

ABBOTT JACOB

ROLLO IN
NAPLES

Jacob Abbott

Rollo in Naples

«Public Domain»

Abbott J.

Rollo in Naples / J. Abbott — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

Chapter I.	5
Chapter II.	12
Chapter III.	18
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	20

Jacob Abbott

Rollo in Naples

Chapter I. The Vetturino

If ever you make a journey into Italy, there is one thing that you will like very much indeed; and that is the mode of travelling that prevails in that country. There are very few railroads there; and though there are stage coaches on all the principal routes, comparatively few people, except the inhabitants of the country, travel in them. Almost all who come from foreign lands to make journeys in Italy for pleasure, take what is called a *vetturino*.

There is no English word for *vetturino*, because where the English language is spoken, there is no such thing. The word comes from the Italian word *vettura*, which means a travelling carriage, and it denotes the man that owns the carriage, and drives it wherever the party that employs him wishes to go. Thus there is somewhat the same relation between the Italian words *vettura* and *vetturino* that there is between the English words *chariot* and *charioteer*.

The Italian *vetturino*, then, in the simplest English phrase that will express it, is a *travelling carriage man*; that is, he is a man who keeps a carriage and a team of horses, in order to take parties of travellers with them on long journeys, wherever they wish to go. Our word *coachman* does not express the idea at all. A coachman is a man employed by the owner of a carriage simply to drive it; whereas the *vetturino* is the proprietor of his establishment; and though he generally drives it himself, still the driving is only a small part of his business. He might employ another man to go with him and drive, but he would on that account be none the less the *vetturino*.

The *vetturino* usually takes the entire charge of the party, and provides for them in every respect,—that is, if they make the arrangement with him in that way, which they generally do, inasmuch as, since they do not, ordinarily, know the language of the country, it is much more convenient for them to arrange with him to take care of them than to attempt to take care of themselves. Accordingly, in making a journey of several days, as, for example, from Genoa to Florence, from Florence to Rome, or from Rome to Venice, or to Naples, the *vetturino* determines the length of each day's journey; he chooses the hotels where to stop, both at noon and for the night; he attends to the passports in passing the frontiers, and also to the examination of the baggage at the custom houses; and on arriving at the hotels he orders what the travellers require, and settles the bill the next morning. For all this the travellers pay him one round sum, which includes every thing. This sum consists of a certain amount for the carriage and horses, and an additional amount of about a dollar and a half or a dollar and three quarters a day, as agreed upon beforehand, for hotel expenses on the way. Thus, by this mode of travelling, the whole care is taken off from the traveller's mind, and he has nothing to do during the daytime but to sit in his carriage and enjoy himself, and at night to eat, drink, sleep, and take his comfort at the hotel.

It was at Florence that Mr. George and Rollo first commenced to travel with a *vetturino*. They came to Florence by steamer and railway; that is, by steamer to Leghorn, and thence across the country by railway. Florence is a very pretty place, with the blue and beautiful River Arno running through the middle of it, and ancient stone bridges leading across the river from side to side. The town is filled with magnificent churches and palaces, built, some of them, a thousand years ago, and all so richly adorned with sculptures, paintings, bronzes, and mosaics, that the whole world flock there to see them. People go there chiefly in the winter. At that season the town is crowded with strangers. A

great many people, too, go there in the winter to avoid the cold weather which prevails at that time of the year, in all the more northerly countries of Europe.

There is so little winter in Florence that few of the houses have any fireplaces in them except in the kitchen. When there comes a cold day, the people warm themselves by means of a jug or jar of earthen ware, with a handle passing over across the top, by which they carry it about. They fill these jars half full of hot embers, and so carry them with them wherever they want to go. The women, when they sit down, put the jar under their dresses on the floor or pavement beneath them, and the men place it right before them between their feet.

You will see market women and flower girls sitting in the corners of the streets in the winter, attending to their business, and keeping themselves warm all the time with these little fire jars; and artists in the palaces and picture galleries, each with one of them by his side, or close before him, while he is at work copying the works of the great masters, or making drawings from the antique statues.

There is another very curious use that the people of Florence make of these jars; and that is they warm the beds with them when any body is sick, so as to require this indulgence. You would think it very difficult to warm a bed with an open jar filled with burning embers. The way they do it is this: they hang the jar in the inside of a sort of wooden cage, shaped like a bushel basket, and about as large. They turn this cage upside down, and hang the jar up in it by means of a hook depending inside. They turn down the bed clothes and put the cage in it, jar of coals and all. They then put back the bed clothes, and cover the cage all up. They leave it so for a quarter of an hour, and then, carefully turning the clothes down again, they take the jar out, and the bed is warmed.

But to return to Mr. George and Rollo. They engaged a vetturino for the first time at Florence. Mr. George had gone to Florence chiefly for the purpose of examining the immense collections of paintings and statuary which exist there. Rollo went, not on account of the paintings or statues,—for he did not care much about such things,—but because he liked to go any where where he could see new places, and be entertained by new scenes. Accordingly, while Mr. George was at work in the galleries of Florence, studying, by the help of catalogues, the famous specimens of ancient art, Rollo was usually rambling about the streets, observing the manners and customs of the people, and watching the singular and curious scenes that every where met his eye.

