Title: The Man who kept his Money in a Box

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THE MAN WHO KEPT HIS MONEY IN A BOX.

I FIRST saw the man who kept his money in a box in the midst of the ravine of the Via Mala. I interchanged a few words with him or with his wife at the hospice, at the top of the Splugen; and I became acquainted with him in the courtyard of Conradi's hotel at Chiavenna. It was, however, afterwards at Bellaggio, on the lake of Como, that that acquaintance ripened into intimacy. A good many years have rolled by since then, and I believe this little episode in his life may be told without pain to the feelings of any one.

His name was —; let us for the present say that his name was Greene. How he learned that my name was Robinson I do not know, but I remember well that he addressed me by my name at Chiavenna. To go back, however, for a moment to the Via Mala;—I had been staying for a few days at the Golden Eagle at Tusis,—which, by-the-bye, I hold to be the best small inn in all Switzerland, and its hostess to be, or to have been, certainly the prettiest landlady,—and on the day of my departure southwards, I had walked on, into the Via Mala, so that the diligence might pick me up in the gorge. This pass I regard as one of the grandest spots to which my wandering steps have ever carried me, and though I had already lingered about it for many hours, I now walked thither again to take my last farewell of its dark towering rocks, its narrow causeway and roaring river, trusting to my friend the landlady to see that my luggage was duly packed upon the diligence. I need hardly say that my friend did not betray her trust.

As one goes out from Switzerland towards Italy, the road through the Via Mala ascends somewhat steeply, and passengers by the diligence may walk from the inn at Tusis into the gorge, and make their way through the greater part of the ravine before the vehicle will overtake them. This, however, Mr. Greene with his wife and daughter had omitted to do. When the diligence passed me in the defile, the horses trotting for a few yards over some level portion of the road, I

saw a man's nose pressed close against the glass of the coupé window. I saw more of his nose than of any other part of his face, but yet I could perceive that his neck was twisted and his eye upturned, and that he was making a painful effort to look upwards to the summit of the rocks from his position inside the carriage.

There was such a roar of wind and waters at the spot that it was not practicable to speak to him, but I beckoned with my finger and then pointed to the road, indicating that he should have walked. He understood me, though I did not at the moment understand his answering gesture. It was subsequently, when I knew somewhat of his habits, that he explained to me that on pointing to his open mouth, he had intended to signify that he would be afraid of sore throat in exposing himself to the air of that damp and narrow passage.

I got up into the conductor's covered seat at the back of the diligence, and in this position encountered the drifting snow of the Splugen. I think it is coldest of all the passes. Near the top of the pass the diligence stops for awhile, and it is here, if I remember, that the Austrian officials demand the travellers' passports. At least in those days they did so. These officials have now retreated behind the Quadrilatère,—soon, as we hope, to make a further retreat,—and the district belongs to the kingdom of United Italy. There is a place of refreshment or hospice here, into which we all went for a few moments, and I then saw that my friend with the weak throat was accompanied by two ladies.

"You should not have missed the Via Mala," I said to him, as he stood warming his toes at the huge covered stove.

"We miss everything," said the elder of the two ladies, who, however, was very much younger than the gentleman, and not very much older than her companion.

"I saw it beautifully, mamma," said the younger one; whereupon mamma gave her head a toss, and made up her mind, as I thought, to take some little vengeance before long upon her step-daughter. I observed that Miss Greene always called her step-mother mamma on the first approach of any stranger, so that the nature of the connection between them might be understood. And I observed also that the elder lady always gave her head a toss when she was so addressed.

"We don't mean to enjoy ourselves till we get down to the lake of Como," said Mr. Greene. As I looked at him cowering over the stove, and saw how oppressed he was with great coats and warm wrappings for his throat, I quite

agreed with him that he had not begun to enjoy himself as yet. Then we all got into our places again, and I saw no more of the Greenes till we were standing huddled together in the large courtyard of Conradi's hotel at Chiavenna.

Chiavenna is the first Italian town which the tourist reaches by this route, and I know no town in the North of Italy which is so closely surrounded by beautiful scenery. The traveller as he falls down to it from the Splugen road is bewildered by the loveliness of the valleys,—that is to say, if he so arranges that he can see them without pressing his nose against the glass of a coach window. And then from the town itself there are walks of two, three, and four hours, which I think are unsurpassed for wild and sometimes startling beauties. One gets into little valleys, green as emeralds, and surrounded on all sides by grey broken rocks, in which Italian Rasselases might have lived in perfect bliss; and then again one comes upon distant views up the river courses, bounded far away by the spurs of the Alps, which are perfect,—to which the fancy can add no additional charm. Conradi's hotel also is by no means bad; or was not in those days. For my part I am inclined to think that Italian hotels have received a worse name than they deserve; and I must profess that, looking merely to creature comforts, I would much sooner stay a week at the Golden Key at Chiavenna, than with mine host of the King's Head in the thriving commercial town of Muddleboro, on the borders of Yorkshire and Lancashire.

I am always rather keen about my room in travelling, and having secured a chamber looking out upon the mountains, had returned to the court-yard to collect my baggage before Mr. Greene had succeeded in realising his position, or understanding that he had to take upon himself the duties of settling his family for the night in the hotel by which he was surrounded. When I descended he was stripping off the outermost of three great coats, and four waiters around him were beseeching him to tell them what accommodation he would require. Mr. Greene was giving sundry very urgent instructions to the conductor respecting his boxes; but as these were given in English, I was not surprised to find that they were not accurately followed. The man, however, was much too courteous to say in any language that he did not understand every word that was said to him. Miss Greene was standing apart, doing nothing. As she was only eighteen years of age, it was of course her business to do nothing; and a very pretty little girl she was, by no means ignorant of her own beauty, and possessed of quite sufficient wit to enable her to make the most of it.

Mr. Greene was very leisurely in his proceedings, and the four waiters were almost reduced to despair.

“I want two bed-rooms, a dressing-room, and some dinner,” he said at last, speaking very slowly, and in his own vernacular. I could not in the least assist him by translating it into Italian, for I did not speak a word of the language myself; but I suggested that the man would understand French. The waiter, however, had understood English. Waiters do understand all languages with a facility that is marvellous; and this one now suggested that Mrs. Greene should follow him up-stairs. Mrs. Greene, however, would not move till she had seen that her boxes were all right; and as Mrs. Greene was also a pretty woman, I found myself bound to apply myself to her assistance.

“Oh, thank you,” said she. “The people are so stupid that one can really do nothing with them. And as for Mr. Greene, he is of no use at all. You see that box, the smaller one. I have four hundred pounds’ worth of jewellery in that, and therefore I am obliged to look after it.”

