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BATTLE OF THRASIMENE.

On the evening before the legions of Rome encountered their terrible enemy for the third time since his descent from the Alps, the sun, as it seemed, sunk down in a sea of blood.

Wearily, from the first streakings of the morning, had the legionaries toiled on through dust and fatigue and thirst, and all the while the sun shot down his fervours upon them un-pityingly. The heavens were remarkably free from clouds, not a speck dotted the solemn blue that stretched and gleamed above—not a fragment of straggling vapour could the eye detect on the deep, still surface that overhung them through all that weary day. Upon the villages through which their march lay, there seemed to have settled a mysterious dread of the coming. The awful scene which was so soon to follow upon the footsteps of the night had thrown out its ominous shadow before it, threatening and cold, and shut up men's hearts and mouths. The warm sunlight had no power to dispel it—it was there—it was a shadow to be felt, it lay upon men's souls; it was the shadow of Death. Both animate and inanimate nature seemed to have inhaled the infection of the hour; the invisible terror which hung like lead upon the air; the incipient rush of blood, the precursive crash of ruin. It seized upon the birds among the branches

DISCOVERIES AT DINNER.

I often amuse myself in travelling with a little harmless speculation and conjecture, as to the characters and callings of my *compagnons de voyage*. I was one day indulging this propensity at the table of a large hotel, where my curiosity was specially excited by two groups at no great distance but in opposite directions and scarcely visible to one another. Both sets were dressed expensively, although in very different styles. The only thing in which they were alike was the loud and ostentatious way in which they ordered and drank wine. While I was narrowly observing them, a man of middle size and strongly built, plainly but well dressed, with the slightest imaginable dash of vulgarity in garb and manner, took possession of a vacant seat beside me, and after swallowing his soup with some haste, surprised me by observing very coolly—I perceive that you make good use of your eyes, sir. What do you mean? I mean that you are in the habit of guessing who and what your neighbours are. How do you know that?—I know it first by seeing it, and then by your not denying it. I see no reason to deny it; I suppose you do not mean to charge it as a crime. No, for then I should criminate myself, as it is not only my habit, but my business to do the same. And you have no doubt been practising on me? Of course. And may I ask with what success. Of that you may judge for yourself when I tell you, that I take you for an educated man, but now connected with a bank or trading company of some sort. I see I am right by your looks. If you want your revenge, you may have it by telling me what I am—Guess—a cattle-dealer? I suspect you meant to punish me by that conjecture. But you missed your mark. I am not at all offended. I am on intimate terms with many drovers. Try again. A practical plumber? That is said at random. I am satisfied with knowing that you do not know and cannot even guess my vocation. Well, I will

tell you. I am a policeman from the city on official business. I am waiting the convenience of that handsome gentlemanly person at the head of the table. I have travelled on his track for two days, and at last have come in sight of him. As soon as he rises, I shall make his acquaintance. In the mean time let me help you out of your perplexities. The only people here that have excited your curiosity are the two parties on the right and left. Perhaps you think the first set are Hungarians or Poles. But their moustaches are of domestic manufacture, and you hear they swear in English. They are not even Englishmen, as you may judge by their pronunciation. You look surprised, but I have been in England, and am not entirely illiterate myself. To tell you the truth, I was turned out of college, went to sea and have since followed many honourable callings. But as to our distinguished neighbours here, they are not gentlemen of wealth and leisure, as they seem to wish us to suppose. If they were, they would act here as they do at home. They would take their food as a matter of course, and not as an extraordinary treat, in which the whole company feels an interest. See how they look round as they order the French dishes in a loud voice. It is easy to see that they are not here every day, or this would grow familiar. Then observe how closely they study the wine-list, and select the high-priced wines. And how they smack their lips and criticise the vintage. And see how they pity us for drinking water. That little one can hardly bear the sight of it. He pushes his glass from him with contempt. He evidently wishes us to think that he breakfasts and sups daily on Johannisberg. But alas his breastpin and his ring betray him. They are obviously shoppish, both in size and splendour. And if you listen, you will hear the whole set every now and then allude to "the store"—the amount of business, number of hands, hour of closing, &c. They are not ashamed of this among themselves, nor is it anything to be ashamed of. But why assume the air of dukes or princes of the blood before the public? Why do they call the attention of the table to their victuals and their drink, as if such things were just invented, and they

had bought the first sample at a premium? Why not eat and drink quietly like the small elderly man near them, who has more of the gentleman in his little finger, than they in their whole bodies. You see he takes no notice of his neighbour's plates or persons, but eats as if he were at home. He looks at the *carte*, to see if what he wants is there, not to study out some hard names or outlandish kickshaw. He has his wine, but makes no more ado with it than with his water. In a word, you may be sure the man is used to what he has before him, which is more than I can say of our moustached friends, or of that other noisy set, upon the right. They are doing very much the same thing as to meats and drinks, but they belong to an entirely different class. Their long hair and bare necks and the cloaks they swaggered in awhile ago, together with their whistling and loud laughter without cause or provocation, would indicate a recent escape from college or boarding-school, if there is such an institution hereabouts. At all events, they are under age and from the country, and entitled to allowance for imagining that no one ever dined at a table-d'hôte before them, and that they are of course the observed of all observers. They will soon outgrow it and laugh at the next generation just as we now laugh at them. But see that man directly opposite—how carefully he puts the salt and butter, and whatever else is meant for common use, as near to himself and as much out of every body else's reach as possible. And now, while he is waiting for the lobster, see how narrowly he watches every plate within eye-shot, to discover what his neighbours are or have been eating. See how contemptuous he looks at me, because I use my knife perhaps too freely, and at you because you ask for fish at this time of the dinner and devour it plain instead of emptying the castors on it. Now the servant brings his plate—observe how he snatches it—and how ferociously he orders something else. Depend upon it, that man is accustomed to wait upon himself. If he was used to command, he would know how to treat the servants, without either bullying as he now does, or calling them familiarly by name, and in a loud voice, like that youth

from a neighbouring liquor store with a faint attempt at sandy whiskers, who seems to think that the perfection of dining consists in tasting every thing upon the table or the bill of fare.

Just at this interesting point of the discourse, my communicative *convive* suddenly arose, threw down his napkin, and without bidding me adieu, joined a gentleman who was going out. As my late companion pressed his hand in cordial salutation and then went out with him arm in arm, I recognized, in spite of a sudden paleness and a smile expressing any thing but pleasure, the distinguished looking gentleman who had been presiding at the head of the long table.

AGIO.

THE ODYSSEY.

No. II.

We shall merely mention as we pass the interview between Ulysses and his mother in the lower world, as a specimen of simple and unlaboured pathos. But we must make room for another sea-scene.

For here stood Scylla, while Charybdis there,
With hoarse throat deep absorbed the briny flood
Oft as she vomited the deluge forth,
Like water caldron'd o'er a furious fire
The whirling Deep all murmur'd, and the spray
On both those rocky summits fell in showers,
But when she sucked the salt wave down again,
Then all the pool appeared wheeling about
Within, the rock rebellowed, and the sea,
Drawn off into the gulf, disclosed to view
The oozy bottom. Us pale horror seized.
Thus dreading death, with fast set eyes we watched
Charybdis; mean time Scylla from the bank
Caught six away, the bravest of my friends;
And, as I watching stood the galleys course