

THE WESTERN CAROLINIAN.

THE POWERS NOT DELEGATED TO THE UNITED STATES BY THE CONSTITUTION, NOR PROMISED BY IT TO THE STATES, ARE RESERVED TO THE STATES RESPECTIVELY, OR TO THE PEOPLE.—Amendments to the Constitution, Article X.

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LIBERTINO GENUCHI.

AS ITALIAN STORY.
[Continued from our last.]

There is nothing more destructive of right government in Italy than the murderer who her churches afford to the most atrocious of criminals—once within her pale, and they are safe.—It engenders crime, since it affords the murderer a hope of escaping; and it diminishes the idea of the atrocity of the crime, to see the most hardened of wretches fed by the priest's hands, whilst many a starving man amongst the lazzaroni without is pining for the waif of bread.

Libertino fled to the portal of the church of La Vergine Maria del Norte, and for three days and nights did he remain there, braving the sullen menace of the brothers of her he had destroyed; for he knew that he was secure from danger. To attempt to paint the workings of his breast would be in vain; he had the triumph of revenge, but he had also its reward! His nerves were palsied.—The eye of fancy conjured up each hour some dire image of terror to his disordered imagination. Conscience, like a scorpion, clung upon his crime; and reflection, like a slow, still stream of water, kept dropping on his heart, to scald and weigh it down! Inactivity to him became insupportable—he determined on braving the fiercest danger rather than endure the agony he felt; and on the fourth night fled from his sanctuary, escaped the vigilance of those who watched for him, and endeavored, on the mountain of Rapallo, to seek for the solace and society of his brother.

But Joanni was not there. He was too shrewd and calculating to endanger his brother's safety by joining him, since he might be watched, and a clue thus given to the authorities, who were on the alert to capture the murderer, and deliver him into the hands of justice. The excitement throughout the town was unprecedented. The family of Mazza were generally beloved, and many of the former admirers of the beauties of the hapless Catarina bound themselves, by a general and solemn compact, to avenge her death.

Libertino wandered through the day, the most wretched of human beings. The craving of nature he could satisfy with the chestnuts lying under the trees, and he could allay his pining thirst at the mountain stream; but what could cool the burning fever of his heart—his brain! He dreaded, yet almost longed, for the sight of his brother.—He began to fancy that he, too, had deserted him, after winding up his spirit to decide on and execute the heinous deed which had plunged him into the pale of hope of pardon.

As the sun descended, and night threw her shadow mantle over the earth, he betook himself to one of the huts (of which there are many in the forest) where the chestnuts are housed, previous to their importation into the town, for the purpose of being converted into flour, or for foreign consumption.

With a collection of stones, and some straw he found about the buildings, he formed a bed, on which he threw his fevered limbs; and, being exhausted from mental rather than bodily exertion, at last he slept. A gentle rustling from without aroused him about midnight. His guilty conscience, in every breeze and leaf, fully depicted an avenging enemy; and he started from the spot where he had lain himself, and placed his finger on the trigger of a pistol.—"Be it man or beast," he exclaimed aloud, "be aware!" A gentle whine, or rather bark of recognition, caused him to withdraw his hand; and Carlo, a fine St. Bernard dog, the faithful follower and messenger of his brother, leaped upon him with every mark of recognition and pleasure. He perceived a wallet tied round the body of the dog; he displaced, and opened it. The contents were meat, wine, and (what he valued more) a letter from his brother. With his hand and steel he struck a light, and set fire to a heap of dried leaves, by which he was enabled to decipher its contents.

"Be on your guard—remain as much as possible in concealment. My coming to you would only discover your retreat. Carlo, each night, shall be my messenger. The whole town is on the alert. To your just revenge they designate a murderer. Tomorrow a large body will commence a search for you; if you are in the Rapallo forest, you can elude their search; or, by a running fight, make them pay dearly for their temerity. The Mazza, your former friends, are now your sworn and most inveterate enemies. The French authorities are over here from Genoa, and several gen darmes have already arrived. In the hour of need I will not fail you."
JOANNI.

Libertino had no implements for writing; he enclosed, however, a small portion of powder and a bullet, to signify that he might require ammunition, and sent the faithful dog, by a signal, homeward.

He again resigned himself to sleep, but dreams of the most fearful import harassed him throughout the night; and with the sun he arose, and endeavored, by exercise, to shake off the sad impression they had left on his disordered mind.

