

during the days of his first prosperity, and of his earnest cravings, Josephine had carefully gathered; they were to be, amid the precious and costly treasures which the future was to lay at her feet, the most glorious and most prized, and which she preserved with sacred loyalty as long as she lived.

This is the reason that, out of all the letters which Bonaparte wrote to Josephine during long years, not one is lost; that there is no gap in the correspondence, and that we can with complete certainty, from week to week and year to year, follow the relations which existed between them, and that the thermometer can be placed on Bonaparte's heart to observe how by degrees the heat diminishes, the warmth of passion disappears into the cool temperature of a quiet friendship, and how it never sinks to cold indifference, even when Josephine had to yield to the young and proud daughter of Austria, and give up her place at the side of the emperor.

Of all the letters of Josephine to Bonaparte, which were now so glowing that they seemed to devour him with flames of fire and bewildered his senses, and then so cold and indifferent that they caused the chill of death to pass over his frame—of all these, not one has been preserved to posterity. Perhaps the Emperor Napoleon destroyed them; when in the Tuileries he received Josephine's successor, his second wife, and when he endeavored to destroy in his own proud heart the memory of the beautiful, happy past, he there destroyed those letters, that they might return to dust, even as his own love had returned.

CHAPTER XXV.

JOSEPHINE IN ITALY.

BONAPARTE'S letter, which the courier brought to Josephine, found her recovered, and ready to follow her husband's call, and go to Milan. But she was deprived of one precious and joyous hope: the child, which Bonaparte so much envied because it would pass many years in Josephine's arms, was never to be born.

In the last days of the month of June Josephine arrived in Milan. Her whole journey had been one uninterrupted triumph. In Turin, at the court of the King of Sardinia, she had received the homage of the people as if she were the wife of a mighty ruler; and wherever she went, she was received with honors and distinction. To Turin Bonaparte had sent before him one of his adjutants, General Marmont, afterward Duke de Ragusa, to convey to her his kindest regards and to accompany her with a military escort as far as Milan. In the palace de Serbelloni, his residence in Milan, adorned as for a feast, Bonaparte received her with a countenance radiant with joy and happy smiles such as seldom brightened his pale, gloomy features.

But Bonaparte had neither much time nor leisure to devote to his domestic happiness, to his long-expected reunion with Josephine. Only three days could the happy lover obtain from the restless commander; then he had to tear himself away from his sweet repose, to carry on further the deadly strife which he had begun in Italy against Austria—which had decided not to give away one foot of Lombardy without a struggle—and not to submit to the conqueror of Lodi. A new army was marched into Italy under the command of General Wurmser, the same against whom, three years before, on the shores of the Rhine, Alexandre de Beauharnais had fought in vain. At the head of sixty

thousand men Wurmser moved into Italy to relieve Mantua, besieged by the French.

This alarming news awoke Bonaparte out of his dream of love, and neither Josephine's tears nor prayers could keep him back. He sent couriers to Paris, to implore from the Directory fresh troops and more money, to continue the campaign. The Directory answered him with the proposition to divide the army of Italy into two columns, one of which would act under the commander-in-chief, General Kellermann, the other under Bonaparte.

But this proposition, which the jealous Directory made for the sake of breaking the growing power of Bonaparte, only served to lift him a step higher in his path to the brilliant career which he alone, in the depths of his heart, had traced, and the secret of which his closed lips would reveal to no one.

Bonaparte's answer to this proposition of the Directory was, that if the power were to be divided, he could only refuse the half of this division, and would retire entirely from command.

He wrote to Carnot: "It is a matter of indifference to me whether I carry on the war here or elsewhere. To serve my country, and deserve from posterity one page of history, is all my ambition! If both I and Kellermann command in Italy, then all is lost. General Kellermann has more experience than I, and will carry on the war more ably. But the matter can only be badly managed if we both command. It is no pleasure for me to serve with a man whom Europe considers the first general of the age."

Carnot showed this letter to the Directory, and declared that if Bonaparte were to be given up, he would himself resign his position of secretary of war. The Directory was not prepared to accept this twofold responsibility, and they sacrificed Kellermann to the threats of Napoleon and Carnot.