The reason why there are so many paintings and sculptures in Italy is this: in the middle ages, it was the fashion, in all the central parts of Europe, for the people to spend almost all their surplus money in building and decorating churches. Indeed, there was then very little else that they could do. At the present time, people invest their funds, as fast as they accumulate them, in building ships and railroads, docks for the storage of merchandise, houses and stores in cities, to let for the sake of the rent, and country seats, or pretty private residences of various kinds, for themselves. But in the middle ages very little could be done in the way of investments like these. There were no railroads, and there was very little use for ships. There was no profit to be gained by building houses and stores, for there were so many wars and commotions among the people of the different towns and kingdoms, that nothing was stable or safe. For the same reason it was useless for men to spend their money in building and ornamenting their own houses, for at the first approach of an enemy, the town in which they lived was likely to be sacked, and their houses, and all the fine furniture which they might contain, would be burned or destroyed.

But the churches were safe. The people of the different countries had so much veneration for sacred places, and for every thing connected with religion, that they were afraid to touch or injure any thing that had been consecrated to a religious use. To plunder a church, or a convent, or an abbey, or to do any thing to injure or destroy the property that they contained, was regarded as *sacrilege*; and sacrilege they deemed a dreadful crime, abhorred by God and man. Thus, while they would burn and destroy hundreds of dwellings without any remorse, and turn the wretched inmates out at midnight into the streets to die of exposure, terror, and despair, they would stop at once when they came to the church, afraid to harm it in any way, or to touch the least thing that it contained. Accordingly, while

every thing else in a conquered town was doomed to the most reckless destruction, all that was in the church,—the most delicate paintings, and the most costly gold and silver images and utensils—were as safe as if they were surrounded by impregnable castle walls.

Of course these notions were very mistaken ones. According to the teachings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, it must be a greater sin to burn down the cottage of a poor widow, and turn her out at midnight into the streets to die, than to plunder for gain the richest altar in the world.

From these and various other similar causes, it happened that, in the middle ages,—that is, from five hundred to a thousand years ago,—almost all the great expenditures of money, in all the great cities and towns of Europe, were made for churches. Sometimes these churches were so large that they were several hundred years in building. One generation would begin, another would continue, and a third would finish the work; that is, provided the finishing work was ever done. Great numbers of them remain unfinished to the present day, and always will remain so.

It is generally, however, the exterior which remains incomplete. Within they are magnificent beyond description. They are so profusely adorned with altars, chapels, crucifixes, paintings, vessels of gold and silver, and with sculptures and monuments of every kind, that on entering them one is quite bewildered with the magnificence of the scene.

There are a great many different altars where divine service may be performed, some arranged along the sides of the church, in the recesses between the pillars, and others in the transepts, and in various little chapels opening here and there from the transepts and the aisles; and so extensive and vast is the interior that sometimes four or five different congregations are engaged in worship in different parts of the church at the same time, without at all disturbing one another.

One of the most celebrated of these great churches is the cathedral at Florence, where Mr. George and Rollo were now staying. There is a representation of it on the next page, which will give you some idea of its form, though it can convey no conception of its immense magnitude.

The dome that surmounts the centre of the building is the largest in the world. It was a hundred years after the church was commenced before the dome was put on. The dome is about a hundred and forty feet wide from side to side, and almost as high as it is wide. It is more than a hundred and thirty feet high, which is enough for twelve or fifteen stories of a good-sized house. And this is the dome alone. The whole height of the church, from the ground to the top of the cross, is nearly four hundred feet. You will get a better idea of how high this is, if you ask of your father, or of some one that knows, what the height is of some tall steeple near where you live.

When the architect who conceived the idea of finishing the church by putting this dome upon it first proposed it, the other architects of the town declared that it could not be done. It was impossible, they said, to build so large a dome on the top of so lofty a building. But he insisted that it was not impossible. He could not only build the dome at that height, but he could first build an octagonal lantern, he said, on the top of the church, and then build the dome upon that, which would carry the dome up a great deal higher. At last they consented to let him make the attempt; and he succeeded. You see the dome in the engraving, and the octagonal lantern beneath it, on which it rests. The lantern is the part which has the round windows.

You see to the left of the church, at the farther end, a tall, square tower. This is the bell tower. There are six bells in it. It was designed to have a spire upon it, but the spire has not yet been built, and perhaps it never will be.

This bell tower alone cost an enormous sum of money. It is faced on every side, as indeed the church itself is, with different colored marbles, and the four walls of it, on the outside, are so profusely adorned with sculptures, statues, and other costly and elaborate architectural decorations, that it would take a week to examine them fully in detail.

The part of the church which is presented to view in the engraving is the end. The front proper is on a line with the farther side of the bell tower. The engraving does not show us the length of the

edifice at all, except so far as we gain an idea of it by the long procession which we see at the side. As I have already said, the length is more than five hundred feet, which is nearly half a quarter of a mile.

The putting on of the dome was considered the greatest achievement in the building of the church; and the architect who planned and superintended the work gained for himself immortal honor. After his death a statue of him was made, and placed in a niche in the wall of the houses on one side of the square, opposite the dome. He is represented as sitting in a chair, holding a plan of the work in his hand, and looking up to see it as it appeared completed. We can just see this statue in the foreground of the picture, on the left.

And now I must return to the story.