He took his station on a point that commanded the outlet from the town, and where he was effectually concealed by a projecting fragment of a rock. About nine o'clock, he perceived that a considerable body were winding their way up the narrow track which led to the mountain. In flight, Libertino had little hope for safety. He must resist by force; and how to overcome the inequality of numbers by the strength of a single army was a matter of doubt, and, for the moment, of dismay; at first he almost resolved to oppose their first entrance into the forest, which they could only effect in single file, but he saw that he must then eventually be overpowered. He therefore determined on concealing himself among the trees, and, by hovering within gun-shot of the party, and occasionally knocking off its leaders, to endeavor to strike such dismay into them as would induce them to relinquish their pursuit. By the first discharge he brought down the two leaders of the party: he

knew it not, but they were the two elder brothers of her he had already sent to her last home!—Imagining that the shots were from a pistol—that their enemy must be near—the whole body broke with fury into the woods. For three hours did Libertino keep up a running fight, according to the direction of his brother; nor did the infuriated townsmen relinquish their pursuit, until twenty-seven of their number had fallen victims to Libertino's unerring aim. That this sad havoc had been effected by a single arm they could not imagine; and under a belief that the murderer must be backed by others as desperate as himself, they retreated into the town to procure further aid, and recount the disastrous result of their expedition.

Libertino felt no additional remorse in having split so much blood during the day. It was, he argued with himself, self-preservation, and, as such, excusable.

"Old! how will an Engender son. Throw guilt upon the soul, And, like a rock dash'd on the troubled lake, 'Twill form its circles—round succeeding round—Each water."

But a few days, or rather a few hours, had passed, since Libertino had a heart overflowing with good thoughts towards all mankind. One fatal turn had poisoned all. Fate, like a mildew, had ruined the virtuous harvest, and the crop was weeds!

At night, through the faithful Carlo, Libertino received another letter from his brother, and an ample supply of ammunition. But a comparatively trifling number of his fellow-townsmen accompanied the last remaining son of Andrea Mazza the following day, who went out previous to the forming of the body of gen darmes who were to assist in the pursuit, that he might with his own arm avenge the sad mortality Libertino had caused in his once happy and united family. Libertino recognized him in the wood; but he, of all others, had formerly been most dear to him, and he could not in his heart add him to the number of the victims: nine in number, however, he had lost.

The gens d'armes by this time had approached, and taken up their position in a masterly style, and, as they advanced, and judiciously made their advance in an extended line, aided by several bloodhounds who beat the thicket, that, in despite of all his efforts, Libertino found that, in a few moments, he would be driven from the shelter of the wood. By his gun he shot four of the mounted soldiers; and then, every other hope failing, he resolved on seeking safety in flight. He burst from the wood, and, at his utmost speed, endeavored to gain the top of the mountain. Adolpho Mazza caught sight of him, and, eagle-like, endeavored to dash on his prey. "Dastard! murderer! turn and face me like a man!" he exclaimed, with fury. Libertino, for a moment, stopped—Adolpho endeavored to discharge a pistol at his head, but it flashed in the pan.

"Follow me not, Adolpho! You I would not hurt. Next to me, who has bestowed me this wretchedness, I loved you best and dearest. Rush not thus headlong to your destruction!"

"Fiend! murderer! hypocrite! be this your answer." And again he ineffectually endeavored to discharge his pistol. The gens d'armes were now issuing in full gallop from the wood, following the dogs, which were at full cry. Libertino turned and fled, bewildered. He knew not the direction he had taken, until he came to a yawning precipice, formed by the two mountains of Rapallo and De Rhus, the very sight of which would be sufficient to appal the stoutest nerve. But death was now in front and in his rear—to deliver himself up to his enemies was more bitter to him than death itself; and with a spring, to which despair alone could have given a sufficient impetus, Libertino cleared the yawning abyss, and fell almost breathless on the edge of the adjoining mountain. Adolpho Mazza recklessly endeavored to follow him; he failed, and his body fell from projecting rock to rock, until it reached the valley below, so distorted a mass of innumerate flesh, that it was impossible for his nearest friend to recognize it. The bloodhounds and the horses of the gens d'armes alike refused the leap. It never was before, nor has it since been, accomplished by man or beast. The yawning gulf has received the appellation of *Il Salto dell' Uomo*, and a stone is erected to portray to travellers and posterity the astonishing fact.

Part of the mountain of De Rhus is sacred ground, belonging to the church; and there, for some days, Libertino remained in safety; but his brother's dog came not. There were no chestnut trees to afford him sustenance, and he was constrained to feed on the wild berries he found around him, which were ill-qualified to support his existence.