General Bonaparte was confirmed in his position of com-

mander-in-chief of the army in Italy, even for the future, and the conduct of the war was left in his hands alone.

With this fresh triumph over his enemies at home, Bonaparte marched from Milan to fight the re-enforced enemy of France in Italy.

On this new war-path, amid dangers and conflicts, the tumults of the fight, the noise of the camp, the confusion of the bivouac, the young general did not for one moment forget the wife he so passionately loved. Nearly every day he wrote to her, and those letters, which were often written between the dictation of the battle's plan, the dispatches to the Directory, and the impending conflict, are faithful way-marks, whose directions it is easy to follow, and thus trace the whole successful course of the hero of Italy.

To refer here to Bonaparte's letters to Josephine, implies at once the mention of Bonaparte's deeds and of Josephine's happiness. The first letter which he wrote after the interview in Milan is from Roverbella, and it tells her in a few words that he has just now beaten the foe, and that he is going to Verona. The second is also short and hastily written, but is full of many delicate assurances of love, and also that he has met and defeated the foe at Verona. The third letter is from Marmirolo, and shows that Bonaparte, notwithstanding his constant changes of position, had taken the precautions that Josephine's letters should everywhere follow him; for in Marmirolo he received one, and this tender letter filled him with so much joy, thanks, and longings, that, in virtue of it, he forgets conquests and triumphs entirely, and is only the longing, tender lover. He writes:

"MARMIROLO, the 29th Messidor, 9 in the evening
" (July 17), 1796.

"I am just now in receipt of your letter, my adored one; it has filled my heart with joy. I am thankful for the pains you have taken to send me news about yourself; with your

improved health, all will be well; I am convinced that you have now recovered. I would impress upon you the duty of riding often; this will be a healthy exercise for you.

"Since I left you I am forever sorrowful. My happiness consists in being near you. Constantly does my memory renew your kisses, your tears, your amiable jealousy; and the charms of the incomparable Josephine kindle incessantly a burning flame within my heart and throughout my senses. When shall I, free from all disturbance and care, pass all my moments with you, and have nothing to do but to love, nothing to think of but the happiness to tell it and prove it to you? I am going to send you your horse, and I trust you will soon be able to be with me. A few days ago I thought I loved you, but since I have seen you again, I feel that I love you a thousand times more. Since I knew you, I worship you more and more every day; this proves the falsity of La Bruyère's maxim; which says that love springs up all at once. Every thing in nature has its growth in different degrees. Ah, I implore you, let me see some of your faults; be then less beautiful, less graceful, less tender, less good; especially be never tender, never weep: your tears deprive me of my reason, and change my blood into fire. Believe me, that it is not in my power to have a single thought which concerns you not, or an idea which is not subservient to you.

"Keep very quiet. Recover soon your health. Come to me, that at least before dying we may say, 'We were happy so many, many days!'

"Millions of kisses even for Fortuné, notwithstanding its naughtiness.*

BONAPARTE."

But this letter, full of tenderness and warmth, is not yet enough for the ardent lover; it does not express sufficiently

* Fortuné was that little peevish dog which, when Josephine was in prison, served as love-messenger between her and her children.

his longing, his love. The very next day, from the same quarters of Marmirolo, he writes something like a postscript to the missive of the previous day. He tells her that he has made an attack upon Mantua, but that a sudden fall of the waters of the lake had delayed his troops already embarked, and that this day he is going to try again in some other way; that the enemy a few days past had made a sortie and killed a few hundred men, but that they themselves, with considerable loss, had to retreat rapidly into the fortress, and that three Neapolitan regiments had entered Brescia. But between each of these sentences intervene some strong assurance of his love, some tender or flattering words; and finally, at the end of the letter, comes the principal object, the cause why it was written. The tender lover wanted some token from his beloved: it is not enough for him always to carry her portrait and her letters, he must also have a lock of her hair. He writes:

"I have lost my snuffbox; I pray you find me another, somewhat more flat, and pray have something pretty written upon it, with a lock of your hair. A thousand burning kisses, since you are so cold, love unbounded, and faithfulness beyond all proof."