While Mr. George and Rollo were in Florence, Rollo was occupied mainly, as I have already said, in rambling about the town, and observing the scenes of real and active life, which every where met his view in the streets and squares, while Mr. George spent his time chiefly in the churches, and in the galleries of painting and sculpture, studying the works of art. One morning after breakfast, Mr. George was going to the great gallery in the palace of the grand duke, to spend the day there. Rollo said that he would walk with him a little way. So they walked together along the street which led by the bank of the river.

"Uncle George," said Rollo, "how much longer is it going to take for you to study these paintings and statues till you are satisfied?"

"Five or ten years," said Mr. George.

"O uncle George!" exclaimed Rollo; "I have seen as much of them as *I* want to see already."

"You have not seen one of them yet," said Mr. George.

"Not seen one of them!" repeated Rollo.

"No, not one of them," replied Mr. George.

"I don't know what you mean by that," said Rollo.

"I'll show you what I mean some time or other," said Mr. George, "when you are in one of the galleries with me."

"I should like to have you," said Rollo; "but now I really want to know when you are going to be ready to go on towards Naples. I'd rather see Mount Vesuvius than all the paintings in the world, especially if there is a good blazing eruption coming out of it, and plenty of red-hot stones."

"The first question to be settled," said Mr. George, "is, how we shall go."

"Are there more ways than one?" asked Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George; "there are three or four ways. We are here at Florence, in the interior of the country, and Rome is also in the interior; but there is a seaport on the coast for each city. So we can go from here to Leghorn, which is the seaport for Florence, by the railroad, and there we can take a steamboat and go to Civita Vecchia, which is the seaport for Rome. There we can land and go up to Rome in some sort of a carriage."

"I like that way," said Rollo. "I like that best of all. There are a railroad and a steamboat both in it."

"Another way," continued Mr. George, "is, we can go by the malle post."¹

"I should like to go by the malle post," said Rollo; "they keep the horses on the gallop almost all the way."

"Then again," continued Mr. George, "if we choose we can engage a vetturino."

"Yes," said Rollo; "there are plenty of them always standing out here by the bridge. They ask me almost, every day, when I go by, whether I want a carriage. 'Want a carriage, sir,' they say, 'to go to Rome, to Naples, to Venice, to Genoa?'"

¹ The malle post is a sort of despatch carriage, that takes the mails. It can take also two or three passengers. They change horses very often with the malle post, and drive very fast.

Here Rollo repeated the words of the vetturini, imitating the peculiar intonations with which they spoke, in quite a skilful manner: "To Rome! Naples! Venice! Nice! Genoa!"

"Yes," said Mr. George, "those are the men."

"And, come to think of it," said Rollo, "I believe, after all, I would rather go with a vetturino. We ride along so pleasantly day after day, and go through all the towns, cracking our whip, and seeing so many curious things all along the road side!"

"Yes," said Mr. George; "but there is one difficulty. We are only two, and the carriages of the vetturini are usually large enough for four or six."

"And would not they go for two?" asked Rollo.

"O, yes," said Mr. George; "they will go for two; but then the men must have full price for their carriage and horses, and that makes it very expensive for two."

"What do people do, then," asked Rollo, "when there are only two to go?"

"They generally find some other people that want to go," replied Mr. George, "and make up a party, and so divide the expense."

"And can't we do that?" asked Rollo.

"We do not know any body here," said Mr. George.

Rollo did not know what to say to this, and so he was silent, and walked along, thinking what it was best to do. Presently, after a moment's pause, he added,—

"I mean to ask some of the vetturinos if they have not got a carriage for two."

"*Vetturini* is the plural of vetturino, in Italian," said Mr. George, "and not vetturinos."

"But I am not speaking Italian," said Rollo; "I am speaking English."

"True," said Mr. George.

At this stage of the conversation Mr. George and Rollo arrived at the end of the bridge across the Arno, which Mr. George had to pass over in going to his gallery. This bridge is a very ancient one, and is quite a curiosity, as it is built massively of stone, and is lined with a row of shops on each side, so that in passing over it you would think it was a street instead of a bridge, were it not that the shops are so small that you can look directly through them, and see the river through the windows on the back side.

These shops are occupied by jewellers, who keep for sale the mosaic pins, bracelets, and earrings, for which Florence is so famous, and great numbers of these mosaics, as well as various other kinds of jewelry, are exposed to view in little show cases that are arranged in a curious manner, on small counters before the windows, so that any one can see them all in passing along.

On reaching this bridge, Rollo concluded to stop, and look at the mosaics, and so his uncle left him and went on alone.

As Rollo was standing at one of the little shop windows a few minutes after his uncle had left him, a man dressed in a blue frock, and with a sort of woollen comforter of bright colors about his neck, came up to him, and asked him in French whether the party that he belonged to did not want a carriage to go to Rome. Rollo perceived at once that the man was a vetturino.

"I don't know but that we do," said he. "Have you got a carriage?"

"Yes," replied the vetturino; "I have got a large and very nice carriage, and four excellent horses."

"Then it won't do," said Rollo, "for there are only two in our party, and a large carriage and four horses will be more than we need."

"O, but that will make no difference," said the vetturino. "You see I'm a return, and I will take you about as cheap as you can go in a small carriage."

"For how much?" asked Rollo.

"Why, my price is three napoleons a day," said the vetturino, "for a full party; but as you are only two, I will take you for less. Have you got a great deal of baggage?"

"No; very little," said Rollo.

After some further conversation with the vetturino, Rollo concluded to make an appointment with him to come to the hotel that evening and see his uncle George.

