CHAPTER XXVII.

THE COURT OF MONTEBELLO.

On the 18th of April were finally signed, in Leoben, the preliminaries of peace between Austria and France, and which finally put an end to this cruel war. Austria was compelled to acknowledge herself defeated, for even the Archduke Charles, who had pushed forward from the Rhine with his army to oppose the conqueror of Wurmser and of Alvinzi, had not been able to arrest Bonaparte in his victorious career.

Bonaparte had publicly declared he would march toward Vienna, and dictate to the Emperor of Germany, in his very palace, terms of peace. He was at the point of carrying into execution this bold plan. Since the battle of Tagliamento, on the 16th of March, the army of the archduke was broken, and he could no longer prevent Bonaparte from marching with his army over Laybach and Trieste into Germany. On the 25th of March, Bonaparte entered into Klagenfurt; and now that he was but forty miles from the capital, the Austrian court began to tremble at the approach of this army of *sans-culottes* who, under the leadership of General Bonaparte, had been transformed into heroes. She therefore accepted the propositions of peace made by Bonaparte, and, as already said, its preliminaries were signed in Leoben.

Now Bonaparte could rest after such constant and bloody work, now he could again hasten to his Josephine, who was waiting for him in the palace of Serbelloni.

The whole city—all Lombardy—was with her, awaiting him. His journey from Leoben to Milan was a continuous triumph, which, however, reached its culminating point at his entrance into the city. Milan had adorned herself for this day as a bride to receive her hero. From every balcony

waved the united French and Italian standards, costly tapestries were hanging down, every window was occupied by beautiful women gayly attired, and who, with large bouquets of flowers and waving handkerchiefs, greeted the conqueror. All the dignitaries of the city went to meet him in processional pomp; from every tower sounded the welcome chimes, and the compact masses of the people in the streets and on the roofs of the houses filled the air with the jubilant shout: "Long live the deliverer of Italy! the conqueror of Austria!"

Josephine, surrounded by ladies of the highest aristocracy of Lombardy, received her husband in the Palace Serbelloni. With radiant smiles, and yet with tears in her eyes, she received him, her heart swelling with a lofty joy at this ovation to Bonaparte; and through the glorification of this victory he appeared to her more beautiful, more worthy of love, than ever before. On this day of his return from so many battles and victories her heart gave itself up with all its power, all its unreservedness and fulness, to this wondrous man who had won so many important battles, and who bowed before her alone with all the submissive humility of a conquered man! From this day she loved him with that warm, strong love which was to end only with her death.

Josephine had good reason to be happy on this day, for it brought her not only her husband, but also a new source of happiness, her son, her dear Eugene. Bonaparte had sent for him from Paris, and given him a commission of second lieutenant in the first regiment of hussars, and had also appointed him adjutant of the commanding general of the army of Italy, perhaps as much to give to Josephine a new proof of his affection as to attach Eugene to his person, for whom he felt the love of a father.

Near the returned general, Josephine, to her supreme delight, saw her dear son, from whom she had been separated so long; and Eugene, whom she had left in Paris a

mere boy, presented himself to her in Milan, in his officer's uniform, as a youth, with countenance beaming with joy and eyes full of lustre, ready to enter upon fame's pathway, on which his step-father, so brilliant a model, was walking before him. The maternal heart of Josephine felt both love and pride at the sight of this young man, so remarkable for his healthy appearance, and his youthful vigor and genius, and she thanked Bonaparte with redoubled love for the joyous surprise which his considerate affection had prepared for her.

Now began for Josephine and Bonaparte happy days, illumined by all the splendor of festivities, of fealty exhibited, of triumphs realized. After lingering a few days in Milan, Bonaparte, with his wife, the whole train of his friends, his adjutants and servants, removed to the pleasure-castle of Montebello, near Milan.

