THE WORLD AT WAR

ADVENTURES OF AN AIDE-DE-CAMP

OR, A CAMPAIGN IN CALABRIA

VOLUME 1, 2, 3

JAMES GRANT

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Volume 1

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PREFACE.

The very favourable reception given by the Press and Public generally, to "The Romance of War," and its "Sequel," has encouraged the Author to resume his labours in another field.

Often as scenes of British valour and conquest have been described, the brief but brilliant campaign in the Calabrias (absorbed, and almost lost, amid the greater warlike operations in the Peninsula) has never, he believes, been touched upon: though a more romantic land for adventure and description cannot invite the pen of a novelist; more especially when the singular social and political ideas of those unruly provinces are remembered.

Indeed it is to be regretted that no narrative should have been published of Sir John Stuart's Neapolitan campaign. It was an expedition set on foot to drive the French from South Italy; and (but for the indecision which sometimes characterized the ministry of those days) that country might have become the scene of operations such as were carried on so successfully on the broader arena of the Spanish Peninsula.

Other campaigns and victories will succeed those of the great Duke, and the names of Vittoria and Waterloo will sound to future generations as those of Ramillies and Dettingen do to the present. Materials for martial stories will never be wanting: they are a branch of literature peculiarly British; and it is remarkable that, notwithstanding the love of peace, security and opulence, which appears to possess

us now, the present age is one beyond all others fond of an exciting style of literature.

Military romances and narratives are the most stirring of all. There are no scenes so dashing, or so appalling, as those produced by a state of warfare, with its contingent woes and horrors; which excite the energies of both body and mind to the utmost pitch.

The author hopes, that, though containing less of war and more of love and romantic adventure than his former volumes, these now presented to the Reader will be found not the less acceptable on this account. They differ essentially from the novels usually termed military; most of the characters introduced being of another cast.

The last chapters are descriptive of the siege of Scylla; a passage of arms which, when the disparity of numbers between the beleaguered British and the besieging French is considered, must strike every reader as an affair of matchless bravery.

Several of the officers mentioned have attained high rank in their profession—others a grave on subsequent battle-fields: their names may be recognised by the military reader. Other characters belong to history.

The names of the famous brigand chiefs may be familiar to a few: especially Francatripa. He cost the French, under Massena, more lives than have been lost in the greatest pitched battle. All the attempts of Buonaparte to seduce him to his faction, or capture him by force, were fruitless; and at last, when his own followers revolted, and were about to

deliver him up to the iron-hearted Prince of Essling, he had the address to escape into Sicily with all their treasure, the accumulated plunder of years. Being favoured by the Queen, he, no doubt, spent the close of his years in ease and opulence. Scarolla became a true patriot, and died "Chief of the Independents of Basilicata."

It is, perhaps, needless to observe, that many scenes purely fanciful are mingled with the real military details.

The story of the Countess of La Torre, however, is a fact: the shocking incidents narrated actually occurred in an Italian family of rank, many years ago. Strazzoldi's victim received no less than thirty-three wounds from his poniard. The author has given the real titles of the infamous parties, and only trusts he has not marred a very sad story by his mode of relating it. In atrocity, the tale has lately found a parallel in the Praslin tragedy: indeed, "truth is stranger than fiction." There is nothing so horrible in a romance but may be surpassed by the occurrences contained in the columns of a newspaper; where we often find recorded outrages against humanity, greater by far than any conceived by the wildest imaginings of a French novelist.

Those feudal militia, or gens-d'armes, the *sbirri*, so often mentioned in these pages, were a force maintained by the landholders. The sbirri received a certain sum daily to support themselves, and provide their arms, clothing, and horses: they lived among the paesani in the villages, but were completely under the orders and at the disposal of

their lord. The sbirri were the last relics of the feudal system.

