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CASANOVA AT DUX:  
AN UNPUBLISHED CHAPTER OF HISTORY  
BY ARTHUR SYMONS

# The Bibelot

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# The Bibelot

## I.

**I**T has long been a matter of common knowledge that the English mind is singularly inelastic concerning matters which, to use a booksellers' phrase, transcend the bounds of decency, more especially so in its preconception of the said boundaries and where they begin and end. Nor does one have to go very far afield in literary research to recall the fact of Pepys and the still to-be-looked-for unexpurgated text of this most human of all diarists. Another instance may be found in the unrivalled memoirs of Anthony Hamilton which have been mishandled by every editor with the single exception of Henry Vizetelly, whose edition, published in 1889, is out of print and practically unknown. Coming to our immediate subject we may safely regard as a negligible quantity everything written in English on Casanova until almost precisely a century after his death.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Real Barry Lyndon* by W. E. Garrett Fisher, in *The English Illustrated Magazine* for March, 1896. See also *Highways and Byways in Literature* by Hugh Farrie, London, 1910, Pp. 115-

To put the case briefly: the first worthwhile essay<sup>2</sup> on this undivine adventurer was contributed by Havelock Ellis to *The Savoy*, November, 1896. Possibly owing to this fact Mr. Arthur Symons, then editor of that delightful but now defunct magazine, was thus early directed to the rehabilitation of a genius, sinister and sordid, if you will have it so, but none the less a unique personality which serves as a master-key to unlock the moral and social life of the Eighteenth Century. First published in *The North American Review*, September, 1902, (from whom we have purchased the right to reprint,) *Casanova at Dux: An Unpublished Chapter of History* would seem to have attracted scant attention: none the less it must be reckoned with as a serious contribution to literary history. If Grammont and Pepys are seen to be indispensable; if Rousseau and even the unspeakable De Sade must be reckoned with, Casanova in far higher degree is a fixed figure in any ade-

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120, for the sole reference we have found concerning Mr. Symons' essay.

<sup>2</sup> See Affirmations by Havelock Ellis. Octavo, London, 1898, Pp. 86-130. The *Savoy* article is here continued and made complete. The name of Mr. Whibley should also be mentioned. See *Literary Portraits*, by Charles Whibley. Octavo, London, 1904, Pp. 291-313.

quate survey of that dead and gone century  
be limned for all time and for all the world  
to know.

During the past decade much water has  
undoubtedly flowed under the bridge of  
critical research. Is it not typical of British  
mental attitude (which being of yesterday  
is also of to-day and hence seemingly for-  
ever,) that Frederic Harrison, dean of critics  
though he be, should fail to mention in his  
Among my Books<sup>3</sup> the name of one who  
as an interpreter of men and morals stands  
alone? Alive as he is to the merit of  
Lockhart's Scott, Gibbe's Autobiography,  
Lewes' Life of Goethe, he fails, even casu-  
ally, to recall Casanova or mention Rous-  
seau; and yet he could discover in a real  
life of Byron, which, he says, "we never  
shall have," a something "we should no  
doubt furiously enjoy."

## II.

Since Symons' aid to our enlightenment  
much new light has been cast on "what  
manner of man Casanova seemed to his  
contemporaries." The time, therefore, is  
at hand when his memoirs, even in the  
garbled text we now possess, forms the basis

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<sup>3</sup> Now publishing in The English Review begin-  
ning with December, 1911.

of a liberal education, though assuredly of a sort not imparted by any ordinary course of literary study. At last the solitary pursuits of the specialist<sup>4</sup> are likely to find a more general public, when all serious students, no longer wholly kept from the vivid Pepys, are also to read the authentic adventures of a born wastrel though none the less one whose confessions make the age wherein he moved an ever-living reality. Beside such comedie humaine the deeds of Cellini and Carlo Gozzi are as water unto wine. To neglect Casanova is as if you had not assayed and assessed Boswell, or if, as a Latin scholar, you had neglected Petronius and the Lucianic dialogues. To one desirous of coming into close grips with a genuine Superman of the Eighteenth Century such lack of appreciation is pathetically inadequate.

Thus we owe to Arthur Symons the first disentangling of a rare subliminal self from the rubbish heap of critical near-sightedness — the restoration of a living man to his lost world of undoubted realities. Meanwhile, for those who do not wish to await the complete text, or who are unable to

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<sup>4</sup> See *Casanova et son temps* by Edouard Maynial. Paris: Mercure de France, 1911. Translated by Ethel Colburn Mayne, Octavo, London, 1911.

get at the English translation of 1896, there is the two volume expurgated Memoirs of 1902, and the book by Edouard Maynial.<sup>5</sup> For the unexpurgated version,<sup>6</sup> which Signor Aldo Ravà is to edit and the firm of Brockhaus will presently publish, we must abide the coming hour. From such material promised us it can be seen that "the unsavory masterpiece of the past" is about to emerge from its undeserved notoriety "into a precious historical document:" while foremost among the names of all good students and true that of Arthur Symons stands as the earliest English investigator who has laid hands upon the real Jacques — not indeed a "Jean-Jacques" whom we all are supposed to

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5 The only complete translation in English was the one issued in London, 1896 in 12 vols., octavo, for subscribers only by H. S. Nichols, which, needless to say, was duly suppressed by the indefatigable English Vice Society. There is therefor alone available The Memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt, The Prince of Adventurers. A New and Abridged Edition, with Introduction, Two Portraits, Notes, and Appendices. Octavo, cloth, 2 vols., London, 1902. Said to be the joint work of two ladies whose names are not given.

6 See an appreciative review of the two latest books on Casanova in The Nation for March 21, 1912, that by Maynial as above, and Lettere di donne a Giacomo Casanova, by Aldo Ravà with ten portraits and one facsimile, Milan, Treves, 1912.

