

her to his breast and embraced her several times; but Josephine, overcome by excitement, had fainted. I hastened to ring for assistance. The emperor, to avoid the renewal of a painful scene, which it was not in his power to prevent, placed the empress in my arms as soon as he perceived her senses return, and ordered me not to leave her, and then he hurried away through the halls of the first story, at whose gate his carriage was waiting. Josephine became immediately conscious of the emperor's absence; her tears and sobs redoubled. Her women, who had now entered, laid her on a sofa, and busied themselves with tender solicitude to bring her relief. In her bewilderment she had seized my hands, and urgently entreated me to tell the emperor not to forget her, and to assure him of her devotedness, which would outlast every trial. I had to promise her that at my arrival in Trianon I would wait upon the emperor and see that he would write to her. It caused her pain to see me leave, as if my departure tore away the last bond which united her to the emperor. I left her, deeply affected by so true a sorrow and by so sincere a devotion. During the whole journey I was deeply moved, and could not but bewail the merciless political considerations which tore violently apart the bonds of so faithful an affection for the sake of contracting a new union, which, after all, contained but uncertain chances.

"In Trianon I told the emperor all that had happened since his departure, and I conveyed to him the message intrusted to me by the empress. The emperor was still suffering from the emotions caused by this farewell scene. He spoke warmly of Josephine's qualities, of the depth and sincerity of the sentiments she cherished for him; he looked upon her as a devoted friend, and, in fact, he has ever maintained for her a heart-felt affection. The very same evening he sent her a letter to console her in her solitude. When he learned that she was sad and wept much, he wrote to her

again, complained tenderly of her want of courage, and told her how deeply this troubled him."\*

It is true Josephine's sorrow was bitter, and the first night of solitude in Malmaison was especially distressing and horrible. But even in these hours of painful struggle the empress maintained her gentleness and mildness of character. Mademoiselle d'Avrillon, one of the ladies in waiting, has given her testimony to that effect:

"I was with the empress during the greater part of the night," writes she; "sleep was impossible, and time passed away in conversation. The empress was moved to the very depth of her heart; it is true, she complained of her fate, but in expressions so gentle, in so resigned a manner, that tears would come to her eyes. There was no bitterness in her words, not even during this first night when the blow which destroyed her, had fallen upon her; she spoke of the emperor with the same love, with the same respect, as she had always done. Her grief was most acute: she suffered as a wife, as a mother, and with all the wounded sensitiveness of a woman, but she endured her affliction with courage, and remained unchanged in gentleness, love, and goodness."†

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

### THE DIVORCED.

JOSEPHINE had accepted her fate, and, descending from the imperial throne whose ornament she had long been, retired into the solitude and quietness of private life.

\* Meneval, "Napoléon et Marie Louise.—Souvenirs Historiques," vol. i., pp. 230-232.

† Avrillon, "Mémoires," vol. ii., p. 166.

But the love and admiration of the French nation followed the empress to Malmaison, where she had retreated from the world, and where the regard and friendship, if not the love of Napoleon himself, endeavored to alleviate the sufferings of her solitude. During the first days after her divorce, the road from Paris to Malmaison presented as animated a scene of equipages as in days gone by, when the emperor resided there with his wife. All those whose position justified it, hastened to Malmaison to pay their respects to Josephine, and through the expressions of their sympathy to soften the asperities of her sorrow. Doubtless many came also through curiosity, to observe how the empress, once so much honored, endured the humiliation of her present situation. Others, believing they would exhibit their devotedness to the emperor if they should follow their master's example, abandoned the empress, as he had done, and took no further notice of her.

But the emperor soon undeceived the latter, manifesting his dissatisfaction by his cold demeanor and repelling indifference toward them, whilst he loudly praised all those who had exercised their gratitude by visiting Malmaison, and in expressing their devotedness to the empress.