“Indeed,” said I, rather startled at this amount of confidence on rather a short acquaintance. “In that case I do not wonder at your being careful. But is it not rather rash, perhaps—”

“I know what you are going to say. Well, perhaps it is rash. But when you are going to foreign courts, what are you to do? If you have got those sort of things you must wear them.”

As I was not myself possessed of anything of that sort, and had no intention of going to any foreign court, I could not argue the matter with her. But I assisted her in getting together an enormous pile of luggage, among which there were seven large boxes covered with canvas, such as ladies not uncommonly carry with them when travelling. That one which she represented as being smaller than the others, and as holding jewellery, might be about a yard long by a foot and a half deep. Being ignorant in those matters, I should have thought it sufficient to carry all a lady’s wardrobe for twelve months. When the boxes were collected together, she sat down upon the jewel-case and looked up into my face. She was a pretty woman, perhaps thirty years of age, with long light yellow hair, which she allowed to escape from her bonnet, knowing, perhaps, that it was not unbecoming to her when thus dishevelled. Her skin was very delicate, and her complexion good. Indeed her face would have been altogether prepossessing had there not been a want of gentleness in her eyes. Her hands, too, were soft and small, and on the whole she may be said to have been possessed of a strong battery of feminine attractions. She also well knew how to use them.

“Whisper,” she said to me, with a peculiar but very proper aspiration on the h —“Wh-hisper,” and both by the aspiration and the use of the word I knew at once from what island she had come. “Mr. Greene keeps all his money in this box also; so I never let it go out of my sight for a moment. But whatever you do, don’t tell him that I told you so.”

I laid my hand on my heart, and made a solemn asseveration that I would not divulge her secret. I need not, however, have troubled myself much on that head, for as I walked up stairs, keeping my eye upon the precious trunk, Mr. Greene addressed me.

“You are an Englishman, Mr. Robinson,” said he. I acknowledged that I was.

“I am another. My wife, however, is Irish. My daughter,—by a former marriage,—is English also. You see that box there.”

“Oh, yes,” said I, “I see it.” I began to be so fascinated by the box that I could not keep my eyes off it.

“I don’t know whether or no it is prudent, but I keep all my money there; my money for travelling, I mean.”

“If I were you, then,” I answered, “I would not say anything about it to any one.”

“Oh, no, of course not,” said he; “I should not think of mentioning it. But those brigands in Italy always take away what you have about your person, but they don’t meddle with the heavy luggage.”

“Bills of exchange, or circular notes,” I suggested.

“Ah, yes; and if you can’t identify yourself, or happen to have a headache, you can’t get them changed. I asked an old friend of mine, who has been connected with the Bank of England for the last fifty years, and he assured me that there was nothing like sovereigns.”

“But you never get the value for them.”

“Well, not quite. One loses a franc, or a franc and a half. But still, there’s the certainty, and that’s the great matter. An English sovereign will go anywhere,” and he spoke these words with considerable triumph.

“Undoubtedly, if you consent to lose a shilling on each sovereign.”

“At any rate, I have got three hundred and fifty in that box,” he said. “I have them done up in rolls of twenty-five pounds each.”

I again recommended him to keep this arrangement of his as private as possible,—a piece of counsel which I confess seemed to me to be much needed,—and then I went away to my own room, having first accepted an invitation from Mrs. Greene to join their party at dinner. “Do,” said she; “we have been so dull, and it will be so pleasant.”

I did not require to be much pressed to join myself to a party in which there was so pretty a girl as Miss Greene, and so attractive a woman as Mrs. Greene. I therefore accepted the invitation readily, and went away to make my toilet. As I did so I passed the door of Mr. Greene’s room, and saw the long file of boxes being borne into the centre of it.

I spent a pleasant evening, with, however, one or two slight drawbacks. As to old Greene himself, he was all that was amiable; but then he was nervous, full of cares, and somewhat apt to be a bore. He wanted information on a thousand points, and did not seem to understand that a young man might prefer the conversation of his daughter to his own. Not that he showed any solicitude to prevent conversation on the part of his daughter. I should have been perfectly at liberty to talk to either of the ladies had he not wished to engross all my attention to himself. He also had found it dull to be alone with his wife and daughter for the last six weeks.

He was a small spare man, probably over fifty years of age, who gave me to understand that he had lived in London all his life, and had made his own fortune in the city. What he had done in the city to make his fortune he did not say. Had I come across him there I should no doubt have found him to be a sharp man of business, quite competent to teach me many a useful lesson of which I was as ignorant as an infant. Had he caught me on the Exchange, or at Lloyd’s, or in the big room of the Bank of England, I should have been compelled to ask him everything. Now, in this little town under the Alps, he was as much lost as I should have been in Lombard Street, and was ready enough to look to me for information. I was by no means chary in giving him my counsel, and imparting to him my ideas on things in general in that part of the world;—only I should have preferred to be allowed to make myself civil to his daughter.

In the course of conversation it was mentioned by him that they intended to stay a few days at Bellaggio, which, as all the world knows, is a central spot on the

lake of Como, and a favourite resting-place for travellers. There are three lakes which all meet here, and to all of which we give the name of Como. They are properly called the lakes of Como, Colico, and Lecco; and Bellaggio is the spot at which their waters join each other. I had half made up my mind to sleep there one night on my road into Italy, and now, on hearing their purpose, I declared that such was my intention.

"How very pleasant," said Mrs. Greene. "It will be quite delightful to have some one to show us how to settle ourselves, for really—"

"My dear, I'm sure you can't say that you ever have much trouble."

"And who does then, Mr. Greene? I am sure Sophonisba does not do much to help me."

"You won't let me," said Sophonisba, whose name I had not before heard. Her papa had called her Sophy in the yard of the inn. Sophonisba Greene! Sophonisba Robinson did not sound so badly in my ears, and I confess that I had tried the names together. Her papa had mentioned to me that he had no other child, and had mentioned also that he had made his fortune.

And then there was a little family contest as to the amount of travelling labour which fell to the lot of each of the party, during which I retired to one of the windows of the big front room in which we were sitting. And how much of this labour there is incidental to a tourist's pursuits! And how often these little contests do arise upon a journey! Who has ever travelled and not known them? I had taken up such a position at the window as might, I thought, have removed me out of hearing; but nevertheless from time to time a word would catch my ear about that precious box. "I have never taken *my* eyes off it since I left England," said Mrs. Greene, speaking quick, and with a considerable brogue superinduced by her energy. "Where would it have been at Basle if I had not been looking after it?" "Quite safe," said Sophonisba; "those large things always are safe." "Are they, Miss? That's all you know about it. I suppose your bonnet-box was quite safe when I found it on the platform at—at—I forget the name of the place?"