"Come immediately after dinner," said Rollo.

"At what time?" asked the vetturino.

"Why, we dine at half past six," said Rollo, "and uncle George will be through at eight."

"Then I will come at eight," said the vetturino.

One reason why Rollo concluded to make this appointment was, that he particularly liked the vetturino's appearance. He had an open and intelligent countenance, and his air and bearing were such as to give Rollo the idea that he was a very good-natured and sociable, as well as capable man. In answer to a question from Rollo, he said that his name was Vittorio.

When Mr. George came home that evening, a short time before dinner, Rollo told him what he had done.

"Good!" said Mr. George. "We are in luck. I should not be surprised if we should be able to fill his carriage for him. I have found a party."

Mr. George further stated to Rollo that, in rambling through the rooms of the gallery where he had been spending the day, he had met with a lady of his acquaintance who was travelling with two children and a maid, and that he had been talking with her about forming a party to travel together to Naples.

"Are the children girls or boys?" asked Rollo.

"One of them is a girl and the other is a boy," said Mr. George; "but the girl is sick."

"Is she?" asked Rollo.

"At least she has been sick," said Mr. George. "She has had a fever, but now she is slowly getting well. Her name is Rosalie."

"I think that is rather a sentimental name," said Rollo.

"They call her Rosie, sometimes," said Mr. George.

"That's a little better," said Rollo, "but not much. And what is her other name?"

"Gray," said Mr. George.

Vittorio came at eight o'clock that evening, according to appointment. The first thing that Mr. George did was to propose to go and see his carriage. So they all went together to see it. It was in a stable near by. Mr. George and Rollo were both well pleased with the carriage. It had four seats inside, like an ordinary coach. Besides these there were two good seats outside, under a sort of canopy which came forward over them like a chaise top. In front of these, and a little lower down, was the driver's seat.

The inside of such a coach is called the interior.² The place outside, under the chaise top, is called the *coupé*.³ Rollo generally called it the *coop*.

The chaise top in front could be turned back, so as to throw the two seats there entirely open. In the same manner the top of the interior could be opened, so as to make the carriage a barouche.

"It is just exactly such a carriage as we want," said Rollo, "if Mrs. Gray will only let you and me have the coop."

"We'll see about that," said Mr. George.

Mr. George then proceeded to discuss with Vittorio the terms and conditions of the agreement which should be made between them, in case the party should conclude to hire the carriage; and after ascertaining precisely what they were, he told Vittorio that he would decide the next morning, and he appointed ten o'clock as the time when Vittorio was to call to get the decision. Mr. George and Rollo then went back to the hotel.

² In French, *l'intérieur*.

³ Pronounced *coopay*, only the last syllable is spoken rather short.

"Why did not you engage him at once?" asked Rollo, as they walked along. "It was such a good carriage!"

"Because I want first to see what terms and conditions I can make with Mrs. Gray," replied Mr. George.

"Why?" asked Rollo; "don't you think she will be willing to pay her share?"

"O, yes," said Mr. George. "She says she is willing to pay the whole, if I will only let her go with us."

"And shall you let her pay the whole?" asked Rollo.

"No, indeed," replied Mr. George. "I shall let her pay her share, which will be just two thirds, for she has four in her party, and we are two."

"And so her portion will be four sixths," said Rollo, "and that is the same as two thirds."

"Exactly," said Mr. George.

"So then it is all settled," said Rollo.

"About the money it is," replied Mr. George; "but that was not what I referred to. When two parties form a plan for travelling together in the same carriage for many days, it is necessary to have a very precise understanding beforehand about every thing, or else in the end they are very sure to quarrel."

"To quarrel!" repeated Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George; "and generally the more intimate their friendship for each other is before they set out, the more sure they are to quarrel in the end."

"That's curious," said Rollo.

"They begin by being very polite to each other," continued Mr. George; "but by and by, a thousand questions begin to come up, and there is nobody to decide them. For a time each one professes a great readiness to yield to the other; but before long each begins to think that the other assumes too much of the direction. Mrs. A. thinks that Mrs. B. keeps the carriage too much shut up, or that she always manages to have the best seat; and Mrs. B. thinks that Mrs. A. takes the best room too often at the hotels; or that she is never ready at the proper time; or that she always manages to have what she likes at the hotels, without paying enough regard to the wishes of the rest of the party."

"Is that the way they act?" asked Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George; "that is the way exactly. I have heard the secret history of a great many travelling parties that began very brightly, but ended in heart-burnings, miffs, and all sorts of troubles. The only way to prevent this is to have a very definite and precise understanding on all these points before we set out. And that is what I am going to have with Mrs. Gray."

"And suppose she won't come to any agreement," said Rollo. "She'll say, 'La, it's no matter. We shall not quarrel.'"

"Then I won't go with her," said Mr. George.

Chapter II.

Contracts and Agreements

In arranging for a journey in Italy with a vetturino, there are three separate classes of expenditure to be provided for. First, the carriage and horses; secondly, the board at the hotels by the way; and thirdly, the *buono manos*.

As to the carriage and horses, the question, in the case of Mr. George's party, was soon settled. Vittorio said that his regular price was three napoleons a day for a full party. This is about twelve dollars, and includes the keeping of the horses, and all the tolls, tariffs, and way expenses of every kind. Mr. George had ascertained that this was about the usual price, and he did not ask Vittorio to take any less.