He himself went beyond his whole court in showing attention and respect to Josephine. The very next day after their separation, the emperor went to Malmaison to visit her, and to take with her a long walk through the park. During the following days he came again, and once invited her and the ladies of her new court to a dinner in Trianon.

Josephine might have imagined that nothing had been altered in her situation, and that she was still Napoleon's wife. But there were wanting in their intercourse those little, inexpressible shades of confidence which her exquisite tact and her instinctive feelings felt yet more deeply than the more important and visible changes.

When Napoleon came or went, he no longer embraced her, but merely pressed her hand in a friendly manner, and often called her "madame" and "you;" he was more formal, more polite to her than he had ever been before.

And then his daily visits ceased; in their place came his letters, it is true, but they were only the letters of a friend, who tried to comfort her in her misfortune, but took no sympathetic interest in her distress.

Soon these letters became more rare, and when they did come they were shorter. The emperor had to busy himself with other matters than with the solitary, rejected woman in Malmaison; he had now to occupy his thoughts with his young and beautiful bride—with Maria Louisa, the daughter of the Emperor of Austria, who was soon to enter Paris as the wife of Napoleon, the Emperor of France.

Bitter and painful indeed were those first days of resignation for Josephine; harsh and unsparing were the conflicts she had to fight with her own heart, before its wounds could be closed, and its pains and its humiliations cease to torment her!

But Josephine had a brave heart, a strong will, and a resolute determination to control herself. She conquered herself into rest and resignation; she did not wish that the emperor, the happy bridegroom, should ever hear of her red, weeping eyes, of her lamentations and sighs; she did not wish that, in the golden cup which the husband of the emperor's young daughter was drinking in the full joyousness of a conqueror, her tears should commingle therein as drops of gall.

She controlled herself so far as to be able with smiling calmness to have related to her how Paris was celebrating the new marriage festivities, how the new Empress of the French was everywhere received with enthusiasm. She was even able to inquire, with an expression of friendly sym-

pathy, after Maria Louisa, the young wife of sixteen, who had taken the place of the woman of forty-eight, and from whom Josephine, in the sincerity of her love, required but one thing, namely, to make Napoleon happy.

When she was told that Napoleon loved Maria Louisa with all the passion of a fiery lover, Josephine conquered herself so as to smile and thank God that she had accepted her sacrifice and thus secured Napoleon's happiness.

But the emperor, however much he might be enamored of his young wife, never forgot the bride of the past, the beloved one of his youth, of whom he had been not only captivated, but whom he had loved from the very depths of his soul. He surrounded her, though from a distance, with attentions and tokens of affection; he would often write to her; and at times, when his heart was burdened and full of cares, he would come to Malmaison, and visit this woman who understood how to read in his face the thoughts of his heart, this woman whose soft, gracious, and amiable disposition—even as a tranquillizing and invigorating breeze after a sultry day—could quiet his excited soul; to this woman he came for refreshment, for a little repose, and sweet communion.

It is true those visits of the emperor to his divorced wife were made secretly and privately, for his second wife was jealous of the affection which Napoleon still retained for Josephine; she listened with gloomy attention to the descriptions which were made to her of the amiableness, of the unwithered beauty of Josephine; and one day, after hearing that the emperor had visited her in Malmaison, Maria Louisa broke out into tears, and complained bitterly of this mortification caused by her husband.

Napoleon had to spare this jealous disposition of his young wife, for Maria Louisa was now in that situation which France and its emperor had expected and hoped from this marriage; she was approaching the time when the ob-

ject for which Napoleon had married her was to be accomplished, when she was to give to France and the Bonaparte dynasty a legitimate heir. It was necessary, therefore, to be cautious with the young empress, and, on account of her interesting situation, it was expedient to avoid the gloomy sulkiness of jealousy.

By the emperor's orders, and under pain of the punishment of his wrath, no one dared speak to Maria Louisa of the divorced empress, and Napoleon avoided designedly to give her an occasion of complaint. He went no longer to Malmaison; he even ceased corresponding with his former wife.