It was on a dark and stormy night he left this miserable mountain. Wrapping his cloak about him, and concealing, as much as possible, his arms, he ventured to enter into the town, and, at midnight, present himself at his father's door. It was opened by Joanni.

"Heavens! Libertino—is it possible that you are yet alive! I had mourned you as one dead, and followed to the grave a body taken up at the foot of the Prati du Rhus, which was believed generally to have been yourself!"

Libertino explained to him that it was that of the ill-fated Adolpho Mazza.

"The mistake is most fortunate. Their pursuit will be, probably, relinquished. Let them live on in their errors. But my brave boy, you must again to the mountains—this is no place for you. I fear the very walls. Away—until I can arrange a plan for removing you to another country. Joanni will never fail you now, my more than ever brother!"

After partaking refreshment, Libertino prepared to leave.

"Where is our father?"

"Gone! His heart was broken; but he blessed you before he died!"

Libertino rushed from the house. His newly-acquired hardihood had not totally destroyed the softer feelings of his nature; and he who had in-

jured his hands in the blood of forty of his fellow-creatures, wept to his father's memory.

Although the belief was general in Chiavari that the mutilated remains that had been taken up and buried were those of Libertino, the gens d'armes, who had witnessed his successful leap, knew to the contrary, and stated as much to the prefect of the town. Silence was enjoined them, and the authorities consulted together, in order that, by stratagem, they might accomplish that which force had been unable to effect.

There were, at this time, two brothers in the prison, undergoing their sentence of solitary confinement for a daring robbery they had committed. They were considered efficient, and they became willing agents in the hands of the police to secure the capture of Libertino. Freedom, and a very considerable reward, was a temptation too great to be resisted. Instructed by their employers, they sought the wood, where it was rightly surmised that Libertino had returned—dressed in their prison attire, and, to all appearance, men who had effected their escape by their own adroitness.

Libertino met them; considering them men whose case was desperate as his own, he feared them not; and, after a few days, a bond of apparent friendship had been sealed between them over the generous wines with which Joanni still continued to supply his brother. When they set their ground secure, Nicola Spolini one morning contrived to engage the attention of Libertino, while Baptista, his brother, descended from the mountain to state the progress they had already made, and to make arrangements for the capture of their victim. It was agreed that, at night-fall, a body of dismounted police should station themselves within the wood, to await a signal to be made by Baptista, and that Libertino should be seized and secured when under the influence of sleep—so great was the terror that his successful defence had occasioned.

If he slept, a whistle was to be the sign for their approach; should he be disturbed by it, a remark was to be made, in a loud tone, upon the weather, to afford a clue to those without, and to prevent their immediate entrance.

Baptista had returned to Libertino and his brother in so short a time, that no suspicion of treachery ever entered his mind. His spirits, however, were that evening more than ever depressed. He felt, he knew not why, a presentiment of coming evil, he expressed as much to his companions, who laughed, and endeavored to reason him out of feelings which might otherwise have interrupted his sleep, and frustrated their well-laid stratagem.

Carlo appeared in the hut at the accustomed time with wine and provisions; he, too, betrayed uneasiness; he showed a reluctance at returning home; and, on leaving the house, he looked in so suspicious a manner, that Libertino was struck with the coincidence. Nicola and Baptista pronounced his forebodings childish in the extreme.

After their usual sleep, they betook themselves to rest. The brothers feigned sleep; but it was long ere, by the deep breathing of Libertino, they were ventured to put their plan in execution. At last, however, they were convinced he slept. Baptista crouched towards the half-opened door, and gave a long, shrill whistle. Libertino awoke.

"What noise was that?" he hastily demanded, seizing his firearms.

"Nothing, my friend; 'twas only I who whistled, because I could not sleep."

"I liked it not," replied the drowsy man.—"Hear you not a noise without?"

It was the police. The second signal was necessary. Baptista, in a loud voice, exclaimed—

"Tis but the wind; it is a stormy night!" The gens d'armes took the bait, and remained still as death.

"Tis singular," muttered Libertino, "but my mind is out of tune." He turned over upon his leafy bed, and again, after a time, he slept.

A whistle, more gentle than the first, was then given by Baptista. The police rushed upon the carkened lights—fell in a body upon Libertino, and had bound and secured him before he was enabled to make the slightest resistance. His companions were also seized for the time, in order that the party they had taken in his capture should not be known to any of his relatives, who might be inclined to revenge their perfidy. Not a word, nor a sigh, escaped Libertino; but he saw through the manoeuvring of his false companions, and fixed on them a look they could neither misinterpret nor misunderstand; and, in a short hour, he was cast, loaded with irons, into the strongest dungeon of the prison.

