

MY COURTSHIP

AND

H 186

ITS CONSEQUENCES;

AND

REVELATIONS FROM THE FOREIGN OFFICE.

BY

HENRY WIKOFF.

“An honest tale speeds best
Being plainly told.”

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[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]



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TO THE MOST NOBLE
THE
MARQUIS DE CAVOUR,
OF SARDINIA,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE RESPECTFULLY
Dedicated,
BY
HIS VERY HUMBLE AND GRATEFUL SERVANT
THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

It is necessary to make some explanation for troubling the public with a narrative so entirely personal as that which follows. It is also proper to make some apology for publishing events of so private a nature, and for exposing once more to a painful publicity a lady of respectability, and with whom my relations have been so long and intimate. Nothing short of an inexorable necessity would compel me to a course so repugnant to my tastes and feelings. I trust that a simple statement of facts will absolve me from the grave responsibility of this unpleasant act.

It may be remembered by some of my readers that about two years since, February, 1852, a trial took place at Genoa, Italy, for the "Abduction" of Miss Jane C. Gamble, 41, Portland-place, London, wherein I figured as the chief accused. Though it was proved on that occasion that Miss Gamble was actually betrothed to me at the time, and that my offence was no other than a harmless lover's trick, yet by unfair means, as I shall show, I was condemned by a Genoese Judge, without the intervention of a Jury, to fifteen months' imprisonment at Genoa. My respect for my

numerous friends both in my own country and Europe, would of itself be a sufficient motive to urge me to make an exposition of my case against this extreme act of legal rigour. But there are other reasons still stronger.

In March, 1852, a pamphlet was published in London affecting to give a report of the above Trial, but it was so studded with misrepresentation that the only object of the Publisher could have been to mislead the English public, and excite prejudice against me. One instance of this will suffice. The pamphlet stated on its title-page that I was arraigned for a "Conspiracy to effect a forced marriage with Miss Gamble," whereas I was simply accused, as the records of the Tribunal will show, of the "Abduction" of Miss Gamble, and her servant and mine were included in the charge as accessories. My servant, however, was acquitted.

Again in April, 1852, a publication appeared in the *Daily News*, a London Journal, purporting to be an accurate version of the incidents of my Courtship, and adding, besides, many details of the pretended "Abduction" of Miss Gamble that were not only odious, but in the highest degree criminal. For instance, I was accused of having sought to administer chloroform to Miss Gamble whilst in my apartment at Genoa, on November 15th, 1851. This narration was false from beginning to end, and its only purpose, as in the case of the pamphlet just mentioned, could have been to traduce and