Here, amid rich natural scenery, in this large, imposing castle, which, built on the summit of a hill, mantled with olive-groves and vineyards, afforded on all sides a view of the surrounding, smiling plains of Lombardy—here Bonaparte wished to rest from the hardships and dangers of his last campaign; here, he wished to organize the great Italian republic which was then the object of his exertions, and whose iron crown he afterward coveted to place on his head. At Montebello he wished to enact new laws for Italy, create new institutions, reduce to silence, with threatening voice, the opposition of those who dared to oppose to the new law of liberty the old centennial rights of possession and of citizenship.

Italy was to be free, such was the will of her deliverer; and he took great care not to let any one suspect or read the secret thoughts which he kept hid behind the pompous proclamations of his authority. He therefore answered evasively and vaguely those who came to fathom his designs, and to become acquainted with his plans.

The Grand-duke of Tuscany sent to Montebello for this purpose, the Marquis Manfredini. He was instructed to ask General Bonaparte if it was his intention to destroy the grand-duchy of Tuscany, and to incorporate its territory into the great Italian republic. The marquis implored Bonaparte with persuasive, touching accents, to tell him what his plans were, and if he would allow Tuscany to subsist as an independent state.

Bonaparte, smiling, shrugged his shoulders: "Signor marquis," said he, "you remind me of that creditor who once asked the Cardinal de Rohan when he wished to pay him. The cardinal simply answered: 'My dear sir, do not be so curious.' If your grand-duke will keep quiet, he will suffer no injury."

Napoleon exhibited less friendliness and good-nature toward the republic of Venice, which had also sent her delegates to Montebello for the sake of reconciling the general, who had sworn vengeance against the republic, because a sort of Sicilian Vespers had been organized there against the French; and because, especially in Verona, and throughout the Venetian provinces, thousands of Frenchmen had been murdered by the revolted peasants, whom the fanatical priesthood had stirred to sedition.

Now, that Bonaparte had defeated the Grand-duke Charles, the hope of the rebels, Venice humbly sent her most distinguished sons to plead for forgiveness and indulgence, and to promise full reparation. But Napoleon received them with contempt and threatening anger, and to their humble petitions replied in a thundering voice, "I will be an Attila to Venice!"

Meanwhile the same general, who swore the ruin of Venice, showed himself conciliating and lenient toward Rome, and instead of being an Attila, he endeavored to be a preserver and a protector.

The Directory in Paris was not fully satisfied with the

peace which Bonaparte had concluded with the pope. They thought Napoleon had been too lenient with him; that he ought to have taken Rome from him, as he tore away Milan from the Emperor of Germany. The five rulers of France went so far as to make reproaches against Bonaparte for his leniency, and to require from him the downfall of the pope, and with him that of Catholicism.

But Bonaparte had the boldness to oppose these demands of the Directory, and to set up his will in defiance to their supreme authority.

He wrote to the Directory: "You say with reason that the Roman religion will long be the enemy of the republic; that is very true, but it is equally true that, on account of the great distance you are from the scene of events, you cannot measure the amount of difficulty there is in carrying out your orders.

"You wish to destroy the Catholic Church in a city where it has ruled so many years. Believe me, it is useless to burden ourselves with fruitless labor. We have already enough to do; to defeat our enemies on the field of battle, it is not necessary to arouse all Europe against us—even the heretics, through policy, would defend the cause of the Holy See. Are you fully convinced that France would calmly look on? France needs a religious worship: that which you propose cannot, on account of its simplicity, replace this one. Follow my advice: let the pope be pope! If you bury his earthly power, acknowledge at least his spiritual authority. Force him not to seek refuge at a foreign court, where by his mere presence it would gain an immense ascendency. Italy wants religion and the pope. If she is wounded in her faith, she will be hostile to us, while now she is peaceably inclined. I repeat, the present difficulties are too weighty, to add new ones. Who can fathom the future? Who can assume the responsibility of such a deed as the one you propose? I shall not, therefore, do

it, since you leave it with me to inform you on the subject. I consider it dangerous to conjure up fanaticism. The Catholic religion is that of the arts, and the arts are absolutely necessary to Italy's welfare. Be sure that if you destroy the former, you give a fatal blow to the latter, and that the Italians are good accountants. Ponder well these matters, then, and be sure that Catholicism has ceased to exist in France. Are you well satisfied that no one there will go back to it?"