Since these volumes were written, the flames of civil war have passed over the romantic Calabrias: the government of Naples has received a severe, though perhaps wholesome, shock; and the brave Sicilians are wresting from their obstinate sovereign those beneficial concessions which he cannot safely withhold. A still greater crisis for Italy is, perhaps, impending: Lombardy is filled with the troops of Austria; and if the *absolute* policy of the veteran Metternich prevails, ere long those "millions of cannon-balls" (which were so lately ordered by his government) will be dealing death among the ranks of Italian patriots. Should that day ever arrive, surely the Hungarian, the Bohemian, and the brave Pole, will know the time has come to draw and to strike! The eyes of all Europe are at present turned upon the policy of Austria, and the fate of Italy; and should matters ever take the turn anticipated, the landing again of a British army on the Italian shores will prove a death-blow to the ambitious projects of the House of Hapsburg.

A long preface may be likened to a hard shell, which must be cracked ere one can arrive at the kernel. The Author has to ask pardon of his readers for trespassing so long on their patience; but he considered the foregoing explanations in some degree necessary, to illustrate the fortunes, mishaps, and adventures of the hero.

EDINBURGH, *February* 1848.

CHAPTER I.

THE LANDING IN CALABRIA.

On the evening of the last day of June 1806, the transports which had brought our troops from Sicily anchored off the Italian coast, in the Bay of St. Eufemio, a little to the southward of a town of that name.

The British forces consisted of H. M. 27th, 58th, 78th, and 81st Regiments of the Line, the Provisional Light Infantry and Grenadier Battalions, the Corsican Rangers, Royal Sicilian Volunteers, and the Regiment of Sir Louis de Watteville, &c., the whole being commanded by Major-General Sir John Stuart, to whose personal staff I had the honour to be attached.

This small body of troops, which mustered in all only 4,795 rank and file, was destined by our ministry to support the Neapolitans, who in many places had taken up arms against the usurper, Joseph Buonaparte, and to assist in expelling from Italy the soldiers of his brother. Ferdinand, King of Naples, after being an abject vassal of Napoleon, had allowed a body of British and Russian soldiers to land on his territories without resistance. This expedition failed; he was deserted by the celebrated Cardinal Ruffo, who became a Buonapartist; and as the French emperor wanted a crown for his brother Joseph, he proclaimed that "the Neapolitan dynasty had ceased to reign"—that the race of Parma were no longer kings in Lower Italy—and in January 1806 his legions crossed the frontiers. The "lazzaroni king" fled instantly to Palermo; his spirited queen, Carolina (sister of

the unfortunate Marie Antoinette), soon followed him; and the usurper, Joseph, after meeting with little or no resistance, was, in February, crowned king of Naples and Sicily, in the church of Sancto Januario, where Cardinal Ruffo of Scylla, performed solemn mass on the occasion. All Naples and its territories submitted to him, save the brave mountaineers of the Calabrias, who remained continually in arms, and with whom we were destined to co-operate.

When our anchors plunged into the shining sea, it was about the close of a beautiful evening—the hour of Ave Maria—and the lingering light of the Ausonian sun, setting in all his cloudless splendour, shed a crimson glow over the long line of rocky coast, burnishing the bright waves rolling on the sandy beach, and the wooded mountains of Calabria, the abode of the fiercest banditti in the world.

The tricolor flaunted over the towers of St. Amanthea, a little town to the northward of the bay, commanded by a castle on a steep rock, well garrisoned by the enemy; and the smoke of their evening gun curled away from the dark and distant bastions, as the last vessel of our armament came to anchor. The whole fleet, swinging round with the strong current which runs through the Strait of Messina, lay one moment with their sterns to the land and the next to the sparkling sea, which pours through between these rock-bound coasts with the speed of a mill-race.

Italy lay before us: the land of the fabled Hesperia—the country of the "eternal city;" and I thought of her as she was once: of "majestic Rome," in all her power, her glory, and

her military supremacy; when nations bowed their heads before her banners, and her eagles spread their wings over half a world. But, alas! we find it difficult to recognise in the effeminate Venetian, the revengeful Neapolitan, or the ferocious Calabrian, the descendants of those matchless soldiers, whose pride, valour, and ambition few since have equalled, and none have yet surpassed. We viewed with the deepest interest that classic shore, which so many of us now beheld for the first time. To me, it was a country teeming with classic recollections—the sunny and beautiful land whose very history has been said to resemble a romance; but the mass of our soldiers were of course, strangers to all these sentiments: the grave and stern Ross-shireman, and the brave bog-trotters of the Inniskilling, regarded it only as a land of hard marches, short rations, and broken heads; as a hostile coast, where the first soldiers of the continent were to be encountered and overcome—for with us these terms are synonymous.