*know, but a more human experimentalist in living,—the Chevalier de Seingalt, prince of all adventurers past, present or to come.*

*It is true that most adventurers of old time "come like shadows, so depart," but the one exquisite episode of Henriette pleads for her lover though heaven and earth were silent. It was the hour when happy dreams take leave yet the memory of those old sweet nights, the loveliest of earth, remain to us and are in evidence that they remained to Casanova when everything else of dear and desirable in his unresting life had found*

*"The end of tender words and faces,  
The end of all, the popped sleep."*

FOR JULY :

THE VIELLE-PLAYER'S STORY  
BY JOHN HENRY SHORTHOUSE.

CASANOVA AT DUX :  
AN UNPUBLISHED CHAPTER OF HISTORY  
By  
ARTHUR SYMONS.

*What should be our last word about Casanova? It is true that although—if indeed one should not say because—he was so heroically natural Casanova was not an average normal man. It is scarcely given to the average man to expend such versatile and reckless skill in the field of the world, or to find so large a part wherein to play off that skill. But neither are the saints and philosophers normal; St. Bernard was not normal, nor yet Spinoza. And surely it is a poor picture of the world which would show us St. Bernard and Spinoza and shut out Casanova. "Vous avez l'outil universel," Fabrice said to Gil Blas. Casanova's brain was just such a tool of universal use, and he never failed to use it. For if you would find the supreme type of the human animal in the completest development of his rankness and cunning, in the very plentitude of his most excellent wits, I know not where you may more safely go than to the Mémoires of the self-ennobled Jacques Casanova Chevalier de Seingalt.*

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

L A PISTE CASANOVÉRIENNE, as it is fondly called, has long held a quite reasonable fascination for all students of social history and psychology. These famous *Mémoires* furnish an unique tableau of the eighteenth century, painted for us by a man whose personality was itself unique. The trail has been carefully followed by Englishmen and Frenchmen alike. Mr. Arthur Symons and Mr. Havelock Ellis in our own country have displayed a passionate interest in the wonderful Venetian; while Messieurs Armand Baschet and Octave Uzanne have foraged in the lockers of the Maison Brockhaus at Leipzig, in the Archives of the Venetian Senate, and have given us the results of their researches. . . . . It is to these writers that we owe the discovery that Casanova was not a mere retailer of impossibly indelicate stories, but a memoirist of the first order, and the author of one of the most vivacious and artistically faithful pictures of the romantic age in which he moved, that we are lucky enough to possess. This "passionist," as the French love to call him, this prince of adventurers, was a man of action, who cared to analyse the springs of that action, and posed to himself, and to all his friends, as a philosopher. The list of his philosophical and metaphysical works would startle and weary. The *Mémoires* alone survive.

*Introduction to the Memoirs of Jacques Casanova de Seingalt. Octavo, 2 vols. (London, 1902.)*

## CASANOVA AT DUX:

AN UNPUBLISHED CHAPTER OF HISTORY.

### I.

THE "Memoirs" of Casanova, though they have enjoyed the popularity of a bad reputation, have never had justice done to them by serious students of literature, of life and of history. One English writer, indeed, Mr. Havelock Ellis, has realized that "there are few more delightful books in the world," and he has analyzed them in an essay on Casanova, published in "Affirmations," with extreme care and remarkable subtlety. But this essay stands alone, at all events in English, as an attempt to take Casanova seriously, to show him in his relation to his time, and in his relation to human problems. And yet these "Memoirs" are perhaps the most valuable document which we possess on the society of the eighteenth century; they are the history of a unique life, a unique personality, one of the greatest of autobiographies; as a record of adventures, they are more entertaining than "Gil Blas," or "Monte Cristo," or any of the imaginary travels, and escapes, and masquerades in life, which have been written in imitation of them. They tell the story of a

man who loved life passionately for its own sake: one to whom woman was, indeed, the most important thing in the world, but to whom nothing in the world was indifferent. The bust which gives us the most lively notion of him shows us a great, vivid, intellectual face, full of fiery energy and calm resource, the face of a thinker and a fighter in one. A scholar, an adventurer, perhaps a Cabalist, a busy stirrer in politics, a gamester, one "born for the fairer sex," as he tells us, and born also to be a vagabond; this man, who is remembered now for his written account of his own life, was that rarest kind of autobiographer, one who did not live to write, but wrote because he had lived, and when he could live no longer.

And his "Memoirs" take one all over Europe, giving sidelights, all the more valuable in being almost accidental, upon many of the affairs and people most interesting to us during two-thirds of the eighteenth century. Giacomo Casanova was born in Venice, of Spanish and Italian parentage, on April 2d, 1725; he died at the Château of Dux, in Bohemia, on June 4th, 1798. In that lifetime of seventy-three years he

travelled, as his "Memoirs" show us, in Italy, France, Germany, Austria, England, Switzerland, Belgium, Russia, Poland, Spain, Holland, Turkey; he met Voltaire at Ferney, Rousseau at Montmorenci, Fontenelle, d'Alembert and Crébillon at Paris, George III. in London, Louis XV. at Fontainebleau, Catherine the Great at St. Petersburg, Benedict XII. at Rome, Joseph II. at Vienna, Frederick the Great at Sans-Souci. Imprisoned by the Inquisitors of State in the *Piombi* at Venice, he made, in 1755, the most famous escape in history. His "Memoirs," as we have them, break off abruptly at the moment when he is expecting a safe-conduct, and the permission to return to Venice after twenty years' wanderings. He did return, as we know from documents in the Venetian archives; he returned as secret agent of the Inquisitors, and remained in their service from 1774 until 1782. At the end of 1782, he left Venice; and next year we find him in Paris, where, in 1784, he met Count Waldstein, at the Venetian Ambassador's, and was invited by him to become his librarian at Dux. He accepted, and for the fourteen remaining

years of his life lived at Dux, where he wrote his "Memoirs."