While in Montebello, though the sword had been laid aside, Bonaparte was still busy with war affairs, and the quarrels of princes and nations. Josephine at the same time passed there the honored life of a mighty princess, whose favors and intercessions the great and the powerful of earth endeavored to obtain by every conceivable means. The ladies of the aristocracy of Milan were eager to pay their homage to the wife of the deliverer; the courts of Italy, as well as other parts of Europe, sent ambassadors to General Bonaparte; and these gentlemen were naturally zealous in offering their incense to Josephine, in surrounding her with courtly and flattering attentions. The Marquis de Gallo, the ambassador of Spain at the court of Verona, came with the Austrian ambassador, the Count von Meerfeld, to Montebello, to enter into negotiations about the peace which was to form the precious key-stone to the preliminaries of Leoben; and these two gentlemen, who opposed to the plain manners of Bonaparte's companions-in-arms the very essence of refined, polished, and witty courtiers, rivalled each other in showing to Josephine their highest consideration by their festivities and amusements; to win her favor and interest through the most complacent and considerate attention to all her views, wishes, and plans.

Josephine received all this homage with the enchanting grace and smiling quietude of a woman who, without exalta-

tion or pride, feels no surprise at any flattery or homage, but kindly and thankfully accepts what is due to her. Among this brilliant Italian aristocracy which surrounded her—among the ambassadors of the powers who sued not so much for alliance with France as for General Bonaparte's favor—among the generals and superior officers who had shared with Bonaparte the dangers of the battle-field and the laurels of victory—among learned men, artists, and poets, whom Bonaparte had often invited to Montebello—among so brilliant, so wealthy, so superior, so intelligent a society, Josephine shone as the resplendent sun around which all these planets moved, and from which they all received life, light, and happiness. She received the ambassadors of sovereigns with the dignity and affability of a princess; she conversed with the most distinguished ladies in cheerful simplicity, and with the unaffected joyousness and harmless innocency of a young maiden; she conversed with men of learning and artists in profound and serious tones, about their labors, their efforts, and success; she allowed the generals to relate the momentous events of the late great battles, and her eye shone with deeper pride and pleasure when from the mouth of the brave she heard the enthusiastic praise of her husband.

Then her keen looks would be directed toward Bonaparte, who perchance stood in a window recess, engaged in some grave, solemn conversation with an eminent ambassador; her eyes again would glance from her husband to her son, to this young officer of seventeen years, who now laughed, jested, and played, as a boy, and then with respectful attention listened to the conversation of the generals, and whose countenance beamed with inspiration as they spoke to him of the mighty deeds of war and the plans of battle of his step-father, whom Eugene loved with the affection of a son, and the enthusiasm of a disciple who looks up to and reveres his master.

Yes, Josephine was happy in these days of Montebello. The past, with its sad memories, its deceptions and errors, had sunk behind her, and a luminous future sent its rays upon her at the side of the man whom jubilant Italy proclaimed "her deliverer," and whom Josephine's joyous heart acknowledged to be her hero, her beloved. For now she loved him truly, not with that love of fifteen years past, with the marmoreal pulse, of which Bonaparte had spoken to her in his letters, but with all the depth and glow of which a woman's heart is capable, with all the passion and jealousy of which the heart of a creole alone is susceptible.

Happy, sunny days of Montebello! days full of love, of poetry, of beauty, of happiness!—full of the first, genial, undisturbed, mutual communion!—days of the first triumphs, of the first homage, of the first dawn of a brilliant future! Never could the memory of those days fade away from Josephine's heart; never could the empress, in the long series of her triumphs and rejoicings, point to an hour like one of those she had, as the wife of the general, enjoyed at Montebello!