Two days afterward he writes again from Marmirolo, at first hastily, a few words about the war, then he comes to the main point. He has been guilty, toward Josephine, of a want of politeness, and, with all the tenderness and humility of a lover, he asks forgiveness. Her pardon and her constant tardiness in answering his letters, are to him more weighty matters than all the battles and victories of his restless camp-life, and therefore he begins at once with a complaint at his separation from her.

"MARMIROLO, the 1st Thermidor, Year IV. (July 19, 1796.)

"For the last two days I am without letters from you. This remark I have repeated thirty times; you feel that

this for me is sad. You cannot, however, doubt of the tenderness and undivided solicitude with which you inspire me.

"We attacked Mantua yesterday. We opened upon it, from two batteries, a fire of shells and red-hot balls. The whole night the unfortunate city was burning. The spectacle was terrible and sublime. We have taken possession of numerous outworks, and we open the trenches to-night. To-morrow we make our headquarters at Castiglione, and think of passing the night there.

"I have received a courier from Paris. He brought two letters for you: I have read them. Though this action seems to me very simple, as you gave me permission so to do, yet, I fear, it will annoy you, and that troubles me exceedingly. I wanted at first to seal them over again; but, pshaw! that would have been horrible. If I am guilty, I beg your pardon. I swear to you I did it not through jealousy; no, certainly not; I have of my adored one too high an opinion to indulge in such a feeling. I wish you would once for all allow me to read your letters; then I should not have any twittings of conscience or fear.

"Achilles, the courier, has arrived from Milan; no letter from my adored one! Farewell, my sole happiness! When will you come, and be with me? I shall have to fetch you from Milan myself.

"A thousand kisses, burning as my heart, pure as yours!

"I have sent for the courier; he says he was at your residence, and that you had nothing to say, nothing to order! Fie! wicked, hateful, cruel tyrant!—pretty little monster! You laugh at my threats and my madness; ah, you know very well that if I could shut you up in my heart, I would keep you there a prisoner.

"Let me know that you are cheerful, right well, and loving!
BONAPARTE."

But Josephine seems not to have answered this letter as Napoleon desired. She knew that it was nothing but unfounded jealousy which had induced him to read the letters sent to her, and to punish him for this jealousy she forbade him to read her letters in the future.

But while she reproached him in a jesting manner, and punished him for this jealousy, she, herself, with all the inconsistency of a lover, fell into the same fault, and could not hide from him the jealous fears which the ladies from Brescia, especially the beautiful Madame de Te—, had created within her mind. Bonaparte answered this letter as general, lover, and husband; he gives an account of his war operations, submits to her will as a lover, and commands her as a husband to come to him in Brescia.

"CASTIGLIONE, the 4th Thermidor, Year IV. (July 22, 1796).

"The wants of the army require my presence in these parts; it is impossible for me to go so far away as Milan; it would require for that purpose five or six days, and during that time circumstances might arise which would make my presence here absolutely necessary.

"You assure me that your health is now good; consequently, I pray you to come to Brescia. At this moment I am sending Murat into the city to prepare you such a house as you wish.

"I believe that you can very well sleep in Cassano on the 6th, if you leave Milan late, so as to be in Brescia on the 7th, where the most tender of lovers awaits you. I am in despair that you can believe, my dear friend, that my heart can be drawn toward any one but yourself; it belongs to you by right of conquest, and will be enduring and everlasting. I do not understand why you speak of Madame de Te—. I trouble myself no more about her than any other woman in Brescia. Since it annoys you that I open your letters, the enclosed one will be the last that I

open; your letter did not reach me till after I had opened this.

"Farewell, my tender one; send me often your news. Break up at once and come to me, and be happy without disquietude; all is well, and my heart belongs to you for life.

"Be sure to return to the Adjutant Miollis the box of medallions which, as he writes, he has given you. There are so many babbling and bad tongues, that it is necessary to be always on one's guard.

"Health, love, and speedy arrival in Brescia!

"I have in Milan a carriage which is suited for city and country; use it on your journey. Bring your silver and a few necessary things. Travel by short stages, and during the cool of the morning and evening, so as not to weary you too much. The troops need only three days to reach Brescia, a distance of fourteen miles. I beg of you to pass the night of the 6th in Cassano; on the 7th I will come to meet you as far as possible.