Casanova died in 1798, but nothing was heard of the "Memoirs" (which the Prince de Ligne, in his own "Memoirs," tells us that Casanova had read to him, and in which he found "*du dramatique, de la rapidité, du comique, de la philosophie, des choses neuves, sublimes, inimitables même*") until the year 1820, when a certain Carlo Angiolini brought to the publishing house of Brockhaus, in Leipzig, a manuscript entitled "*Histoire de ma vie jusqu'à l'an 1797*," in the handwriting of Casanova. This manuscript, which I have examined at Leipzig, is written on foolscap paper, rather rough and yellow; it is written on both sides of the page, and in sheets or quires; here and there, the paging shows that some pages have been omitted, and in their place are smaller sheets of thinner and whiter paper, all in Casanova's handsome, unmistakable handwriting. The manuscript is done up in twelve bundles, corresponding with the twelve volumes of the original edition; and only in one place is there a gap. The fourth and fifth chapters of the twelfth volume are missing, as

#### CASANOVA AT DUX

the editor of the original edition points out, adding: "It is not probable that these two chapters have been withdrawn from the manuscript of Casanova by a strange hand; everything leads us to believe that the author himself suppressed them, in the intention, no doubt, of re-writing them, but without having found time to do so." The manuscript ends abruptly with the year 1774, and not with the year 1797, as the title would lead us to suppose.

This manuscript, in its original state, has never been printed. Herr Brockhaus, on obtaining possession of the manuscript, had it translated into German by Wilhelm Schütz, but with many omissions and alterations, and published this translation, volume by volume, from 1822 to 1828, under the title, *Aus den Memoiren des Venetianers Jacob Casanova de Seingalt.*" While the German edition was in course of publication, Herr Brockhaus employed a certain Jean Laforgue, a professor of the French language at Dresden, to revise the original manuscript, correcting Casanova's vigorous, but at times incorrect, and often somewhat Italian, French according to his own notions

of elegant writing, suppressing passages which seemed too free-spoken from the point of view of morals and of politics, and altering the names of some of the persons referred to, or replacing those names by initials. This revised text was published in twelve volumes, the first two in 1826, the third and fourth in 1828, the fifth to the eighth in 1832, and the ninth to the twelfth in 1838; the first four bearing the imprint of Brockhaus at Leipzig and Ponthieu et Cie. at Paris; the next four the imprint of Heideloff et Campé at Paris; and the last four nothing but "*A Bruxelles.*" The volumes are all uniform, and were all really printed for the firm of Brockhaus. This, however far from representing the real text, is the only authoritative edition, and my references throughout this article will always be to this edition.

In turning over the manuscript at Leipzig, I read some of the suppressed passages, and regretted their suppression; but Herr Brockhaus, the present head of the firm, assured me that they are not really very considerable in number. The damage, however, to the vivacity of the whole narrative, by the per-

sistent alterations of M. Laforgue, is incalculable. I compared many passages, and found scarcely three consecutive sentences untouched. Herr Brockhaus (whose courtesy I cannot sufficiently acknowledge) was kind enough to have a passage copied out for me, which I afterwards read over, and checked word by word. In this passage Casanova says, for instance: "*Elle venoit presque tous les jours lui faire une belle visite.*" This is altered into: "*Cependant chaque jour Thérèse venoit lui faire une visite.*" Casanova says that some one "*avoit, comme de raison, formé le projet d'allier Dieu avec le diable.*" This is made to read: "*Qui, comme de raison, avoit saintement formé le projet d'allier les intérêts du ciel aux œuvres de ce monde.*" Casanova tells us that Thérèse would not commit a mortal sin "*pour devenir reine du monde*": "*pour une couronne,*" corrects the indefatigable Laforgue. "*Il ne savoit que lui dire*" becomes "*Dans cet état de perplexité;*" and so forth. It must, therefore, be realized that the "Memoirs," as we have them, are only a kind of pale tracing of the vivid colors of the original.

When Casanova's "Memoirs" were first

published, doubts were expressed as to their authenticity, first by Ugo Foscolo (in the *Westminster Review*, 1827), then by Quérard, supposed to be an authority in regard to anonymous and pseudonymous writings, finally by Paul Lacroix, "*le bibliophile Jacob*," who suggested, or rather expressed his "certainty," that the real author of the "Memoirs" was Stendhal, whose "mind, character, ideas and style" he seemed to recognize on every page. This theory, as foolish and as unsupported as the Baconian theory of Shakespeare, has been carelessly accepted, or at all events accepted as possible, by many good scholars who have never taken the trouble to look into the matter for themselves. It was finally disproved by a series of articles of the late Armand Baschet, entitled "*Preuves curieuses de l'authenticité des Mémoires de Jacques Casanova de Seingalt*," in "*Le Livre*," January, February, April and May, 1881; and these proofs were further corroborated by two articles of Alessandro d'Ancona, entitled "*Un Avventuriere del Secolo XVIII.*," in the "*Nuova Antologia*," February 1 and August 1, 1882. Baschet had never himself seen

the manuscript of the "Memoirs," but he had learnt all the facts about it from Messrs. Brockhaus, and he had himself examined the numerous papers relating to Casanova in the Venetian archives. A similar examination was made at the Frari at about the same time by the Abbé Fulin; and I myself, in 1894, not knowing at the time that the discovery had been already made, made it over again for myself. There the arrest of Casanova, his imprisonment in the *Piombi*, the exact date of his escape, the name of the monk who accompanied him, are all authenticated by documents contained in the *riferte* of the Inquisition of State; there are bills for the repairs of the roof and walls of the cell from which he escaped; there are the reports of the spies on whose information he was arrested, for his too dangerous free-spokenness in matters of religion and morality. The same archives contain forty-eight letters of Casanova to the Inquisitors of State, dating from 1763 to 1782, among the *Riferte dei Confidenti*, or reports of secret agents; the earliest asking permission to return to Venice, the rest giving information in regard to the immoralities of the city,