Every day brought new festivities, new joys, new receptions: balls, official banquets, select friendly dinners, came by turns; in brilliant *soirées*, they received the aristocracy of Lombardy, who, with ever-growing zeal, struggled for the honor of being received at the court of Montebello, and to see the doors of the drawing-room of the wife of General Bonaparte open to them. Sometimes parties were made up for a chase, of which Berthier acted as master, and who was not a whit behind in organizing hunting-parties in the style of those of the former court of Versailles, where he once had acted as page.

At times, in the warm days of May, the whole company went out together on the large and splendid piazza which ran along the castle, on the garden side, and which was supported by slender marble columns, and whose roof, made of

thin wire-work, was thickly shaded by the foliage of the vine, the ivy, and the delicate leaves of the passion-flower. Here, resting on the marble settees, one listened in blessed happiness to the music of bands secreted in some myrtle-grove and playing military symphonies or patriotic melodies. Then, as the evening faded away, when the court of Montebello, as the Italians now called the residence of the general of the republic, had no brilliant reception, they gathered in the drawing-room, where Josephine, with all the affability of a lady from the great world, received her guests, and with all the modesty and grace of a simple housewife served herself the tea.

These quiet social evenings in the little drawing-room of Josephine, away from excitement, were among Bonaparte's happiest moments; there, for a few hours at least, he forgot the mighty cares and schemes which occupied his mind, and abandoned himself to the joys of society, and to a cheerful intercourse with his family and friends. In these quiet evenings Josephine exerted all the art and refinement of her great social nature to render Bonaparte cheerful and to amuse him. She sometimes organized a party of *vingt-et-un*, and Bonaparte with his cards was as eager for the victory as in days past he had been with his soldiers. Very often, when success did not favor him, and his cards were not such as suited him, the great general would condescend to correct fate (*de corriger la fortune*); and he was much delighted when in his expertness he succeeded, and, thanks to his correction of fate, obtained the victory over his playmates. When the *parti* was ended, they went out on the terrace to enjoy the balmy air and refreshing coolness of the evening, and to take delight in witnessing the enchanting spectacle afforded by the thousands of little stars with which the fire-flies illumined the darkness of the summer night and encircled the lake as with a coronet of emeralds.

When they grew tired of this, they returned to the

drawing-room to listen to Josephine's fine, full, soul-like voice singing the songs of her island-home, or else to find amusement in the recital of fairy tales and marvellous stories. None understood this last accomplishment better than Bonaparte; and it required only the gracious request, the lovely smiles of his Josephine, to convert the general into one of those *improvisatores* who with their stories, more resembling a dramatic representation than a narrative, could exalt the Italian mind into ecstasy, and be ever sure to attract an attentive audience.

Bonaparte understood the art of holding his audience in suspense, and keeping them in breathless attention, quite as well as an improvisator of the Place of St. Mark or of Toledo Street. His stories were always full of the highest dramatic action and thrilling effect; and it was his greatest triumph when he saw his hearers turn pale, and when Josephine, shuddering, clung anxiously to him, as if seeking from the soldier's hand protection against the fearful ghosts he had evoked.

After the marvellous stories came grave scientific conversations with men of learning, whom Bonaparte had invited for the sake of deriving from their intercourse both interest and instruction. Among these were the renowned mathematicians Maria Fontana, Monge, and Berthelet; and the famous astronomer Oriani, whom Bonaparte, through a very flattering autographic note, had invited to Montebello.

But Oriani, little accustomed to society and to conversation with any one but learned men, was very reluctant to come to Montebello, and would gladly have avoided it had he not been afraid of exciting the wrath of the great warrior. Bonaparte, surrounded by his generals, his staff-officers and adjutants, was in the large and splendidly-illumined drawing-room when Oriani made his appearance.

The *savant*, timid and embarrassed, remained near the door, and dared not advance a single step farther on this

brilliant floor, where the lights of the chandeliers were reflected, and which filled the *savant* with more bewilderment than the star-bespangled firmament.