We will not annoy our readers with the recital of the tedious formula of an Italian trial. Libertino was placed at the bar; and, on his own admission, was pronounced guilty, and condemned to expiate his crimes upon the scaffold.

After the sentence, the conduct of the keepers of the prison in Italy changes favorably to the temporary comfort of the condemned. Libertino's irons were struck off; he was permitted to see such of his acquaintances as would visit him; and he was urged, but in vain, to avail himself of the consolation and instruction of his priest—the padre was denied admission.

five to her peers. All this is true; but you murdered her, and murdered my poor innocent boys. They are in heaven; and soon my few gray hairs will mingle with their dust. Ponder this well, Libertino, and repent, while time be given you.—I leave you, unhappy boy, to your reflections."

"And if all this be true," said Libertino to himself. "I then am a villain indeed."

His meditations were interrupted by the arrival of his brother. The stout heart of Joanni melted before him; and, wringing the hands of the unhappy prisoner, he exclaimed—

"I thought not to bring you to this, my brother!"

"Spend not our meeting in tears and fruitless lamentation, Joanni. I have much, very much, of import to say to you," returned Libertino.

"Speak on!"

"I will never fail you in the hour of need; these were your words. That hour, my brother, is at hand!"

"Tell me how I can aid you. Is it possible you can yet have a hope of escape?"

"E'en so!" repeated he, confidently. "Escape! Why? and for what? No! I care not for this prison; and can I ever escape the hideous dungeon of the mind? My thoughts are torture. My deeds of blood weigh heavily on my soul; and yet I am not fully, adequately revenged!"

He spoke in a subdued and guttural tone. Joanni drew near, and listened with attention.

"On you it depends to make me happy. I counsel you not how to go the deed I wish; but promise me, by your hope of salvation, that it shall be done."

"Name it, and I swear—"

"It is enough—I believe and trust in you; for you have never failed me. You know the two Spolini—Nicola and Baptista. Under the plea of being outlaws like myself, they invaded my retreat—stole upon my confidence—partook the food you sent for my existence. They walked with me—condoled with me—partook my shelter—and betrayed me! Brother—I must have their hearts!"

All this was said with a solemn, fearful energy. The eyes of the wretched prisoner were distended, as he gazed anxiously on his brother; and, with suppressed breath, and clenched teeth and hands, awaited the reply.

"Libertino, it shall be done, ere sunset to-morrow. I will convey to you their stony hearts, or perish in the attempt."

"Good, kind Joanni. Then shall I rest, and die in peace!"

"Early the ensuing morning Joanni was at the cottage, to which the Spolini had returned. He affected not to perceive their confusion at his entrance, and took a seat familiarly at the table.

"So, my boys, you then have escaped the bloodhounds?"

"Yes," said Baptista, "so intent were the police upon your poor friend, your brother that we—"

"Ah! poor Libertino, it is all over with him. There is not a chance, nor a hope, of his escape. I saw him yesterday; he spoke much of your friendship for him, and knew well your honest hearts!"

The brothers were relieved by his apparent sincerity.

"Will you not pay him a visit of consolation? He will take it kindly."

"We should endanger our own safety," remarked Nicola; "and should be ourselves recaptured at our entrance."

"My brother has set his heart upon seeing you, and I would not that he should be disappointed now at the very eve of his execution—for he is to die to-morrow."

"To-morrow!" they both exclaimed.

"Yes, the scaffolding is even now erecting. But a thought strikes me by which we can accomplish his wishes, and secure you both from danger. Where is your old mother?"

"She is from home!"

"The better for our project. She is tall; her clothes will easily be made to fit you. Get them instantly—I will arrange them. We will take the outskirts of the town by the river, where we shall be less exposed to observation. Carry you each a flagon of wine—we will bestow on the jailor. I have promised to take the poor boy a home-made loaf; the last of which he ever will partake."

They gave an unwilling consent; fearing, by their refusal, to excite suspicions in the breast of Joanni, of whose projects they were aware, and of whose anger they would fain avoid being the objects.

to them, with a deep and heavy sound to the bottom. Joanni scooped a hollow in the loaf, in which he placed their yet-trembling hearts, and made his way to the prison.

"Back, and so soon!" exclaimed his brother.