For the board of the party by the way, Vittorio said that they could themselves call for what they wanted at the hotels, and pay their own bills, or *he* would provide for them all the way, on their paying him a certain sum per day for each person. This last is the usual plan adopted when travelling in Italy, for the hotel keepers are very apt to charge too much when the travellers call for and pay the bills themselves. Whereas, when the vetturino pays, the hotel keepers are much more reasonable. They are aware that the vetturino knows what the charges ought to be, and they are afraid, if they overcharge him for his party, that then he will take his next party to some other hotel.

"And what shall you give us," asked Mr. George, in talking with Vittorio on this subject, "if you provide for us?"

"In the morning," replied Vittorio, "before we set out, there will be coffee or tea, and bread and butter, with eggs. Then, when we stop at noon, you will have a second breakfast of mutton chops, fried potatoes, fried fish, omelets, and other such things. Then, at night, when the day's journey is done, you will have dinner."

"Very well," said Mr. George. "I should think that that might do. And how much must we pay you?"

"It used to be eight francs a day," said Vittorio; "but the price of every thing is raised, and now we cannot do it well for less than nine francs. I will do it for nine francs apiece all round."

"But there are two boys," said Mr. George. "Don't you charge any thing extra for boys?"

"No, sir," said Vittorio, smiling. He thought at first that Mr. George was going to ask for some abatement on account of a portion of the party being young. "No, sir; we don't charge any thing extra for them."

"You *would* charge extra for them, I think," said Mr. George, "if you only knew how much they can eat."

Vittorio smiled and said that if the party would pay nine francs apiece all round, he should be satisfied, without asking for any thing extra on account of the boys.

The third item of expense in an Italian journey consists of the *buono manos*. In Italy, and indeed generally in Europe, though especially in Italy, nobody, in rendering you a service, is satisfied with receiving merely what you agreed to pay for the service. Every one expects something over at the end, as a token of your satisfaction with him. If you employ a guide in a town to show you about to the places and things that are curious there, under an agreement that he is to have a dollar a day, he is not satisfied at night if you pay him merely a dollar. He expects twenty cents or a quarter of a dollar over, as a *buono mano*, as it is called. This is the understanding on which the bargain is made.

In the same manner, when you pay your bill at the hotel, the waiter expects you to give him a *buono mano*. If any body renders the vetturino a service along the road, it is the vetturino who pays them, because it is in the agreement that he is to pay the way expenses; but then, after getting their pay from him, and also his *buono mano*, they generally come to the carriage and ask for another

buono mano from the party of travellers. Some travellers get vexed and out of patience with this system, and always give, if they give at all, with scowling looks and moody mutterings. Others, seeing how poor all the people are, and how hard it is for them to get their living, are very willing to pay, especially as it is generally only a few cents in each case that is required. Still, unless the traveller understands the system, and prepares himself beforehand with a stock of small change, the *buono mano* business gives him a good deal of trouble. If he does so provide himself, and if he falls into the custom good naturedly, as one of the established usages of the country, which is moreover not without its advantages, it becomes a source of pleasure to him to pay the poor fellows their expected fees.

"Rollo," said Mr. George, "I am going to put the whole business of the *buono manos* into your hands."

"Good!" said Rollo. "I'll take the business if you will only give me the money."

"How much will it require, Vittorio, for each day, to do the thing up handsomely?" asked Mr. George.

Vittorio immediately began to make a calculation. He reckoned in *pauls*, the money which is used most in the central parts of Italy. The substance of his calculation was, that for the whole party about half a dollar would be a proper sum to pay to the domestic at the hotel where they stopped for the night, and a quarter of a dollar or less at noon. Then there were chambermaids, ostlers, and drivers of extra horses or oxen to help up the long hills, all of whom would like a small *buono mano*. This would bring the amount up to about six francs, or a dollar and a quarter a day, on the plan of doing the thing up handsomely, as Mr. George had proposed.

"You mean to be generous with them, uncle George," said Rollo.

"Yes," said Mr. George. "In travelling in Italy, pay out liberally to every body that renders you any service, but not a sou to beggars. That's my rule."

"Besides," he continued, "it is good policy for us to be generous in this case, for Mrs. Gray will pay two thirds of the money. So that you and I, sitting in the coop, as you call it, will have all the pleasure of the generosity, with only one third of the expense of it."

While Mr. George was saying this, he took his wallet out of his pocket, and opened to the compartment of it which contained napoleons.

"Let us see," said he; "we shall be ten days on the way in going to Naples, and Sunday makes eleven. Six francs a day for eleven days makes sixty-six francs."

So saying, he took out three gold napoleons, for the sixty francs, and six francs in silver, and handing the whole to Rollo, said, "There's the money."

"But, uncle George," said Rollo, "I can't pay the *buono manos* in gold."

"No," said Mr. George; "you must get the money changed, of course."

"And what shall I get it changed into?" asked Rollo.

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Mr. George. "That's for you to find out. We have three different kinds of currency between here and Naples. We are now in Tuscany. After we get through Tuscany we come into the Roman states, and after we get through the Roman states we shall come into the kingdom of the two Sicilies, where Naples is. You will require different money in all these countries, and you must look out and not have any left over, or at least very little, when you cross the frontiers."

"But how shall I manage that?" asked Rollo.

