged, or burnt, or imprisoned, or exiled, or reduced to poverty. The chain of Prometheus is hanging yet upon his rock, and weaker limbs writhe daily in its rusty links. Who then, unless for others, would be a darer of wisdom? And yet, how full of it is even the inanimate world? We may gather it out of stones and straws. Much lies within the reach of all: little has been collected by the wisest of the wise. O slaves to passion! O minions to power! ye carry your own scourges about you; ye endure their tortures daily; yet ye crouch for more. Ye believe that God beholds you; ye know that he will punish you, even worse than ye punish yourselves; and still ye lick the dust where the Old Serpent went before you.

*Kotzebue.* I am afraid, sir, you have formed to yourself a romantic and strange idea both of happiness and of wisdom.

*Sandt.* I too am afraid it may be so. My idea of happiness is, the power of communicating peace, good-will, gentle affections, ease, comfort, independence, freedom, to all men capable of them.

*Kotzebue.* The idea is, truly, no humble one.

*Sandt.* A higher may descend more securely on a stronger mind. The power of communicating those blessings to the capable, is enough for my aspirations. A stronger mind may exercise its faculties in the divine work of creating the capacity.

*Kotzebue.* Childish! childish! Men have cravings enow already; give them fresh capacities, and they will have fresh appetites. Let us be contented in the sphere wherein it is the will of Providence to place us; and let us render ourselves useful in it to the uttermost of our power,

without idle aspirations after impracticable good.

*Sandt.* O sir! you lead me where I tremble to step; to the haunts of your intellect, to the recesses of your spirit. Alas! alas! how small and how vacant is the central chamber of the lofty pyramid!

*Kotzebue.* Is this to me?

*Sandt.* To you, and many mightier. Reverting to your own words; could not you yourself have remained in the sphere you were placed in?

*Kotzebue.* What sphere? I have written dramas and novels and travels. I have been called to the Imperial Court of Russia.

*Sandt.* You sought celebrity: I blame not that. The thick air of multitudes may be good for some constitutions of mind, as the thinner of solitudes is for others. Some horses will not run without the clapping of hands; others fly out of the course rather than hear it. But let us come to the point. Imperial courts! What do they know of letters? What letters do they countenance, do they tolerate?

*Kotzebue.* Plays.

*Sandt.* Playthings.

*Kotzebue.* Travels.

*Sandt.* On their business. O ye paviours of the dreary road along which their cannon rolls for conquest! my blood throbs at every stroke of your rammers. When will ye lay them by?

*Kotzebue.* We are not such drudges.

*Sandt.* Germans! Germans! Must ye never have a rood on earth ye can call your own, in the vast inheritance of your fathers?

*Kotzebue.* Those who strive and labor, gain it; and many have rich possessions.

*Sandt.* None; not the highest.

*Kotzebue.* Perhaps you may think them insecure; but they are not lost yet, although the rapacity of France does indeed threaten to swallow them up. But her fraudulence is more to be apprehended than her force. The promise of liberty is more formidable than the threat of servitude. The wise know that she never will bring us freedom; the brave know that that she never can bring us thralldom. She herself is alike impatient of both; in the dazzle of arms she mistakes the one for the other, and is never more agitated than in the midst of peace.

*Sandt.* The fools who went to war against her, did the only thing that could unite her; and every sword they drew was a conductor of that lightning which fell upon their heads. But we must now look at our homes. Where there is no strict union, there is no perfect love; and where no perfect love, there is no true helper. Are you satisfied, sir, at the celebrity and the distinctions you have obtained?

*Kotzebue.* My celebrity and distinctions, if I must speak of them, quite satisfy me. Neither in youth nor in advancing age, neither in difficult nor in easy circumstances, have I ventured to proclaim myself the tutor or the guardian of mankind.

*Sandt.* I understand the reproof, and receive it humbly and gratefully. You did well in writing the dramas, and the novels, and the travels; but, pardon my question, who called you to the courts of princes in strange countries?

*Kotzebue.* They themselves.

*Sandt.* They have no more right to take you away from your country, than to eradicate a forest, or to subvert a church in it. You belong to the land that bore you, and were not at liberty (if right and liberty are one, and unless they are, they are good for nothing), you were not at liberty, I repeat it, to enter into the service of an alien.

*Kotzebue.* No magistrate, higher or lower, forbade me. Fine notions of freedom are these!

*Sandt.* A man is always a minor in regard to his fatherland; and the servants of his fatherland are wrong and criminal if they whisper in his ear that he may go away, that he may work in another country, that he may ask to be fed in it, and that he may wait there until orders and tasks are given for his hands to execute. Being a German, you voluntarily placed yourself in a position where you might eventually be coerced to act against Germans.

*Kotzebue.* I would not.

*Sandt.* Perhaps you think so.

*Kotzebue.* Sir, I know my duty.

*Sandt.* We all do; yet duties are transgressed, and daily. Where the will is weak in accepting, it is weaker in resisting. Already have you left the ranks of your fellow-citizens; already have you taken the enlisting-money and marched away.

*Kotzebue.* Phrases! metaphors! and let me tell you, M. Sandt, not very polite ones. You have hitherto seen little of the world, and you speak rather the language of books than of men.

*Sandt.* What! are books written by some creatures of less intellect than ours? I fancied them to convey the language and reasonings of men. I was wrong, and you are right, Von Kotzebue! They are, in general, the productions of such as have neither the constancy of courage nor the continuity of sense, to act up to what they know to be right, or to maintain it, even in words, to the end of their lives. You are aware that I am speaking now of political ethics. This is the worst I can think of the matter; and bad enough is this.

*Kotzebue.* You misunderstand me. Our conduct must fall in with our circumstances. We may be patriotic, yet not puritanical in our patriotism; not harsh, nor intolerant, nor contracted. The philosophical mind should consider the whole world as its habitation, and not look so minutely into it as to see the lines that divide nations and governments; much less should it act the part of a busy shrew, and take pleasure in giving loose to the tongue, at finding things a little out of place.

*Sandt.* We will leave the shrew where we find her; she certainly is better with the comedian than with the philosopher. But this indistinctness in the moral and political line begets indif-

ference. He who does not keep his own country more closely in view than any other, soon mixes land with sea, and sea with air, and loses sight of everything, at last, for which he was placed in contact with his fellow men. Let us unite, if possible, with the nearest: let usages and familiarities bind us: this being once accomplished, let us confederate for security and peace with all the people round, particularly with people of the same language, laws, and religion. We pour out wine to those about us, wishing the same fellowship and conviviality to others: but to enlarge the circle would disturb and deaden its harmony. We irrigate the ground in our gardens: the public road may require the water equally: yet we give it rather to our borders; and first to those that lie against the house! God himself did not fill the world at once with happy creatures: he enlivened one small portion of it with them, and began with single affections, as well as pure and unmixed. We must have an object and an aim, or our strength, if any strength belongs to us, will be useless.

*Kotzebue.* There is much good sense in these remarks: but I am not at all times at leisure and in readiness to receive instruction. I am old enough to have laid down my own plans of life; and I trust I am by no means deficient in the relations I bear to society.

*Sandt.* Lovest thou thy children? Oh! my heart bleeds! But the birds can fly; and the nest requires no warmth from the parent, no cover against the rain and the wind.

*Kotzebue.* This is wildness: this is agony. Your face is laden with large drops; some of them tears, some not. Be more rational and calm, my dear young man! and less enthusiastic.

*Sandt.* They who will not let us be rational, make us enthusiastic by force. Do you love your children? I ask you again. If you do, you must love them more than another man's. Only they who are indifferent to all, profess a parity.

*Kotzebue.* Sir! indeed your conversation very much surprises me.

*Sandt.* I see it does: you stare, and would look proud. Emperors and kings, and all but maniacs, would lose that faculty with me. I could speedily bring them to a just sense of their nothingness, unless their ears were calked and pitched, although I am no Savonarola. He too died sadly!

*Kotzebue.* Amid so much confidence of power, and such an assumption of authority, your voice is gentle, almost plaintive.

*Sandt.* It should be plaintive. Oh, could it but be persuasive!

*Kotzebue.* Why take this deep interest in me? I do not merit nor require it. Surely anyone would think we had been acquainted with each other for many years.

*Sandt.* What! should I have asked you such a question as the last, after long knowing you?

*Kotzebue (aside).* This resembles insanity.

*Sandt.* The insane have quick ears, sir, and sometimes quick apprehensions.

*Kotzebue.* I really beg your pardon.

*Sandt.* I ought not then to have heard you, and beg yours. My madness could release many from a worse; from a madness which hurts them grievously; a madness which has been and will be hereditary: mine, again and again I repeat it, would burst asunder the strong swathes that fasten them to pillar and post. Sir! sir! if I entertained not the remains of respect for you, in your domestic state, I should never have held with you this conversation. Germany is Germany: she ought to have nothing political in common with what is not Germany. Her freedom and security now demand that she celebrate the communion of the faithful. Our country is the only one in all the explored regions on earth that never has been conquered. Arabia and Russia boast it falsely; France falsely; Rome falsely. A fragment of the empire of Darius fell and crushed her: Valentinian was the footstool of Sapor, and Rome was buried in Byzantium. Boys must not learn this, and men will not. Britain, the wealthiest and most powerful of nations, and, after our own, the most literate and humane, received from us colonies and laws. Alas! those laws, which she retains as her fairest heritage, we value not: we surrender them to gangs of robbers, who fortify themselves within walled cities, and enter into leagues against us. When they quarrel, they push us upon one another's sword, and command us to thank God for the victories that enslave us. These are the glories we celebrate; these are the festivals we hold, on the burial-mounds of our ancestors. Blessed are those who lie under them! blessed are also those who remember what they were, and call upon their names in the holiness of love.