"Freidrichshafen," said Sophonisba, with almost an unnecessary amount of Teutonic skill in her pronunciation. "Well, mamma, you have told me of that at least twenty times." Soon after that, the ladies took them to their own rooms, weary with the travelling of two days and a night, and Mr. Greene went fast asleep in the very comfortless chair in which he was seated.

At four o’clock on the next morning we started on our journey.

> “Early to bed, and early to rise,
> Is the way to be healthy, and wealthy, and wise.”

We all know that lesson, and many of us believe in it; but if the lesson be true, the Italians ought to be the healthiest and wealthiest and wisest of all men and women. Three or four o’clock seems to them quite a natural hour for commencing the day’s work. Why we should have started from Chiavenna at four o’clock in order that we might be kept waiting for the boat an hour and a half on the little quay at Colico, I don’t know; but such was our destiny. There we remained an hour and a half; Mrs. Greene sitting pertinaciously on the one important box. She had designated it as being smaller than the others, and, as all the seven were now ranged in a row, I had an opportunity of comparing them. It was something smaller,—perhaps an inch less high, and an inch and a half shorter. She was a sharp woman, and observed my scrutiny. “I always know it,” she said in a loud whisper, “by this little hole in the canvas,” and she put her finger on a slight rent on one of the ends. “As for Greene, if one of those Italian brigands were to walk off with it on his shoulders, before his eyes, he wouldn’t be the wiser. How helpless you men are, Mr. Robinson!”

“It is well for us that we have women to look after us.”

“But you have got no one to look after you;—or perhaps you have left her behind?”

“No, indeed. I’m all alone in the world as yet. But it’s not my own fault. I have asked half a dozen.”

“Now, Mr. Robinson!” And in this way the time passed on the quay at Colico, till the boat came and took us away. I should have preferred to pass my time in making myself agreeable to the younger lady; but the younger lady stood aloof, turning up her nose, as I thought, at her mamma.

I will not attempt to describe the scenery about Colico. The little town itself is one of the vilest places under the sun, having no accommodation for travellers, and being excessively unhealthy; but there is very little either north or south of the Alps,—and, perhaps, I may add, very little elsewhere,—to beat the beauty of the mountains which cluster round the head of the lake. When we had sat upon those boxes that hour and a half, we were taken on board the steamer, which had been lying off a little way from the shore, and then we commenced our journey.

Of course there was a good deal of exertion and care necessary in getting the packages off from the shore on to the boat, and I observed that any one with half an eye in his head might have seen that the mental anxiety expended on that one box which was marked by the small hole in the canvas far exceeded that which was extended to all the other six boxes. "They deserve that it should be stolen," I said to myself, "for being such fools." And then we went down to breakfast in the cabin.

"I suppose it must be safe," said Mrs. Greene to me, ignoring the fact that the cabin waiter understood English, although she had just ordered some veal cutlets in that language.

"As safe as a church," I replied, not wishing to give much apparent importance to the subject.

"They can't carry it off here," said Mr. Greene. But he was innocent of any attempt at a joke, and was looking at me with all his eyes.

"They might throw it overboard," said Sophonisba. I at once made up my mind that she could not be a good-natured girl. The moment that breakfast was over, Mrs. Greene returned again up-stairs, and I found her seated on one of the benches near the funnel, from which she could keep her eyes fixed upon the box. "When one is obliged to carry about one's jewels with one, one must be careful, Mr. Robinson," she said to me apologetically. But I was becoming tired of the box, and the funnel was hot and unpleasant, therefore I left her.

I had made up my mind that Sophonisba was ill-natured; but, nevertheless, she was pretty, and I now went through some little manœuvres with the object of getting into conversation with her. This I soon did, and was surprised by her frankness. "How tired you must be of mamma and her box," she said to me. To this I made some answer, declaring that I was rather interested than otherwise in the safety of the precious trunk. "It makes me sick," said Sophonisba, "to hear her go on in that way to a perfect stranger. I heard what she said about her jewellery."

"It is natural she should be anxious," I said, "seeing that it contains so much that is valuable."

"Why did she bring them?" said Sophonisba. "She managed to live very well without jewels till papa married her, about a year since; and now she can't travel about for a month without lugging them with her everywhere. I should be so

glad if some one would steal them.”

“But all Mr. Greene’s money is there also.”

“I don’t want papa to be bothered, but I declare I wish the box might be lost for a day or so. She is such a fool; don’t you think so, Mr. Robinson?”

At this time it was just fourteen hours since I first had made their acquaintance in the yard of Conradi’s hotel, and of those fourteen hours more than half had been passed in bed. I must confess that I looked upon Sophonisba as being almost more indiscreet than her mother-in-law. Nevertheless, she was not stupid, and I continued my conversation with her the greatest part of the way down the lake towards Bellaggio.

These steamers which run up and down the lake of Como and the Lago Maggiore, put out their passengers at the towns on the banks of the water by means of small rowing-boats, and the persons who are about to disembark generally have their own articles ready to their hands when their turn comes for leaving the steamer. As we came near to Bellaggio, I looked up my own portmanteau, and, pointing to the beautiful wood-covered hill that stands at the fork of the waters, told my friend Greene that he was near his destination. “I am very glad to hear it,” said he, complacently, but he did not at the moment busy himself about the boxes. Then the small boat ran up alongside the steamer, and the passengers for Como and Milan crowded up the side.

“We have to go in that boat,” I said to Greene.

“Nonsense!” he exclaimed.

“Oh, but we have.”

“What! put our boxes into that boat,” said Mrs. Greene. “Oh dear! Here, boatman! there are seven of these boxes, all in white like this,” and she pointed to the one that had the hole in the canvas. “Make haste. And there are two bags, and my dressing case, and Mr. Greene’s portmanteau. Mr. Greene, where is your portmanteau?”

The boatman whom she addressed, no doubt did not understand a word of English, but nevertheless he knew what she meant, and, being well accustomed to the work, got all the luggage together in an incredibly small number of moments.

“If you will get down into the boat,” I said, “I will see that the luggage follows you before I leave the deck.”

“I won’t stir,” she said, “till I see that box lifted down. Take care; you’ll let it fall into the lake. I know you will.”

“I wish they would,” Sophonisba whispered into my ear.