Only once during this period he had not been able to resist the longing of visiting Josephine, who, as he had heard, was sick. The emperor, accompanied only by one horseman, rode from Trianon to Malmaison. At the back gate of the garden he dismounted from his horse, and, without being announced, walked through the park to the castle. No one had seen him, and he was about passing from the front-room into the cabinet of the empress by a side-door, when the folding-doors leading from this front-room into the cabinet opened, and Spontini walked out.

Napoleon, agitated and vexed at having been surprised, advanced with imperious mien toward the renowned *maestro*, who was quietly approaching him.

"What are you doing here, sir?" cried Napoleon, with choleric impatience.

Spontini, however, returned the emperor's haughty look, and, measuring him with a deep, flaming glance, asked, with a lofty assurance: "Sire, what are you doing here?"

The emperor answered not—a terrible glance fell upon the bold *maestro*, without, however, annihilating him: then Napoleon entered into Josephine's cabinet, and Spontini walked away slowly and with uplifted head.

Spontini, the famous composer of the "Vestals," whose

score he had dedicated to the Empress Josephine, remained after her divorce a true and devoted admirer of the empress; and in Malmaison, as well as in the castle of Navarra, he showed himself as faithful, as ready to serve, as submissive, as he had once been in the Tuileries, or at St. Cloud, in the days of Josephine's glory. He often passed whole weeks in Navarra, and even undertook to teach the ladies and gentlemen of the court the choruses of the "Vestals," which the empress so much liked.

Josephine had, therefore, for the renowned *maestro* a heart-felt friendship, and she took pleasure in boasting of the gratitude and loyalty of Spontini, in contrast with the sad experiences she had made of man's ingratitude.\*

The emperor, as already said, avoided to trouble his young wife by exciting her jealousy; and though he did not visit Malmaison, though for a time he did not write to Josephine, yet he was acquainted with the most minute details of her life, and with all the little events of her home; and he took care that around her every thing was done according to the strictest rules of etiquette, and that she was surrounded by the same splendor and the same ceremonies as when she was empress.

At last the moment had come which was to give to Josephine her most sacred and glorious reward. The cannon of the Invalides, with their one hundred and one thunders, announced that Maria Louisa had given birth to a son, and Prince Eugene was the first who brought this news to his mother in Navarra.

Josephine's countenance beamed with satisfaction and joy when she learned from the lips of her son this news of the birth of the King of Rome; she called her whole court together to communicate herself this news to the ladies and gentlemen, and to have them listen to the descriptions which

\* "Mémoires sur l'Impératrice Joséphine," par Mlle. Ducrest," vol. i., p. 287.

Eugene, with all heartiness, was making of the scenes which had taken place in the imperial family circle during the mysterious hours of suspense and expectation.

But when Eugene repeated the words of Napoleon's message which he sent through him to Josephine, her countenance was illumined with joy and satisfaction, and tears started from her eyes—tears of purest joy, of most sacred love!

Napoleon had said: "Eugene, go to your mother; tell her that I am convinced no one will be more pleased with my happiness than she. I would have written to her, but I should have had to give up the pleasure of gazing at my son. I part from him only to attend to inexorable duties. But this evening I will accomplish the most agreeable of all duties—I will write to Josephine."\*

The emperor kept his word. The same evening there came to Malmaison an imperial page, with an autograph letter from Napoleon to Josephine. The empress rewarded this messenger of glad tidings with a costly diamond-pin, and then she called her ladies together, to show them the letter which had brought so much happiness to her heart, and which also had obscured her eyes with tears.

It was an autograph letter of Napoleon; it contained six or eight lines, written with a rapid hand; the pen, too hastily filled, had dropped large blots of ink on the paper. In these lines Napoleon announced to Josephine the birth of the King of Rome, and concluded with these words: "This child, in concert with our Eugene, will secure the happiness of France, and mine also."