*Kotzebue.* Moderate the transport that inflames and consumes you. There is no dishonour in a nation being conquered by a stronger.

*Sandt.* There may be great dishonour in letting it be the stronger; great, for instance, in our disunion.

*Kotzebue.* We have only been conquered by the French in our turn.

*Sandt.* No, sir, no: we have not been, in turn or out. Our puny princes were disarmed by promises and lies: they accepted paper crowns from the very thief who was sweeping into his hat their forks and spoons. A cunning traitor snared incautious ones, plucked them, devoured them, and slept upon their feathers.

*Kotzebue.* I would rather turn back with you to the ancient glories of our country than fix my attention on the sorrowful scenes more near to us. We may be justly proud of our literary men, who unite the suffrages of every capital, to the exclusion of almost all their own.

*Sandt.* Many Germans well deserve this honour, others are mangle-fed and hirelings.

*Kotzebue.* The English and the Greeks are the only nations that rival us in poetry, or in any works of imagination.

*Sandt.* While on this high ground we pretend to a rivalry with England and Greece, can we

reflect without a sinking of the heart on our inferiority in political and civil dignity? Why are we lower than they? Our mothers are like their mothers; our children are like their children; our limbs are as strong, our capacities are as enlarged; our desire of improvement in the arts and sciences is neither less vivid and generous, nor less temperate and well-directed. The Greeks were under disadvantages which never bore in any degree on us; yet they rose through them vigorously and erectly. They were Asiatic in what ought to be the finer part of the affections; their women were veiled and secluded, never visited the captive, never released the slave, never sat by the sick in the hospital, never heard the child's lesson repeated in the school. Ours are more tender, compassionate, and charitable, than poets have feigned of the past, or prophets have announced of the future; and, nursed at their breasts and educated at their feet, blush we not at our degeneracy? The most indifferent stranger feels a pleasure at finding, in the worst-written history of Spain, her various kingdoms ultimately mingled, although the character of the governors, and perhaps of the governed, is congenial to few. What delight then must overflow on Europe, from seeing the mother of her noblest nation rear again her venerable head, and bless all her children for the first time united!

*Kotzebue.* I am bound to oppose such a project.

*Sandt.* Say not so: in God's name, say not so.

*Kotzebue.* In such confederacy I see nothing but conspiracy and rebellion, and I am bound, I tell you again, sir, to defeat it, if possible.

*Sandt.* Bound! I must then release you.

*Kotzebue.* How should you, young gentleman, release me?

*Sandt.* May no pain follow the cutting of the knot. But think again: think better: spare me!

*Kotzebue.* I will not betray you.

*Sandt.* That would serve nobody: yet, if in your opinion betraying me could benefit you or your family, deem it no harm; so much greater has been done by you in abandoning the cause of Germany. Here is your paper; here is your ink.

*Kotzebue.* Do you imagine me an informer?

*Sandt.* From maxims and conduct such as yours, spring up the brood, the necessity, and the occupation of them. There would be none, if good men thought it a part of goodness to be as active and vigilant as the bad. I must go, sir! Return to yourself in time! How it pains me to think of losing you! Be my friend!

*Kotzebue.* I would be.

*Sandt.* Be a German!

*Kotzebue.* I am.

*Sandt.* (*having gone out*). Perjurer and profaner! Yet his heart is kindly. I must grieve for him! Away with tenderness! I disrobe him of the privilege to pity me or to praise me, as he would have done had I lived of old. Better men shall do more. God calls them: me too he calls: I will enter the door again. May the greater sacrifice bring the people together, and hold them evermore in peace and concord. The lesser victim follows willingly. (*Enters again.*)

Turn! die! (*strikes.*)

Alas! alas! no man ever fell alone. How many innocent always perish with one guilty! and writhe longer!

Unhappy children! I shall weep for you elsewhere. Some days are left me. In a very few the whole of this little world will lie between us. I have sanctified in you the memory of your father. Genius but reveals dishonour, commiseration covers it.

## THE CARDINAL-LEGATE ALBANI AND PICTURE-DEALERS.

MARCHESE SCAMPA, CONTE BIANCHERIA, SIGNOR CORAZZA, CARDINAL-LEGATE ALBANI.

*Legate.* Most illustrious Signor Marchese! I grieve deeply to have incommoded you. Most illustrious Signor Conte Cesare! I am sorry to have caused you any disturbance. Most esteemed, prized, and ornamented Signor Corazza! I feel somewhat of uneasiness at requiring your attendance.

*Scampa.* Your Eminence may dispose of me purely at Her pleasure.

*Biancheria.* I am your Eminence's most obsequious, most devoted, and most humble servant.

*Corazza.* I kiss the sacred hem of her purple, humbly inclining myself.

*Legate.* On my faith, Signors! a pretty piece of pastry you have been making! A fine embroilment! on my body!

*Scampa.* Eminence! all men have had their embroilments.

*Biancheria.* Pieces of pastry all men have made, Eminence!

*Legate.* Signors! I fear these will stick upon your fingers some time yet, although I pray God you may, with his help, wash yourselves clean.

*Scampa.* We are in his hands.

*Biancheria.* . . . And your Eminence's.

*Scampa.* I meant Hers all the while.

*Corazza.* Surely; securely! I am in Hers, the whole of me.

*Legate.* 'Tis well. Now in the name of Dominio, most gentle sirs, how could you play these tricks? What doings are these! I accuse you of nothing: I am convinced you are innocent, most innocent, more than most innocent. And yet, diavole! they will have it otherwise.

*Scampa.* God and your Eminence with us, our uprightness is not to be disputed.

*Biancheria.* We know what we know: we are what we are: we can tell them that. Let them mind it. What says Signor Marchese? Do I speak well?

*Scampa.* True; most true; Signor Conte! always under the correction of his Eminence.

*Legate.* Forasmuch as I have understanding in me, there are not two honest gentlemen in Bologna. Very old houses! vastly rich heretofore: rich still. Honey does not run from the pot without leaving some against the sides; ay, Signor Marchese!

*(Aside.)* It sticks hard; but I have a spoon that will scrape it.

You appear to be incommoded by a cough, Signor Marchese! Will my snuff-box relieve it?

*Scampa.* Infinite thanks, Eminence! immortal condescension! It would cure Cairo: it would have stopt the seven plagues of Egypt.

*Legate.* Signor Conte! we are coming to the business. Pardon my habits of despatch! Only be explicit; be clear: I must do my duty: I may be lenient. Much is left to my judgment and discretion; and you noble personages are the very last in the world who would wish to lead it astray, or make it harsh.

An English gentleman, with more earnestness than . . .

*All at once.* As usual with the nation.

*Legate.* . . . has applied to me personally.

*Scampa.* Personally! to a Porporato!

*Biancheria.* Personally! to a Cardinal-Legate!

*Corazza.* Oh! Personally! to an Eminence of Holy Church! with a maggiorduomo, four cooks, six chaplains, and (Sant Antonio) the six finest mules in all the Patrimony! Cospetto! the heretic!

*Legate.* So it is: by letter to me, I mean.

*All.* Letter! more and more presumptuous!

*Scampa.* No preliminary!

*Biancheria.* Secretary, even secretary, had been too high. Maestro di casa, maestro di scuderia, cameriere, page, porter, or any other dignitary of the household, might have received it in the first instance, under the form of supplication. But letter! letter! letter! my head turns round with it.

*Scampa.* Carbonaro!

*Corazza.* Giovane Italia! disguised as an Englishman.

*Scampa.* Eminence! we are gallant men, men of honour, men of garb, and Her most obsequious. Some regards\* are due to persons of distinction. Why should he trouble your Eminence with his concerns? petty matters! trifles! trivialities! Law indeed to an Englishman is like his native air: he flies to it as he flies to his ship; he loses his appetite if he misses it: and he never thinks he has enough of it until it has fairly stript him and begins to lie heavy on his stomach. It is hista, his plum-pudding, his punch, his nightcap.

*Legate.* Happy! if he can throw it off so easily when he wakens. Law in England ought to be in capital condition, if exercise can accomplish it.

*Biancheria.* There are common laws and common lawyers in Bologna, blessed be his Holiness! And nothing new about them, nothing wild and extravagant, nothing visionary. They are ancient and awful as our Garisenda, and, like Garisenda, lean toward the inhabitants.