But Bonaparte's keen eye understood at once his newly-arrived guest; he advanced eagerly toward him, and as Oriani, stammering and embarrassed, was endeavoring to say something, but grew silent in the midst of his speech, the former smilingly asked:

"What troubles you so much? You are among your friends; we honor science, and I willingly bow to it."

"Ah, general," sighed Oriani, sorrowfully, "this magnificence dazzles me."

Bonaparte shrugged his shoulders. "What!" said he, looking around with a contemptuous glance on the mirrors and rich tapestries which adorned the walls, and on the glittering chandeliers, the embroidered uniforms of the generals, and the costly toilets of the ladies—"what, do you call this magnificence? Can these miserable splendors blind the man who every night contemplates the far more lofty and impressive glories of the skies?"

The *savant*, recalled by these warning words of Bonaparte to the consciousness of his own dignity, soon recovered his quiet demeanor and conversed long and gladly with the general, who never grew tired of putting questions to him, and of gaining from him information.

But there were also cloudy moments in Montebello, oftentimes overshadowing the serene sunshine. They came from France—from Rome—and there were even some which had their origin in Montebello. These clouds which were formed in Montebello, and which caused slight showers of tears with Josephine, and little tempests of anger with Bonaparte, were certainly not of a very serious nature; they owed their origin to a lapdog, and this pet dog was Fortuné, the same which in days gone by had been the letter-carrier between Josephine and her children when she

was in the Carmelite prison. Notwithstanding Fortuné had become old and peevish, Josephine and her children loved him for the sake of past reminiscences, while Bonaparte simply hated and detested him. Bonaparte had, however, perhaps without wishing it, erected for him an abiding monument in the "Mémorial de Ste. Hélène," where he gave a report of his hostilities with the lapdog Fortuné, along with those of his wars with the European powers.

"I was then," says Bonaparte, in his "Mémorial," "the ruler of Italy, but in my own house I had nothing to say; there Josephine's will was supreme. There was an ugly, growling personage, at war with everybody, whose bad qualities made him intolerable to me and to others, yet he was an important individual, who was by Josephine and her children flattered from morning till evening, and who was the object of their most delicate attentions. Fortuné, to me a hateful beast, was a horrible lapdog, with crooked legs and deformed body, without the slightest beauty or kindness, but of a most malicious disposition. I would gladly have killed him, and often prayed Heaven to deliver me from him. This happiness was, however, reserved for me in Montebello. A bull-dog which belonged to my cook became tired of his churlish incivilities, and not having the same considerateness as the rest of the inmates of the palace of Montebello, he attacked the detestable animal so violently as to kill him on the spot. Then began tears and sighs in the house. Josephine could not be comforted; Eugene wept, and I myself against my will put on a sorrowful countenance. But I gained nothing by this fortunate accident. After Fortuné had been stuffed, sung in sonnets, and made immortal by funeral discourses, he was replaced by two setters, male and female. Then came the amiable displays and the bickerings of this love-couple, and afterward their progeny. So that I knew not what to do.

"Soon after this, as I was walking in the park, I noticed

my cook, who, as soon as he saw me, disappeared on a side-path.

"'Are you afraid of me?' said I.

"'Ah, general,' replied he, timidly, 'you have good reason to be angry with me.'

"'I? What have you done?'

"'My unfortunate dog has indeed killed poor little Fortuné.'

"'Where is your dog?'

"'He is in the city. God have mercy on us! he dares not come here.'

"'Listen, my good fellow' (but I spoke in a low voice, for fear of being heard), 'let your dog run about just as he likes—perhaps he may deliver me from the others.'

"But this happiness was not in reserve for me. Josephine, not satisfied with dogs, soon after this procured a cat, which brought me into a state of despair; for this detestable animal was the most vicious of its race. . . . ."*

The strifes with Fortuné, with the setters, and with the cat, troubled Bonaparte less than the intrigues which his enemies in Italy, as well as in France, stirred up against him, and through them endeavored to destroy him.