Barbarized by the wars and ravages which followed the French revolution and invasion,—swarming with disorderly soldiers, savage brigands, and starving peasantry writhing under the feudal system—the Naples of that time was very different from the Naples of to-day, through which so many tourists travel with luxurious safety: at least so far as the capital. Few, I believe, penetrate into that terra incognita, the realm of the bandit Francatripa.

Orders were despatched by the general from ship to ship, that the troops should be held in readiness to

disembark by dawn next day. The quarter-guards and deck-watches were strengthened for the night, and strict orders given to sentries not to permit any communication with the shore, or with the numerous boats which paddled about among the fleet. Our ships were surrounded by craft of all shapes and sizes, filled with people from St. Eufemio, and other places adjacent: bright-eyed women, their dark hair braided beneath square linen head-dresses, with here and there a solitary "gentiluómo," muffled in his cloak, and ample hat, beneath which glowed the red spark of a cigar; meagre and grizzled priests; wild-looking peasantry, half naked, or half covered with rough skins; and conspicuous above all, many fierce-looking fellows, wearing the picturesque Calabrian garb, of whose occupation we had little doubt: the gaiety of their attire, the long dagger gleaming in their sashes, the powder-horn, and the well-oiled rifle slung across the back by a broad leather sling, proclaimed them brigands; who came crowding among their honester countrymen, to hail and bid us welcome as allies and friends.

An hour before daylight, next morning, we were all on deck and under arms. Our orders were, to land with the utmost silence and expedition, in order to avoid annoyance from the light guns of the French; who occupied the whole province from sea to sea, and whom we fully expected to find on the alert to oppose our disembarkation.

My first care was to get my horse, Cartouche, into one of the boats of the *Amphion* frigate. Aware that sharp work

was before us, I personally superintended his harnessing; having previously given him a mash with a dash of nitre in it, and had his fetlocks and hoofs well washed, and his eyes and nostrils sponged with vinegar, to freshen him up after the close confinement of the ship: he was then carefully slung over the side, by a "whip" from the yard-arm. The oars dipped noiselessly into the waves, and we glided away to the beach of St. Eufemio, the point marked out for our landing-place. I stood by Cartouche's head, holding the reins shortened in my hand, and stroking his neck to quiet him; for the fiery blood horse had shown so much impatience when the oars dipped into the water, or the boat heaved on the heavy ground-swell, that his hoofs threatened every instant to start a plank and swamp us.

All the boats of the fleet were now in requisition; and, being crowded to excess with soldiers accoutred with their knapsacks and arms, and freighted with baggage, cannon, and tumbrils, miners' tools, and military stores to arm and clothe the Calabrese, they were pulled but slowly towards the point of rendezvous. The last boat had no sooner landed its freight, than the ship of the admiral, Sir Sydney Smith, fired a gun, and the fleet of frigates and gunboats weighed anchor, and stood off northwards, to attack the Castle of St. Amanthea; against which, operations were forthwith commenced by the whole naval armament.

The lofty coast loomed darkly through a veil of haze; the morning air was chill, and a cold sea-breeze swept over the black billows of the Straits; against the effects of which, I

fortified myself with my comfortable, double-caped cloak, a cigar, and a mouthful from a certain convenient flask, which experience had taught me to carry always in my sabretache. The time was one of keen excitement; even to me, who had served at the siege of Valetta, and in other parts of the Mediterranean, and shared in many a memorable enterprise which has added to our empire the valuable posts and possessions we hold in that part of Europe. As the daylight increased, and the sun rose above the mountains, pouring a flood of lustre over the straits of the Faro, the scene appeared of surpassing beauty. Afar off, in the direction of the Lipari, the sea assumed its deepest tint of blue; while the whole Bay of St. Eufemio seemed filled with liquid gold, and the white waves, weltering round the base of each distant promontory, were dashed from the volcanic rocks in showers of sparkling silver: all the varied hues which ocean assumes under an Italian sky were seen in their gayest splendour. The picturesque aspect of this romantic shore was heightened by the appearance of our armament: as the debarking corps formed open column of companies on the bright yellow beach, their lively uniforms of scarlet, green, and white, the standards waving, and lines of burnished bayonets glistening in the sun—which seemed to impart a peculiarly joyous lustre to all it shone upon—the scene was spirit-stirring.