"I don't know," said Mr. George, "any more than you do. If I had it to do, I should try to find out. But that is your affair, not mine. You said that if I would give you the money you would take the whole business of the *buono manos* off my hands. I must go now and see about my arrangement with Mrs. Gray."

"Well," said Rollo, "I'll find out what to do."

Thus the *buono mano* question was disposed of.

As to the board, Mr. George made a verbal agreement with Vittorio that he would pay fifty-four francs a day for the whole party, and that, in consideration of that sum, Vittorio was to provide board

and lodging for them all, at the best hotels, and in the best style. He paid for five days in advance. At the end of that time, the party were to be at liberty either to continue the system at the same rate, or to abandon it, and pay the bills at the hotels themselves.

In respect to the carriage and horses, Vittorio brought him an agreement, filled up from a printed form, which he and Vittorio signed in duplicate. It was as follows. There was a picture of a carriage and horses at the head of it. I give you the document in the original French. If you are studying French yourself, you can read it. If not, you must ask some one to translate it for you, if you wish to know what it all means.

Vittorio Gonsalvi, Voiturier.

Florence, le 22 Mars, 1857.

Par la présente écriture, faite à double original, pour valoir et pour être strictement observée, comme de droit, par les parties contractantes, a été fixe, et convenu ce qui suit.

Le propriétaire de voiture, Gonsalvi, domicilié à Rome, promet et s'oblige de servir Monsieur George Holiday et sa suite dans le voyage qu'il veut entreprendre de Florence à Napoli, par la voie de Arezzo, Perugia, Rome, et Terracina, et être conduit par un bon voiturier, pour le prix convenu de trois cents francs, pour la voiture et les quatre chevaux.

Moyennant ce paiement, qui s'effectuera moitié avant de partir, moitié à Napoli, le propriétaire de voiture, ou son conducteur délégué, est tenu des obligations ci-après designées.

Tous les frais occasionnés pour le passage des fleuves, rivières, ponts, et montagnes, ainsi que ceux des barrières, seront à la charge du voiturier conducteur.

L'étrénne d'usage à donner au voiturier conducteur sera selon son bon service.

Le dit voyage sera fait dans dix jours complets.

Le depart de Florence est fixé dans le journée du 23 courant, a onze heures matin.

Pour tous les jours en sus, qu'il plairait à dit Monsieur Holiday de s'arrêter dans une ville, ou qu'il y fut forcé par des imprévues, il est convenu qu'il payera cinq francs par jour par cheval pour la nourriture des chevaux.

Le voiturier devra constamment descendre dans de bonnes auberges, et partira tous les matins de bonne heure, pour arriver tous les soirs avant la nuit à l'auberge ou l'on devra coucher.

Et pour l'observance des conditions ci-dessus mentionnées, les parties interessées l'ont volontairement signée.

George Holiday,

Vittorio Gonsalvi.

The agreement which Mr. George made with Mrs. Gray was not so difficult to understand. Mrs. Gray did not, as Rollo had predicted, appear unwilling to make a definite arrangement in respect to the respective privileges and rights of the various members of the party in the carriage and at the hotels. She was a very sensible woman, and she saw the propriety of Mr. George's suggestion at once. Mr. George attributed the necessity of it, in part, to there being so many children in the party.

"When there are children," said he, "we must have system and a routine."

"That is very true," said Mrs. Gray.

"And the more formal and precise the arrangement is, the better," said Mr. George. "It amuses them, and occupies their minds, to watch the operation of it."

"Yes," said Mrs. Gray; "I have no doubt of it."

"Then," said Mr. George, "I will draw up some articles of agreement, and if you approve of them, Rosie shall make a copy of them. Rosie shall keep the copy, too, after she has made it, and shall see that the rules are all observed."

"But what shall I do," said Rosie, "if any body breaks any of the rules?"

"Then they must be punished," said Mr. George. "You shall determine what the punishment shall be, and I will see that it is inflicted."

So Mr. George drew up a set of rules; but before proposing them to Mrs. Gray and her children, he read them to Rollo. He read as follows:—

I

The interior of the carriage, all the way, shall belong to Mrs. Gray and her family, and the *coupé* to Mr. George and Rollo. Mr. George or Rollo may, perhaps, sometimes ride inside; but if they do so, it is to be understood that they ride there as the guests of Mrs. Gray; and in the same manner, if at any time any of Mrs. Gray's party ride outside, it will be as the guests of Mr. George and Rollo.

"Good!" said Rollo. "I like that regulation very much. I shall not want to get inside very often."

"You may sometimes wish to invite Rosie to take your place outside, when it is very pleasant, and you take her place inside," suggested Mr. George.

"No," said Rollo; "there will be room outside for her and me too. She can sit right between you and me."

"And, perhaps, sometimes I may invite Rosie and her brother to come outside and ride with you, while I go inside with Mrs. Gray," added Mr. George.

"*That* will be a good plan," said Rollo. "But now what is the second rule?"

II

On arriving at a hotel for the night, Mrs. Gray is to take her choice first of all the rooms shown, for herself and Rosie. Then from the other rooms Mr. George is to choose the bed that he will sleep in. Then the two boys are to choose from the beds that are left, each to have the first choice alternately, beginning with Josie.

"Why should Josie begin?" asked Rollo. "I am the oldest."

