ABBOTT JACOB

ROLLO IN ROME

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Chapter I.
The Diligence Office

Rollo went to Rome in company with his uncle George, from Naples. They went by the diligence, which is a species of stage coach. There are different kinds of public coaches that ply on the great thoroughfares in Italy, to take passengers for hire; but the most common kind is the diligence.

The diligences in France are very large, and are divided into different compartments, with a different price for each. There are usually three compartments below and one above. In the Italian diligences, however, or at least in the one in which Mr. George and Rollo travelled to Rome, there were only three. First there was the *interior*, or the body of the coach proper. Directly before this was a compartment, with a glass front, containing one seat only, which looked forward; there were, of course, places for three persons on this seat. This front compartment is called the *coupé*.[1] It is considered the best in the diligence.

There is also a seat up above the *coupé*, in a sort of second

[1] Pronounced *coupay*.

story, as it were; and this was the seat which Mr. George and Rollo usually preferred, because it was up high, where they could see better. But for the present journey Mr. George thought the high seat, which is called the *banquette*, would not be quite safe; for though it was covered above with a sort of chaise top, still it was open in front, and thus more exposed to the night air. In ordinary cases he would not have been at all afraid of the night air, but the country between Naples and Rome, and indeed the country all about Rome, in every direction, is very unhealthy. So unhealthy is it, in fact, that in certain seasons of the year it is almost uninhabitable; and it is in all seasons considered unsafe for strangers to pass through in the night, unless they are well protected.

There is, in particular, one tract, called the *Pontine Marshes*, where the road, with a sluggish canal by the side of it, runs in a straight line and on a dead level for about twenty miles. It so happened that in going to Rome by the diligence, it would be necessary to cross these marshes in the night, and this was an additional reason why Mr. George thought it better that he and Rollo should take seats inside.

The whole business of travelling by diligence in Europe is managed in a very different way from stage coach travelling in America. You must engage your place several days beforehand; and when you engage it you have a printed receipt given you, specifying the particular seats which you have taken, and also containing, on the back of it, all the rules and regulations of the

service. The different seats in the several compartments of the coach are numbered, and the prices of them are different. Rollo went so early to engage the passage for himself and Mr. George that he had his choice of all the seats. He took Nos. 1 and 2 of the *coupé*. He paid the money and took the receipt. When he got home, he sat down by the window, while Mr. George was finishing his breakfast, and amused himself by studying out the rules and regulations printed on the back of his ticket. Of course they were in Italian; but Rollo found that he could understand them very well.

"If we are not there at the time when the diligence starts, we lose our money, uncle George," said he. "It says here that they won't pay it back again."

"That is reasonable," said Mr. George. "It will be our fault if we are not there."

"Or our misfortune," said Rollo; "something might happen to us."

"True," said Mr. George; "but the happening, whatever it might be, would be *our* misfortune, and not theirs, and so we ought to bear the loss of it."

"If the baggage weighs more than thirty *rotolos*, we must pay extra for it," continued Rollo. "How much is a *rotolo*, uncle George?"

"I don't know," said Mr. George, "but we have so little baggage that I am sure we cannot exceed the allowance."

"The baggage must be at the office two hours before the time

for the diligence to set out," continued Rollo, passing to the next regulation on his paper.

"What is that for?" asked Mr. George.

"So that they may have time to load it on the carriage, they say," said Rollo.

"Very well," said Mr. George, "you can take it to the office the night before."

"They don't take the risk of the baggage," said Rollo, "or at least they don't guarantee it, they say, against unavoidable accidents or superior force. What does that mean?"

"Why, in case the diligence is struck by lightning, and our trunk is burned up," replied Mr. George, "or in case it is attacked by robbers, and carried away, they don't undertake to pay the damage."

"And in case of *smarrimento*," continued Rollo, "they say they won't pay damages to the amount of more than nine dollars, and so forth; what is a *smarrimento*, uncle George?"

"I don't know," said Mr. George.

"It may mean a smash-up," said Rollo.

"Very likely," said Mr. George.

"Every traveller," continued Rollo, looking again at his paper, "is responsible, personally, for all violations of the custom-house regulations, or those of the police."

"That's all right," said Mr. George.

"And the last regulation is," said Rollo, "that the travellers cannot smoke in the diligence, nor take any dogs in."

"Very well," said Mr. George, "we have no dogs, and we don't wish to smoke, either in the diligence or any where else."

"They are very good regulations," said Rollo; and so saying, he folded up the paper, and put it back into his wallet.

On the evening before the day appointed for the journey, Rollo took the valise which contained the principal portion of his own and his uncle's clothes, and went with it in a carriage to the office. Mr. George offered to accompany him, but Rollo said it was not necessary, and so he took with him a boy named Cyrus, whom he had become acquainted with at the hotel.

The carriage, when it arrived at the diligence station, drove in under an archway, and entered a spacious court surrounded by lofty buildings. There was a piazza, with columns, all around the court. Along this piazza, on the four sides of the building, were the various offices of the different lines of diligences, with the diligences themselves standing before the doors.

"Now, Cyrus," said Rollo, "we have got to find out which is our office."

But Rollo was saved any trouble on this score, for the coachman drove the carriage directly to the door of the office for Rome. Rollo had told him that that was his destination, before leaving the hotel.