Mr. Greene said nothing, but I could see that his eyes were as anxiously fixed on what was going on as were those of his wife. At last, however, the three Greens were in the boat, as also were all the packages. Then I followed them, my portmanteau having gone down before me, and we pushed off for Bellaggio. Up to this period most of the attendants around us had understood a word or two of English, but now it would be well if we could find some one to whose ears French would not be unfamiliar. As regarded Mr. Greene and his wife, they, I found, must give up all conversation, as they knew nothing of any language but their own. Sophonisba could make herself understood in French, and was quite at home, as she assured me, in German. And then the boat was beached on the shore at Bellaggio, and we all had to go again to work with the object of getting ourselves lodged at the hotel which overlooks the water.

I had learned before that the Greenes were quite free from any trouble in this respect, for their rooms had been taken for them before they left England. Trusting to this, Mrs. Greene gave herself no inconsiderable airs the moment her foot was on the shore, and ordered the people about as though she were the Lady Paramount of Bellaggio. Italians, however, are used to this from travellers of a certain description. They never resent such conduct, but simply put it down in the bill with the other articles. Mrs. Greene’s words on this occasion were innocent enough, seeing that they were English; but had I been that head waiter who came down to the beach with his nice black shiny hair, and his napkin under his arm, I should have thought her manner very insolent.

Indeed, as it was, I did think so, and was inclined to be angry with her. She was to remain for some time at Bellaggio, and therefore it behoved her, as she thought, to assume the character of the grand lady at once. Hitherto she had been willing enough to do the work, but now she began to order about Mr. Greene and Sophonisba; and, as it appeared to me, to order me about also. I did not quite enjoy this; so leaving her still among her luggage and satellites, I walked up to the hotel to see about my own bed-room. I had some seltzer water, stood at the window for three or four minutes, and then walked up and down the

room. But still the Greenes were not there. As I had put in at Bellaggio solely with the object of seeing something more of Sophonisba, it would not do for me to quarrel with them, or to allow them so to settle themselves in their private sitting-room, that I should be excluded. Therefore I returned again to the road by which they must come up, and met the procession near the house.

Mrs. Greene was leading it with great majesty, the waiter with the shiny hair walking by her side to point out to her the way. Then came all the luggage,—each porter carrying a white canvas-covered box. That which was so valuable no doubt was carried next to Mrs. Greene, so that she might at a moment's notice put her eye upon the well-known valuable rent. I confess that I did not observe the hole as the train passed by me, nor did I count the number of the boxes. Seven boxes, all alike, are very many; and then they were followed by three other men with the inferior articles,—Mr. Greene's portmanteau, the carpetbag, &e., &c. At the tail of the line, I found Mr. Greene, and behind him Sophonisba. "All your fatigues will be over now," I said to the gentleman, thinking it well not to be too particular in my attentions to his daughter. He was panting beneath a terrible great-coat, having forgotten that the shores of an Italian lake are not so cold as the summits of the Alps, and did not answer me. "I'm sure I hope so," said Sophonisba. "And I shall advise papa not to go any farther unless he can persuade Mrs. Greene to send her jewels home." "Sophy, my dear," he said, "for Heaven's sake let us have a little peace since we are here." From all which I gathered that Mr. Green had not been fortunate in his second matrimonial adventure. We then made our way slowly up to the hotel, having been altogether distanced by the porters, and when we reached the house we found that the different packages were already being carried away through the house, some this way and some that. Mrs. Green, the meanwhile, was talking loudly at the door of her own sitting-room.

"Mr. Greene," she said, as soon as she saw her heavily oppressed spouse,—for the noonday sun was up,—"Mr. Greene, where are you?"

"Here, my dear," and Mr. Greene threw himself panting into the corner of a sofa.

"A little seltzer water and brandy," I suggested. Mr. Greene's inmost heart leaped at the hint, and nothing that his remonstrant wife could say would induce him to move, until he had enjoyed the delicious draught. In the mean time the box with the hole in the canvas had been lost.

Yes; when we came to look into matters, to count the packages, and to find out

where we were, the box with the hole in the canvas was not there. Or, at any rate, Mrs. Greene said it was not there. I worked hard to look it up, and even went into Sophonisba's bed-room in my search. In Sophonisba's bed-room there was but one canvas-covered box. "That is my own," said she, "and it is all that I have, except this bag."

"Where on earth can it be?" said I, sitting down on the trunk in question. At the moment I almost thought that she had been instrumental in hiding it.

"How am I to know?" she answered; and I fancied that even she was dismayed. "What a fool that woman is!"

"The box must be in the house," I said.

"Do find it, for papa's sake; there's a good fellow. He will be so wretched without his money. I heard him say that he had only two pounds in his purse."

"Oh, I can let him have money to go on with," I answered grandly. And then I went off to prove that I was a good fellow, and searched throughout the house. Two white boxes had by order been left downstairs, as they would not be needed; and these two were in a large cupboard of the hall, which was used expressly for stowing away luggage. And then there were three in Mrs. Greene's bed-room, which had been taken there as containing the wardrobe which she would require while remaining at Bellaggio. I searched every one of these myself to see if I could find the hole in the canvas. But the hole in the canvas was not there. And let me count as I would, I could make out only six. Now there certainly had been seven on board the steamer, though I could not swear that I had seen the seven put into the small boat.

"Mr. Greene," said the lady standing in the middle of her remaining treasures, all of which were now open, "you are worth nothing when travelling. Were you not behind?" But Mr. Greene's mind was full, and he did not answer.

"It has been stolen before your very eyes," she continued.

"Nonsense, mamma," said Sophonisba. "If ever it came out of the steamer it certainly came into the house."

"I saw it out of the steamer," said Mrs. Greene, "and it certainly is not in the house. Mr. Robinson, may I trouble you to send for the police?—at once, if you please, sir."

I had been at Bellaggio twice before, but nevertheless I was ignorant of their system of police. And then, again, I did not know what was the Italian for the word.

“I will speak to the landlord,” I said.

“If you will have the goodness to send for the police at once, I will be obliged to you.” And as she thus reiterated her command, she stamped with her foot upon the floor.

“There are no police at Bellaggio,” said Sophonisba.

“What on earth shall I do for money to go on with?” said Mr. Greene, looking piteously up to the ceiling, and shaking both his hands.