*Scampa.* Talk of patriotism! this I call patriotism. We can buy injustice of any tribunal in Italy, and at a reasonable price: it would be hard indeed if we can not buy justice for a little more, in proportion to the rarity, and if we are forced to go beyond our native country for this greatest benefit of a paternal government. I should be sorry to prefer any on earth to my own Bologna, blest as it is with the rule and guidance of the Prince of the Apostles, but more immediately under his delegate the Holiness of our Lord, Leo the Twelfth, now sitting and reigning, and worthily and plenary represented by your Eminence. But, Eminence! (pardon me if I sob aloud and beat my breast at saying it) there are countries, yes, there are countries in our Italy, where insolent Englishmen are thrown utterly into the shade, their audacity rising beyond endurance. One of them, believe me, had the temerity to take the wall of Don Neri Corsini, a Roman prince, a prime minister. Nobly and worthily did his Highness treat this sacrilege.

*Legate.* I am uninterested in the event: excuse my interruption.

*Scampa.* Condescend to listen. The proud Englishman had bought a villa and a couple of farms under Fiesole; rooting up olives, cutting down vines, the madman! A Frenchman was his neighbour. He had a right to the waste water of the proud Englishman's fountain. The proud Englishman, in his spite and malignity, not only shaved every morning, and ordered all his men servants, to the number of five, to shave also just as frequently, but he washed his hands and face several times in the day, and especially at that season when water is most wanted. In like manner did all his children, four of them; and all four bathed: all four, Eminence! all four! every day! the malignant father setting them the example.

*Legate.* Heretics and Turks are much addicted to bathing. It might be superstition, or it might be an idea of cleanliness. The English are malicious one against another, almost universally, but toward foreigners there appears to be more contemptuousness than malice.

*Scampa.* Your Eminence has the eye upon the key-hole, and sees the whole chamber. Pride and malice, the right side and the left side of the Devil, constitute the Englishman. O the persecutor! This, the very worst of them all, excepting the wretch who would, in the presence of your Eminence, deflower the fair fame of innocent men like me, this one committed the injury through wanton extravagance, shaving, washing, bathing, beside watering two hundred orange, lemon, citron trees, and then laurels and myrtles and rhododendrons and magnolias, and fantas-

tical outlandish flowers innumerable. No wonder there was little waste water. The Frenchman cited him before the tribunals. At first they favored the Englishman, as was intended. The Frenchman, as Frenchmen always do, shifted his ground a little, and won the second cause. In the third the Englishman had his turn, to prove the fairness of processes in Tuscany. Then a couple of the judges were persuaded to see their error, and voted on the contrary side. Presently more had their eyes opened for them. In vain did the proud Englishman hold in contempt the variations of the opponent and the judges: in vain, over and over, did he offer tenfold the value of the water, supposing the water was the thing wanted, which the Frenchman had declared he never cared about, having plenty on each side of his house. No, this would never serve the purpose of those who patted him on the back. His suit assumed a somewhat different form, term after term, otherwise it could not easily have been so protracted. Nothing was now left for the proud Englishman but appeal to the last resort; but, just before the defection of the two favorable judges was decided on and arranged, the Court of Appeal in the last resort was purposely suppressed. Such was the fate of the proud Englishman and his waste water.

*Legate.* I hope, Signor Marchese, that the matter ends here; for you must remember that I have other business in hand.

*Scampa.* Patience, Eminence, patience! It does not end here, nor could it reasonably. This arrogant infuriated man, this devastator of vines and olives, this substituter of grass and moss for cabbages and onions, was sentenced to construct with efficient masonry a competent reservoir in front and within ten paces of his hall-door. Such a sentence, if such a sentence had been possible against a noble Tuscan, would have broken the heart of Conte Gherardesca, the late proprietor, although he resided there but seldom, and enjoyed but few perhaps of the cabbages and onions so unworthily supplanted. Just punishment for this overbearing pertinacious Englishman! reminding him for ever of what is due to a Roman prince and prime minister; such a diplomatist that he had the honour of serving both his native sovereign the Granduke Ferdinand and the Emperor Napoleon at the same time, enjoying the countenance of each, unsuspected by the other. And a shining countenance it was. Faith of Bacchus! it was an omelet well fried on each side, and enough of it to fatten a Carthusian.

*Legate.* To what does this tend, Signor Marchese?

*Scampa.* It tends, Eminence, to prove satisfactorily the small regard entertained for Englishmen in other quarters of our Italy: it tends to prove, above all things, their contempt of dignities, and how easily, by the grace of your Eminence, they may be disappointed in their extravagant recourse to litigation. The litigant was condemned to a series of lawsuits for nine years,

with more variations than ever were composed by Rossini. It was decided from the beginning that some should be won and some lost, and that at last all the costs should be cast upon this proud Englishman. The whole property of his adversary amounts not to the sum expended in the maintenance of what he presumed to call his rights: a favorite word, Eminence, with those islanders. He was a true Englishman, unbending to authority, repulsive to rank, and bearing an abominable dash of charcoal on his shoulders, black, black as Satanasso. He would not have gained his lawsuit even if he had consented to pay down the fair market-price, which his proud stomach would never do. But *we* are ready, Eminence, *we* are ready; for no men alive observe more strictly the usages of their fathers. We hate revolutionary notions, we hate false doctrines: honour and religion, and love of our neighbour, is our motto.

*Legate.* I wish so great a hardship had befallen no better man than the person you describe: but, remember, I am not sitting here to examine the merits of his case. We have our own laws.

*Scampa.* I call that a happy country whose law is as movable as Easter, and as manageable and pleasant as the Carnival. If it is not so in the states of the Church, where upon earth ought it to be? I pay to His Holiness fifteen Roman crowns yearly, for dispensation to eat flesh in Lent.\*

*Legate.* You seem strong and healthy, most illustrious!

*Scampa.* Under the blessing of heaven, by paying the fifteen crowns I continue so. If all would do the same their sins would fall off them as the scales fall from a leper. Ling may help to lift a man out of Purgatory; but Roman crowns, legitimate and unslit, can alone pave the way to Paradise. I am no niggard, no Englishman: right well do I know, and more especially do I acknowledge, that His Holiness is not only an apostle, but a prince, and that His dignity is to be duly supported by all true Christians. I glory in being one; and God forbid I should ever be so straitened in circumstances for want of protection, as to cry out for an abatement. In Tuscany the judges will hear reason, when the wand of the apparitor is tipped with gold and the litigant speaks in French. It is better he should speak it first to Don Neri, who understands it perfectly.

*Legate.* I do entreat you, Signor Marchese, to come at once to the point.

*Scampa.* I would gladly, triumphantly, ecstatically, shed the last drop of my blood for His Holiness; but, oh! what is all a man's blood worth when it is robbed of its vital heat, of its menestra, its fry, and its roast? I am a good subject, a good Catholic, true, faithful, vigilant; I am a gallant man, a brave man; but I have my fears.

\* A family, however healthy, may obtain it at that price, and some very pious ones do.

There are carbonari everywhere: there is carbon under the chair of His Holiness. A hard blow, an angry breath, a humiliating indignity, a cruel unpaternal . . . what am I saying? what am I thinking of? . . . may . . . mercy upon us! may . . . O holy Virgin avert it! may, alas! set his footstool in such a blaze, ay, footstool and canopy, purple and triple crown, as all the tears of your Eminence, and of the devoted servant at your feet, would be insufficient to extinguish.

*Legate.* What would you have, gentlemen?

*Biancheria.* Eminence! we do not ask more for ourselves, who are Italians, than was graciously conceded to a foreigner.

*Legate.* The French have it always in their power to do a great deal of mischief; and such is their natural disposition. The tiger in his cage is just as restless as in his wilderness, and his keeper must now and then humour him.

*Biancheria.* We ask to be protected from no Frenchman upon earth, which would be beyond any reasonable hope, but only from our accursed Englishman, who, by his pertinacity and obduracy, has proved himself to be made of the same paste as the other, and drawn out of the same oven. Like the other, he would rather put in jeopardy three thousand crowns than distribute a few hundreds in charity among the faithful domestics of your Eminence, and their virtuous wives and amiable children. What hearts, ahime! what hearts these English carry with them about Italy! In fact, Eminence, an Englishman closes his fist on these occasions as firmly as if he were boxing. The main difference is, that on these if he is beaten he has the folly to complain, whereas on the other he would be silent if you had beaten him half into a mummy. Knock out an eye, and he gives you his hand; mistake a picture in selling it to him, and he delivers you over to the executioner.

*Scampa.* If not quite that, he makes you give back the money; and thus, blemishing your honour, he leaves an incurable wound in the very centre of the heart.

*Legate.* Gently, good Signor Marchese! such hard thumps on the exterior may produce an effect no less fatal. I should apprehend ossification and aneurism. We must bear with human infirmity. All nations have their customs, all individuals their privileges and foibles. As the English fight best upon the ocean, it is probable and presumable that they see best with their heads under water; which opinion some of the pictures bought by them on dry land, at enormous prices, for their national gallery, seem to confirm. Certainly they little know our usages: but they know incomparably more about theoretical law than about its practical administration. Perhaps, as you suggest, they are somewhat too indifferent to the deferential delicacy of its domestic courtesies. Knowing the weaknesses to which, as children of Adam, we all are liable, I would not animadvert on them severely, nor prejudice them. True it is, the Frenchman is more soci-

able at all times, and more amiable at most: and if there are seasons when he must inevitably swear and fight, we may charitably believe that he follows the law of his nature in so doing; that God made him so; and we must take him as we find him. And we shall the more readily do this, if we remark his perfect ease and indifference what he swears to, and what he fights for.