after his return there; all in the same handwriting as the "Memoirs." Further proof could scarcely be needed, but Baschet has done more than prove the authenticity, he has proved the extraordinary veracity, of the "Memoirs." F. W. Barthold, in "*Die Geschichtlichen Persönlichkeiten in J. Casanova's Memoiren*," 2 vols., 1846, had already examined some hundred of Casanova's allusions to well-known people, showing the perfect exactitude of all but six or seven, and out of these six or seven inexactitudes ascribing only a single one to the author's intention. Baschet and d'Ancona both carry on what Barthold had begun; other investigators, in France, Italy and Germany, have followed them; and two things are now certain, first, that Casanova himself wrote the "Memoirs" published under his name, though not textually in the precise form in which we have them; and, second, that as their veracity becomes more and more evident as they are confronted with more and more independent witnesses, it is only fair to suppose that they are equally truthful where the facts are such as could only have been known to Casanova himself.

## II.

For more than two-thirds of a century it has been known that Casanova spent the last fourteen years of his life at Dux, that he wrote his "Memoirs" there, and that he died there. During all this time people have been discussing the authenticity and the truthfulness of the "Memoirs," they have been searching for information about Casanova in various directions, and yet hardly any one has ever taken the trouble, or obtained the permission, to make a careful examination in precisely the one place where information was most likely to be found. The very existence of the manuscripts at Dux was known only to a few, and to most of these only on hearsay; and thus the singular good fortune was reserved for me, on my visit to Count Waldstein in September, 1899, to be the first to discover in the most interesting things contained in these manuscripts. M. Octave Uzanne, though he had not himself visited Dux, had indeed procured copies of some of the manuscripts, a few of which were published by him

in "*Le Livre*," in 1887 and 1889. But with the death of "*Le Livre*" in 1889, the *Casanova inédit* came to an end, and has never, so far as I know, been continued elsewhere. Beyond the publication of these fragments, nothing has been done with the manuscripts at Dux, nor has an account of them ever been given by any one who has been allowed to examine them.

For five years, ever since I had discovered the documents in the Venetian archives, I had wanted to go to Dux; and four summers ago, when I was staying with Count Lützow at Zempach, in Bohemia, I found the way kindly opened for me. Count Waldstein, the present head of the family, with extreme courtesy, put all his manuscripts at my disposal, and invited me to stay with him. Unluckily, he was called away on the morning of the day that I reached Dux. He had left everything ready for me, and I was shown over the castle by a friend of his, Dr. Kittel, whose courtesy I should like also to acknowledge. After a hurried visit to the castle we started on the long drive to Oberleutensdorf, a smaller Schloss near Komotau, where the Waldstein family was

then staying. The air was sharp and bracing; the two Russian horses flew like the wind; I was whirled along in an unfamiliar darkness, through a strange country, black with coal mines, through dark pine woods, where a wild peasantry dwelt in little mining towns. Here and there, a few men and women passed us on the road, in their Sunday finery; then a long space of silence, and we were in the open country, galloping between broad fields; and always in a haze of lovely hills, which I saw more distinctly as we drove back next morning.

The return to Dux was like a triumphal entry, as we dashed through the marketplace filled with people come for the Monday market, pots and pans and vegetables strewn in heaps all over the ground, on the rough paving stones, up to the great gateway of the castle, leaving but just room for us to drive through their midst. I had the sensation of an enormous building: all Bohemian castles are big, but this one was like a royal palace. Set there in the midst of the town, after the Bohemian fashion, it opens at the back upon great gardens, as if it were in the midst of the country. I walked through

room after room, along corridor after corridor; everywhere there were pictures, everywhere portraits of Wallenstein, and battle scenes in which he led on his troops. The library, which was formed, or at least arranged, by Casanova, and which remains as he left it, contains some 25,000 volumes, some of them of considerable value; one of the most famous books in Bohemian literature, Skála's "History of the Church," exists in manuscript at Dux, and it is from this manuscript that the two published volumes of it were printed. The library forms part of the Museum, which occupies a ground-floor wing of the castle. The first room is an armory, in which all kinds of arms are arranged, in a decorative way, covering the ceiling and the walls with strange patterns. The second room contains pottery, collected by Casanova's Waldstein on his Eastern travels. The third room is full of curious mechanical toys, and cabinets, and carvings in ivory. Finally, we come to the library, contained in the two innermost rooms. The book-shelves are painted white, and reach to the low vaulted ceilings, which are whitewashed. At the end of a book-case,

in the corner of one of the windows, hangs a fine engraved portrait of Casanova.

After I had been all over the castle, so long Casanova's home, I was taken to Count Waldstein's study, and left there with the manuscripts. I found six huge cardboard cases, large enough to contain foolscap paper, lettered on the back: "*Gräfl. Waldstein-Wartenberg'sches Real Fiedicommiss, Dux-Oberleutensdorf: Handschriftlicher Nachlass Casanova.*" The cases were arranged so as to stand like books; they opened at the side; and on opening them, one after another, I found series after series of manuscripts roughly thrown together, after some pretence at arrangement, and lettered with a very generalized description of contents. The greater part of the manuscripts were in Casanova's handwriting, which I could see gradually beginning to get shaky with years. Most were written in French, a certain number in Italian. The beginning of a catalogue in the library, though said to be by him, was not in his handwriting. Perhaps it was taken down at his dictation. There were, also, some copies of Italian and Latin poems not written by him. Then there were many

big bundles of letters addressed to him, dating over more than thirty years. Almost all the rest was in his own handwriting.