These last words were to Josephine full of delight. "Is it, then, possible," exclaimed she, joyously, "to be more amiable and more tender, thus to sweeten what this moment might have of bitterness if I did not love the emperor so

\* Ducrest, vol. i., p. 236.

much? To place my son alongside of his is an act worthy of the man who, when he will, can be the most enchanting of men." \*

And this child, for which so much suffering had been endured, for which she had offered her own life in sacrifice, was by Josephine loved even as if it were her own. She was always asking news from the little King of Rome, and no deeper joy could be brought to her heart than to speak to her of the amiableness, the beauty, the liveliness of this little prince, who appeared to her as the visible reward of the sacrifice which she had made to God and to the emperor.

One intense, craving wish did Josephine cherish during all these years—she longed to see Napoleon's son; she longed to press to her heart this child who was making her former husband so happy, and on which rested all the hopes of France.

Finally Napoleon granted her desire. Privately, and in all secrecy, for Maria Louisa's jealousy was ever on the watch, and she would never have consented to allow her son to go to her rival; without pomp, without suite, the emperor took a drive with the little three-year-old King of Rome to the pleasure-castle of Bagatelle, whither he had invited the Empress Josephine through his trusty chamberlain Constant.

Josephine herself has described her interview with the little King of Rome in a very touching and affecting letter which she addressed the next day to the emperor, and which contains full and interesting details of the brief interview she had with the son of Maria Louisa. We cannot, therefore, abridge this letter, nor deny ourselves the pleasure of transcribing it:

"Sire, although deeply moved by our interview of yesterday, and preoccupied with the beautiful and lovely child

\* Ducrest, vol. i., p. 238.

you brought me, penetrated with gratitude for the step taken by you for my sake, and whose unpleasant consequences, I may well imagine, could fall only upon you; I felt the most pressing desire to converse with you, to assure you of my joy, which was too great to be at once exhibited in a suitable manner. You, who to meet my wishes exposed yourself to the danger of having your peace disturbed, will fully understand why I thus long to acknowledge to you all the happiness your inestimable favor has produced within me.

"Truly, it was not out of mere curiosity that I wished to see the King of Rome; his face was not unknown to me, for I had seen striking portraits of him. Sire, I wanted to examine the expression of his features, listen to the tone of his voice, which is so much like yours; I wanted to see you—how you would caress the child, and then I longed also to return to him the caresses which my son Eugene received from you. If I recall to your remembrance how dear my son was once to you, it is that you should not be surprised at the partiality which I cherish for the son of another, for it is your son, and you will find neither insincerity nor exaggeration in feelings which you fully appreciate, since you yourself have nurtured similar ones.

"The moment I saw you enter with the little Napoleon in your hand was undoubtedly one of the happiest of my eventful life. That moment surpassed all the preceding ones, for never have I received from you a stronger proof of your affection to me. It was no passionate love which induced you to fulfil my wishes, but it was a sincere esteem and affection, and these feelings are unchangeable, and this thought completes my happiness.

"It was not without trembling that I thought of the dissolution of our marriage-ties, for it was reasonable for me to apprehend that a young, beautiful wife, endowed also with the most enviable gifts, would soon make you for-

get one who lacks all these advantages, and who then would be far away from you. When I called to mind all the amiable qualities possessed by Maria Louisa, I could not but tremble at the thought that I should soon be indifferent to you, but surely I was then ignoring the loftiness and generosity of your soul, which still preserves the memory of its extraordinary devotedness, and of its tenderness toward me, a devotedness and tenderness whose superabundance was proportioned to those eminent qualities which have surprised Europe, and which cause you to be admired by all those who come near you, and which even constrain your enemies to render you justice!