The white walls and church tower of the little town, the foliage of the surrounding forest, backed by the lofty peaks of the Calabrian Apennines—the winding strip of golden

sand fringing the fertile coast, and encircling the wave-beaten rocks, where a fisherman sat mending his nets and singing, perhaps, of Thomas Aniello—the remote Sicilian shore, and the wide expanse of sea and sky were all glowing in one glorious blaze of light—the light of an Italian sunrise, beneath whose effulgence the face of nature beams bright with sparkling freshness and roseate beauty.

Our nine battalions of infantry now formed close column; while the Royal Artillery, under Major Lemoine, got their eleven field-pieces and two howitzers into service order, the tumbrils hooked to the guns, and the horses traced to the carriages. During these preparations the general kept me galloping about between the different commanding officers with additional instructions and orders; for we expected to be attacked every moment by the enemy, of whose arrangements we had received a very confused account from the peasantry.

As the sun was now up, the rare beauty of the country was displayed to the utmost advantage: but we scanned the lofty mountains, the romantic gorges, the grim volcanic cliffs and bosky thickets, only to watch for the glitter of French steel; for the flutter of those standards unfurled so victoriously at Arcole, Lodi, and Rivoli; or for the puff of white smoke which announces the discharge of a distant field-piece. Strange to say, not the slightest opposition was made to our landing; although there were many commanding points from which a few light guns would have mauled our boats and battalions severely.

The troops remained quietly in close column at quarter distance, with their arms ordered, until command was given to unfurl all colours, and examine flints and priming. A reconnoitring party was then pushed forward to "feel the ground," and our little army got into marching order, and advanced to discover what the distance of a few miles would bring forth. The Corsican Rangers were the skirmishers.

"Sir John," said I, cantering up to the general, "permit me to join the light troops that I may see what goes on in front?"

"You may go, Dundas," he replied; "but remember, they are under the command of Major Kraünz, who, I believe, is no friend of yours."

"No, truly; there is no man I would like better to see knocked on the head; and so, *allons!* Sir John."

"Be attentive to his orders, however," said he, with a grave nod, as I bowed and dashed off.

Kraünz! yes, I had good reason to hate the name, and curse its owner. I had a brother who belonged to a battalion of these Rangers. He was a brave fellow, Frank; and had served with distinction at Malta, and under Charles Stewart at the siege of Calvi; and, after Sir John Moore, was the first man over the wall at the storming of the Mozello fort. But his career was a short one. Between Frank and Kraünz there arose a dispute, a petty jealousy about some pretty girl at Palermo; a challenge ensued, and Frank was put under arrest for insubordination. From that moment, he was a

marked man by the brutal German, who was resolutely bent upon his ruin—and a military man alone can know what the unhappy officer endures, who is at strife with an uncompromising, vindictive, and perhaps vulgar, commanding-officer. Thank God! there are few such in our service. Frank's proud spirit could ill brook the slights and insults to which Kraünz subjected him; and being one day "rowed" publicly for coming five minutes late to parade, in the height of his exasperation he struck down the German with the sword he was lowering in salute, and was, in consequence, placed instantly under close arrest. A court-martial dismissed him from that service in which he had gained so many scars. His heart was broken: the disgrace stung him to the soul. He disappeared from Sicily, and from the hour he left his regiment could never be discovered by our family. Therefore, it cannot be wondered at that I cared but little about the safety of his German enemy.