I came first upon the smaller manuscripts, among which I found, jumbled together on the same and on separate scraps of paper, washing-bills, accounts, hotel bills, lists of letters written, first drafts of letters with many erasures, notes on books, theological and mathematical notes, sums, Latin quotations, French and Italian verses, with variants, a long list of classical names which have and have not been "*francisés*," with reasons for and against; "what I must wear at Dresden"; headings without anything to follow, such as: "reflexions on respiration, on the true cause of youth — the crows"; a new method of winning the lottery at Rome; recipes, among which is a long printed list of perfumes sold at Spa; a newspaper cutting, dated Prague, 25 October, 1790, on the thirty-seventh balloon ascent of Blanchard; thanks to some "noble donor" for the gift of a dog called "Finette"; a passport for "*Monsieur de Casanova, Venetian, allant d'ici en Hollande*," October 13, 1758, ("*Ce Passeport bon pour quinze jours*"), together

with an order for post-horses, gratis, from Paris to Bordeaux and Bayonne.<sup>1</sup>

Occasionally, one gets a glimpse into his daily life at Dux, as in this note, scribbled on a fragment of paper (here and always I translate the French literally): "I beg you to tell my servant what the biscuits are that I like to eat, dipped in wine, to fortify my stomach. I believe that they can all be found at Roman's." Usually, however, these notes, though often suggested by something closely personal, branch off into more general considerations; or else begin with general considerations, and end with a case in point. Thus, for instance, a fragment of three pages begins: "A compliment which is only made to gild the pill is a positive impertinence, and Monsieur Bailli is nothing but a charlatan; the monarch ought to have spit in his face, but the monarch trembled with fear." A manuscript entitled "*Essai d'Egoïsme*," dated "Dux, this 27th June, 1769," contains, in the midst of various reflections, an offer to let his *appartement* in return for enough money to "tranquillise

<sup>1</sup> See the account of this visit to Holland, and the reference to taking a passport, "Memoirs," v., 238.

for six months two Jew creditors at Prague." Another manuscript is headed "Pride and Folly," and begins with a long series of antitheses, such as: "All fools are not proud, and all proud men are fools. Many fools are happy, all proud men are unhappy." On the same sheet follows this instance or application:

Whether it is possible to compose a Latin distich of the greatest beauty without knowing either the Latin language or prosody. We must examine the possibility and the impossibility, and afterwards see who is the man who says he is the author of the distich, for there are extraordinary people in the world. My brother, in short, ought to have composed the distich, because he says so, and because he confided it to me tête-à-tête. I had, it is true, difficulty in believing him; but what is one to do? Either one must believe, or suppose him capable of telling a lie which could only be told by a fool; and that is impossible, for all Europe knows that my brother is not a fool.

Here, as so often in these manuscripts, we seem to see Casanova thinking on paper. He uses scraps of paper (sometimes the blank page of a letter, on the other side of which we see the address) as a kind of informal diary; and it is characteristic of him, of the man of infinitely curious mind,

which this adventurer really was, that there are so few merely personal notes among these casual jottings. Often, they are purely abstract; at times, metaphysical *jeux d'esprit*, like the sheet of fourteen "Different wagers," which begins:

I wager that it is not true that a man who weighs a hundred pounds will weigh more if you kill him. I wager that if there is any difference, he will weigh less. I wager that diamond powder has not sufficient force to kill a man.

Side by side with these fanciful excursions into science, come more serious ones, as in the note on Algebra, which traces its progress since the year 1494, before which "it had only arrived at the solution of problems of the second degree, inclusive." A scrap of paper tells us that Casanova "did not like regular towns." "I like," he says, "Venice, Rome, Florence, Milan, Constantinople, Genoa." Then he becomes abstract and inquisitive again, and writes two pages, full of curious, out of the way learning, on the name of Paradise.

The name of Paradise is a name in Genesis which indicates a place of pleasure (*lieu voluptueux*): this term is Persian. This place of pleasure was made by God before he had created man.

It may be remembered that Casanova quarrelled with Voltaire, because Voltaire had told him frankly that his translation of "*L'Ecoissaise*" was a bad translation. It is piquant to read another note written in this style of righteous indignation:

Voltaire, the hardy Voltaire, whose pen is without bit or bridle; Voltaire who devoured the Bible, and ridiculed our dogmas, doubts, and after having made proselytes to impiety, is not ashamed, being reduced to the extremity of life, to ask for the sacraments, and to cover his body with more relics than St. Louis had at Amboise.

Here is an argument more in keeping with the tone of the "Memoirs":

A girl who is pretty and good, and as virtuous as you please, ought not to take it ill that a man, carried away by her charms, should set himself to the task of making their conquest. If this man cannot please her by any means, even if his passion be criminal, she ought never to take offence at it, nor treat him unkindly; she ought to be gentle, and pity him, if she does not love him, and think it enough to keep invincibly hold upon her own duty.

Occasionally he touches upon æsthetical matters, as in a fragment which begins with this liberal definition of beauty:

Harmony makes beauty, says M. de S. P. (Bernardin de St. Pierre), but the definition is too short,

## CASANOVA AT DUX

if he thinks he has said everything. Here is mine. Remember that the subject is metaphysical. An object really beautiful ought to seem beautiful to all whose eyes fall upon it. That is all; there is nothing more to be said.

At times we have an anecdote and its commentary, perhaps jotted down for use in that latter part of the "Memoirs" which was never written, or which has been lost. Here is a single sheet, dated "this 2nd September, 1791," and headed "Souvenir":

The Prince de Rosenberg said to me, as we went down stairs, that Madame de Rosenberg was dead, and asked me if the Comte de Waldstein had in the library the illustration of the Villa d'Altichiero, which the Emperor had asked for in vain at the city library of Prague, and when I answered "yes," he gave an equivocal laugh. A moment afterwards, he asked me if he might tell the Emperor. "Why not, monsieur? It is not a secret." "Is His Majesty coming to Dux?" "If he goes to Oberlaitensdorf (*sic*) he will go to Dux, too; and he may ask you for it, for there is a monument there which relates to him when he was Grand Duke." "In that case, His Majesty can also see my critical remarks on the Egyptian prints."