There was a man in a sort of uniform at the door of the office. Rollo pointed to his valise, and said, in Italian, "For Rome to-morrow morning." The man said, "Very well," and taking the valise out of the carriage, he put it in the office. Then Rollo and

Cyrus got into the carriage again, and rode away.

The next morning Mr. George and Rollo went down to breakfast before six o'clock. While they were eating their breakfast, the waiter came in with a cold roast chicken upon a plate, which he set down upon the table.

"Ah!" said Mr. George, "that is for us to eat on the way."

"Don't the diligence stop somewhere for us to dine?" asked Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George, "I presume it stops for us to dine, but as we are going to be out all night, I thought perhaps that we might want a supper towards morning. Besides, having a supper will help keep us awake in going across the Pontine Marshes."

"Must we keep awake?" asked Rollo.

"So they say," replied Mr. George. "They say you are more likely to catch the fever while you are asleep than while you are awake."

"I don't see why we should be," said Rollo.

"Nor do I," said Mr. George.

If Mr. George really did not know or understand a thing, he never pretended to know or understand it.

"It may be a mere notion," said Mr. George, "but it is a very prevailing one, at any rate; so I thought it would be well enough for us to have something to keep us awake."

"We will take some bread and butter too," said Rollo.

Mr. George said that that would be an excellent plan. So they each of them cut one of the breakfast rolls which were on the

table in two, and after spreading the inside surfaces well with butter, they put the parts together again. The waiter brought them a quantity of clean wrapping paper, and with this they wrapped up both the chicken and the rolls, and Rollo put the three parcels into his bag.

"And now," said Rollo, "what are we to do for drink?"

"We might take some oranges," suggested Mr. George.

"So we will," said Rollo. "I will go out into the square and buy some."

Rollo, accordingly, went out into the square, and for what was equivalent to three cents of American money he bought six oranges. He put the oranges into his pockets, and returned to the hotel.

He found Mr. George filling a flat bottle with coffee. He had poured some coffee out of the coffee pot into the pitcher of hot milk, which had still a considerable quantity of hot milk remaining in it, and then, after putting some sugar into it, and waiting for the sugar to dissolve, he had commenced pouring it into the flat bottle.

"We may like a little coffee too," said Mr. George, "as well as the oranges. We can drink it out of my drinking cup."

Rollo put his oranges into Mr. George's bag, for his own bag was now full. When all was ready, and the hotel bill was paid, Mr. George and Rollo got into a carriage which the waiter had sent for to come to the door, and set off for the diligence office. It was only half past seven when they arrived there. Rollo saw

what time it was by the great clock which was put up on the front of one of the buildings towards the court yard.

"We are too early by half an hour," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George, "in travelling over new ground we must always plan to be too early, or we run great risk of being too late."

"Never mind," said Rollo, "I am glad that we are here before the time, for now I can go around and see the other diligences getting ready to go off."

So Rollo began to walk about under the portico, or piazza, to the various diligences which were getting ready to set out on the different roads. There was one where there was a gentleman and two ladies who were quite in trouble. I suppose that among the girls who may read this book there may be many who may think that it must necessarily be a very agreeable thing to travel about Europe, and that if they could only go,—no matter under what circumstances,—they should experience an almost uninterrupted succession of pleasing sensations. But the truth is, that travelling in Europe, like every other earthly source of pleasure, is very far from being sufficient of itself to confer happiness. Indeed, under almost all the ordinary circumstances in which parties of travellers are placed, the question whether they are to enjoy themselves and be happy on any particular day of their journey, or to be discontented and miserable, depends so much upon little things which they did not at all take into the account, or even foresee at all in planning the journey, that it is wholly uncertain

when you look upon a party of travellers that you meet on the road, whether they are really having a good time or not. You cannot tell at all by the outward circumstances.

There was a striking illustration of this in the case of the party that attracted Rollo's attention in the court of the diligence office. The gentleman's name was Howland. One of the ladies was his young wife, and the other lady was her sister. The sister's name was Louise. Mr. Howland intended to have taken the whole *coupé* for his party; but when he went to the office, the day before, to take the places, he found that one of the seats of the *coupé* had been engaged by a gentleman who was travelling alone.

"How unlucky!" said Mr. Howland to himself. "We must have three seats, and it won't do for us to be shut up in the interior, for there we cannot see the scenery at all."

So he went home, and asked his wife what it would be best to do. "We cannot have three seats together," said he, "unless we go up upon the *banquette*."

But the bride said that she could not possibly ride on the *banquette*. She could not climb up to such a high place.

Now, Mrs. Howland's real reason for not being willing to ride on the banquette, was not the difficulty of climbing up, for at all the diligence offices they have convenient step ladders for the use of the passengers in getting up and down. The real reason was, she thought it was not genteel to ride there. And in fact it is not genteel. There is no part of the diligence where people who attach much importance to the fashion of the thing are willing

to go, except the coupé.

"And we don't want to ride in the interior," said Mr. Howland.

"No," said the bride, "that is worse than the banquette."

"Nor to wait till another day," added Mr. Howland.