The advanced party, under the command of Kraünz, consisted of three companies of Corsican Rangers; these moved in double quick time along the narrow highway towards the mountains, from which the hardy peasantry soon came pouring down, greeting us with cries of "Long live Ferdinand of Bourbon! long live our holy faith!" I galloped after the Corsicans, in high spirits at the prospect of seeing something more exciting than was usually afforded by the lounging life I had spent in the garrisons of Sicily—dangling about the royal palace, or the quarter-general, drinking deep and late in our mess-room at

Syracuse, or smoking cigars among the promenaders on the Marina of "Palermo the Happy." My brave Cartouche appeared to rejoice that he trod once more on firm earth; curveting, neighing, and tossing his proud head and flowing mane, while he snuffed the pure breeze from the green hills with dilated and quivering nostrils.

It was a soft and balmy morning: the vast blue vault above was free from the faintest fleece of cloud, and pervaded by the deep cerulean hue so peculiar to this enchanting climate. At that early hour, not a sound stirred the stillness of the pure atmosphere, save the twittering of the merry birds as they fluttered from spray to spray, or the measured tramp of feet and clanking of accoutrements, as the smart light troops in their green uniform moved rapidly forward—the glazed tops of their caps, their tin canteens and bright muskets barrels, flashing in the light of the morning sun.

As we advanced into the open country, the scenery rapidly changed: the sandy beach, the bold promontory, and sea-beaten rock, gave place to the vine-clad cottage and the wooded hill. Some antique tomb, a rustic fountain, or a time-worn cross, half sunk in earth, often adorned the way-side; the white walls of a convent, embosomed among luxuriant orange trees, or an ancient oratory, with its carved pilasters and gray arches, occasionally met the eye; while the dark arcades of a vast and ruined aqueduct stretched across the valley, and the ramparts of a feudal castello frowned from the mountains above—the ruddy hue of its

time-worn brick, or ferruginous rock, harmoniously contrasting with the bronzed foliage of dense forests, forming the background of the view. The air was redolent with the perfume of roses, and myriads of other flowers, which flourished in the wildest luxuriance on every side; while the gigantic laurel, the vine, with its purple fruitage, the graceful acacia, and the glossy ilex, alternately cast their shadows across our line of march.

All this was delightful enough, no doubt: but a rattling volley of musketry, which flashed upon us from amid the dark masses of a wood we were approaching, brought a dozen of our party to the ground, and the whole to a sudden halt.

"Live Joseph, King of Naples!" cried the French commanding officer, brandishing his sabre. "Another volley, my braves!"

But before his last order could be obeyed, our own fire was poured upon his light troops, whose pale green uniform could scarcely be distinguished from the foliage, among which they had concealed themselves in such a manner as completely to enfilade the highway. Shot dead by the first fire, Kraünz rolled from his saddle beneath the hoofs of my horse, and his glazing eyes glared upwards on me for a second. Perhaps I answered by a scowl: for I thought of my brother Frank.

Disconcerted by his sudden fall, and staggered by the unexpected fire in front and flank, the Corsicans would have shown the white feather—in other words, fled—had I not set

a proper example to their officers, by leaping from Cartouche and putting myself at their head.

"Forward, Corsicans! Remember Paolo! Follow me! Charge!" And with levelled bayonets they plunged through the thicket, regardless of what the enemy's strength might be.

Hand to hand with the musket and sabre, we dashed headlong into the wood, and engaged the tirailleurs, with whom the contest was sharp. We lost several men, and I received a slight wound on the left arm from a young sub, whom we afterwards discovered to be the son of General Regnier; but a party of our own troops, led by Colonel Oswald, rushing with impetuosity on the flanks of the French, decided the issue of this our first encounter with them in Italy. We dislodged the little band from ambush, taking two hundred prisoners, and killing, or putting to flight, as many more. Captain De Viontessancourt, who commanded them, escaped with the survivors. These French troops proved to be a detachment of the 23rd Light Infantry.

Leaving a party to guard our prisoners, we followed cautiously the retreating tirailleurs through the great forest of St. Eufemio, and along the highway towards Maida, exchanging a skirmishing fire the whole way: many men were killed, or severely wounded, and left to become a prey to lynxes and wolves. As little honour and no advantage seemed likely to accrue from this unpleasant work, Oswald ordered a halt to be sounded, and drew the skirmishers

together, until our main body appeared; when, by command of the general, a position was taken up on advantageous ground, supplied with wood and water, while the necessary advanced picquets were despatched to the different points and roads around it.