*Biancheria.* For my part, I have no complaint to make against him: no Frenchman ever carried off any of my pictures.

*Legate.* Signor Conte! keep your own secret. Do not imply, as your speech would do, that you never had any worth carrying off.

*Corazza.* Our Italy would rise up in arms against the despoiler and deflowerer. Your Eminence would issue a rescript, an ordinance: we are safe. Ah, Signor Conte! not without an inspiration did you remind his Eminence of our Garisenda, and her maternal leaning toward us. Signor Conte and Signor Marchese would melt Saint Peter and persuade Saint Thomas, when they were stubbornest. I am ready to weep.

*Legate.* At what, Signor Corazza?

*Corazza.* Ca! at what? it lies beyond expression.

*Legate.* Well, in this article of weeping we perhaps may help you.

*Corazza (aside).* Per Bacco! it grows serious!

*Legate.* The foreigner threatens . . .

*All.* The assassin!

*Legate.* . . . to send the Process before the Ruota Criminale at Rome, first submitting it to the Pontifical Chancery.

*Scampa.* Chancery! we are fresh eggs; we are live oysters; we are swallowed up; the Day of Judgment can not piece us again! If anything reasonable had been offered, then indeed who knows? Eminence! only hear the Englishman's proposals! That the pictures should be sent back; true, at the purchaser's charge; but what compensation for losing the sight of our pictures? Pictures that have been hanging in our palaces from time immemorial; pictures that have made men, women, and children, stand breathless under them; pictures that at last were given to the Englishman at his own price; for he would not listen to reason. I told him I had a presentiment of heartbreaking: I clasped my hands: I lifted up my eyes imploringly to the ceiling, until my sighs carried down a cobweb from a highth of twelve *braccia*, and almost blinded me. I made no complaint; I bring no action for damages. There is one Scampa in the world; only one; here he stands.

*Biancheria.* Think! figure it! Eminence! he offered us our pictures again, with only one-half of the money! Could a Jew do worse? The Pontifical Chancery and the Ruota Criminale would never tribulate gallant men in this guise. We must go to Rome with sacks in our great coats: and the judges there can smell silver from gold



through a Russia-leather portmanteau, mix it as you will. Here in Bologna the judges are our neighbours, and act like neighbours. No pride, no fastidiousness: they have patience and hear reason. Only one word from your Eminence, and all stands well.

*Legate.* Reason too is heard at Rome.

*Scampa.* It goes by the Diligence to the bankers, and (Santa Maria!) makes but a short stay there.

*Biancheria.* Yes, Eminence! at Rome too they hear reason and have patience: but they require more reason from us, and more patience. Sacks! Eminence! sacks and sacks, Eminence! exterminated mountains! Mexico, Peru, Cordilleras!

*Corazza.* Is money chaff, Signor Marchese? Signor Conte! is money swept off with the beard and suds at the barber's? To me it does not seem so. I am a poor man, but honest. I work, I work hard; ca! if anyone knew it!

*Legate.* At what do you work, most respectable Signor Corazza, my most worshipful master?

*Corazza.* At my business; day after day; all day long. O the life! to gain a crown-piece after years and years, and many and many! To stand and stand, and sigh and sigh, with my hands before me; now straight down, now across; sad variety! Now looking at one Virgin, now at another; now at this Bambino, now at that; never minding me; tiring my heart and tearing it, and gnawing it, summer and winter, spring and autumn; while others are in villa! hosiers and hatters, who can not distinguish a picture from a counterpane, a Porporato from a Piovano. Ca! and these people get more money than they can spend: what livers and brains! what capons! what trout! Their wine comes from twenty miles off; cospetto! One keeps his civetta, another his billiard-table, another his . . . what not! Here am I! no wine, no billiard, no pallone, no laughing, no noise! The very carts in the streets grumble to be in it at such a season. All I possess of the country is a grille in a cage of straw. The blessed Saint who lost her eyes . . . if she can be said to have lost them when she carried them in a dish . . . suffered less than mine did when I lost my Guido.

*Legate.* Have you nothing of the kind remaining?

*Corazza.* Providence never abandons the faithful. A Ludovico . . . pure, sincere, intact; purest, sincerest, intactest . . . but alas! no menestra in pentola; no more menestra than if there were no rice-ground in Lombardy. This I call enduring fatigue, Signor Marchese! This I call sweating, Signor Conte! This I call tribulation, Eminence! Your Eminence can feel all this for us poor people in the trade. Look now! look now! only look! Here comes an Englishman to the Pelican; a milord; a real milord of London. The fame of the finest pieces in the world reaches him on the steps; not mine; I do not say mine; but the pieces of Signor Marchese and Signor Conte, rimbombing through the universe. He hardly asks

for dinner: Signor Perotti, Signor Flavio, your Eminence must know him, padrone of the Pelican, says, "Leave that to me." Now Signor Flavio speaks English as well as milord Bérón or milord Scacchesperro. "Do you want cash, sir? I will take any bill upon London, two months, three months." O the ingratitude of the canaglia! The pictures are given; thrown away, (do I speak well, Signor Marchese?), packed up, sealed at the custom-house, sent off; Signor Flavio goes along with them, loses his business, his rest, his peace of mind, crosses the Appennines, as Annibal did, and reaches Florence, eviscerated, exsossated, with nine great packages! nine! the treasures of Bologna!

*Biancheria.* We lie near the woods, or we never could have given the empty cases for the money we gave the pictures at.

*Scampa.* I doubt, after all, whether they will cover the carpenter's bill.

*Corazza.* Be tranquil, Signor Marchese! I have calculated that they certainly will, if he waits (as usual) a reasonable while for the payment.

*Scampa.* It was a great inconvenience to me: I made a great sacrifice: I thought of building a palace with the planks. Will your Eminence just look over the ground-plan?

*Legate.* Prodigious! magnificent elevation! Blessed Saints!

*Scampa.* One might imagine that a little of the timber would be left. Quite the contrary. I have ruined the way through my estate by the carriage of supplementary loads; and I should not have regretted it if I could have given satisfaction. I am ready to do the like again for anyone who thinks more liberally.

*Biancheria.* It must be by particular favour, and with strong recommendations, that an Englishman ever enters my house again. My stock of timber was small: however, if it had pleased His Beatitude the Holiness of our Lord to equip a galley or two against the Turks or Greeks, I had wherewithal at his service. Now, now indeed, not a stick is left me! not a thorn, not a dead leaf on the floor: the packages took all.

*Corazza.* Men of humble condition must be cautious in their resentments. My temper is forgiving; my heart is large; I am ready to press my enemy to it again when he sees his error.

*Legate.* He fancies he has already seen it, my most ornamented friend and worthy patron! His correspondent at Florence assures me, on the authority of the whole Academy, that he has been defrauded.

*Biancheria.* If this gentleman is a gentleman of the law, he may lie legally: but if he acts merely as a friend, and in private, he acts insidiously. What gentleman in Italy ever took upon himself the business of another, where he fancied the other had been imprudent and might lose by that imprudence, whether life or property? The English alone are discontented with their own dangers, and run into those of other people. They pursue thieves; they mount upon conflagra-

tions. Instead of joining the stronger, they join the weaker, subverting the order of things. Even dogs and wolves know better.

*Scampa.* I am ruined by them; this is all I pretend to know of their doings. Since I sold them my pictures, I am infested and persecuted and worried to death by duns. They belabor and martellate my ears worse than the terza rima of Dante, the next taking up the rhyme of the last. I am not a dealer in pictures: I only sell when anyone takes a fancy to this or that; and merely to show that we in Bologna are as condescending and polite to strangers as the people of Rome or Florence.

*Legate.* Very proper; but this double baptism of pictures, this dipping of old ones in the font again, and substituting a name the original sponsor never dreamt of giving, this, methinks, Signor Marchese! under correction! is somewhat questionable and exceptionable.

*Scampa.* Under the correction of your Eminence, bending myself most submissively, I have as much right to call my pictures by what appellation I please as my house-dog. He whose son has been christened by the name of Tommaso, may deem it more pleasurable to his ear, or more conducive to his welfare, or more appertaining to the dignity of his beloved heir, to designate him by that of Pietro or Giovanni. Again, I have as much right to ask a thousand crowns as a hundred. Asking does not cut purses nor force open bankers' desks. Beside, have I ever transgressed by laying claim to infallibility? Only one upon earth is infallible; and he not in pictures: it is only in things that nobody in this world can comprehend.

*Legate.* Piously and judiciously spoken.

*Scampa.* Eminence! I am liable to errors; I am frail; I am a man: we are all of us dust; we are all of us ashes; here to-day, there to-morrow; but I stick to my religion; I wear my honour next my heart. I should like to catch this Englishman by twilight: I should like to hear how he would answer an honest man to his face. No subterfuges with me. Accidents have happened; malaria; judgments. Many have fallen sick by holding their noses too close to the ground, like dogs in the grotto at Naples yonder.

*Legate.* Be calm, Signor Marchese!

*Scampa.* My blood rises against oppression and injustice. These proud Englishmen shall never govern us. We are under the Church; God be praised! We are under his blessed Saints and your Eminence. Englishmen! what are Englishmen? In their ships they may do something. Give me one, visage to visage in the shaven field, and, capperi! he should soon see who was before him: ay, capperi! should he. Uh! uh! I almost crack my teeth with my courage.