In Italy it was the priests who had sworn deadly enmity to Bonaparte, and who, with all the weapons which the arsenal of the Church, fanaticism, and superstition, furnished them, fought against the general who had dared to break the power of the pope, and to restrict within narrower limits the rule of the priests. It was these priests who continually made the most furious opposition to the ascendency which Bonaparte had won over the Italian mind, and sought constantly to rouse up, within the minds of the people, opposition to him.

One day, Marmont announced that a certain Abbé Sergi

* "Mémorial de Ste. Hélène."

was exciting the peasants against the French, and especially against Bonaparte; that he was preaching sedition and rebellion in Christ's name, and was showing to the ignorant laborers a letter, which he had received from Christ, in which it was declared that General Bonaparte was an atheist and a heretic, whom one ought to destroy and drive away from Italy's sacred soil.

Bonaparte at once ordered Marmont to arrest this Abbé Sergi, who lived in Poncino, and to bring him to Montebello. His orders were followed, and, after a few days, the captive abbé was brought before the general. He seemed cheerful, unaffected, and assumed the appearance of being unconscious of guilt.

"Are you the man," exclaimed Bonaparte, "to whom Christ writes letters from Paradise?"

"Ah! signor general, you are joking," replied the abbé, smiling—but one of Bonaparte's angry looks fell upon his broad, well-fed face, and forced the priest into silence.

"I am not joking," answered Bonaparte, angrily; "you, however, are joking with the peasants, since you are telling these poor, superstitious men that you are in correspondence with Christ."

"Alas! signor general," sighed the abbé, with contrite mien, "I wanted to do something in the defence of our cause, and what can a poor clergyman do?—he has no weapons—"

"Mind that in future you procure other weapons!" interrupted Bonaparte, vehemently. "That will be better for you than to dare use the Deity for your schemes of wickedness. I order you to receive no more letters from Paradise, not even from Christ. Correspond with your equals, and be on your guard, or you will soon find that I can punish the disobedient!"

The abbé bowed penitently, and with tears in his eyes.

Bonaparte turned his back to him, and ordered him to be taken to Poncino.

From that day, however, much as he hated General Bonaparte, the Abbé Sergi received no more letters from Paradise.

Nevertheless, the letters of the Abbé Sergi were not those which gave the most solicitude to Bonaparte; much worse were those he received from Paris, which gave him an account of the persevering intrigues of his enemies, and the malicious slanders that were circulated against him by the Directory, who were envious of his power and superiority, and which mischievous and poisonous calumnies were re-echoed in the newspapers.

These insidious attacks of the journals, more than any thing else, excited Bonaparte's vehement anger. The hero who, on the battle-field, trembled not before the balls which whizzed about his head, had a violent dislike to those insect-stings of critics who, like wasps humming round about the laurel-wreath on his brow, ever found between the leaves of his fame some place where with their stings they could wound him, and who was as sensitive as a young blameless maiden would be against the wasp-stings of slander.

This irritable sensitiveness led him to consider those detestable attacks of the journals worth a threatening denunciation to the Directory.

"Citizen-directors," wrote he to them, "I owe you an open confession; my heart is depressed and filled with horror through the constant attacks of the Parisian journals. Sold to the enemies of the republic, they rush upon me, who am boldly defending the republic. 'I am keeping the plunder,' whilst I am defeating them; 'I affect despotism,' whilst I speak only as general-in-chief; 'I assume supreme power,' and yet I submit to law! Every thing I do is turned to a crime against me; the poison streams over me.

"Were any one in Italy to dare give utterance to the

one-thousandth part of those calumnies, I would impose upon him an awful silence!

"In Paris, this is allowed to go on unpunished, and your tolerance is an encouragement. The Directory is thus producing the impression that it is opposed to me. If the directors suspect me, let them say so, and I will justify myself. If they are convinced of my uprightness, let them defend me.

"In this circle of argument, I include the Directory with me, and cannot go beyond it. My desire is, to be useful to my country. Must I, for reward, drink the cup of poison?