"Yes, I acknowledge to you, sire, you have once more found the means of astonishing me, and to fill me with admiration, accustomed as I am to admire you; and your whole conduct, so well suited to my position, the solicitude with which you surround me, and finally the step you took yesterday in my behalf, prove to me that you have far surpassed all the favorable and charming impressions which I have ever cherished for you.

"With what fondness I pressed the young prince to my heart! How his face, radiant with health, filled me with delight, and how happy I was to see him so amused and so contented as he watched us both! In fact, I entirely forgot I was a stranger to this child; I forgot that I was not his mother while partaking his sweet caresses. I then envied no man's happiness; mine seemed far above all bliss granted to poor mortals here below. And when the time came to part from him, when I had to tear myself from this little being whom I had barely learned to know, I felt in me a deep anguish, as deep as if all the sorrows of humanity had pierced me through.

"Have you, as I did, closely noticed the little commanding tone of your son when he made known to me his wish that he wanted me to be in the Tuileries with him? And

then his little pouting mien when I answered that this could not be?

"'Why,' exclaimed he, in his own way, 'why, since papa and I wish it?'

"Yes, this already reveals that he will understand how to command, and I heartily rejoice to discern traits of character which, in a private individual, might be pregnant with evil consequences, but which are becoming to a prince who is destined to rule in a time that is so near a long and terrible revolution. For after the downfall of all order, such as we have outlived, a sovereign cannot hope to maintain peace in his kingdom merely through mildness and goodness. The nation over which he rules, and which yet stands on the hot soil of a volcano, must have the assurance that crime no sooner lifts its head than swift punishment will reach it. As you yourself have told me a thousand times: 'When once fear has been instilled, one must not by arbitrariness, but through strict impartiality, strive to be loved.'

"You have often used your privilege of granting pardon, but you have more frequently proved that you would not tolerate a violation of the laws enacted by you. Thus you have subdued and mastered the Jacobins, quieted the royalists, and satisfied the party of moderation. Your son will now have your example before him, and, happier than you, will be able to go further in manifesting clemency toward the guilty.

"I had with him a conversation which establishes the deep sensitiveness of his heart.

"He was delighted with my *charivari*, and then he said to me:

"'Ah, how beautiful that is! but if it were given to a poor man he would be rich, would he not, madame?'

"'Certainly he would,' I replied.

"'Well, then,' said he, 'I have seen in the woods a poor

man; allow me to send for him. I have no money myself, and he needs a good coat.'

"The emperor,' I replied, 'will find a pleasure in gratifying your wishes. Why does not your imperial highness ask him for his purse?'

"I have asked him already, madame. He gave it to me when we left Paris, and we have given all away. But as you look so good, I thought you would do what was so natural.'

"I promised to be useful to that poor man, and I will certainly keep my word. I have given orders to my courier to find the unfortunate person, and bring him to-morrow to Malmaison, where we will see what can be done for him. For it will indeed be sweet for me to perform a good work counselled by a child three years old. Tell him, I pray you, sire, that this poor man is no longer poor!

"I have thought you would be pleased to gather these details from a conversation which passed between us in a low voice, while you were busy at the other end of the drawing-room, examining an atlas. You will also perceive by this, how fortunate it is for the King of Rome to have a governess, who knows how to inspire him with such feelings of compassion, the more touching that they are seldom found in princes. For princes in general have been accustomed to a constant flattery, which induces them to imagine that every thing in the world is for them, and that they can entirely dismiss the duty of thinking about others. In fact the eminent qualities of Madame de Montesquiou make her worthy of the important and responsible charge you have committed to her care, and the sentiments of the prince justify the choice you have made. Will he not be good and benevolent, who is brought up by goodness and benevolence themselves?

"I am, however, afraid that his imperial highness, not-

withstanding the orders made to him by you, has spoken of this interview, which was to remain secret. I recommended him not to open his mouth, and I assured him that if any one knew that he had come to Bagatelle it would be impossible for him to come here again.