Here we formed an entrenched camp, expecting to be joined by some of the Calabrian noblesse and people, and to hear certain intelligence of the movements of the enemy whose strongest force lay at Reggio, under the command of Regnier, a general of division.

CHAPTER II.
THE PIGTAIL.

Soon after halting, we received intelligence of the successful issue of Sir Sydney Smith's attack on the Castle of St. Amanthea; a strong fort, which, being quite inaccessible on the land side, he carried by assault on the seaward, capturing four hundred prisoners, and a quantity of arms and military stores.

In the evening, I was despatched by Sir John to a young Neapolitan noble; who, in anticipation of our expedition had some time before secretly quitted Palermo, and had been residing among his countrymen, for the purpose of ascertaining their sentiments towards the British as allies, and the probable number that would rise in arms, on our displaying the Union-Jack in Italy.

This personage, to whom I took a letter from the general, bore the titles of Visconte di Santugo, and Grand Bailiff of Lower Calabria, and was the most powerful Feudatory in the provinces. Our leader requested that he would use all his influence to arouse the peasantry to arms, for the service of his Majesty the King of Naples, in support of whose cause our expedition had now landed on the Italian shore. We soon found, however, that the hardy Calabrese required no other incentive than their own intense hatred and deep-rooted detestation of the French. I had been ordered to return next morning with any volunteers the Visconte could collect; and was not averse

from the prospect of remaining a night at his villa, as my undressed wound was becoming a little troublesome.

At that time, the two Calabrias, the Abruzzi, and all the Italian mountains and fastnesses, were swarming with hordes of armed peasantry—half patriots and half bandits. This system of disorganization and immorality was promoted by a mortal hatred—the rancorous enmity of Italian hearts—against the usurper Buonaparte, and his slavish law of conscription; which aimed at the military enrolment of all classes, without distinction or permitting substitution. The proud noble who could trace his name and blood to the warriors and senators of ancient Rome, and the humble peasant were to be alike torn from their homes, turned into the ranks as private soldiers, and sent forth, at the pleasure of this foreign tyrant, to fight and to perish among the wild sierras of Spain, or the frozen deserts of Russia. In consequence of this invasion of the rights of the Italian people, many young men of high birth, and others whose condition in life had, previous to the French aggression, been respectable, now fled to the mountains and wilderness, and became outlaws, rather than yield submission to the yoke of a Corsican conqueror. Ranged under various leaders, these spirited desperadoes, in conjunction with the banditti and the Loyal Masse, harassed the French incessantly, by a guerilla warfare of attacks, skirmishes, and assassinations; and with such effect, that Buonaparte computed his loss by the stiletto and rifle at not

less than twenty thousand soldiers, during his attempts to subdue the brave outlaws of the Calabrian mountains.

In every town there was a French garrison, and every garrison had its prison-house, which was filled with those whom the French chose to designate rebels: these they put to death by scores; waging against the unhappy paesani a war of extermination, and maintaining it with a cruelty unworthy of the heroes of Arcole and Marengo, and the representatives of the boasted "first nation in Europe." By sentence of a drum-head court-martial, and more often without the form of a trial, the poor peasants were shot to death in vast numbers; and their bodies, after being suspended on gibbets for a day or two, were cast into an immense pit dug close by, in order that the gallows might be clear for the next detachment of victims brought in by the troops employed in scouring and riding down the country. These outrages considered, it was no matter of wonder to us that the country rose *en masse* on our landing, and that the Neapolitan cry of "Ferdinando nostro, e la Santa Fede!" rang from the shores of the Mediterranean to the waves of the Adriatic.