"No," said Mrs. Howland. "We must go to-morrow, and we must have the *coupé*. The gentleman who has engaged the third seat will give it up to us, I am sure, when he knows that it is to oblige a lady. You can engage the two seats in the coupé, and one more, either on the banquette or in the interior, and then when the time comes to set out we will get the gentleman to let us have his seat. You can pay him the difference."

"But, Angelina," said Mr. Howland, "I should not like to ask such a thing of the gentleman. He has taken pains to go a day or two beforehand to engage his seat, so as to make sure of a good one, and I don't think we ought to expect him to give it up to accommodate strangers."

"O, he won't mind," said Mrs. Howland. "He would as lief change as not. And if he won't, we can arrange it in some way or other."

So Mr. Howland engaged the two places in the coupé, and one on the banquette. When the morning came, he brought his two ladies to the diligence station in good season. He was very unwilling to ask the gentleman to give up his seat; but his wife, who was a good deal accustomed to have her own way, and who, besides, being now a bride, considered herself specially entitled to indulgences, declared that if her husband did not ask

the gentleman, she would ask him herself.

"Very well," said Mr. Howland, "I will ask him then."

So Mr. Howland went to the gentleman, and asked him. He was standing at the time, with his umbrella and walking stick in his hand, near one of the pillars of the portico, smoking a cigar. He looked at Mr. Howland with an expression of some surprise upon his countenance on hearing the proposition, took one or two puffs from his cigar before replying, and then said quietly that he preferred the seat that he had taken in the coupé.

"It would be a very great favor to us, if you would exchange with us," said Mrs. Howland, who had come up with her husband, and stood near. "We are three, and we want very much to be seated together. We will very gladly pay the difference of the fare."

The gentleman immediately, on being thus addressed by Mrs. Howland, took the cigar out of his mouth, raised his hat, and bowed very politely.

"Are you and this other lady the gentleman's party?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," said Mrs. Howland.

"Then I cannot possibly think of giving up my seat in the coupé," replied the gentleman. "I am a Russian, it is true, but I am not a bear, as I should very justly be considered, if I were to leave a compartment in the coach when *two* such beautiful ladies as you were coming into it, especially under the influence of any such consideration as that of saving the difference in the fare."

The gentleman said this in so frank and good-natured a way

that it was impossible to take offence at it, though Mr. Howland felt, that by making the request and receiving such a reply, he had placed himself in a very ridiculous position.

"I prize my seat more than ever," said the Russian, still addressing the ladies; "I prize it incalculably, and so I cannot think of going up upon the banquette. But if the gentleman will go up there, I will promise to take the very best care of the ladies possible, while they are in the coupé."

Mrs. Howland then took Louise aside, and asked, in a whisper, whether she should have any objection to ride in the interior, in case Mr. Howland could exchange the place on the banquette for one within. Louise was quite troubled that her sister should make such a proposal. She said she should not like very well to go in there among so many strangers, and in a place, too, where she could not see the scenery at all. Besides, Louise thought that it would have been more generous in Angelina, if she thought it necessary for one or the other of them to ride inside, to have offered to take a seat there herself, instead of putting it off upon her sister, especially since it was not so proper, she thought, for her, being a young lady, to ride among strangers, as for one who was married.

Mr. Howland then suggested that they should all ascend to the banquette. The persons who had the other two seats there would of course be willing to change for the coupé; or at least, since the coupé was considered the best place, there would be no indelicacy in asking them to do it.

But the bride would not listen to this proposal. She never could climb up there, in the world, she said.

By this time the coach was ready, and the conductor began to call upon the passengers to take their places, so that there was no more time for deliberation. They were all obliged to take their seats as the conductor called off the names from his way bill. The two ladies entered the coupé in company with the Russian, while Mr. Howland ascended by the step ladder to his seat on the banquette. While the passengers were thus getting seated the postilions were putting in the horses, and in a moment more the diligence set off.

Now, here were four persons setting out on a pleasant morning, in a good carriage, to take the drive from Naples to Rome—one of the most charming drives that the whole tour of Europe affords, and yet not one of them was in a condition to enjoy it. Every one was dissatisfied, out of humor, and unhappy. The Russian gentleman was displeased with Mr. Howland for asking him to give up his seat, and he felt uncomfortable and ill at ease in being shut up with two ladies, who he knew were displeased with him for not giving it up. The bride was vexed with the Russian for insisting on his place in the coupé, and with her sister for not being willing to go into the interior, so that she might ride with her husband. Miss Louise was offended at having been asked to sit in the interior, which request, she said to herself, was only part of a systematic plan, which her sister seemed to have adopted for the whole journey, to make herself the principal

personage in every thing, and to treat her, Louise, as if she was of no consequence whatever. And last of all, Mr. Howland, on the banquette above, was out of humor with himself for having asked the Russian to give up his seat, and thus subjected himself to the mortification of a refusal, and with his wife for having required him to ask it.

Thus they were all at heart uncomfortable and unhappy, and as the horses trotted swiftly on along the smooth and beautiful road which traverses the rich campagna of Naples, on the way to Capua, the splendid scenery was wholly disregarded by every one of them.