"Farewell, my Josephine; a thousand tender kisses!

"BONAPARTE."

Josephine gladly obeyed the wishes of her husband, and exactly on the 7th Thermidor (July 25) she entered Brescia. Bonaparte had ridden an hour's distance to meet her, and, amid the shouts of the population, he led her in triumph into the house prepared for her reception.

Three days were allowed to the general to enjoy his happiness and Josephine's presence. On the 28th of July he received the intelligence that Wurmser was advancing, and that he was in Marmirolo. At once Bonaparte broke up from Brescia, to meet him and offer battle.

Brescia was no longer a dwelling-place for Josephine now that the enemy threatened it; she therefore accompanied her husband, and the effeminate creole, the tender

Parisian, accustomed to all the comforts of life, the lady surrounded by numerous attendants in Milan, saw herself at once obliged, as the true wife of a soldier, to share with her husband all the hardships, inconveniences, and dangers of a campaign.

The news of the advance of the Austrians became more and more precise. No sooner had Bonaparte arrived in Peschiera with his Josephine, than he learned that Montevaldo was attacked by the enemy. In great haste they pursued their journey; the next day they reached Verona, but Wurmser had been equally swift in his movements, and on the heights surrounding Verona were seen the light troops of Austria.

Even a serious skirmish at the outposts took place, and Josephine, against her will, had to be the witness of this horrible, cannibal murder, which we are pleased to call war.

Bonaparte, who had preceded his army, was forced to retreat from Verona, and went with Josephine to Castel Nuovo, where the majority of his troops were stationed. But it was a fearful journey, beset with dangers. Everywhere on the road lay the dying and the wounded who had remained behind after the different conflicts, and who with difficulty were crawling along to meet the army. Josephine's sensitive heart was painfully moved by the spectacle of these sufferings and these bleeding wounds. Napoleon noticed it on her pale cheeks and trembling lips, and in the tears which stood in her eyes. Besides which, a great battle was at hand, threatening her with new horrors. To guard her from them, Bonaparte made another sacrifice to his love, and resolved to part from her.

She was to return to Brescia, while Napoleon, with his army, would meet the foe. With a thousand assurances of love, and the most tender vows, he took leave of Josephine, and she mastered herself so as to repress her anxiety and timidity, and to appear collected and brave. With a smile

on her lip she bade him farewell, and began the journey, accompanied by a few well-armed horsemen, whom Bonaparte, in the most stringent terms, commanded not to leave his wife's carriage for an instant, and in case of attack to defend her with their lives.

At first the journey was attended with no danger, and Josephine's heart began to beat with less anxiety; she already believed herself in safety. Suddenly, from a neighboring coppice, there rushed out a division of the enemy's cavalry; already were distinctly heard the shouts and cries with which they dashed toward the advancing carriage. To oppose this vast number of assailants was not to be thought of; only the most rapid flight could save them.

The carriage was turned; the driver jumped upon the horses, and, in a mad gallop, onward it sped. To the swiftness of the horses Josephine owed her escape. She reached headquarters safely, and was received by Bonaparte with loud demonstrations of joy at her unexpected return.

But Josephine had not the strength to conceal the anxiety of her heart, her fears and alarms. These horrible scenes of war, the sight of the wounded, the dangers she had lately incurred, the fearful preparations for fresh murders and massacres—all this troubled her mind so violently that she lost at once all courage and composure. A nervous trembling agitated her whole frame, and, not being able to control her agony, she broke into loud weeping.

Bonaparte embraced her tenderly, and as he kissed the tears from her cheeks, he cried out, with a threatening flash in his eyes, "Wurmser will pay dearly for the tears he has caused!"*

It was, however, a fortunate accident that the enemy's cavalry had hindered Josephine from reaching Brescia. A quarter of an hour after her return to headquarters the

* Bonaparte's words.—"Mémorial de Ste. Helène," vol. i., p. 174.

news arrived that the Austrians had advanced into Brescia. Meanwhile Josephine had already regained all her courage and steadfastness; she declared herself ready to abide by her husband, to bear with him the dangers and the fatigues of the campaign; that she wished to be with him, as it behooved the wife of a soldier.