*Legate.* Spare them! spare them! good Signor Marchese! they are worth their weight in gold at your age. Let us respect our veterans, so sadly thinned by the enemy.

*Scampa.* I have the blood of youth in my veins.

*Legate.* You must feel it very comfortable.

*Scampa.* It boils within me.

*Legate.* Let it; let it; better within than without. Surely it is applicable to pleasanter purposes than broils.

*Scampa.* Stains upon honour . .

*Legate.* . . May be covered with blood more easily than washed out with it. You are calmer, Signor Conte! Let me remark to you, then, that the Englishman in question has sent to me an attestation on a certain picture, purporting to bear the seal of our Academy: this seal is declared by one of our own Academicians (now in Florence) to be a forgery.

*All.* A traitor! a traitor! a traitor to his country!

*Biancheria.* The Englishman himself forged it.

*Corazza.* The English are capable. I never saw people write with such ease and fluency.

*Scampa.* Very great forgers; very notorious. Many are hanged for it every year in London; some of the most respectable persons in the whole nation, who spend several thousand dollars a year; milords, bankers, bishops.

*Biancheria.* Bishops! more shame upon them! Ours in Italy are long-dips; four-and-twenty to the pound; in England they are as substantial as sausages. What the devil should they forge but their credentials?

*Scampa.* I said, and I repeat it, many English are hanged for it every year; not one Italian. Lord Kenyon, the greatest judge in the kingdom, declared it lawful against an enemy: now Catholics are enemies in the eye of the Anglican Church, and the English laws acknowledge and act upon it; therefore, on their own principles, we may fairly and justifiably be guilty of it, at our good pleasure. Not that we ever are.

*Biancheria.* A secretary, by inadvertency, may affix a seal to a wrong paper. We cannot look to these bagatelles: we cannot light the taper for all our letters: we have extensive correspondences: a good deal of money comes yearly by this way into the Legations.

*Scampa.* An easy quiet liberality; some slight preference to the native; a little more regard to his testimony who is a Christian, than to a Quaker's, a Turk's, a Lutheran's, an Anabaptist's, a Freemason's, may benefit the individual, consolidate the government, and calm those uneasinesses and ranklings which have kept our wretched country . .

*Biancheria, whispering to him.* Oh! take heed! diamene!

*Scampa.* . . Wretched, until the arrival of your Eminence, by perpetual insurrections. Only two years ago (horrible to think of!) Cardinal Rivarola was shot in his carriage. God knows why. Mystery hangs over everything here below. Idle men are seen about, ready to be hired: their work requires but short instruments and short warning.

*Legate.* Pooh! pooh! Signor Marchese! never fear them; we will watch over you. Government

can pay them best: they are idle or at work as we judge proper. Englishmen have long purses, but never hire any help in their anger.

*Corazza.* Economical indeed! meanspirited creatures!

*Biancheria.* But they carry sticks, and confound distinctions with them.

*Scampa.* Bloody rogues are left yet in the Legations; and not all of them on the mountains. Have a care, Eminence! they pretend to love their country. Such folks are always dangerous: their whistle is heard farther than any. We have seen, O Christ! O holy Virgin! . . . Surgeon's work does not stand well. I weep at thinking . . . my eyes overflow . . . I kiss the feet that represent His Holiness.

*Legate.* Signor Marchese! you overpower me. And, Signor Conte! you also at my other! nay, nay, in the name of . . . Cazzo! . . . you go too far. I do intreat you to rise up from my feet: your lips make them too hot: they do indeed. Gentlemen, the pleasure of your company has almost caused me to forget that you do me the honour of consulting with me on business of importance. Forgery is really an ugly thing, in my view of the subject. Swindling sounds indifferently. The Academicians of Florence have formally and unanimously decided that your pictures are not only no originals, but are wretched copies. Fifteen names, the names of all present, are subscribed to the declaration, signed by the president, the senator Alessandri! "Siamo di concorde avviso che il primo sia una copia mediocre, &c.: che il secondo appartenga ad un debole imitatore della scuola Bolognese; e gli ultimi due sieno fatti da un cattivo seguace," &c.

*Biancheria.* Eminence! let the Academicians of Florence look at the pictures that the most liberal and intelligent of our Italian princes (I mean secular; no offence to our Lord and Master His Beatitude) has bought in their own city, and under their own eyes. How happens it that he has friends about him who recommend to him the purchase, at many thousand crowns, of pieces not worth five figs? Domenichinos! Salvators, Leonardos, Murillos! Is the Guido in the Tribuna any Guido at all? Would your Eminence give three crowns for it, out of the frame?

*Scampa.* Their Domenichino in the same Tribuna, did Domenichino ever see it? However, it is better than a real work of his in the Palazzo Pitti, which the Granduke's purveyors bought for him at the price of fifteen hundred louis. Eminence! would you give fifty crowns for it? Our Lord would never have talked a half-minute with such a Magdalen as that: he would have thrown her pot of pomatum in her face.

*Corazza.* Under favour, how happens it that they recommend to the Granduke restorers and cleaners who never learnt anything of the art, and never attempted it on their own dirt and rags?

*Scampa.* How happens it that the finest pictures in the world have been ruined within these two years? The friend of His Imperial Highness,

who recommended these rascals and their rubbish, has unquestionably his profits.

*Corazza.* And why should not we have ours? We who rub nothing out at all, and put little on . . .

*Legate.* . . . Except in price, most adorned sir.

*Biancheria.* I would not wish my observations to transpire. If the scourers at Florence go on as they have been going on lately, the collections at the gallery and at Pitti will be fit only for the Committee of Taste in London; and the Granduke must have recourse to us for what is unsold in our corridors.

*Legate.* Sorry am I to understand that so zealous a protector, and so liberal an encourager of the Arts, has fallen among thieves.

*Scampa.* However he has purchased some fine pictures. Old pencils are redhot iron to young fingers: all are burnt at first.

*Biancheria.* Unhappily, the two purest and most perfect works of Raffael are transferred from Tuscany to Bavaria: his Bindo Altoviti and his Tempi Madonna.

*Legate.* Raffael has been surpassed in portraits by Titian and Giorgione. But Tuscany may weep for ever over her loss in the Bindo Altoviti, which I have often seen in the palace where it was painted. Towns, fortresses, provinces, are won, recovered, restored, repurchased: kings will keep Raffaels; kings alone, or higher dignitaries, should possess them.

*Scampa.* He who would sell his Raffael would sell his child.

*Biancheria.* Cospetto! thirty.

*Scampa.* Or his father.

*Biancheria.* Cappari! All, all, to the last.

*Legate.* Leonardos, Correggios, rare, very rare: but only one genius ever existed who could unite what is most divine on earth with what is most adorable in heaven. He gives sanctity to her youth, and tenderness to the old man that gazes on her. He purifies love in the virgin's heart; he absorbs it in the mother's.

*Corazza.* Many allow him the preference over our school.

*Legate.* Ca! ca! ca! your School! an immondezzaio to a Sistine Chapel.

*Scampa.* Eminence! in Rome, protected by popes and cardinals, he reached perfection.

*Legate.* Protected! He walked among saints and prophets, their herald upon earth. What a man! what a man! his shadow in our path will not let lies pass current, nor flattery sink into the breast. No, Marchese! At Rome he thought he could embellish what is most beautiful in sentiment: at Florence, until the scourers brought their pestilence into the city, his genius soared in all its light angelic strength. At Florence he was the interpreter of Heaven: at Rome he was only the conqueror of Michel-Angelo: he had left Paradise, he had entered Eden.

*Scampa.* In your Rome the great Florentine taught him dignity.

*Legate.* Strange mistake! Was ever painter so

dignified as Fra Bartolommeo, whom he studied before he went to Rome? In amplitude, in gravity, in majesty, Fra Bartolommeo is much the superior of Michel-Angelo: both want grace: both are defective in composition. These two qualities were in the soul of Raffael: had he looked for them externally, he might have found them on the gates of the Battisterio. I admire and venerate the power of Michel-Angelo: but the boy of Urbino reached the head of this giant at the first throw. He did not strip your skins over your heads to show where your muscles lie; nor throw Hercules into the manger at Bethlehem; nor fall upon Alemena for Mary.

I know not how it happens, but love of the Arts leads me astray. When persons of intelligence on such subjects are about me, I am apt to prolong the discourse. But the pleasantest day must end; the finest sunset is at last a sunset.

Gentlemen! on the word of a friend, and such I am to all entrusted to my governance, and especially to men of merit, to persons of distinction, true Bolognese, real professors. . . Gentlemen! you will find it better to contrive, if possible, that this awkward question do not come before the ordinary tribunals.

*Scampa.* Eminence! what in God's name can they do against us if we are protected?

*Biancheria.* The milord erred in his judgment; we did not err in ours. If men are to suffer for errors, which, alas! seems the lot of humanity, let those suffer who do err, by no means those who do not. No man was ever brave at this embroidery of picture-fancying until he had often pricked his finger. Now I would advise milord to put his between his lips, and not to hold it up in public with a paltry jet bead of blood on it, as if he endured the sufferings of a martyr. We ought to complain; not he. Is it right or reasonable, or according to justice or law, that good quiet Christians, pursuing the steps of their forefathers . . . do I say well, Signor Marchese?