The Emperor asked me this morning, 6 October, how I employed my time at Dux, and I told him that I was making an Italian anthology. "You have all the Italians, then?" "All, sire." See what a lie leads to. If I had not lied in saying that I was making an anthology, I should not have found myself obliged

to lie again in saying that we have all the Italian poets. If the Emperor comes to Dux, I shall kill myself.

"They say that this Dux is a delightful spot," says Casanova in one of the most personal of his notes, "and I see that it might be for many; but not for me, for what delights me in my old age is independent of the place which I inhabit. When I do not sleep, I dream, and when I am tired of dreaming, I blacken paper, then I read, and most often reject all that my pen has vomited." Here we see him blackening paper, on every occasion, and for every purpose. In one bundle I found an unfinished story, about Roland, and some adventure with women in a cave; then a "Meditation on arising from sleep, 19 May, 1789"; then a "Short Reflection of a Philosopher who finds himself thinking of procuring his own death. At Dux, on getting out of bed on the 13th October, 1793, day dedicated to St. Lucy, memorable in my too long life." A big budget, containing cryptograms, is headed "Grammatical Lottery"; and there is the title page of a treatise on "*The Duplication of the Hexahedron, demonstrated*

*geometrically to all the Universities and all the Academies of Europe.*"<sup>1</sup> There are innumerable verses, French and Italian, in all stages, occasionally attaining the finality of these lines, which appear in half a dozen tentative forms:

*" Sans mystère point de plaisirs,  
Sans silence point de mystère.  
Charme divin de mes loisirs,  
Solitude ! que tu m'es chère ! "*

Then there are a number of more or less complete manuscripts of some extent. There is the manuscript of the translation of Homer's "Iliad," in *ottava rima* (published in Venice, 1775-78); of the "*Histoire de Venise*," of the "*Icosameron*," a curious book published in 1787, purporting to be "translated from English," but really an original work of Casanova; "*Philocalies sur les Sottises des Mortels*," a long manuscript never published; the sketch and beginning of "*Le Polemarque, ou la Calomnie démasquée par le presence d'esprit. Tragicomédie en trois actes, composée à Dux dans le mois de Juin de l'Année, 1791*," which recurs again under the form of the "*Polemoscope: La*

<sup>1</sup> See Charles Henry, "*Les Connaissances Mathématiques de Casanova*," Rome, 1883.



*Lorgnette menteuse ou la Calomnie démasquée,*" acted before the Princesse de Ligne at her château at Teplitz, 1791. There is a treatise in Italian, "*Delle Passioni*"; there are long dialogues, such as "*Le Philosophe et le Theologien,*" and "*Rêve: Dieu-Moi*"; there is the "*Songe d'un Quart d'Heure,*" divided into minutes; there is the very lengthy criticism of "*Bernardin de Saint-Pierre*"; there is the "*Confutation d'une Censure indiscreète qu'on lit dans la Gazette de Jena, 19 Juin, 1789*"; with another large manuscript, unfortunately imperfect, first called "*L'Insulte,*" and then "*Placet au Public,*" dated "Dux, this 2nd March, 1790," referring to the same criticism on the "*Icosameron*" and the "*Fuite des Prisons.*" "*L'Histoire de ma Fuite des Prisons de la République de Venise, qu'on appelle les Plombs,*" which is the first draft of the most famous part of the "Memoirs," was published at Leipzig in 1788; and, having read it in the Marcian Library at Venice, I am not surprised to learn from this indignant document that it was printed "under the care of a young Swiss, who had the talent to commit a hundred faults of orthography."

## III.

We come now to the documents directly relating to the "Memoirs," and among these are several attempts at a preface, in which we see the actual preface coming gradually into form. One is entitled *Casanova au Lecteur*," another *Histoire de mon Existence*," and a third "*Preface*." There is also a brief and characteristic "*Précis de ma vie*," dated November 17, 1797. Some of these have been printed in "*Le Livre*," 1887. But by far the most important manuscript that I discovered, one which, apparently, I am the first to discover, is a manuscript entitled "*Extrait du Chapitre 4 et 5*." It is written on paper similar to that on which the "Memoirs" are written; the pages are numbered 104-148; and though it is described as "*Extrait*," it seems to contain, at all events, the greater part of the missing chapters to which I have already referred, Chapters IV. and V. of the last volume of the "Memoirs." In this manuscript we find Armelline and Scolastica, whose story is interrupted by the abrupt ending of Chapter III.; we find Mariuccia of Vol. VII. chapter

9, who married a hair-dresser; and we find also Jaconine, whom Casanova recognizes as his daughter, "much prettier than Sophia, the daughter of Thérèse Pompeati whom I had left at London."<sup>1</sup> It is curious that this very important manuscript, which supplies the one missing link in the "Memoirs," should never have been discovered by any of the few people who have had the opportunity of looking over the Dux manuscripts. I am inclined to explain it by the fact that the case in which I found this manuscript contains some papers not relating to Casanova. Probably, those who looked into this case looked no further. I have told Herr Brockhaus of my discovery, and I hope to see Chapters IV. and V. in their places when the long-looked for edition of the complete text is at length given to the world.