But Bonaparte felt that her company would cripple his courage and embarrass his movements. Josephine once more had to leave him, so that the tender lover might not disturb the keen commanding general, and that his head and not his heart might decide the necessary measures.

He persuaded Josephine to leave him, and to retire into one of the central cities of Italy. She acceded to his wishes, and travelled away toward Florence. But, to reach that city, it was necessary to pass Mantua, which the French were investing. Her road passed near the walls of the besieged city, and one of the balls, which were whizzing around the carriage, struck one of the soldiers of her escort and wounded him mortally. It was a dangerous, fearful journey—war's confusion everywhere, wild shouts, fleeing, complaining farmers, constant cries of distress, anxiety, and want.

But Josephine had armed her heart with great courage and resolution; she shrank from no danger, she overcame it all; she already had an undaunted confidence in her husband's destiny, and believed in the star of his prosperity.

And this star led her on happily through all dangers, and protected her throughout this reckless and daring journey. Through Bologna and Ferrara, she came at last to Lucca; there to rest a few days from her hardships and anxieties. There, in Lucca, she was to experience the proud satisfaction of being witness of the deep confidence which had struck root in the heart of the Italians, in reference to the success of the French commander-in-chief. Though it was well known that Wurmser, with a superior force, was advancing against General Bonaparte, and his hungry,

tattered troops, and that they were on the eve of a battle which, according to all appearances, promised to Napoleon a complete defeat, and to the Austrians a decisive victory, the town of Lucca was not afraid to give to the wife of Bonaparte a grand and public reception. The senate of Lucca received her with all the marks of distinction shown only to princesses; the senate came to her in official ceremony, and brought her as a gift of honor, in costly gold flasks, the produce of their land, the fine oil of Lucca.

Josephine received these marks of honor with that grace and amiability with which she won all hearts, and, with her enchanting smile, thanking the senators, she told them, with all the confidence of a lover, that her victorious husband would, for the magnificent hospitality thus shown her, manifest his gratitude to the town of Lucca by the prosperity and liberty which he was ready to conquer for Italy.

This confidence was shortly to be justified. No sooner had Josephine arrived in Florence, whither she had come from Lucca, than the news of the victory of the French army, commanded by her husband, reached there also.

Suddenly abandoning the siege of Mantua, Bonaparte had gathered together all his forces, and with them he dealt blow after blow upon the three divisions of the army corps of Wurmser, until he had completely defeated them. The battles of Lonato and Castiglione were the fresh trophies of his fame. On the 10th of August Bonaparte made his victorious entry into Brescia, which only twelve days before he had been suddenly obliged to abandon with his Josephine, to whom he had then been barely reunited, and was still luxuriating in the bliss of her presence.

Bonaparte had fulfilled his word: he had revenged Josephine, and Wurmser had indeed paid dearly for the tears which he had caused Josephine to shed!

But after these days of storm and danger, the two lovers

were to enjoy a few weeks of mutual happiness and of splendid triumphs.

Josephine had returned from Florence to Milan, and thither Bonaparte came also in the middle of August, to rest in her arms after his battles and victories.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BONAPARTE AND JOSEPHINE IN MILAN.

THE days of armistice which Bonaparte passed in Milan were accompanied by festivities, enjoyments, and triumphs of all kinds. All Milan and Lombardy streamed forth to present their homage to the deliverer of Italy and to his charming, gracious wife; to give feasts in their honor, to praise them in enthusiastic songs, to celebrate their fame in concerts, serenades, and illuminations.

The palace Serbelloni served Italy's deliverer once more as a residence, and it was well calculated for this on account of its vastness and elegance. This was one of the most beautiful buildings among the palaces of Milan. Over its massive lower structure, and its *rez-de-chaussée* of red granite, sparkling in the sun with its play of many colors, arose bold and steep its light and graceful *façade*. The interior of this beautiful palace of the Dukes of Serbelloni was adorned with all the splendors which sculpture and painting gathered into the palaces of the Italian nobility.

In those halls, whose roofs were richly decorated and gilded, and supported by white columns of marble, and whose walls were covered with those splendid and enormous mirrors which the republic of Venice alone then manufactured; and from whose tall windows hung down in long, heavy folds curtains of purple velvet, embroidered with