"I can no longer be satisfied with empty, evasive arguments; and if justice is not done to me, then I must take it myself. Therefore, I am yours. Salutation and brotherly love.

BONAPARTE."

But all these vexations, hostilities, and calumnies, were, however, as already said, mere clouds, which now and then obscured the bright sunshine at the court of Montebello. At a smile or a loving word from Josephine, they flew away rapidly, and the sunshine again in all its splendor, the pleasures, feasts, and joys, continued in their undisturbed course. All Italy did homage to the conqueror, and it was therefore very natural that sculptors and painters should endeavor to draw some advantage from this enthusiasm for its deliverer, and that they should endeavor to represent to the admirers of Bonaparte his peculiar form and countenance.

But Bonaparte did not like to have his portrait painted. The staring, watchful gaze of an artist was an annoyance to him; it made him restless and anxious, as if he feared that the scrutinizing look at his face might read the secrets of his soul. Yet at Josephine's tender and pressing request he had consented to its being taken by a young painter, Le Gros, whose distinguished talent had been brought to his notice.

Le Gros came therefore to Montebello, happy in the thought that he could immortalize himself through a successful portrait of the hero whom he honored with all the enthusiasm of a young heart. But he waited in vain three days for Bonaparte to give him a sitting. The general had not one instant to spare for the unfortunate young artist.

At last, at Josephine's pressing request, Bonaparte consented on the fourth day to sit for him one-quarter of an hour after breakfast. Le Gros came therefore delighted, at the time appointed, into the cabinet of Josephine, and had his easel ready, awaiting the moment when Bonaparte would sit in the arm-chair opposite. But, alas! the painter's hopes were not to be realized. The general could not bring himself to sit in that arm-chair, doing nothing but keeping his head quiet, so that the painter might copy his features. He had no sooner been seated, than he sprang up suddenly, and declared it was quite impossible to endure such martyrdom.

Le Gros dared not repeat his request, but with tears in his eyes gathered up his painting-materials. Josephine smiled. "I see very well," said she, "that I must have recourse to some extraordinary means to save for me and for posterity a portrait of the hero of Arcola."

She sat down in the arm-chair, and beckoned to Le Gros to have his easel in readiness. Then with a tender voice she called Napoleon to her, and opening both arms she drew him down on her lap, and in this way she induced him to sit down quietly a few moments and allow the painter the sight of his face, thus enabling him to sketch the portrait.*

At the end of this peculiar sitting, Bonaparte smilingly promised that he would next day grant the painter a second one, provided Josephine would again have the "extraordinary means" ready. She consented, and for four days in succession Le Gros was enabled to sit before him a quarter of an hour, and throw upon his canvas the features of the general, while he quietly sat on Josephine's lap.

* "Mémoires et Souvenirs du Comte Lavalette," vol. i., p. 168.

This picture, which Le Gros thus painted, thanks to the sweet *ruse* of Josephine, and which was scattered throughout Europe in copperplate prints, represented Bonaparte, with uncovered head, holding a standard in his hand, and with his face turned toward his soldiers, calling on them to follow him as he dashed on the bridge of Arcola, amid a shower of Austrian balls.

It is a beautiful, imposing picture, and contemporaries praised it for its likeness to the hero, but no one could believe that this pale, grave countenance, these gloomy eyes, and earnest lips, which seemed incapable of a smile, were those of Bonaparte as he sat on the lap of his beloved Josephine when Le Gros was painting it.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE PEACE OF CAMPO FORMIO.

After three months the time drew nigh when the peace negotiations were to reach a final conclusion, and when it was to be decided if the Emperor of Germany would make peace with the French republic or if he would renew the war.

For three months had the negotiations continued in Montebello—three months of feasts, pleasures, and receptions. To the official and public rejoicings had been also added domestic joys. Madame Letitia came to Italy to warm her happy, proud mother's heart at the triumphs of her darling son; and she brought with her her daughter Pauline, while