Another<sup>1</sup> manuscript which I found tells with great piquancy the whole story of the Abbé de Brosses' ointment, the curing of the Princesse de Conti's pimples, and the birth of the Duc de Montpensier, which is told very briefly, and with much less point,

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<sup>1</sup> See Memoirs, IX., 272, et seq.

in the "Memoirs" (vol. III., p. 327). Readers of the "Memoirs" will remember the duel at Warsaw with Count Branicki in 1766 (vol. X., pp. 274-320), an affair which attracted a good deal of attention at the time, and of which there is an account in a letter from the Abbé Taruffi to the dramatist, Francesco Albergati, dated Warsaw, March 19, 1766, quoted in Ernesto Masi's "Life of Albergati," Bologna, 1878. A manuscript at Dux in Casanova's handwriting gives an account of this duel in the third person; it is entitled: "*Description de l'affaire arrivée a Varsovie le 5 Mars, 1766.*" D'Ancona, in the "*Nuova Antologia*" (vol. 67, p. 412), referring to the Abbé Taruffi's account, mentions what he considers to be a slight discrepancy: that Taruffi refers to the *danseuse* about whom the duel was fought as La Casacci, while Casanova refers to her as La Catai. In this manuscript Casanova always refers to her as La Casacci; La Catai is evidently one of M. Laforgue's arbitrary alterations of the text.

In turning over another manuscript, I was caught by the name Charpillon, which every reader of the "Memoirs" will remember as

the name of the harpy by whom Casanova suffered so much in London, in 1763-4. This manuscript begins by saying: "I have been in London for six months and have been to see them (that is, the mother and daughter) in their own house," where he finds nothing but "swindlers, who cause all who go there to lose their money in gambling." This manuscript adds some details to the story told in the ninth and tenth volumes of the "Memoirs," and refers to the meeting with the Charpillons four and a half years before, described in volume V., pages 482-485. It is written in a tone of great indignation. Elsewhere, I found a letter written by Casanova, but not signed, referring to an anonymous letter which he had received in reference to the Charpillons, and ending: "My handwriting is known." It was not until the last that I came upon great bundles of letters addressed to Casanova, and so carefully preserved that little scraps of paper on which postscripts are written are still in their places. One still sees the seals on the backs of many of the letters, on paper which has slightly yellowed with age, leaving the ink, however, almost

always fresh. They come from Venice, Paris, Rome, Prague, Bayreuth, The Hague, Genoa, Fiume, Trieste, &c., and are addressed to as many places, often "*poste restante.*" Many are letters from women, some in beautiful handwriting, on thick paper; others on scraps of paper, in painful hands, ill-spelt. A Countess writes pitifully, imploring help; one protests her love, in spite of the "many chagrins" he has caused her; another asks "how they are to live together"; another laments that a report has gone about that she is secretly living with him, which may harm *his* reputation. Some are in French, more in Italian. "*Mon cher Giacomello,*" writes one woman, in French; "*Carissimo e Amalissimo,*" writes another, in Italian. These letters from women are in some confusion, and are in need of a good deal of sorting over and rearranging before their full extent can be realized. Thus I found letters in the same handwriting separated by letters in other handwritings; many are unsigned, or signed only by a single initial; many are undated, or dated only with the day of the week or month. There are a great many letters, dating from 1779 to 1786, signed

"Francesca Buschini," a name which I cannot identify; they are written in Italian, and one of them begins: "*Unico Mio vero Amico*" ("my only true friend"). Others are signed "Virginia B.,"; one of these is dated "Forli, October 15, 1773." There is also a "Theresa B.," who writes from Genoa. I was at first unable to identify the writer of a whole series of letters in French, very affectionate and intimate letters, usually unsigned, occasionally signed "B." She calls herself "*voire petite amie*"; or she ends with a half smiling, half reproachful "good-night, and sleep better than I." In one letter, sent from Paris in 1759, she writes: "Never believe me, but when I tell you that I love you, and that I shall love you always." In another letter, ill-spelt, as her letters often are, she writes: "Be assured that evil tongues, vapors, calumny, nothing can change my heart, which is yours entirely, and has no will to change its master." Now, it seems to me that these letters must be from Manon Baletti, and that they are the letters referred to in the sixth volume of the "Memoirs." We read there (page 60) how on Christmas day, 1759,

Casanova receives a letter from Manon in Paris, announcing her marriage with "M. Blondel, architect to the King, and member of his Academy"; she returns him his letters, and begs him to return hers, or burn them. Instead of doing so, he allows Esther to read them, intending to burn them afterwards. Esther begs to be allowed to keep the letters, promising to "preserve them religiously all her life." "These letters," he says, "numbered more than two hundred, and the shortest were of four pages." Certainly there are not two hundred of them at Dux, but it seems to me highly probable that Casanova made a final selection from Manon's letters, and that it is these which I have found.

But, however this may be, I was fortunate enough to find the set of letters which I was most anxious to find: the letters from Henriette, whose loss every writer on Casanova has lamented. Henriette, it will be remembered, makes her first appearance at Cesena, in the year 1748; after their meeting at Geneva, she reappears romantically *à propos*, twenty-two years later, at Aix in Provence; and she writes to Casanova pro-

posing "*un commerce épistolaire*," asking him what he has done since his escape from prison, and promising to do her best to tell him all that has happened to her during the long interval. After quoting her letter, he adds: "I replied to her, accepting the correspondence that she offered me, and telling her briefly all my vicissitudes. She related to me in turn, in some forty letters, all the history of her life. If she dies before me, I shall add these letters to these 'Memoirs;' but to-day she is still alive, and always happy, though now old." It has never been known what became of these letters, and why they were not added to the "Memoirs." I have found a great quantity of them, some signed with her married name in full, "Henriette de Schnetzmann," and I am inclined to think that she survived Casanova, for one of the letters is dated Bayreuth, 1798, the year of Casanova's death. They are remarkably charming, written with a mixture of piquancy and distinction; and I will quote the characteristic beginning and end of the last letter I was able to find. It begins: "No, it is impossible to be sulky with you!" and ends: "If I become vicious, it is you,

my Mentor, who make me so, and I cast my sins upon you. Even if I were damned I should still be your most devoted friend, Henriette de Schnetzmann." Casanova was twenty-three when he met Henriette; now, herself an old woman, she writes to him when he is seventy-three, as if the fifty years that had passed were blotted out in the faithful affection of her memory. How many more discreet and less changing lovers have had the quality of constancy in change, to which this life-long correspondence bears witness? Does it not suggest a view of Casanova not quite the view of all the world? To me it shows the real man, who perhaps of all others best understood what Shelley meant when he said:

True love in this differs from gold or clay,  
That to divide is not to take away.