Now, it is very often so with parties travelling in Europe. The external circumstances are all perhaps extremely favorable, and they are passing through scenes or visiting places which they have thought of and dreamed of at home with beating hearts for many years. And yet now that the time has come, and the enjoyment is before them, there is some internal source of disquiet, some mental vexation or annoyance, some secret resentment or heart-burning, arising out of the circumstances in which they are placed, or the relations which they sustain to one another, which destroys their peace and quiet of mind, and of course incapacitates them for any real happiness. So that, on the whole, judging from what I have seen of tourists in Europe, I should say that those that travel do not after all, in general, really pass their time more happily than those who remain at home.

I have two reasons for saying these things. One is, that those

of you who have no opportunity to travel, may be more contented to remain at home, and not imagine that those of your friends who go abroad, necessarily pass their time so much more happily than you do. The other reason is, that when you do travel, either in our own country or in foreign lands, you should be more reasonable and considerate, and pay more regard to the wishes and feelings of others, than travellers usually do. Most of the disquietudes and heart-burnings which arise to mar the happiness of parties travelling, come from the selfishness of our hearts, which seems, in some way or other, to bring itself out more into view when we are on a long journey together than at any other time. In the ordinary intercourse of life, this selfishness is covered and concealed by the veil of politeness prescribed by the forms and usages of society. This veil is, however, very thin, and it soon disappears entirely, in the familiar intercourse which is necessarily produced by the incidents and adventures of a journey. In being daily and hourly with each other for a long time, people appear just as they really are; and unless they are really reasonable, considerate, and just towards one another, they are sure sooner or later to disagree.

But though the bridal party were very much out of humor with each other, as we have seen, Mr. George and Rollo were entirely free from any such uneasiness. They both felt very light-hearted and happy. They rambled about the court yard till they had seen all that there was there to interest them, and then they went to their own diligence. They opened the coupé door and looked in.

"Our seats are Nos. 1 and 2," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George. "One of them is next the window, and the other is in the middle. You may get in first, and take the seat by the window."

"No, uncle George," said Rollo, "you had better have the seat by the window."

"We will take turns for that seat," said Mr. George, "and you shall begin."

Mr. George arranged it to have Rollo take his turn first, because he knew very well that, in the beginning of a journey, such a boy as Rollo was always full of enthusiasm and excitement; and that, consequently, he would enjoy riding at the window much more at first than at a later period. So Rollo got in and took his seat, and Mr. George followed him. In a very few minutes afterwards, the postilions came out with the horses.

But I have something particular to say about the postilions and the horses, and I will say it in the next chapter.

Chapter II.
The Journey

There are a great many curious things to be observed in travelling by the public conveyances on the continent of Europe. One is the way of driving the horses. It is a very common thing to have them driven, not by coachmen, but by postilions. There is a postilion for each pair of horses, and he sits upon the nigh horse of the pair. Thus he rides and drives at the same time.

In these cases there is no driver's seat in front of the coach. Or if there is a seat in front, it is occupied by the passengers. All the driving is done by the postilions.

The postilions dress in a sort of livery, which is quite gay in its appearance, being trimmed with red. The collars and the lapels of their jackets, too, are ornamented here and there with figures of stage horns and other emblems of their profession. They also wear enormously long and stout boots. These boots come up above their knees. They carry only a short whip, for they only have to whip the horse that they are upon, and the one which is by the side of him, and so they do not have to reach very far. When there are four horses, there are two postilions, and when there are six, three.

A large diligence, with six horses, and a gayly dressed postilion mounted on one of the horses of each pair, makes a

very grand appearance, you may depend, in coming, upon the gallop, into the streets of a town—the postilions cracking their whips, and making as much noise as they can, and all the boys and girls of the street coming to the doors and windows to see.

"I am glad we are going to have postilions, uncle George," said Rollo, as they were getting into the coach.

"Why?" asked Mr. George.

"Because I like the looks of them," said Rollo; "and then we always go faster, too, when we have postilions. Besides, when there is a seat for a driver on the coach, it blocks up our front windows; but now our windows are all clear."

"Those are excellent reasons—all of them," said Mr. George.

The postilions did indeed drive very fast, when they once got upon the road. There was a delay of half an hour, at the gate of the city, for the examination of the passports; during which time the postilions, having dismounted from their horses, stood talking together, and playing off jokes upon each other. At length, when the passports were ready, they sprang into their saddles, and set the horses off upon the run.

The road, on leaving the gates, entered a wide and beautiful avenue, which was at this time filled with peasants coming into town, for that day was market day in Naples. The people coming in were dressed in the most curious costumes. Multitudes were on foot, others rode crowded together in donkey carts. Some rode on the backs of donkeys, with a load of farming produce before or behind them. The women, in such cases, sat square upon the

donkey's back, with both their feet hanging down on one side; and they banged the donkey with their heels to make him get out of the way so that the diligence could go by.

The country was very rich and beautiful, and it was cultivated every where like a garden. Here and there were groves of mulberries,—the tree on which the silk worm feeds,—and there were vineyards, with the vines just bursting into leaf, and now and then a little garden of orange trees. In the mean time the postilions kept cracking their whips, and the horses galloped on at such a speed that Rollo had scarcely time to see the objects by the road side, they glided so swiftly by.

"Won't the silk worms eat any kind of leaves but mulberry leaves?" he asked.

"No," said Mr. George, "at least the mulberry silk worms will not. There are a great many different kinds of silk worms in the world; that is, there are a great many different kinds of caterpillars that spin a thread and make a ball to wrap up their eggs in, and each one lives on a different plant or tree. If you watch the caterpillars in a garden, you will see that each kind lives on some particular leaf, and will not touch any other."