"True," said Mr. George; "but it is of no consequence at all which begins, and as *we* are drawing up the rules, it is polite and proper to give Josie the precedence in such a point."

"Very well," said Rollo; "go on. How about Susannah?"

"O, it is not necessary to make any rule about Susannah," replied Mr. George. "I suppose that Mrs. Gray will take her into her room, if there is a spare bed there. If not, they must make some other arrangement for her."

III

Every evening before the party separate for the night, Mrs. Gray shall decide at what hour we shall set off the next morning, and also at what hour we shall breakfast, after first hearing what Vittorio's opinion is as to the best time for setting out.

"Why can't we have a fixed time for setting out every day?" asked Rollo, "and agree about it once for all beforehand."

"Because we have different distances to go on different days," said Mr. George, "so that sometimes we shall have to set out much earlier than will be necessary at other times."

"Then why should not we consult together as to the time?" asked Rollo. "I don't see any reason for leaving it altogether to *one* of the party."

"Why, you see that Mrs. Gray is a lady," replied Mr. George, "and it takes a lady longer to dress and get ready than men. Besides, she has two children to look after."

"And Susannah to help her," said Rollo.

"True," said Mr. George; "still it seems proper that the time for setting out should be fixed by the lady,—of course, after hearing what the vetturino has to say."

"I think so too," said Rollo; "so go on."

IV

Any person who is not ready to sit down to breakfast at the time which shall have been appointed by Mrs. Gray the evening before, or who shall not be ready to enter the carriage at the time appointed, shall pay a fine, except in the case hereinafter provided for. If the person so behindhand is one of the children, the fine shall be two cents, or the value thereof in the currency of the country where we may chance to be; and if it is one of the grown persons, the fine shall be three times that amount, that is, six cents.

"Yes; but suppose we don't wake up?" suggested Rollo.

"That contingency is provided for in the next article," said Mr. George.

V

It shall be Mr. George's duty to knock at all the bedroom doors every morning, three quarters of an hour before the time fixed for breakfast; and if he fails to do so, then he shall pay all the fines for tardiness that may be incurred that morning by any of the party.

"Very good!" said Rollo.

VI

It shall be Rosie's duty to decide whether or not any persons are tardy any morning; and her mother's watch shall be the standard of time. Her decisions shall be without appeal; and no excuses whatever shall be heard, nor shall there be any release from the fine, except in the case of a failure of Mr. George to knock at the doors, as hereinbefore provided.

"But we might some of us have a good excuse some time," said Rollo.

"True," said Mr. George; "we doubtless shall. But if we go upon the plan of admitting excuses, then there will be a long debate every morning, on the question whether the excuses are good or not, which will cause a great deal of trouble. It is better for us to pay the fine at once. It is not much, you know."

"Well," said Rollo, "go on."

VII

Josie is hereby appointed treasurer, to collect and keep the fines.

"And what is to be done with the money?" asked Rollo.

"You will see," said Mr. George.

VIII

Any one of the party who shall at any time make complaint of any thing in respect to the carriage, or the riding during the day, or in respect to the food provided at the hotels, or the rooms, or the beds, when we stop for the night, except when such complaint relates to an evil which may be remedied, and is made with a view to having it remedied, shall be fined one cent, or the value thereof in the currency of the country. Rosie is to be the sole judge of the infractions of this rule, and is to impose the fine, while Josie, as before, is to collect and keep the money.

"I wish you would make me the treasurer," said Rollo.

"No," said Mr. George; "you have the care of the *buono mano* fund. Josie shall be treasurer for the fines."

"Very well," said Rollo.

IX

On the arrival of the party at Naples, the amount of the fine money shall be expended in the famous Neapolitan confectionery, and shall be divided equally among the three children.

"Good!" said Rollo. "But, uncle George, I don't think you ought to call us *children* exactly. We are almost all of us twelve or thirteen."

"True," said Mr. George, "you are not children; but what can I call you to distinguish you from the grown persons of the party. The regular and proper designation for persons under age, in a legal document, is *infants*."

"Hoh!" said Rollo, "that is worse than *children*."

"I might call you the young persons, or the junior members of the party."

"Yes," said Rollo, "that will be better; the junior members of the party."

So it was agreed to strike out the word *children* wherever it occurred in the document, and insert in lieu of it the phrase *junior members of the party*.

With this correction the document was read to Mrs. Gray in the hearing of Rosie and Josie. They all approved it in every respect. The draught was then given to Rosie in order that she might make a fair copy of it. When the copy was made, the nine rules were read again in the hearing of the whole party, and all agreed to abide by them.

Thus the arrangements for the journey were complete; and Mrs. Gray, after learning from Vittorio that the first day's journey would not be long, and that it would answer to set out at any time before noon, fixed the hour for departure at eleven o'clock. Vittorio said he would be at the door half an hour before, in order to have time to load the baggage.

Chapter III. The Journey

The journey from Florence to Naples, as planned and provided for by the contracts and agreements described in the last chapter, was prosecuted from day to day, until its completion, in a very successful and prosperous manner. The various contingencies likely to occur having been foreseen and provided for by the contract and the rules, every thing worked smoothly and well, and none of those discussions, disagreements, and misunderstandings occurred, which so often mar the pleasure of parties travelling together in one company for many days.