But, though the letters from women naturally interested me the most, they were only a certain proportion of the great mass of correspondence which I turned over. There were letters from Carlo Angiolini, who was afterwards to bring the manuscript of the "Memoirs" to Brockhaus; from Balbi, the monk with whom Casanova escaped from

the *Piombi*; from the Marquis Albergati, playwright, actor and eccentric, of whom there is some account in the "Memoirs"; from the Marquis Mosca, "a distinguished man of letters whom I was anxious to see," Casanova tells us in the same volume in which he describes his visit to the Moscas at Pesaro; from Zulian, brother of the Duchess of Fiano; from Richard Lorrain, "*bel homme, ayant de l'esprit, le ton et le goût de la bonne société,*" who came to settle at Gorizia in 1773, while Casanova was there; from the Procurator Morosini, whom he speaks of in the "Memoirs" as his "protector," and as one of those through whom he obtained permission to return to Venice. His other "protector," the *avogador* Zaguri, had, says Casanova, "since the affair of the Marquis Albergati, carried on a most interesting correspondence with me"; and in fact I found a bundle of no less than a hundred and thirty-eight letters from him, dating from 1784 to 1798. Another bundle contains one hundred and seventy-two letters from Count Lamberg. In the "Memoirs" Casanova says, referring to his visit to Augsburg at the end of 1761:

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I used to spend my evenings in a very agreeable manner at the house of Count Max de Lamberg, who resided at the court of the Prince-Bishop with the title of Grand Marshal. What particularly attached me to Count Lamberg was his literary talent. A first-rate scholar, learned to a degree, he has published several much esteemed works. I carried on an exchange of letters with him which ended only with his death, four years ago, in 1792.

Casanova tells us that, at his second visit to Augsburg in the early part of 1767, he "supped with Count Lamberg two or three times a week," during the four months he was there. It is with this year that the letters I have found begin: they end with the year of his death, 1792. In his "*Mémoire d'un Mondain*," Lamberg refers to Casanova as "a man known in literature, a man of profound knowledge." In the first edition of 1774, he laments that "a man such as M. de S. Galt" should not yet have been taken back into favor by the Venetian government, and in the second edition, 1775, rejoices over Casanova's return to Venice. Then there are letters from Da Ponte, who tells the story of Casanova's curious relations with Mme. d'Urfé, in his "Memorie scritte da esso," 1829; from Pittoni, Bono, and others

mentioned in different parts of the "Memoirs," and from some dozen others who are not mentioned in them. The only letters in the whole collection that have been published are those from the Prince de Ligne and from Count Koenig.

## IV.

Casanova tells us in his "Memoirs" that, during his later years at Dux, he had only been able to "hinder black melancholy from devouring his poor existence, or sending him out of his mind," by writing ten or twelve hours a day. The copious manuscripts at Dux show us how persistently he was at work on a singular variety of subjects, in addition to the "Memoirs" and to the various books which he published during those years. We see him jotting down everything that comes into his head, for his own amusement, and certainly without any thought of publication; engaging in learned controversies, writing treatises on abstruse mathematical problems, composing comedies to be acted before Count Waldstein's neighbors, practising verse-writing in two languages, indeed with more patience than success, writing philosophical dialogues in which God and himself are the speakers, and keeping up an extensive correspondence, both with distinguished men and with delightful women. His mental activity, up to the age of seventy-three, is as prodigious

as the activity which he had expended in living a multiform and incalculable life. As in life everything living had interested him, so in his retirement from life every idea makes its separate appeal to him; and he welcomes ideas with the same impartiality with which he had welcomed adventures. Passion has intellectualized itself, and remains not less passionate. He wishes to do everything, to compete with every one; and it is only after having spent seven years in heaping up miscellaneous learning, and exercising his faculties in many directions, that he turns to look back over his own past life, and to live it over again in memory, as he writes down the narrative of what had interested him most in it. "I write in the hope that my history will never see the broad daylight of publication," he tells us, scarcely meaning it, we may be sure, even in the moment of hesitancy which may naturally come to him. But if ever a book was written for the pleasure of writing it, it was this one; and an autobiography written for oneself is not likely to be anything but frank.

"Truth is the only God I have ever adored," he tells us; and we now know how

truthful he was in saying so. I have only summarized in this article the most important confirmations of his exact accuracy in facts and dates; the number could be extended indefinitely. In the manuscripts we find innumerable further confirmations; and their chief value as testimony is that they tell us nothing which we should not have already known, if we had merely taken Casanova at his word. But it is not always easy to take people at their own word, when they are writing about themselves; and the world has been very loth to believe in Casanova as he represents himself. It has been specially loth to believe that he is telling the truth when he tells us about his adventures with women. But the letters contained among these manuscripts show us the women of Casanova writing to him with all the fervor and all the fidelity which he attributes to them; and they show him to us in the character of as fervid and faithful a lover. In every fact, every detail, and in the whole mental impression which they convey, these manuscripts bring before us the Casanova of the "Memoirs." As I seemed to come upon Casanova at home, it

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was as if I came upon an old friend, already perfectly known to me, before I had made my pilgrimage to Dux.



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