"Yes," said Rollo, "we found a big caterpillar once on the caraway in our garden, and we shut him up in a box, in order to see what sort of a butterfly he would turn into, and we gave him different kinds of leaves to eat, but he would not eat any but caraway leaves."

"And what became of him at last?" asked Mr. George.

"O, he turned into a butterfly," said Rollo. "First he turned into a chrysalis, and then he turned into a butterfly."

"There are a great many different kinds of silk worms," said Mr. George; "but in order to find one that can be made useful, there are several conditions to be fulfilled."

"What do you mean by conditions to be fulfilled?" asked Rollo.

"Why, I mean that there are several things necessary, in order that the silk worm should be a good one to make silk from. In the first place, the fibre of the silk that he spins must be fine, and also strong. In the next place, it must easily unwind from the cocoon. Then the animal must be a tolerably hardy one, so as to be easily raised in great numbers. Then the plant or tree that it feeds upon must be a thrifty and hardy one, and easily cultivated. The mulberry silk worm has been found to answer to these conditions better than any hitherto known; but there are some others that I believe they are now trying, in order to see if they will not be better still. They are looking about in all parts of the world to see what they can find."

"Who are looking?" asked Rollo.

"The Society of Acclimatation," replied Mr. George. "That is a society founded in Paris, and extending to all parts of the world, that is employed in finding new plants and new animals that can be made useful to man, or finding some that are useful to man in one country, and so introducing them into other countries. They are trying specially to find new silk worms."

"There are some kinds of caterpillars in America," said Rollo, "that wind their silk up into balls. I mean to get some of the balls when I go home, and see if I can unwind them."

"That will be an excellent plan," said Mr. George.

"If I can only find the end," said Rollo.

"There must be some art required to find the end," rejoined Mr. George, "and then I believe there is some preparation which is necessary to make the cocoons unwind."

"I wish I knew what it was," said Rollo.

"You can inquire of some of the people when we stop to dine," replied Mr. George.

"But I don't know enough Italian for that," said Rollo.

"That's a pity," said Mr. George.

In the mean time the horses trotted and galloped on until they had gone about ten miles, and then at length the postilions brought them up at the door of an inn, in a village. Fresh horses were standing all ready at the door, with new postilions. The postilions that had been driving took out their horses and led them away, and then came themselves to the window of the coupé and held out their caps for their *buono mano*, as they call it; that is, for a small present.

Every body in Italy, who performs any service, expects, in addition to being paid the price regularly agreed upon for the service, to receive a present, greater or smaller according to the nature of the case. This present is called the *buono mano*.[2]

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[2] Pronounced *bono mahno*.

The postilions always expect a buono mano from the passengers in the stage coach, especially from those who ride in the coupé.

Rollo gave them a few coppers each, for himself and for Mr. George, and just as he had done so, a young man without any hat upon his head, but with a white napkin under his arm, came out of the hotel, and advancing to the window of the coupé asked Mr. George and Rollo, in French, if they wished to take any thing.

"No," said Mr. George. "Not any thing."

"Yes, uncle George," said Rollo, "let us go and see what they have got."

He said this, of course, in English, but immediately changing his language into French, he asked the waiter what they could have.

The waiter said that they could have some hot coffee. There would not be time for any thing else.

"Let us have some hot coffee, uncle George," said Rollo, eagerly.

"Very well," said Mr. George.

So Rollo gave the order, and the waiter went into the house. In a moment he returned with two cups of very nice coffee, which he brought on a tray. By this time, however, the fresh horses were almost harnessed, so that it was necessary to drink the coffee quick. But there was no difficulty in doing this, for it was very nice, and not too hot. Rollo had barely time to give back the cups and pay for the coffee before the diligence began to move.

The postilions started the horses with a strange sort of a cry, that they uttered while standing beside them, and then leaped into the saddles just as they were beginning to run.

The journey was continued much in this way during the whole day. The country was delightful; the road was hard and smooth as a floor, and the horses went very fast. In a word, Rollo had a capital ride.

After traversing a comparatively level country for some miles, the road entered a mountainous region, where there was a long ascent. At the foot of this ascent was a post house, and here they put on six horses instead of four. Of course there were now three postilions. But although the country was mountainous, the ascent was not steep, for the road was carried up by means of long windings and zigzags, in such a manner that the rise was very regular and gradual all the way. The consequence was, that the six horses took the diligence on almost as fast up the mountains as the four had done on the level ground.

About five o'clock in the afternoon the diligence made a good stop, in order to allow the passengers to dine.

"We will go in and take dinner with the rest," said Mr. George, "and so save the things that we have put up for a moonlight supper on the Pontine Marshes."

"Yes," said Rollo, "I shall like that very much. Besides, I want to go and take dinner with them here, for I want to see how they do it."

The place where the diligence stopped was a town called Mola

di Gaeta. It stood in a very picturesque situation, near the sea. For though the road, in leaving Naples, had led at first into the interior of the country, and had since been winding about among the mountains, it had now come down again to the margin of the sea.