*Scampa.* Capitally! admirably! sound argument! touching truth! But I am not to judge. . . I am a party, it seems!

*Biancheria.* That good quiet christians, eccetera; loyal subjects, eccetera; gallant men, men of honour, men of garb, eccetera, eccetera . . . should be persecuted and ransacked and trodden upon and torn and worried and dilacerated and devoured by these arrogant insatiable English.

*Scampa.* Bravo! bravo! bravo!

*Corazza.* Ancora! ancora! bisse, bisse, bisse!

*Biancheria.* These arrogant insatiable English, what would they have? I gave them my flesh and blood; would they seize my bones? Let them, let them! since for even one's bones there is no rest on earth; none whatever; not a pin's point; saving upon the breast of your Eminence.

*Legate.* Ohibo! where is the need of weeping and wailing, Signor Conte?

*Biancheria.* Magdalen wept and wailed, Peter wept and wailed: but they had gone astray, they had slipped and sidled: I have followed my line

of duty; I have acted consistently; I have gone on as I began. Why should these infuriated monsters run from under the North Pole against me? why be permitted to stroke up, in a manner, my spinal hair from tail to nape in this fashion? merciful Jesu! eradicating, eradicating! flaying, flaying. The acquirer of the pictures, he complain too! he complain! after spoiling his own speculation. Had he kept his tongue from ringing, his seven hundred louis, the poor compensation for our master-pieces, would have procured him a seat in the Committee of Taste in London, and every piece would have turned out a miraculous loaf; a Christ in the Garden. What power! what patronage! And they eat, Eminence! they eat; or they are much belied. If another man's macaroni is a foot long, theirs is a yard. Fry, fry, fry, all day: the kitchen hums and buzzes like a spring meadow: it frets and fumes and wheezes with its labour: one cook cannot hear another: you might travel as far as from Bologna to Ancona between the boiled and the roast. And what do we get? at the uttermost the scale of an anchovy, with scarcely oil enough to float it. . .

*Corazza.* . . And perhaps, late in the season, the extremity of a radish, so cursedly tough, you may twist it twenty times round the finger.

*Scampa.* We are amenable to your Eminence: but what has the Academy of Florence to do with us? Presently, no doubt, we shall be cited before the Committee of Taste on the Thames. Let us discuss a little the qualifications of our future judges, now we have plainly shown what our present are. Has not this glorious Committee paid several thousand louis for a false Correggio, which was offered at Rome heretofore for fifteen crowns, and carried to Milan ere it found so much? Has not this glorious Committee, which snatched so eagerly at a false, rejected a real one at a low price? Have the blockheads not allowed the finest Andrea to slip out of London, and to hang on a banker's wall at Paris? Could they not have bought it at a third less than what the banker paid for it? and will he sell it again for a third more?

*Legate.* In almost all the works of this otherwise admirable painter there is a vulgarity which repels me.

*Biancheria.* But what truth, Eminence, what truth!

*Legate.* The most endearing quality, I perceive, with Signor Conte Biancheria.

*Biancheria.* It stands indeed high with me.

*Scampa.* There is no answering any of the Count's questions on the Committee of Taste.

*Biancheria.* The facts are known all over the world. Not a cottage or cavern, not a skiff or felucca, not a gondola or canoe, from Venice to Van Diemen's Land, that does not echo them.

*Legate.* Indeed!

*Biancheria.* Upon my faith as a Christian!

*Scampa.* There is a certain duke at Rome, a duke made after buckles were left off, who can

always sell what he proposes. He recommends an original: over comes milord, sees it finished, accepts in his condescension an inlaid table, and fills the newspapers with the fine contours, the aerial perspective, the topazes, rubies, and emeralds, of this precious oil-cloth.

*Biancheria.* We poor Bolognese can not give such dinners as a Roman duke and banker can. We are hungry; yet we invite the stranger to partake with us.

*Legate.* Of your hunger, most illustrious?

*Biancheria.* With what we have we serve him.

*Corazza.* An honest man would do his business regularly; a good citizen makes no disturbances, and is ashamed of troubling the courts of justice or intruding on his superiors. Peace, concord, faith, veneration, are inherent in the highest and in the lowest of the Bolognese.

*Scampa.* And yet the Academy of Florence makes war against the Academy of Bologna! Would it not be wiser if those who preside over the Arts imitated the conduct of those who preside over the nations? Would it not be better if they agreed that the same system should govern all? Can not our Bologna and Florence come closer, like England and Turkey, France and Russia, Spain and Persia, Portugal and Congo? Are we never to follow our betters? We indeed do: why will not they? Times are very much altered for the worse, Eminence, since we were children.

*Legate.* Ah Marchese! You were a child long after I was one.

*Scampa.* A year; or may-be thirteen months. I have seen forty some time.

*Legate.* I approach eighty.

*Scampa.* In dreams and visions; not otherwise. I am as near to Purgatory as your Eminence is to Paradise.

*Legate (aside).* I believe it; on the wrong side too.

*Scampa.* Did your Eminence speak to me?

*Legate.* I was regretting to myself the strength of the Declaration that lies before me.

*Biancheria.* A mere formulary; signed by fourteen or fifteen rival Academicians. Our pictures had no such pedantry about them. We too have signatures: the pen trembles with their emotion.

*Legate.* True enough; few of the names are legible, and those unknown.

*Scampa.* There now! convincing! convincing! The better part of them could not see the paper under them through their tears.

*Biancheria.* Well might they weep. Such pictures then must leave Bologna? Our beloved country must lose them for ever! our dear children must not enjoy what their fathers and forefathers gloried in!

*Corazza.* What could we do? The English are powerful at sea: they have a fleet in the Adriatic no farther off than Corfu.

*Legate.* The question is the authenticity of the pictures.

*Scampa.* And, after an attestation on the spot,

the Academy of Florence has the impudence to sign and seal against it!

*Corazza.* May not pictures have suffered on the road? may not malicious men, artists and dealers, jealous of the Bolognese school, jealous of an honest man's good fortune . . .

*Scampa.* . . Carpers of titles, revilers of dignities . . .

*Corazza.* . . Ay, ay . . have given them a few false touches?

*Biancheria.* May not the air of Florence, moister and heavier than ours, have suffused with a duller tint and disturbed the transparency of the glazing?

*Scampa.* People sign without reflection, Eminence! My uncle Matteo the Canonico, your Eminence's old worshipper, used to say well and truly, the day of judgment is the last day we can expect on earth, and that he saw no signs of it.

*Legate.* We have no proof of malice in the decision.

*Biancheria.* Even good men have some. Saint Cyprian said that the face of Saint Jerome, in Correggio's picture, would have done better for the lion, and the lion's for him.

*Legate.* Whether Saint Cyprian said it may perhaps be questioned.

*Corazza.* O the Magdalen! what a tint! what a touch! The hair! how it swells! how it falls! how it undulates! how it reposes! Music to the eye, to the heart, to the intellect, to the soul! the music of Paesello! Then her . . . ca! ca! ca! what tongue can reach it! Eminence! look; behold her! She has kissed the Bambino with the endearing curl of her lip, where it loses itself in the paler roses of the cheek; and she holds the kiss, one would think, between the lip and the child, afraid to drop it by moving. Tender, tender, tender! And such an ancle there! oh! oh! the heart can not contain it.

*Legate.* Nevertheless, the holy child is a young satyr, and the Saint a wild beast, come rather to swallow than fondle him. Somebody seems to have driven him up into the corner, else his claws might alarm us. As to the lion, he has been in the menagery from his birth, where some other beast more leonine begot him.

*Scampa.* If this picture has its faults, well may ours have them too. In regard to authenticity, we did not see the artist paint them. We may have been deceived: and because we have been deceived must we be called deceivers? Fine Florentine logic forsooth! turning everything the wrong side upward.

*Corazza.* I have studied the art from my youth, and have made the pot boil with it, although there is not a cinder at present, hot or cold, under it. I do know a little of the matter, if a modest man may say it: a little I do know. These Florentines . . . my patience escapes me . . .

*Legate.* We must attempt to catch it again for you in this room, most prized and ornamented Signor Corazza!

*Corazza.* I but humbly follow Signor Marchese. Enter the Tribuna where the best pictures are supposed to hang. The Magdalen's head is more like a boiled calf's. She was flesh and blood, the Magdalen was, I warrant her. She had fingers fit for anything: and here are long sticks, no better than those which some blockhead has stuck upon the Medicean Venus, for Englishmen to admire upon tradition in this age, and Kamskatkaldes in the next. We do not read that the fingers of the Magdalen were broken or dislocated at the cross or elsewhere, as these are. How would you manage her heavy stupid head? Guido would have put it in its right position: Guido would have given it expression and grace, tenderness and emotion: it has verily no more of these than an ox's heart at the shambles. Another step, and we stand before the Holy Family of Michel-Angelo.

*Legate.* Signor Corazza, my patron! do not pull down this picture: this is genuine: it was painted for the Medici, and was never out of their sight. There is some (however slight) reason to believe that the other is a Guido: but Guido was a youth before he was a man, and a boy before he was a youth, and often painted a picture by lamp-light, or by none, to get out of a scrape.

