

**PAUL GOSSLETT'S
CONFESSIONS IN
LOVE, LAW, AND
THE CIVIL SERVICE**

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Paul Gosslett's Confessions in Love, Law, and the Civil Service by Paul Gosslett

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IN

LOVE, LAW, AND THE CIVIL SERVICE.

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PAUL GOSSLETT'S CONFESSIONS.

MY FIRST MISSION UNDER F.O.

I WAS walking very sadly across the Green Park one day, my hat pressed over my eyes, not looking to right or left, but sauntering slowly along, depressed and heavy-hearted, when I felt a friendly arm slip softly within my own, while a friendly voice said—

“I think I have got something to suit you, for a few months at least. Don't you know Italian?”

“In a fashion, I may say I do. I can read the small poets, and chat a little. I'll not say much more about my knowledge.”

“Quite enough for what I mean. Now tell me another thing. You're not a very timid fellow I know. Have you any objection to

going amongst the brigands in Calabria,—on a friendly mission, of course,—where it will be their interest to treat you well?”

“Explain yourself a little more freely. What is it I should have to do?”

“Here’s the whole affair; the son of a wealthy baronet, a Wiltshire M.P., has been captured and carried off by these rascals. They demand a heavy sum for his ransom, and give a very short time for the payment. Sir Joseph, the youth’s father, is very ill, and in such a condition as would make any appeal to him highly dangerous; the doctors declare, in fact, it would be fatal; and Lady Mary S. has come up to town, in a state bordering on distraction, to consult Lord Scatterdale, the Foreign Secretary, who is a personal friend of her husband. The result is that his lordship has decided to pay the money at once; and the only question is now to find the man to take it out, and treat with these scoundrels.”

“That ought not to be a very difficult matter, one would say; there are scores of fellows with pluck for such a mission.”