"Oh, then, madame,' replied he, 'be not alarmed, I will say nothing, for I love you; promise me, however, if I am obedient, to come soon and visit me.'

"Ah! I assured him, that I desired this more than he did himself, and I have never spoken more truly.

"Meanwhile, I am conscious that those interviews, which fill me with extreme joy, cannot often be repeated, and I must not abuse your goodness toward me by claiming your presence too often. The sacrifice which I make to your mental quietude is another proof of my intense desire to render you happy. This thought will comfort me while waiting to be able to embrace my adopted son. Do you not find this exchange of children very sweet? As regards myself, sire, what distresses me is, that I can only give to your son this name, without being able to be useful to him! And, again, how different is my position from that which you held toward Eugene! The longer, the kinder you are to him, the less can I show you my gratitude! However, I rely upon the vice-king that he will be a comfort to you, amid the sorrows which your family causes you. If, unfortunately, what you surmise about the King of Naples were to happen, then Eugene would become still more useful to you than ever, and I dare trust he would prove worthy of you by his conduct in war as well as by his sincere devotedness to your service.

"You have now received quite a long letter from me! The sentiment of delight in talking about our two sons has carried me away, and this sentiment will make me excusable for having so long intruded upon you. As sorrow needs concentration, so joy needs expansion. This, sire, explains

this letter, long as a volume, and which I cannot close without once more expressing my deepest gratitude.

“JOSEPHINE.”\*

#### CHAPTER XLIV.

##### DEATH.

HAPPY the man to whom it is granted to close a beautiful and worthy life with a beautiful and worthy death! Happy Josephine, for whom it was not reserved like the rest of the Bonapartes to wander about Europe seeking for a refuge where they might hide themselves from the persecutions and hatred of the princes and people! To her alone, of all the Napoleonic race, was reserved the enviable fate to die under the ruins of the imperial throne, whose fragments fell so heavily upon her heart as to break it.

For France the days of fear had come, for Napoleon the days of vengeance. The nations of Europe had at last risen with the strength of the lion that breaks his chains and is determined to obtain liberty by devouring those who deprived him of it, and so those irritated nations had with the power of their wrath forced their princes, who had been so obediently submissive to Napoleon, to declare war and to fight against him for life or death.

The conflicts, battles, and endless victories of the constantly defeated Austrians, Prussians, Russians, and English, belong to history—this everlasting tribunal where the deeds of men are judged, and where they are written on its pages to be for ages to come as lessons and examples of warning and encouragement.

Josephine, the lonely and rejected one, had nothing to

\* Ducrest, “Mémoires,” vol. iii., p. 294.

do with those fearful events which shook France; she played no active part in the great drama which was performed before the walls of Paris, and which closed with the fall of the hero whom she had so warmly and so truly loved.

Josephine, during those days of horror and of decisive conflicts, was in her pleasure-castle of Navarra. Her daughter, Queen Hortense, with her two sons, Napoleon Louis and Louis Napoleon, was with her. There she learned the treachery of the marshals, the capitulation of Marmont, the surrender of Paris, and the entrance of the foreign foe into the capital of France.

But where was Napoleon? Where was the emperor? Did Josephine know anything of him? Why did he not come to the rescue of his capital, and drive the foe away?

Such were the questions which afflicted Josephine's heart, and to which the news, finally re-echoed through Paris, gave her the fearful response.

Napoleon had come too late, and when he had arrived in Fontainebleau with the remnants of the army defeated by Blucher, he learned there that Marmont had capitulated, and that the allies had already entered Paris, and all was lost.

The deputies of the senate and Napoleon's faithless marshals came from Paris to Fontainebleau to require from him that he should resign his crown, and that he should save France by the sacrifice of himself and his imperial dignity. These men, lately the most humble, devoted courtiers and flatterers of Napoleon, who owed to him everything—name, position, fortune, and rank—had now the courage to approach him with lofty demeanor and to request of him to depart into exile.