*Scampa.* Historical facts! recondite biography! Guido has got drunk upon a Magdalen, gone to a brothel with a Saint Catharine, and gamed upon Christ's coat. In Michel-Angelo's Holy Family, why does the Virgin (who looks neither like virgin nor mother) toss the poor Baby so carelessly across her shoulder? And why do those idle vagabonds sit naked on the wall behind her? Have they no reverence? no decency? God's blood! master Michel-Angelo! I suspect thy nose was flattened by divine judgment for this flagrant impudicity. In the same Tribuna is another Holy Family; one among the few bad works of Giulio Romano. Beyond it are two Correggios by Vanni of Sienna, and then another Holy Family, also by Vanni, but undoubtedly for Correggio's.

*Corazza.* Ah Signor Marchese! There is somewhat of his sweetness in the coloring of the landscape.

*Scampa.* But that wench with her twisted face, her twisted hands, and her child sprawling before her, like what has dropped from one's head under the comb! yet our judges, our censurers, our incriminators, firmly believe in the transcendent excellence of those works. They know nothing of any school but their own, and little of that. What a Perugino is there locked up in their Academy! while these inferior pictures occupy the most conspicuous situation, the satellites of the Medicean Venus. They have heard, and they repeat to you, that Perugino is hard and dry. Certainly those who worked for him were so, and so was he himself in the beginning: but what at first was harshness became at last a pure severity. He learned from the great scholar he taught; and the wiser his followers were, the

more they venerated the abilities of their master. He had no pupil so great as Raffael, nor had Raffael any so great as he.

*Legate.* Titian ennobled men; Correggio raised children into angels; Raffael performed the more arduous work of restoring to woman her pristine purity. Perugino was worthy of leading him by the hand. I am not surprised that Rubens is the prime favorite of tulip-fanciers: but give me the clear warm mornings of Correggio, which his large-eyed angels, just in puberty, so enjoy. Give me the glowing afternoons of Titian; his majestic men, his gorgeous women, and (with a prayer to protect my virtue) his Bacchantes. Yet, Signors! we may descant on grace and majesty as we will; believe me, there is neither majesty so calm, concentrated, sublime, and self-possessed (true attributes of the divine), nor is there grace at one time so human, at another time so superhuman, as in Raffael. He leads us into heaven; but neither in satin robes nor with ruddy faces. He excludes the glare of light from the sanctuary; but there is an ever-burning lamp, an ever-ascending hymn; and the purified eye sees, as distinctly as is lawful, the divinity of the place. I delight in Titian, I love Correggio, I wonder at the vastness of Michel-Angelo; I admire, love, wonder, and then fall down before, Raffael.

*Scampa.* Eminence! we have Titian, we have Raffael, in our Academy; we want only Correggio. At my decease perhaps . . . And yet he, who was quite at home with angels, played but a sorry part among saints: he seems to have considered them as very indifferent company for him. How they stare and straddle and sprawl about his Cupola! But what coloring on his canvas! Would your Eminence favor me with another ray of light on him and Raffael!

*Legate.* Signor Marchese! I am afraid I can say nothing on the subject that has not been said twenty times before; and if I do, I may be wrong.

*All.* Impossible.

*Legate.* Even the coloring of Correggio, so transparent, so pure, so well considered and arranged, is perhaps too rich and luscious for the divine ideas of Raffael: it might have overshoot the scope which his temperate suavity attained. The drapery of Correggio is less simple than becomes the modest maid of Bethlehem, chosen by the all-seeing eye for her simplicity.

*Biancheria.* And yet, under favour, in the Madonna della Seggiola, there is almost a fantastic charm in the vivid colours of the tartan dress.

*Legate.* So much the worse. Let us admire the composition, but neither the style of the drapery nor the expression of the countenance. The Virgin has ceased to be a virgin; and the child has about it neither the sweetness of an amiable infant, nor the mysterious indication of a half-human god. Raffael in Rome had forgotten the tenderness of his diviner love; and the Tempter had seduced him to change purity for power. Nevertheless he remains, far beyond all com-

parison, the greatest genius that ever glorified the Arts. He was not, like Michel-Angelo, a great architect, a scientific sculptor, an admirable poet: he attempted not universality; but he reached perfection. What other mortal has?

*All.* Oracles! oracles!

*Biancheria.* I myself possess a little bit of Perugino: honey, sugar, cinnamon.

*Corazza (aside).* And a good deal of each; two dollars would not cover it. How he kisses the tips of his two fingers and thumb, all three in a cluster! I wish he would pay me my twelve livres for this honey and sugar and cinnamon, in which however he will never catch the wary old wasp. The thing is fairly worth a couple of zecchins, and he knows it.

*Legate.* Signor Corazza, were you saying your prayers behind me?

*Corazza.* Fervently. Alas! I have no Perugino: I had a Saint Peter: tears like pearls: an ear, you might have put your finger in it up to the elbow: hair, I was afraid of blowing a fly from it. Strangers, when they entered the room, cried, "Signor Corazza! do you keep poultry in your saloon?"

*Legate.* What of that?

*Corazza.* Incidental. The cock in the distance, red, gold, emerald; six, seven, eight crowns' worth of lapis lazuli; wings displayed, neck outstretched, eyes that might have lighted up our theatre; comb . . . I would never let a cook enter the room, lest he should have cut it off. Everybody fancied he heard him crow; for fancy it must have been. And what became of this picture? Two Englishmen tore it from the wall: I thought they would have carried the house, the street itself, away with it. They stopped my mouth: no stirring, no breathing. England, monopolising England, possesses now Saint Peter! The milords threw down their paltry hundred zecchins, leaving me lifeless at the loss of my treasure, and sacking our Bologna in this inhuman way. O had your Eminence seen that cock; had your Eminence seen that hair, fine, fine, fine as an infant's; the crown of the head smooth as the cover of a soup-tureen; nothing to hide the veins on the temples: he would have been bald within the year, unless by miracle. I had also an Andromeda: Signor Conte knew her. Dignitaries of the Church have stood before her until their knees bent under them.

*Legate.* Did Englishmen dispossess you likewise of your Andromeda?

*Corazza.* Half the nation fell upon her at once: all were after her: what was to be done! I was widowed of her too: they had her. One would think, after this they might have been quiet: not they: we must bleed and martyrise: no end or remission of our sufferings. The English are very unlike what they were formerly: surely the breed of milords is extinct.

*Legate.* Quite the contrary, I believe.

*Corazza.* Then they are turned into chapmen. No sooner do they come to an inn, than they

inquire how much the host asks for so many; and if they do not like the price, they drive off. Formerly if you skinned a milord you only tickled him. Who, in the name of the Holy Virgin! could have begotten the present race? They have shockingly ill-treated our worthy fellow-citizen, the most esteemed Signor Flavio Perotti of the Pelican. He offered them his house; he placed everything before them; all unreservedly at their disposal. He serves his country with consummate zeal and fidelity: much money flows into it through his hands: many pictures that might peradventure do great dishonour to the names of Domenichino and Guido, and the whole family of the Caracci, and sweet Albano . . . my tears will flow at the name, it so much resembles our illustrious protector's . . . Yes, yes, many and many slip quietly from the Pelican out of the country, by Signor Flavio's intervention. Hence there is scarcely an auction, I hear, in England, without a dozen of Domenichinos; while in Italy dukes and princes lie on their death-beds and gasp for one. The milords in Florence conspired against poor Signor Flavio, as an accomplice in what they were pleased to denigrate a cheat and forgery. Figure it! your Eminence! figure it! an accomplice! Signor Flavio told me that, unless he had quitted Florence on the instant, the Police would have consigned him to the Bargello. This comes of accepting bills from foreigners! this comes from facilitating business!

*Biancheria.* Eminence! we live in an ungrateful world, a world full of snares, frauds, and perils. Many saints have said it, and all honest men have experienced it. I gave my pictures to this Englishman, merely not to disgust or displease him. He had them not at my price, but at his own. I abandoned them; I stood in desolation. Recovering my senses, I saw bare walls; Chiusi, Populonia.

*Legate.* Signor Conte! most illustrious! had the purchaser ever any dealings with you before?

*Biancheria.* He never was before in Bologna. We see many Englishmen from time to time, but none come twice: the reason is, they take the other road. Beside, they are men of business, and carry off at once everything they like.

*Corazza.* I never heard of one entering the same shop a second time. The French are called inconstant: but in inconstancy the English outfly them by leagues and latitudes. Him whom they call an honest man one day, they call a rogue the next: they are as mild as turnips in the morning, and as hot as capicums in the afternoon.

*Scampa.* Whenever an Englishman of distinction was inclined to favor me, he always found my palace at his disposal. I began at last to give a preference to the Frenchman. Instead of such outrageous words as *accomplice, eccetera, eccetera*, when a Frenchman has rung a few changes on the second and sixth letters of the alphabet, his temperament grows cooler: you may compromise with him: but the *Got-dam* of the Englishmen

sounds like the bursting of the doors of Janus, and his fist is always ready to give it emphasis. I regret that I have encountered more than once such rudeness, after making him the master of my house and servants.