The entrance to the hotel was under a great archway. There were doors to the right and left from this archway, leading to staircases and to apartments. The passengers from the diligence were conducted through one of these doors into a very ancient looking hall, where there was a table set for dinner, with plates enough for twenty persons—that being about the number of passengers contained in the various compartments of the diligence.

On the opposite side of the arched way was a door leading to another hall, where there was a table set for the conductor and the postilions.

After waiting a few minutes, the company of passengers took their seats at the table. Besides the plates for the guests, there was a row of dishes extending up and down the middle of the table, containing apples, pears, oranges, nuts, raisins, little cakes, and bon-bons of various kinds. There were also in this row two vases containing flowers.

Excepting these fruits and sweetmeats, there was nothing eatable upon the table when the guests sat down. It is not customary in European dinners to put any thing upon the table except the dessert.

The other dishes are brought round, and presented one by one to each guest. First came the soup. When the soup had been eaten, and the soup plates had been removed, then there was boiled beef. The beef was upon two dishes, one for each side of the table. It was cut very nicely in slices, and each dish had a fork and a spoon in it, for the guests to help themselves with. The dishes were carried along the sides of the table by the waiters, and offered to each guest, the guests helping themselves in succession to such pieces as they liked.

After the beef had been eaten, the plates were all changed, and then came a course of fried potatoes; then, after another change of plates, a course of mutton chops; then green peas; then roast beef; then cauliflower with drawn butter; then roast chicken with salad; and lastly, some puddings. For each separate article of all this dinner there was a fresh plate furnished to each guest.

After the pudding plates were removed, small plates for the dessert were furnished; and then the fruit, and the nuts, and the bon-bons were served; and the dinner was over.

For every two guests there was a decanter of wine. At least it was what they called wine, though in taste it was more like sour cider. The people generally used it by pouring a little of it into their water.

When the dinner was over, the passengers all paid the amount that was charged for it, and each gave, besides, a buono mano to the waiter who had waited upon his side of the table. By this time the diligence was ready, and they all went and took their

seats in it again.

The sun was now going down, and in the course of an hour the last of its rays were seen gilding the summits of the mountains. Soon afterwards the evening began to come on.

"Before a great while," said Mr. George, "we shall begin to draw near to the frontier."

"Yes," said Rollo, "the frontier between the kingdom of Naples and the dominions of the pope. They will examine the baggage there, I suppose."

"No," said Mr. George; "they will not examine the baggage till we get to Rome."

"I thought they always examined the baggage at the frontier, when we came into any new country," said Rollo.

"They do," said Mr. George, "unless the baggage is under the charge of public functionaries; and then, to save time, they often take it into the capital, and examine it there. I asked one of the passengers at the dinner table, and he said that the trunks were not to be opened till we get to Rome."

"They will examine the passports, I suppose," said Rollo.

"Yes," replied Mr. George, "they will, undoubtedly, examine the passports at the frontier."

You cannot pass from one country in Europe to another, any where, without stopping at the last military station of the country that you leave, to have your passport examined and stamped, in token of permission given you to go out, and also at the first military station of the country which you are about to enter, to

have them examined and stamped again, in token of permission to come in. All this, as you may suppose, is very troublesome. Besides that, there are fees to pay, which, in the course of a long journey, amount to a considerable sum.

Besides the passport business which was to be attended to, there was a grand change of the diligence establishment at the frontier. The coach itself, which came from Naples, and also the conductor and postilions, were all left at the border, and the passengers were transferred to a new turnout which came from Rome. Indeed, there was a double change; for the Roman diligence brought a load of passengers from Rome to meet the Neapolitan one at the border, and thus each company of travellers had to be transferred to the establishment belonging to the country which they were entering.

This change was made in a post house, in a solitary place near the frontier. It caused a detention of nearly an hour, there were so many formalities to go through. It was late in the evening, and the work was done by the light of torches and lanterns. The two diligences were backed up against each other, and then all the trunks and baggage were transferred from the top of one coach to the top of the other, without being taken down at all. The baggage in these diligences is always packed upon the top.

You would think that this would make the coach top heavy, and so it does in some degree; but then the body of the coach below is so large and heavy, that the extra weight above is well counterpoised; and then, besides, the roads are so smooth and

level, and withal so hard, that there is no danger of an upset.

The work of shifting the baggage from one diligence to the other was performed under an archway. There was a door leading from this archway into a large office, where the two companies of passengers were assembled, waiting for the coaches to be ready. All these passengers were loaded with carpet bags, knapsacks, valises, bundles of umbrellas and canes, and other such light baggage which they had had with them inside the coaches. Many of them were sitting on chairs and benches around the sides of the room, with their baggage near them. Others were walking about the room, changing money with each other; that is, those that were going from Rome to Naples were changing the Roman money, which they had left, for Neapolitan money. The money of one of these countries does not circulate well in the other country. In the middle of the room was a great table, where the conductors and other officials were at work with papers and accounts. Rollo could not understand what they were doing.

Rollo walked about the office, looking at the different passengers, and observing what was going on, while Mr. George remained near the coaches, to watch the transfer of the baggage.

"I want to be sure," said Mr. George, "that our trunk is there, and that they shift it over to the Roman coach."

"They are changing money inside," said Rollo. "Have you got any that you want to have changed?"