And now the whole house was in an uproar, including not only the landlord, his wife and daughters, and all the servants, but also every other visitor at the hotel. Mrs. Greene was not a lady who hid either her glories or her griefs under a bushel, and, though she spoke only in English, she soon made her protestations sufficiently audible. She protested loudly that she had been robbed, and that she had been robbed since she left the steamer. The box had come on shore; of that she was quite certain. If the landlord had any regard either for his own character or for that of his house, he would ascertain before an hour was over where it was, and who had been the thief. She would give him an hour. And then she sat herself down; but in two minutes she was up again, vociferating her wrongs as loudly as ever. All this was filtered through me and Sophonisba to the waiter in French, and from the waiter to the landlord; but the lady’s gestures required no translation to make them intelligible, and the state of her mind on the matter was, I believe, perfectly well understood.

Mr. Greene I really did pity. His feelings of dismay seemed to be quite as deep, but his sorrow and solicitude were repressed into more decorum. “What am I to do for money?” he said. “I have not a shilling to go on with!” And he still looked up at the ceiling.

“You must send to England,” said Sophonisba.

“It will take a month,” he replied.

“Mr. Robinson will let you have what you want at present,” added Sophonisba. Now I certainly had said so, and had meant it at the time. But my whole travelling store did not exceed forty or fifty pounds, with which I was going on

to Venice, and then back to England through the Tyrol. Waiting a month for Mr. Greene's money from England might be even more inconvenient to me than to him. Then it occurred to me that the wants of the Greene family would be numerous and expensive, and that my small stock would go but a little way among so many. And what also if there had been no money and no jewels in that accursed box! I confess that at the moment such an idea did strike my mind. One hears of sharpers on every side committing depredations by means of most singular intrigues and contrivances. Might it not be possible that the whole batch of Greenes belonged to this order of society. It was a base idea, I own; but I confess that I entertained it for a moment.

I retired to my own room for a while that I might think over all the circumstances. There certainly had been seven boxes, and one had had a hole in the canvas. All the seven had certainly been on board the steamer. To so much I felt that I might safely swear. I had not counted the seven into the small boat, but on leaving the larger vessel I had looked about the deck to see that none of the Greene trappings were forgotten. If left on the steamer, it had been so left through an intent on the part of some one there employed. It was quite possible that the contents of the box had been ascertained through the imprudence of Mrs. Greene, and that it had been conveyed away so that it might be rifled at Como. As to Mrs. Greene's assertion that all the boxes had been put into the small boat, I thought nothing of it. The people at Bellaggio could not have known which box to steal, nor had there been time to concoct the plan in carrying the boxes up to the hotel. I came at last to this conclusion, that the missing trunk had either been purloined and carried on to Como,—in which case it would be necessary to lose no time in going after it; or that it had been put out of sight in some uncommonly clever way, by the Greenes themselves, as an excuse for borrowing as much money as they could raise and living without payment of their bills. With reference to the latter hypothesis, I declared to myself that Greene did not look like a swindler; but as to Mrs. Greene—! I confess that I did not feel so confident in regard to her.

Charity begins at home, so I proceeded to make myself comfortable in my room, feeling almost certain that I should not be able to leave Bellaggio on the following morning. I had opened my portmanteau when I first arrived, leaving it open on the floor as is my wont. Some people are always being robbed, and are always locking up everything; while others wander safe over the world and never lock up anything. For myself, I never turn a key anywhere, and no one ever purloins from me even a handkerchief. Cantabit vacuus—, and I am always

sufficiently vacuus. Perhaps it is that I have not a handkerchief worth the stealing. It is your heavy-laden, suspicious, mal-adroit Greenes that the thieves attack. I now found out that the accommodating Boots, who already knew my ways, had taken my travelling gear into a dark recess which was intended to do for a dressing-room, and had there spread my portmanteau open upon some table or stool in the corner. It was a convenient arrangement, and there I left it during the whole period of my sojourn.

Mrs. Greene had given the landlord an hour to find the box, and during that time the landlord, the landlady, their three daughters, and all the servants in the house certainly did exert themselves to the utmost. Half a dozen times they came to my door, but I was luxuriating in a washing-tub, making up for that four-o'clock start from Chiavenna. I assured them, however, that the box was not there, and so the search passed by. At the end of the hour I went back to the Greenes according to promise, having resolved that some one must be sent on to Como to look after the missing article.

There was no necessity to knock at their sitting-room door, for it was wide open. I walked in, and found Mrs. Greene still engaged in attacking the landlord, while all the porters who had carried the luggage up to the house were standing round. Her voice was loud above the others, but, luckily for them all, she was speaking English. The landlord, I saw, was becoming sulky. He spoke in Italian, and we none of us understood him, but I gathered that he was declining to do anything further. The box, he was certain, had never come out of the steamer. The Boots stood by interpreting into French, and, acting as second interpreter, I put it into English.

Mr. Greene, who was seated on the sofa, groaned audibly, but said nothing. Sophonisba, who was sitting by him, beat upon the floor with both her feet.

"Do you hear, Mr. Greene?" said she, turning to him. "Do you mean to allow that vast amount of property to be lost without an effort? Are you prepared to replace my jewels?"

"Her jewels!" said Sophonisba, looking up into my face. "Papa had to pay the bill for every stitch she had when he married her." These last words were so spoken as to be audible only by me, but her first exclamation was loud enough. Were they people for whom it would be worth my while to delay my journey, and put myself to serious inconvenience with reference to money?

A few minutes afterwards I found myself with Greene on the terrace before the

house. “What ought I to do?” said he.

“Go to Como,” said I, “and look after your box. I will remain here and go on board the return steamer. It may perhaps be there.”

“But I can’t speak a word of Italian,” said he.

“Take the Boots,” said I.

“But I can’t speak a word of French.” And then it ended in my undertaking to go to Como. I swear that the thought struck me that I might as well take my portmanteau with me, and cut and run when I got there. The Greenes were nothing to me.

I did not, however, do this. I made the poor man a promise, and I kept it. I took merely a dressing-bag, for I knew that I must sleep at Como; and, thus resolving to disarrange all my plans, I started. I was in the midst of beautiful scenery, but I found it quite impossible to draw any enjoyment from it;—from that or from anything around me. My whole mind was given up to anathemas against this odious box, as to which I had undoubtedly heavy cause of complaint. What was the box to me? I went to Como by the afternoon steamer, and spent a long dreary evening down on the steamboat quays searching everywhere, and searching in vain. The boat by which we had left Colico had gone back to Colico, but the people swore that nothing had been left on board it. It was just possible that such a box might have gone on to Milan with the luggage of other passengers.