As I rode from the camp on my solitary mission towards St. Eufemio, I thought of the lawless state of the country, and could not but feel a little anxious about my personal safety: the gay trappings of a staff uniform were likely to excite the cupidity of some villanous bandit, or unscrupulous patriot. What scattered parties of the French might be lurking in the great forest I knew not; but an encounter with

them seemed preferable to one with the Calabrian brigands: of whose atrocious ferocity I had heard so many horrible stories circulated by the gossiping Sicilians, in the gardens and cafés, the salons and promenades, of Palermo. My first adventure gave me a vivid, but rather unpleasant, illustration of the fierce manners and unsettled state of the country we had come to free from invaders.

While crossing a rustic bridge, the parapets on each side of which were garnished with an iron cage, containing a human head in a ghastly state of decay, my ears were shocked, as my eyes had been, by the cries and exclamations of a man in great agony and terror. Quickening the speed of Cartouche from a trot to a gallop, and unbuttoning my holster flaps in readiness for drawing my pistols, I rode towards the place whence these outcries proceeded. In a rocky hollow by the wayside, I beheld a Sicilian struggling desperately with about twenty armed ruffians, whom I had no hesitation in believing to be banditti. They were all handsome and athletic men, in whose appearance there was something at once striking, picturesque, and sufficiently alarming. All wore high, conical, Calabrian hats, encircled by a broad, red riband, that streamed over the right shoulder; jackets and breeches of bright coloured stuffs, ornamented with a profusion of tags, tassels, and knots, and girt round the waist with a scarlet sash of Palmi silk; and leathern gaiters, laced saltire-wise up the legs with red straps: a musket, dagger, and powder-horn completed their equipments. Coal black hair streamed in

extravagant profusion over their shoulders; long locks being esteemed in the Calabrias a sign of loyalty to the king and enmity to the French: thus the extent of a man's patriotism was determined by the length of his hair. But the unfortunate Sicilian in their hands was destitute alike of flowing curls and twisted pig-tail; hence his captors, supposing him unquestionably to be a traitor (or at least not a true subject to King Ferdinand) in having conformed to the fashion of the French, were determined to punish him in the mode which the wild spirits of these lawless provinces adopted towards those who fell into their hands with hair shorn short: the head having become, since the commencement of the war, "the political index by which they judged whether men were Jacobins, Bourbonists," or Buonapartists.

The brigands greeted my approach with a shout of welcome, and while I was deliberating how best to interfere and save from their fury the unhappy man, he called upon me piteously for aid; saying that he "was a poor tanner of Palermo—a follower of our camp—and one who knew nothing of the fashions of Calabria!" But I was too late to yield him the least assistance, for the horrible punishment was inflicted the moment I drew bridle: and, in truth, I did not feel very chivalric in his cause, on learning that he was one of the villanous tanners of Palermo—that community of assassins so terrible to all Sicily.

The right hand of the poor wretch was chopped off with a bill-hook, and thrust bleeding into his mouth, which they

compelled him to open by pressing the hilt of a poniard behind his right ear. A sheep's tail was then fastened to the back of his head, to supply the deficiency of hair; and bidding him wear it in remembrance of Francatripa, the whole party, after kicking him soundly, bade me 'good-evening,' and vanished among the rocks. The mutilated tanner lay on the ground, writhing in agony of body and bitterness of spirit, calling on San Marco the glorious, Santa Rosalia of Sicily, San Zeno, the blessed Madonna of Philerma, and innumerable other saints, to ease him of his pain; but as none of these spiritual potentates seemed disposed to assist him, he then applied to mortal me.

Dismounting, I raised him from the ground, and tearing my handkerchief into bandages, bound up the stump of his arm to staunch the blood; he bemoaning his misfortune in piteous terms. He had a wife and children, he said, who must perish now, unless the Conciarotti (tanners) of Palermo —to whose unruly corporation he belonged—would support them.

"Oh! Excellenza," he added, "believe me, I am no traitor: and surely the want of my hair will not make me one. I fell in with a French patrol, who compelled me to cut off my long hair, in token of submission to King Peppo." (Peppo, a contraction of Giuseppe, or Joseph, was the name by which Joseph Buonaparte was commonly known.) "Maledictions drive them from purgatory to the deepest dens of hell! They have destroyed me—curses upon them! May they all hang as high as Tourloni the cardinal, and may their bones bleach

white in the rain and the sunshine! Had I lost the left hand, instead of the right, I could still have revenged myself. Maledetto! Oh! blood for blood! Am I not one of the Conciarotti, at whose name the king quakes, at Naples, and his viceroy, at Palermo? But, oh! Madonna mia, never can revenge be mine; for the hand that is gone can grasp the acciaro no more!" And thus cursing and lamenting, he rolled on the grass till he foamed at the mouth. I was obliged to leave him, and pursue my journey.