"No," said Mr. George. "I did not know that we could change here; and I calculated closely, and planned it so as not to have

any of the Naples money left."

"I have got only two or three pieces," said Rollo, "and those I am going to carry home to America for coins."

At length the changes were completed, and Mr. George and Rollo, and also all the other passengers who had come in the diligence from Naples, began to take their places in the coach for Rome; while at the same time the other company got into the Naples coach, which was now going to return. The conductor came for his *buono mano*, the new horses were harnessed in, the postilions leaped into the saddles, and thus both parties set out upon their night ride. It was not far from nine o'clock.

"And now," said Mr. George, "before a great while we shall come upon the Pontine Marshes."

The Pontine Marshes form an immense tract of low and level land, which have been known and celebrated in history for nearly two thousand years. Though called marshes, they are so far drained by ancient canals that the land is firm enough for grass to grow upon it, and for flocks of sheep and herds of cattle to feed; but yet it is so low and so unhealthy, that it is utterly uninhabitable by man. The extent of these marshes is immense. The road traverses them in a direct line, and on a perfect level, for twenty-five or thirty miles, without passing a single habitation, except the post houses, and in the middle a solitary inn.

And yet there is nothing desolate or dreary in the aspect of the Pontine Marshes. On the contrary the view on every side, in passing across them, is extremely beautiful. The road is wide,

and smooth, and level, and is bordered on each side with a double row of very ancient and venerable trees, which give to it, for the whole distance, the character of a magnificent avenue. Think of a broad and handsome avenue, running straight as an arrow for twenty-five miles!

Beyond the trees, on one side, there is a wide canal. This canal runs parallel to the road, and you often meet boats coming or going upon it. Beyond the canal, and beyond the trees on the other side, there extends, as far as the eye can reach, one vast expanse of living green, as smooth and beautiful as can be imagined. This immense tract of meadow is divided here and there by hedges or palings, and now and then a pretty grove appears to vary the scene. Immense flocks of sheep, and herds of horses and cattle, are seen feeding every where, and sometimes herdsmen, on horseback galloping to and fro, attending to their charge.

Mr. George and Rollo had had a fine opportunity to see the scenery of the Pontine Marshes when they came to Naples, for then they crossed them by day light. Now, however, it was night, and there was not much to be seen except the gnarled and venerable trunks of the trees, on each side of the road, as the light of the diligence lanterns flashed upon them.

The postilions drove exceedingly fast all the way over the marshes. The stage stopped three times to change horses. Mr. George kept up a continual conversation with Rollo all the way, in order to prevent him from going to sleep; for, as I have said before, it is considered dangerous to sleep while on the marshes.

About midnight Rollo proposed that they should eat their supper.

"No," said Mr. George, "we will keep our supper for the last thing. As long as we can keep awake without it we will."

So they went on for two hours longer. About one o'clock the moon rose, and the moonbeams shining in through the windows of the coupé, enlivened the interior very much.

"The moonlight makes it a great deal pleasanter," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George, "and it will make it a great deal more convenient for us to eat our supper."

The diligence stopped at a post house to change horses, a little before two, and immediately after it set out again. Mr. George said that it was time for them to take their supper. So Rollo opened the two bags, and took out from one the chicken and the two rolls, and from the other the bottle of coffee and the oranges. He placed the things, as he took them out, in a large pocket before him, in the front of the coupé. Mr. George took two newspapers out of his knapsack, one for Rollo and one for himself, to spread in their laps while they were eating. Then, with a sharp blade of his pocket knife, he began to carve the chicken.

The chicken was very tender, and the rolls were very nice; and as, moreover, both the travellers were quite hungry, they found the supper in all respects excellent. For drink, they had the juice of the oranges. To drink this juice, they cut a round hole in one end of the orange, and then run the blade of the knife in, in all directions, so as to break up the pulp. They could then drink out

the juice very conveniently.

At the close of the supper they drank the coffee. The coffee was cold, it is true, but it was very good, and it made an excellent ending to the meal.

They made the supper last as long as possible, in order to occupy the time. It was three o'clock before it was finished and the papers cleared away. At half past three, Rollo, in looking out at the window, saw a sort of bank by the side of the road; and on observing attentively, he perceived that there was a curve in the road itself, before them.

"Uncle George," said he, "we have got off the marshes!"

"I verily believe we have," said Mr. George.

"So now we may go to sleep," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George. "I'll lay my head over into the corner, and you may lie against my shoulder."

So Mr. George and Rollo placed themselves in as comfortable a position as possible, and composed themselves to sleep. They slept several hours; waking up, or, rather, half waking up, once during the interval, while the diligence stopped for the purpose of changing horses. When they finally awoke, the sun was up high, and was shining in quite bright through the coupé windows.

Chapter III.
The Arrival at Rome

When Mr. George and Rollo awoke from their sleep, they found that they were coming into the environs of Rome. The country was green and beautiful, but it seemed almost uninhabited; and in every direction were to be seen immense ruins of tombs, and aqueducts, and other such structures, now gone to decay. There was an ancient road leading out of Rome in this direction, called the *Appian Way*. It was by this road that the apostle Paul travelled, in making his celebrated journey to Rome, after appealing from the Jewish jurisdiction to that of Cæsar. Indeed, the Appii Forum and the Three Taverns, places mentioned in the account of this journey contained in the Acts, were on the very road that Mr. George and Rollo had been travelling in their journey from Naples to Rome.