I slept at Como, and on the following morning I went on to Milan. There was no trace of the box to be found in that city. I went round to every hotel and travelling office, but could hear nothing of it. Parties had gone to Venice, and Florence, and Bologna, and any of them might have taken the box. No one, however, remembered it; and I returned back to Como, and thence to Bellaggio, reaching the latter place at nine in the evening, disappointed, weary, and cross.

“Has Monsieur found the accursed trunk?” said the Bellaggio Boots, meeting me on the quay.

“In the name of the—, no. Has it not turned up here?”

“Monsieur,” said the Boots, “we shall all be mad soon. The poor master, he is mad already.” And then I went up to the house.

“My jewels!” shouted Mrs. Greene, rushing to me with her arms stretched out as soon as she heard my step in the corridor. I am sure that she would have embraced me had I found the box. I had not, however, earned any such reward. “I can hear nothing of the box either at Como or Milan,” I said.

“Then what on earth am I to do for my money?” said Mr. Greene.

I had had neither dinner nor supper, but the elder Greenes did not care for that. Mr. Greene sat silent in despair, and Mrs. Greene stormed about the room in her anger. “I am afraid you are very tired,” said Sophonisba.

“I am tired, and hungry, and thirsty,” said I. I was beginning to get angry, and to think myself ill used. And that idea as to a family of swindlers became strong again. Greene had borrowed ten napoleons from me before I started for Como, and I had spent above four in my fruitless journey to that place and Milan. I was beginning to fear that my whole purpose as to Venice and the Tyrol would be destroyed; and I had promised to meet friends at Innspruck, who,—who were very much preferable to the Greenes. As events turned out, I did meet them. Had I failed in this, the present Mrs. Robinson would not have been sitting opposite to me.

I went to my room and dressed myself, and then Sophonisba presided over the tea-table for me. “What are we to do?” she asked me in a confidential whisper.

“Wait for money from England.”

“But they will think we are all sharpers,” she said; “and upon my word I do not wonder at it from the way in which that woman goes on.” She then leaned forward, resting her elbow on the table and her face on her hand, and told me a long history of all their family discomforts. Her papa was a very good sort of man, only he had been made a fool of by that intriguing woman, who had been left without a sixpence with which to bless herself. And now they had nothing but quarrels and misery. Papa did not always got the worst of it;—papa could rouse himself sometimes; only now he was beaten down and cowed by the loss of his money. This whispering confidence was very nice in its way, seeing that Sophonisba was a pretty girl; but the whole matter seemed to be full of suspicion.

“If they did not want to take you in in one way, they did in another,” said the present Mrs. Robinson, when I told the story to her at Innspruck. I beg that it may be understood that at the time of my meeting the Greenes I was not engaged

to the present Mrs. Robinson, and was open to make any matrimonial engagement that might have been pleasing to me.

On the next morning, after breakfast, we held a council of war. I had been informed that Mr. Greene had made a fortune, and was justified in presuming him to be a rich man. It seemed to me, therefore, that his course was easy. Let him wait at Bellaggio for more money, and when he returned home, let him buy Mrs. Greene more jewels. A poor man always presumes that a rich man is indifferent about his money. But in truth a rich man never is indifferent about his money, and poor Greene looked very blank at my proposition.

“Do you mean to say that it’s gone for ever?” he asked.

“I’ll not leave the country without knowing more about it,” said Mrs. Greene.

“It certainly is very odd,” said Sophonisba. Even Sophonisba seemed to think that I was too off-hand.

“It will be a month before I can get money, and my bill here will be something tremendous,” said Greene.

“I wouldn’t pay them a farthing till I got my box,” said Mrs. Greene.

“That’s nonsense,” said Sophonisba. And so it was. “Hold your tongue, Miss!” said the step-mother.

“Indeed, I shall not hold my tongue,” said the step-daughter. Poor Greene! He had lost more than his box within the last twelve months; for, as I had learned in that whispered conversation over the tea-table with Sophonisba; this was in reality her papa’s marriage trip.

Another day was now gone, and we all went to bed. Had I not been very foolish I should have had myself called at five in the morning, and have gone away by the early boat, leaving my ten napoleons behind me. But, unfortunately, Sophonisba had exacted a promise from me that I would not do this, and thus all chance of spending a day or two in Venice was lost to me. Moreover, I was thoroughly fatigued, and almost glad of any excuse which would allow me to lie in bed on the following morning. I did lie in bed till nine o’clock, and then found the Greenes at breakfast.

“Let us go and look at the Serbelloni Gardens,” said I, as soon as the silent meal was over; “or take a boat over to the Sommariva Villa.”

“I should like it so much,” said Sophonisba.

“We will do nothing of the kind till I have found my property,” said Mrs. Greene. “Mr. Robinson, what arrangement did you make yesterday with the police at Como?”

“The police at Como?” I said. “I did not go to the police.”

“Not go to the police? And do you mean to say that I am to be robbed of my jewels and no efforts made for redress? Is there no such thing as a constable in this wretched country? Mr. Greene, I do insist upon it that you at once go to the nearest British consul.”

“I suppose I had better write home for money,” said he.

“And do you mean to say that you haven’t written yet?” said I, probably with some acrimony in my voice.

“You needn’t scold papa,” said Sophonisba.

“I don’t know what I am to do,” said Mr. Greene, and he began walking up and down the room; but still he did not call for pen and ink, and I began again to feel that he was a swindler. Was it possible that a man of business, who had made his fortune in London, should allow his wife to keep all her jewels in a box, and carry about his own money in the same?

“I don’t see why you need be so very unhappy, papa,” said Sophonisba. “Mr. Robinson, I’m sure, will let you have whatever money you may want at present.” This was pleasant!

“And will Mr. Robinson return me my jewels which were lost, I must say, in a great measure, through his carelessness,” said Mrs. Greene. This was pleasanter!

“Upon my word, Mrs. Greene, I must deny that,” said I, jumping up. “What on earth could I have done more than I did do? I have been to Milan and nearly fagged myself to death.”

“Why didn’t you bring a policeman back with you?”

“You would tell everybody on board the boat what there was in it,” said I.

“I told nobody but you,” she answered.

“I suppose you mean to imply that I’ve taken the box,” I rejoined. So that on this, the third or fourth day of our acquaintance, we did not go on together quite pleasantly.

But what annoyed me, perhaps, the most, was the confidence with which it seemed to be Mr. Greene’s intention to lean upon my resources. He certainly had not written home yet, and had taken my ten napoleons, as one friend may take a few shillings from another when he finds that he has left his own silver on his dressing-table. What could he have wanted of ten napoleons? He had alleged the necessity of paying the porters, but the few francs he had had in his pocket would have been enough for that. And now Sophonisba was ever and again prompt in her assurances that he need not annoy himself about money, because I was at his right hand. I went upstairs into my own room, and counting all my treasures, found that thirty-six pounds and some odd silver was the extent of my wealth. With that I had to go, at any rate, as far as Innspruck, and from thence back to London. It was quite impossible that I should make myself responsible for the Greenes’ bill at Bellaggio.

