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978-1-108-06618-1 - Social Aspects of the Italian Revolution, in a Series of Letters from Florence: With a Sketch of Subsequent Events up to the Present Time

Theodosia Garrow Trollope

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### Social Aspects of the Italian Revolution, in a Series of Letters from Florence

Having married and settled in Florence in the 1840s, the poet and translator Theodosia Trollope (1816–65) found herself well placed to chronicle the events which contributed to the unification of Italy. While another Englishwoman in Italy, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, would become better known for her verse, Trollope nevertheless firmly established herself in the liberal and literary circles of Florentine society, allowing her to witness at first hand, and explore in prose, the effects that the Risorgimento was having on those living through it. Vividly capturing the unfolding situation in Tuscany, twenty-seven letters first appeared in *The Athenaeum* in 1859–60. They were published together in this work of 1861, along with an update on the months that had elapsed since the last letter was written in April 1860. Championing the cause of unification, Trollope's writing helped to generate enthusiasm in Britain for the progress and personalities of the Risorgimento.

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BY  
THEODOSIA TROLLOPE.

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## PREFACE.



IN the following Letters, reprinted from the 'Athenæum' by the kind permission of the proprietors of that journal, it has been endeavoured, not so much to chronicle events—a duty amply provided for by stronger hands—as to sketch the visible effects produced by these on the various classes of the people among whom they were occurring. Thunder-clouds fleeting across a bright April sky do not produce on the landscape changes more rapid or more picturesque than did the continually vibrating alternations of events boding good or evil to the great cause, on the aspects and bearing of the impressionable Southern race, all whose future fortunes and destinies were at stake. These varying expressions of the popular mind, as it has been moved from hour to hour by hope or fear, misgiving or confidence, disappointment or triumph, it has been sought to

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describe, while the impressions were yet fresh in the writer's mind, with that due local colouring and characteristic physiognomy which make a picture of revolutionary times in Florence so essentially different from any record of similar events in the cities of Northern Europe. If this object has been in any degree attained, the Author's intention will have been fulfilled, for she will have contributed to call the attention of her countrymen to manifestations of national character and capabilities, which hold out promise of a very remarkable career of future advancing civilization, and which have truly deserved to be described by the *mot* attributed to Count Cavour, as "a national epidemic of good sense."

*Florence, November 6, 1860.*

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