By the road-side, I passed some of the bodies of those who had fallen in the skirmish of the morning. Stripped by the peasantry, they had lain all day sweltering under a burning sun; and now the vultures were screaming and flapping their wings, as they settled in flocks wherever one of these poor fellows lay unburied, with his blackened and gory wounds exposed to the gaze of every passer-by.

At the gate of St. Eufemio, I told several persons who were lounging and smoking under the shadow of the walls, of the condition in which I had left the tanner among the rocks; but instead of going immediately to his assistance, they only cursed him as a traitorous Sicilian.

"He is some false follower of Joseph the Corsican—cospetto! Let him die!—yes, die like a dog!" was the answer I received on all sides.

On entering the town, I was greeted by the shouts of the people, who had donned the red cockade of the Neapolitan king. Gentlemen bowed, and ladies smiled and waved their handkerchiefs from verandahs and sun-shaded windows;

women held their children aloft at arms' length, and the ragged artisan flourished his broad straw hat over the half door of his shop; all joining in the general burst of welcome, and cries of long life to King Giorgio of Great Britain.

While riding through the principal street, with all the hurry and importance of an aide-de-camp bearing the fate of empires and of armies in his sabretache, I could behold on every hand the traces of that dreadful earthquake which, two hundred years before, had overwhelmed the ancient and once-opulent city, converting it in a moment into a vast fetid marsh. Here and there stood a palace, rearing its time-worn facade amid the miserable houses or filthy hovels of which the modern St. Eufemio is principally composed; while fragments of columns, crumbling capitals, and shattered entablatures still lay strewn on every side.

The mansion of the podesta, or mayor, and of Ser Villani, the principal lawyer, as well as others of a better description, bore marks of French violence and rapine. Torn from its foundations, lay a column with the arms of Luigi d'Alfieri, the grand bailiff, carved upon it; here lay a statue, there a fountain broken to pieces; the madonnas at the street corners were all demolished, the niches empty, the lamps gone; and many gaps appeared on each side of the way, where houses had been pulled down for firewood, or wantonly burned by the brigade of the Marchese di Monteleone—a Buonapartist commander, whom common report declared to be an Englishman. All the stately trees that once bordered the Marina, or promenade, along the

sea-shore, had been cut away and destroyed; probably, less from necessity than for the purpose of annoying the people: for the French, if allowed to be the most gallant nation, are also considered the most reckless soldiers in Europe.

CHAPTER III.
VISCONTE DI SANTUGO.

The villa of the Visconte di Santugo was some distance beyond St. Eufemio, and my way towards it lay along the desolate Marina.

The appearance of the bay, studded with our fleet of transports and men-of-war, was beautiful; its deep blue was now fast changing to bright gold and crimson, in the deep ruddy glow of the setting sun. The calm sea shone like a vast polished mirror; in whose bright surface the rocky headlands and the yellow beach, the picturesque little town of St. Eufemio, and the castles on the cliffs, with the little groups of white cottages that nestled under their battlements as if for protection, and the stately frigates, with their yards squared, and open ports bristling with cannon, were all reflected: every form and tint as vividly defined below the surface as above.

Situated upon the margin of the bay, stood the residence of the Grand Bailiff. It was a large and imposing edifice, and, though not a perfect model of architecture, presented a very fair example of the ancient Roman blended with the modern Italian style. Designed by the old architect, Giacomo della Porta, the villa occupied the site of the ancient castle of St. Hugo; which had withstood many a fierce assault during the wars with the Norman kings of Sicily, the Saracens and other invaders: it had also been the scene of a cruel act of bloodshed, during the revolt of Campanella the Dominican. The castle suffered so much