We dined early, and after dinner, according to a promise made in the morning, Sophonisba ascended with me into the Serbelloni Gardens, and walked round the terraces on that beautiful hill which commands the view of the three lakes. When we started I confess that I would sooner have gone alone, for I was sick of the Greenes in my very soul. We had had a terrible day. The landlord had been sent for so often, that he refused to show himself again. The landlady—though Italians of that class are always courteous—had been so driven that she snapped her fingers in Mrs. Greene’s face. The three girls would not show themselves. The waiters kept out of the way as much as possible; and the Boots, in confidence, abused them to me behind their back. “Monsieur,” said the Boots, “do you think there ever was such a box?”

“Perhaps not,” said I; and yet I knew that I had seen it.

I would, therefore, have preferred to walk without Sophonisba; but that now was impossible. So I determined that I would utilise the occasion by telling her of my present purpose. I had resolved to start on the following day, and it was now necessary to make my friends understand that it was not in my power to extend to them any further pecuniary assistance.

Sophonisba, when we were on the hill, seemed to have forgotten the box, and to be willing that I should forget it also. But this was impossible. When, therefore,

she told me how sweet it was to escape from that terrible woman, and leaned on my arm with all the freedom of old acquaintance, I was obliged to cut short the pleasure of the moment.

“I hope your father has written that letter,” said I.

“He means to write it from Milan. We know you want to get on, so we purpose to leave here the day after to-morrow.”

“Oh!” said I thinking of the bill immediately, and remembering that Mrs. Greene had insisted on having champagne for dinner.

“And if anything more is to be done about the nasty box, it may be done there,” continued Sophonisba.

“But I must go to-morrow,” said I, “at 5 a.m.”

“Nonsense,” said Sophonisba. “Go to-morrow, when I,—I mean we,—are going on the next day!”

“And I might as well explain,” said I, gently dropping the hand that was on my arm, “that I find,—I find it will be impossible for me—to—to—”

“To what?”

“To advance Mr. Greene any more money just at present.” Then Sophonisba’s arm dropped all at once, and she exclaimed, “Oh, Mr. Robinson!”

After all, there was a certain hard good sense about Miss Greene which would have protected her from my evil thoughts had I known all the truth. I found out afterwards that she was a considerable heiress, and, in spite of the opinion expressed by the present Mrs. Robinson when Miss Walker, I do not for a moment think she would have accepted me had I offered to her.

“You are quite right not to embarrass yourself,” she said, when I explained to her my immediate circumstances; “but why did you make papa an offer which you cannot perform? He must remain here now till he hears from England. Had you explained it all at first, the ten napoleons would have carried us to Milan.” This was all true, and yet I thought it hard upon me.

It was evident to me now, that Sophonisba was prepared to join her step-mother in thinking that I had ill-treated them, and I had not much doubt that I should find Mr. Greene to be of the same opinion. There was very little more said

between us during the walk, and when we reached the hotel at seven or half-past seven o'clock, I merely remarked that I would go in and wish her father and mother good-bye. "I suppose you will drink tea with us," said Sophonisba, and to this I assented.

I went into my own room, and put all my things into my portmanteau, for according to the custom, which is invariable in Italy when an early start is premeditated, the Boots was imperative in his demand that the luggage should be ready over night. I then went to the Greene's sitting-room, and found that the whole party was now aware of my intentions.

"So you are going to desert us," said Mrs. Greene.

"I must go on upon my journey," I pleaded in a weak apologetic voice.

"Go on upon your journey, sir!" said Mrs. Greene. "I would not for a moment have you put yourself to inconvenience on our account." And yet I had already lost fourteen napoleons, and given up all prospect of going to Venice!

"Mr. Robinson is certainly right not to break his engagement with Miss Walker," said Sophonisba. Now I had said not a word about an engagement with Miss Walker, having only mentioned incidentally that she would be one of the party at Innspruck. "But," continued she, "I think he should not have misled us." And in this way we enjoyed our evening meal.

I was just about to shake hands with them all, previous to my final departure from their presence, when the Boots came into the room.

"I'll leave the portmanteau till to-morrow morning," said he.

"All right," said I.

"Because," said he, "there will be such a crowd of things in the hall. The big trunk I will take away now."

"Big trunk,—what big trunk?"

"The trunk with your rug over it, on which your portmanteau stood."

I looked round at Mr., Mrs., and Miss Greene, and saw that they were all looking at me. I looked round at them, and as their eyes met mine I felt that I turned as red as fire. I immediately jumped up and rushed away to my own room, hearing as I went that all their steps were following me. I rushed to the inner recess,

pulled down the portmanteau, which still remained in its old place, tore away my own carpet rug which covered the support beneath it, and there saw—a white canvas-covered box, with a hole in the canvas on the side next to me!

“It is my box,” said Mrs. Greene, pushing me away, as she hurried up and put her finger within the rent.

“It certainly does look like it,” said Mr. Greene, peering over his wife’s shoulder.

“There’s no doubt about the box,” said Sophonisba.

“Not the least in life,” said I, trying to assume an indifferent look.

“Mon Dieu!” said the Boots.

“Corpo di Baccho!” exclaimed the landlord, who had now joined the party.

“Oh—h—h—h—!” screamed Mrs. Greene, and then she threw herself back on to my bed, and shrieked hysterically.

There was no doubt whatsoever about the fact. There was the lost box, and there it had been during all those tedious hours of unavailing search. While I was suffering all that fatigue in Milan, spending my precious zwanzigers in driving about from one hotel to another, the box had been safe, standing in my own room at Bellaggio, hidden by my own rug. And now that it was found everybody looked at me as though it were all my fault.

Mrs. Greene’s eyes, when she had done being hysterical, were terrible, and Sophonisba looked at me as though I were a convicted thief.

“Who put the box here?” I said, turning fiercely upon the Boots.

“I did,” said the Boots, “by Monsieur’s express order.”

“By my order?” I exclaimed.

“Certainly,” said the Boots.

“Corpo di Baccho!” said the landlord, and he also looked at me as though I were a thief. In the mean time the landlady and the three daughters had clustered round Mrs. Greene, administering to her all manner of Italian consolation. The box, and the money, and the jewels were after all a reality; and much incivility can be forgiven to a lady who has really lost her jewels, and has really found them again.