Mrs. Gray was fined for not being ready for breakfast at the time appointed, on the very first morning after leaving Florence. It was at a place called Arezzo. The time appointed for the breakfast was at seven o'clock. Mr. George knocked at all the doors a little before quarter past six. About quarter before seven the two boys came into the breakfast room, and soon afterwards Mr. George and Rosie came. The breakfast was brought in and set upon the table by the waiter a few minutes before seven. The boys immediately began to set the chairs round.

"Quick! quick!" said Josie. "Let us sit down quick, and mother will be tardy, and have to pay a fine."

"Ah, but it does not go by our sitting down," said Rollo. "It goes by Mrs. Gray's watch."

"Yes," said Rosie; "I have got the watch. It wants a minute of the time now."

"I *hope* she won't come," said Josie.

"She will come," said Rosie. "She has been almost ready for some time."

The children all took their seats at the table. Rosie had the watch before her, and was closely observing the minute hand. Mr. George, who thought it not polite that he should take his seat before Mrs. Gray came, stood waiting by the fire. It was a cool morning, and so Mr. George had made a little fire when he first got up.

Notwithstanding Rosie's prediction, Mrs. Gray did not come. Rosie watched the second hand, and as soon as it passed the mark she said,—

"There! it is seven o'clock; now mother is tardy."

Josie clapped his hands, and even Rollo looked quite pleased. In about two minutes the door of Mrs. Gray's bedroom opened, and Mrs. Gray appeared.

"You are too late, mother!" said Josie, in an exulting tone. "You are too late!"

"It does not depend on you to decide," said Mrs. Gray; "it depends upon Rosie."

"Well, mother, you are really too late," said Rosie. "You are two minutes beyond the time, or a minute and a half, at the very least, when you opened the door. So you must pay the fine."

"Yes; and you must pay it to me," said Josie. "I am the treasurer."

"But you have not heard my excuse yet," said Mrs. Gray. "You don't know but that I have got a good excuse."

"Ah, that makes no difference, mother," said Josie. "Excuses go for nothing."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Gray. "Is that the agreement? Let us see, Rosie."

So Rosie took the paper out of her pocket, and with Josie's assistance,—who looked over very eagerly all the time,—she found the passage, and Josie read as follows, speaking the words in a very distinct and emphatic manner:—

"No excuses shall be heard, nor shall there be any release from the fine, except,' and so forth, and so forth. So you see, mother, you can't be excused."

"I see," said Mrs. Gray. "The language is very plain indeed; so I'll pay the fine. I pay it very willingly. It would be very dishonorable in any of us, after having deliberately adopted the rules, to manifest any unwillingness to abide by them."

So Mrs. Gray took out of her pocket a small silver coin called a paul, which Mr. George said was a good deal more than six cents, but which she said was near enough to the amount of the fine, and paid it into Josie's hands. Josie put it safely into a certain compartment of his wallet, which he had set apart for the purpose.

The truth was, that Mrs. Gray contrived to be tardy that morning on purpose, in order to set an example of exact and cheerful submission to the law, and to give a practical illustration, in her own case, of the strictness with which, when once enacted, such laws ought to be enforced. She knew very well that if she had once submitted to be fined, when she was only a minute and a half behind the time, and also to be refused a hearing for her excuse, nobody could afterwards expect any indulgence. The effect produced was just what she had intended, and the whole party were extremely punctual all the way. There were only a few fines assessed, and they were all paid at once, without any objection.

The road lay for a day through a small country called Tuscany. The scenery was very beautiful. Although it was so early in the spring, the wheat fields were every where very green, and in the hedges, and along the banks by the road side, multitudes of flowers were blooming. For a considerable portion of the way, where our travellers passed, the occupation of the inhabitants was that of braiding straw for bonnets; and here every body seemed to be braiding. In the streets of the villages, at the doors of the houses, and all along the roads every where, men, women, and children were to be seen standing in little groups, or walking about together in the sun, braiding the straw with a rapid motion, like that of knitting. They had a little bundle of prepared straw, at their side, and the braid which they had made hung rolled up in a coil before them. They looked contented and happy at their work, so that the scene was a very pleasing, as well as a very curious one to see.

After leaving the frontiers of Tuscany, the party entered the Papal States—a country occupying the centre of Italy, with Rome for the capital of it. The Papal States are so called because they are under the dominion of the pope. Of course the Catholic religion reigns here in absolute supremacy.

While passing through this country, the children, or rather, as Rollo would wish to have it expressed, the young people of the party, were very much interested in observing the crosses which were put up here and there by the road side, with the various emblems and symbols connected with our Saviour's death affixed to them. The first time that one of these crosses attracted their attention, Rosie was riding in the *coupé* with Mr. George and Rollo. There was room enough for her to sit very comfortably between them.

"See!" said Rosie; "see! Look at that cross, with all those images and figures upon it!"

The cross was pretty large, and was made of wood. It was set up by the road side, like a sign post in America. From the middle of the post out to the left hand end of the arm of the cross, there was a spear fixed. This spear, of course, represented the weapon of the Roman soldier, by which the body of Jesus was pierced in the side. From the same part of the post out to the end of the opposite arm of the cross was a pole with two sponges at the end of it, which represented the sponges with which the soldiers reached the vinegar up for Jesus to drink. Then all along the cross bar were various other emblems, such as the nails, the hammer, a pair of pincers, a little ladder, a great key, and on the top a cock, to represent the cock which crowed at the time of Peter's betrayal of his Lord.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.