"Yes, and your wishes are accomplished." He opened the loaf; "Behold their stony hearts!"

Libertino gazed on them with a savage, but pained eyes.

"It is enough, my brother; you will see that I now can perish like a man!"

"I cannot attend your execution, Libertino. I must fly instantly to avoid detection; it is, therefore, now that I must take my last—long leave. I would have had it otherwise, but who can combat against fate."

He brushed a starting tear from his face; and the two brothers, by nature, and in crime, embraced and parted in speechless agony!

The sounds of erecting a scaffold are not likely to encourage sleep in the expecting victim. Libertino never closed his eyes more in this world; yet, on arriving to take him to the place of execution, the jailors were surprised at the fortitude and calmness he evinced, and yet more at the smile that occasionally lighted up his features.

The ceremonies which accompany an Italian execution throw no little light upon the sentiments and character of the people.

First came a procession of priests—one of them carrying a crucifix on a pole hung with black. Then followed a considerable body of the company of *Del Misericordia*, covered with long gowns from head to foot, with holes immediately before the face, through which they could see every thing perfectly; but could not be recognized by the spectators. All of them carried lighted torches, and many of them shook tin boxes, into which the multitude put money to defray the expenses of masses for the soul of the criminal. This is considered the very extreme of charity; and even the most biggarded sceptic throws his mite into the boxes.

Immediately after these came Libertino himself, seated in a cart, with a Capuchin friar on each side of him. The assistants to the executioner, dressed in scarlet jackets, walked by the side of the cart. The procession having moved round the scaffold, on which the guillotine was placed, Libertino, with a bold step, descended from the cart, and walked upon the platform. He disdained the proffered support of the assistants, and the prayers and consolations of the professors, but petitioned that he might be allowed to address a few words to the assembled multitude. His request was granted; and, in a clear and manly voice, he thus spoke:—

"My fellow countrymen, listen to my words—they are the last I can ever offer to the ear of man! I am here to expiate my crime, and appease the offended laws of my country. It is just, I am resigned. Love was my error—jealousy my downfall."

After a pause, he continued—

"I was pursued as an outlaw. I sent thirty-eight victims out of the world before me. Thus, confessedly, I am a murderer, and a monster; the blood of forty is on my head. But I escaped the sword of law by treachery. In the moment of distress I took two wretches to my bosom; they betrayed me to my persecutors, or I should not have been before you now. Yet I lament it not. I repeat, I die contentedly; and why? because I have been revenged!"

He stooped upon the ground for the loaf he had carried with him. He tore it asunder, and held above his head the hearts contained in it.

"These—these were the false hearts that did betray me! and thus—and thus I am avenged." He tore them with his teeth. The multitude stood mute with horror. They were at length wrrenched forcibly from his grasp by the executioner.

"My executioners are impatient. I go to meet my fate. Let the betrayer ever meet the betrayer's reward!"

This meagre translation gives but a faint idea of a speech delivered in his own forcible language, and with inexpressible energy. Again did he refuse the consolations of the priest.

"I have no hope—my crimes are beyond pardon." He laid his head upon the block—the guillotine descended—it rolled upon the platform; the vessels of his neck poured out their blood with the force of water-spouts—a few convulsive movements of the limbs, and all was still!

The populace beheld this awful scene in a serious and compassionate manner. His crimes they abhorred; yet when they saw in him a poor condemned man, on the very threshold of eternity, their animosity ceased. No rancour was displayed, nor insult offered. They viewed him with the eyes of forgiveness and pity; and joined earnestly in prayers for the repose of his unhappy soul.

Even Andrea Mazza, who was in the crowd, with an exalted voice exclaimed—"Adesso spara che l'anima sua sia in paradiso!"

We have little more to add—only one being yet exists who took a part in this appalling tragedy. It is Joanni Genuchi. He is at this time resident in London. His address may be known at the Agent Office to any one who may have the curiosity to enquire. He is supporting existence by the most infamous means, and yet escapes the punishment of the law. He is the forger of passports; the inventor of shipwrecks; and the vender of letters to excite compassion towards the self-elected crew who prey upon the country living on mistaken charity. He is bordering on his sixtieth year, and living with a Welsh woman, who passes as his wife, and who is as hardened and abandoned as himself.

Should he ever hear of these pages, he will be surprised at this accurate detail, which was gleaned and indited on the spot by

AN ENGLISH TRAVELLER.

Never give up your opinion though you know you are wrong: it shows that you have no independence.