There and then there arose a hurly-burly among us as to the manner in which the odious trunk found its way into my room. Had anybody been just enough to consider the matter coolly, it must have been quite clear that I could not have ordered it there. When I entered the hotel, the boxes were already being lugged about, and I had spoken a word to no one concerning them. That traitorous Boots had done it,—no doubt without malice prepense; but he had done it; and now that the Greenes were once more known as moneyed people, he turned upon me, and told me to my face, that I had desired that box to be taken to my own room as part of my own luggage!

“My dear,” said Mr. Greene, turning to his wife, “you should never mention the contents of your luggage to any one.”

“I never will again,” said Mrs. Greene, with a mock repentant air, “but I really thought—”

“One never can be sure of sharpers,” said Mr. Greene.

“That’s true,” said Mrs. Greene.

“After all, it may have been accidental,” said Sophonisba, on hearing which good-natured surmise both papa and mamma Greene shook their suspicious heads.

I was resolved to say nothing then. It was all but impossible that they should really think that I had intended to steal their box; nor, if they did think so, would it have become me to vindicate myself before the landlord and all his servants. I stood by therefore in silence, while two of the men raised the trunk, and joined the procession which followed it as it was carried out of my room into that of the legitimate owner. Everybody in the house was there by that time, and Mrs. Greene, enjoying the triumph, by no means grudged them the entrance into her sitting-room. She had felt that she was suspected, and now she was determined that the world of Bellaggio should know how much she was above suspicion. The box was put down upon two chairs, the supporters who had borne it retiring a pace each. Mrs. Greene then advanced proudly with the selected key, and Mr. Greene stood by at her right shoulder, ready to receive his portion of the hidden treasure. Sophonisba was now indifferent, and threw herself on the sofa, while I walked up and down the room thoughtfully,—meditating what words I should say when I took my last farewell of the Greenes. But as I walked I could see what occurred. Mrs. Greene opened the box, and displayed to view the ample

folds of a huge yellow woollen dressing-down. I could fancy that she would not willingly have exhibited this article of her toilet, had she not felt that its existence would speedily be merged in the presence of the glories which were to follow. This had merely been the padding at the top of the box. Under that lay a long papier-maché case, and in that were all her treasures. “Ah, they are safe,” she said, opening the lid and looking upon her tawdry pearls and carbuncles.

Mr. Greene, in the mean time, well knowing the passage for his hand, had dived down to the very bottom of the box, and seized hold of a small canvas bag. “It is here,” said he, dragging it up, “and as far as I can tell, as yet, the knot has not been untied.” Whereupon he sat himself down by Sophonisba, and employing her to assist him in holding them, began to count his rolls. “They are all right,” said he; and he wiped the perspiration from his brow.

I had not yet made up my mind in what manner I might best utter my last words among them so as to maintain the dignity of my character, and now I was standing over against Mr. Greene with my arms folded on my breast. I had on my face a frown of displeasure, which I am able to assume upon occasions, but I had not yet determined what words I would use. After all, perhaps, it might be as well that I should leave them without any last words.

“Greene, my dear,” said the lady, “pay the gentleman his ten napoleons.”

“Oh yes, certainly;” whereupon Mr. Greene undid one of the rolls and extracted eight sovereigns. “I believe that will make it right, sir,” said he, handing them to me.

I took the gold, slipped it with an indifferent air into my waistcoat pocket, and then refolded my arms across my breast.

“Papa,” said Sophonisba, in a very audible whisper, “Mr. Robinson went for you to Como. Indeed, I believe he says he went to Milan.”

“Do not let that be mentioned,” said I.

“By all means pay him his expenses,” said Mrs. Greene; “I would not owe him anything for worlds.”

“He should be paid,” said Sophonisba.

“Oh, certainly,” said Mr. Greene. And he at once extracted another sovereign, and tendered it to me in the face of the assembled multitude.

This was too much! “Mr. Greene,” said I, “I intended to be of service to you when I went to Milan, and you are very welcome to the benefit of my intentions. The expense of that journey, whatever may be its amount, is my own affair.” And I remained standing with my closed arms.

“We will be under no obligation to him,” said Mrs. Greene; “and I shall insist on his taking the money.”

“The servant will put it on his dressing-table,” said Sophonisba. And she handed the sovereign to the Boots, giving him instructions.

“Keep it yourself, Antonio,” I said. Whereupon the man chucked it to the ceiling with his thumb, caught it as it fell, and with a well-satisfied air, dropped it into the recesses of his pocket. The air of the Greenes was also well satisfied, for they felt that they had paid me in full for all my services.

And now, with many obsequious bows and assurances of deep respect, the landlord and his family withdrew from the room. “Was there anything else they could do for Mrs. Greene?” Mrs. Greene was all affability. She had shown her jewels to the girls, and allowed them to express their admiration in pretty Italian superlatives. There was nothing else she wanted to-night. She was very happy and liked Bellaggio. She would stay yet a week, and would make herself quite happy. And, though none of them understood a word that the other said, each understood that things were now rose-coloured, and so with scrapings, bows, and grinning smiles, the landlord and all his myrmidons withdrew. Mr. Greene was still counting his money, sovereign by sovereign, and I was still standing with my folded arms upon my bosom.

“I believe I may now go,” said I.

“Good night,” said Mrs. Greene.

“Adieu,” said Sophonisba.

“I have the pleasure of wishing you good-bye,” said Mr. Greene.

And then I walked out of the room. After all, what was the use of saying anything? And what could I say that would have done me any service? If they were capable of thinking me a thief,—which they certainly did,—nothing that I could say would remove the impression. Nor, as I thought, was it suitable that I should defend myself from such an imputation. What were the Greenes to me? So I walked slowly out of the room, and never again saw one of the family from

that day to this.

As I stood upon the beach the next morning, while my portmanteau was being handed into the boat, I gave the Boots five zwanzigers. I was determined to show him that I did not condescend to feel anger against him.

He took the money, looked into my face, and then whispered to me, “Why did you not give me a word of notice beforehand?” he said, and winked his eye. He was evidently a thief, and took me to be another;—but what did it matter?

I went thence to Milan, in which city I had no heart to look at anything; thence to Verona, and so over the pass of the Brenner to Innspruck. When I once found myself near to my dear friends the Walkers I was again a happy man; and I may safely declare that, though a portion of my journey was so troublesome and unfortunate, I look back upon that tour as the happiest and the luckiest epoch of my life.

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