The remains of the Appian Way are still to be traced for many miles south of Rome. The road was paved, in ancient times, with very large blocks of an exceedingly hard kind of stone. These stones were of various shapes, but they were fitted together and flattened on the top, and thus they made a very smooth, and at the same time a very solid, pavement. In many places along the Appian Way this old pavement still remains, and is as good as ever.

At length the diligence arrived at the gate of the city. It passed through an arched gateway, leading through an ancient and very venerable wall, and then stopped at the door of a sort of office just within. There were two soldiers walking to and fro before the office.

"What are we stopping for here?" asked Rollo.

"For the passports, I suppose," said Mr. George.

The conductor of the diligence came to the door of the coupé and asked for the passports. Mr. George gave him his and Rollo's, and the conductor carried them, together with those which he had obtained from the other passengers, into the office. He then ordered the postilions to drive on.

"How shall we get our passports again?" asked Rollo.

"We must send for them to the police office, I suppose," said Mr. George.

It is very customary, in the great capitals of Europe, for the police to take the passports of travellers, on their arrival at the gates of the city, and direct them to send for them at the central police office on the following day.

After passing the gate, the diligence went on a long way, through a great many narrow streets, leading into the heart of the city. There was nothing in these streets to denote the ancient grandeur of Rome, excepting now and then an old and venerable ruin, standing neglected among the other buildings.

Rollo, however, in looking out at the windows of the coupé, saw a great many curious sights, as the diligence drove along.

Among these one of the most remarkable was a procession of people dressed in a most fantastic manner, and wearing masks which entirely concealed their faces. There were two round holes in the masks for the eyes. Mr. George told Rollo that these were men doing penance. They had been condemned to walk through the streets in this way, as a punishment for some of their sins.

"Why, they treat them just as if they were children," said Rollo.

"They *are* children," said Mr. George, "in every thing but years."

Not long after this, Rollo saw a very magnificent carriage coming along. It was perfectly resplendent with crimson and gold. The horses, too, and the coachman, and the footmen, were gorgeously caparisoned and apparelled in the same manner.

Rollo pointed it out to Mr. George. Mr. George said it was a cardinal's carriage.

"I wish the cardinal was in it," said Rollo. "I would like to have seen him."

"I presume he would have looked very much like any other man," replied Mr. George.

"Yes, but he would have been dressed differently, wouldn't he?"

"Perhaps so," said Mr. George.

"Perhaps he would have had his red hat on," said Rollo. "I should like to see a cardinal wearing his red hat."

The badge of the cardinal's office is a hat and dress of a red

color.

At length the diligence passed under an archway which led into a large open court, similar to the one in Naples where the journey had been commenced. The passengers got out, the horses were unharnessed, and the baggage was taken down. The trunks were all taken into an office pertaining to the custom house, to be examined by the officers there, in order to see whether there were any contraband goods in them.

Mr. George unlocked his trunk and lifted up the lid. An officer came up to the place, and patting with his hand upon the top of the clothes, as if to prevent Mr. George from lifting them up to show what was below, he said,—

"Very well; very well; it is sufficient."

So saying, he shut down the top of the trunk again, and marked it, "Passed." He then touched his hat, and asked Mr. George if he would make some small present for the benefit of the custom house officers.

That is to say, he evaded the performance of his duty as an officer of the customs, in expectation that the traveller would pay him for his delinquency. Most travellers are very willing to pay in such cases. They have various articles in their trunks which they have bought in other countries, and which, strictly speaking, are subject to duty in entering Rome, and they are willing to pay a fee rather than to have their trunks overhauled. Others, of more sturdy morality, refuse to pay these fees. They consider them as of the nature of bribes. So they say to the officers,—

"Examine the baggage as much as you please, and if you find any duties due, I will pay them. But I will not pay any bribes."

"Now, Rollo," said Mr. George, when he had got possession of his trunk, "we want a carriage to take us and the baggage to the hotel. You may go and see if you can find one, and I will stay here and look after the baggage. Engage the carriage by the hour."

So Rollo went out of the court, and soon found a carriage. Before he got into it, he said to the coachman,—

"*Per hora!*"

This means, By the hour.

At the same time Rollo held up his watch to the coachman, in order to let him see what o'clock it was.

"*Si, signore*," said the coachman.

Si, signore, is the Italian for Yes, sir.

Rollo could not say in Italian where he wished the coachman to go, and so he stood up in the carriage and pointed. Following his indications, the coachman drove in through the archway to the court of the post office, where he found Mr. George waiting. The trunk and the bags were put upon the carriage, in front, and Mr. George got in with Rollo.

"Hotel d'Amerique," said Mr. George to the coachman.

"*Si, signore*," said the coachman, and immediately he began to drive away.

The Hotel d'Amerique was the one where Mr. George had concluded to go. He had found the name and a description of this hotel in his guide book.

"Why did you want me to take the carriage by the hour?" asked Rollo.

"Because it is very probable," said Mr. George, "that we shall not get in at the Hotel d'Amerique, and in that case we shall have to go to other hotels, and unless we take him by the hour, he would charge a course for every hotel that we go to, and the charge even for *two*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.