*Corazza (aside to the secretary).* What servants! they are all the Pelican's. Old Baltazzare-Cincinnati never leaves off his cobbling under the palace-stairs for the best heretic in London. He has orders to the contrary, or the Pelican would stand still in the negotiation. He has other perquisites.

*Legate.* Most prized and ornate Signor Corazza, my patron! I commend your modesty in taking a place behind my chair, while Signor Marchese and Signor Conte do me the honour of indulging me with their presence on the opposite side of the chamber; yet, if you are desirous of whispering any remarks of yours to my secretary, who appears to be an old acquaintance, pray, in courtesy, go as far from my chair as possible; for whispers are apt to divert the attention more than a louder tone.

*Corazza.* Signor Secretary! accept this small cameo.

*Secretary.* Don't mention it; don't think of it; impossible! Not to be observed. . . (*pockets it.*)

I would render you service for service, my dear Signor Corazza! you are a man of parts, a man of business, my most worshipful patron! I have only my good fortune to boast of, partly in the satisfaction I give his Eminence, and partly in the precious acquisition of your friendship. His Eminence has taken under his protection a young person, a relative of mine, sage, good, gentle; they call her handsome. She embroiders; she can get up fine linen. . .

His Eminence wishes her well. There can be no scandal in it; there never was a suspicion; seventeen comes too far under eighty. He would not puff off the girl; but he has told me in confidence that five hundred crowns lie somewhere. And her friends are men of substance; they may come down with what is handsome.

*Corazza.* Signor Secretary! the sooner we are in the midst of these things the better.

*Secretary.* I may misunderstand you, since your impatience seems to have little of the rapturous in it. Why then the better the sooner in the midst of them?

*Corazza.* Because the sooner out?

*Secretary.* Oh! no better reason than this?

*Corazza.* My most ornate and erudite Signor Secretary! I love women in canvas better than in linen: they change less speedily, do an honest man less harm, and are more readily off-hand.

*Secretary.* Eh, eh! well, well! I would not build up a man's fortune against his will.

*Legate.* Signor Corazza!

*Corazza.* Her slave!

*Legate.* I have been turning over the papers very attentively, and begin to think the affair looks serious. If anything can be suggested to relieve you, lawfully and conscientiously. . . reflect

upon it; meet half-way. There is nothing that may not be arranged by wisdom and concession.

*Scampa.* Wisdom does much.

*Legate.* Concession helps her materially, my dear Signor Marchese!

*Biancheria.* The gifted persons, who enjoy the supreme felicity of frequent audiences with your Eminence, admire the prodigious ease with which she performs the greatest actions.

*Scampa.* What a stupendous wisdom falls from the fountain of Her most eloquent lips! As the shallowness of some is rendered less apparent by an umbrageous impenetrability about them, so the profundity of others is little suspected in the placid and winning currency of their demeanour.

*Corazza.* Ah Eminence! She has fairly won her red stockings.

*Legate.* God put them on me only to try me. He has since visited me with many afflictions. In his inscrutable wisdom, he permitted the French to plunder me of my pictures. I have yet some; a few worthy friends have been ambitious to sew up the rents and rips of my fortune: one has offered me one fine piece, another another. They only showed the heart in the right place I am sorry I rejected so many: I might have restored them by my last will and testament, with a slight remembrance, treating some according to what I conceive to be their necessities, and others in proportion to their rank and dignity. But why these reflections? Gentlemen! I am involved in a multiplicity of affairs, an account of which must instantly be laid before his Holiness. In obedience to his Edict, I must inquire into the women who wear silver\* combs and show their shift sleeves: I must ascertain the number of equally grave offenders whose houses are open in the dusk, and the names of those who enter and go out.

*Corazza.* Your Eminence turns round and looks at me. Upon the faith of a Catholic, I went out but. . . that is to say. . .

*Legate.* It is indeed, my patron! it is to say. . . quite enough. Respectable persons, substantial housekeepers, are allowed an honest liberty; but Vice must be tributary to Virtue. The Serpent may bite the Woman's heel, as was ordained; but, if he rises in his ambition, we must detach a golden scale or two from his pericranium. In plain language, gentlemen, the fisc is cracking into chinks with dryness and vacuity: we must contrive to oil it among us.

*Corazza.* I am no defaulter; I am no frequenter. . .

*Secretary (aside).* Why tremble, why hesitate, why excuse yourself, most worthy Signor Corazza? Nobody can suspect you, my patron! you stand erect, above suspicion: your Venuses are upon canvas.

\* There was issued an edict against them by Leo the Twelfth. Creditable women among the poor usually wore them, and they were heirlooms for many generations! It is reported that his holiness had received his last serious injury from a person who usurped this man's only decoration.



*Corazza (aside).* Signor Secretary! no jeering! You shall never cram girls down my throat. There are some that might be too large for it; do you understand me? Mind, look-ye! I do not say all are: I do not say one is: no offence to any relative or friend of yours: I had not a thought of the kind in regard to the lady in question! God knows it!

*Secretary.* You convince me, my dear patron!

*Legate.* In this life, we must all make some small sacrifices, and the sooner we make them the more certain is our reward. I myself am an instance of it. The enemy had despoiled me of my gallery: but the Virgin opened my eyes the wider the more I wept before her, the more promises I made her, and enabled me to foresee the fall of paper-money. I effected large purchases in it, very large indeed, engaging to repay it in the same kind after six months, with great interest. My blessed Patroness enabled me to perform it, at less expense than a plate of unpeppered cucumbers in August. Nor did her favour and inspiration end here. I went, I remember not on what business, to Massa di Carrara. After passing through all the bed-chambers, at the desire of the Duchess, in order to make my choice, I fixed upon one in which there was a Holy Family by Titian.

A noble picture, Signor Marchese! I do assure you, Signor Conte! the picture is worth ten thousand crowns. Signor Corazza! if you had seen that picture, you would have cut off the head of the Bambino for pure affection. Impossible to resist the idea. I prayed and prayed before it, and took out first my scissors, then my penknife; then I thought it would be a pity to lose the rest; for there are parts about the Virgin, too, most delicately touched. Ah what a carnation! what a carnation! the warmest local colors, the most subtle demitints, a glow that creeps on insensibly to lose itself in the shades, making the heart pant and the innermost soul sigh after it.

*All.* I seize it! I seize it! I seize it!

*Legate.* It was no easy matter to put up penknife and scissors; but it was easier than to sleep in such a presence. About midnight I rose and prayed to my Protectress, vowing that, if she would incline the heart of the Duchess to my wishes, I would place a crown of gold over her head, and another of silver over the Bambino's. Whenever, on the following day, any person entered the chamber, he or she found me on my knees before the picture. In the morning I looked pale; I sighed at breakfast; I abstained at dinner; I retired at supper. The Duchess told her chaplain to inform me that her surgeon might be depended on, being a man equally of ability and discretion. I assured him I seldom had had occasion to put any surgeon's ability to the proof, and never his discretion and taciturnity. I rose in her good opinion for both these merits, if we may call them so. I then expressed to him, in confidence, my long sufferings and ex-

ceeding love for the Virgin. Whether he or she informed the Duchess of them, I never have discovered: but her Highness said so many kind words to me on the subject, that I could no longer refuse to eat whatever she recommended. Yet I was obliged to retire immediately after dinner, partly from weakness of stomach, and partly from the rigid devotion which occasioned it.

"What can be the matter with the poor cardinal?" said her Highness. "Highness! the naked truth must out," replied the chaplain. "He does whatever you command or wish: he smiles, however languidly; he drinks, one would almost think, with relish; he eats, I will not say like one with an appetite, but at least as much; to remove all anxiety from your Highness."

"Well but this naked truth. . . I have the courage to encounter it," said the Duchess. "There are baths at Pisa and Lucca, both near, and there are minerals and instruments quite at hand." The worthy chaplain shook his head, and answered, "His Eminence does nothing, day or night, but kneel before the Holy Family in his bed-chamber." "Then get the cushion well stuffed," said her Highness, "or let him have another put upon it: bring him the green velvet one from the chapel; and take especial care that no loose gold-wire, in the lace about it, catches his stockings."

When I was going away I began to despair, and I prayed again to my blessed Benefactress.

Signor Marchese! Signor Conte! She never abandons those who put their trust in her.

*Both.* Never, never. So bountiful is she that she leaves them nothing to desire. She gives all at once.

*Legate.* On the morning of my departure, the Duchess sent up some fine Dresden porcelain to my room, and several richly bound books, requesting my acceptance, she was graciously pleased to say, of the few trifling things she had ordered to be placed there. I humbly told her I could not deprive her of any luxury, to every kind of which I was indifferent and dead. Again she politely asked me if there was nothing I would accept as a remembrance of my visit to Massa. After a pause, and after those protestations of impossibility which good manners render necessary, and indeed after four retrograde steps, it occurred to me as an urgent duty, to declare positively that I would only take the picture; which, if left where it was, might deprive others, equally devout, of as much sleep as I had lost by it. The Duchess stood with her mouth open. . . and very pretty teeth she had in those days. . . I abased my head, kissed her hand, and thanked her with many tears and tendernesses, for a gift which (to me at least) was a precious one, said I, and a pledge of her piety, although no proof of my desert.

*Scampa.* The Duchess is wealthy, and . .