Napoleon, overcome by all this misfortune and treachery which fell upon him, did what they required of him. He abdicated in favor of his son, and left Paris, left France, to go to the small island of Elba, there to dream of the days



which had been and of the days which were coming, when he would regain his glory and his emperor's crown.

Amid the agonies, cares, and humiliations of his present situation, Napoleon thought of the woman whom he had once named the "angel of his happiness," and who he well knew would readily and gladly be the angel of his misfortune. Before leaving Fontainebleau to retire to the island of Elba, Napoleon wrote to Josephine a farewell letter, telling her of the fate reserved for him, and assuring her of his never-ending friendship and affection. He sent this letter to the castle of Navarra by M. de Maussion, and the messenger of evil tidings arrived there in the middle of the night.

Josephine had given orders that she should be awakened as soon as any one brought news for her. She immediately arose from her bed, threw a mantle over her shoulders, and bade M. de Maussion come in.

"Does the emperor live?" cried she, as he approached. "Only answer me this: does the emperor live?"

Then, when she had received this assurance, after reading Napoleon's letter, and learning all the sad, humiliating news, pale, and trembling in all her limbs, she hastened to her daughter Hortense.

"Ah, Hortense," exclaimed she, overcome and falling into an arm-chair near her daughter's bed, "ah, Hortense, the unfortunate Napoleon! They are sending him to the island of Elba! Now he is unhappy, abandoned, and I am not near him! Were I not his wife I would go to him and exile myself with him! Oh, why cannot I be with him?"\*

But she dared not! Napoleon, knowing her heart and her love, had commissioned the Duke de Bassano expressly to tell the Empress Josephine to make no attempt to follow him, and "to respect the rights of another."

\* Mlle. Cochelet, "Mémoires," vol. ii.

This other, however, had not been pleased to claim the right which Josephine was to respect. Napoleon left Fontainebleau on the 21st of April, 1814, to go to the island of Elba. It was his wish to meet there his wife and his son. But Maria Louisa did not come; she did not obey her husband's call; she descended from the imperial throne, and was satisfied to be again an archduchess of Austria, and to see the little King of Rome dispossessed of country, rank, father, and even name. The poor little Napoleon was now called Frank—he was but the son of the Archduchess Maria Louisa; he dared not ask for his father, and yet memory ever and ever re-echoed through his heart the sounds of other days; this memory caused the death of the Duke de Reichstadt, the son of Napoleon.

Napoleon had gone to Elba, and there he waited in vain for Maria Louisa, to fill whose place Josephine would have gladly poured her heart's blood.

But she dared not! she submitted faithfully and devotedly to Napoleon's will. To her he was, though banished, humiliated, and conquered, still the emperor and the sovereign; and her tearful eyes gazed toward the solitary island which to her would have been a paradise could she but have lived there by the side of her Napoleon!

But she had to remain in France; she had sacred duties to perform; she had to save out of the wreck of the empire at least something for her children! For herself she wanted nothing, she desired nothing; but the future of her children had to be secured.

Therefore, Josephine gathered all her courage; she pressed her hands on the mortal wounds of her heart, and kept it still alive, for it must not yet bleed to death; her children yet claimed her care.

Josephine, therefore, left the castle of Navarra for that of Malmaison, thus fulfilling the wishes of the Emperor Alexander, who desired to know Josephine's wishes in refer-

ence to herself and to her children, and who sincerely wished to become acquainted with her, that he might offer her his homage, and transfer to her the friendship he once cherished for Napoleon.

Josephine received in Malmaison the first visit of Alexander, and from this time he came every day, to the great grief of the returned Bourbons, who felt bitterly hurt at the homage thus publicly offered before all the world by the conqueror of Napoleon to the divorced Empress Josephine, who, in the eyes of the proud Bourbons, was but the widow of General de Beauharnais.

Notwithstanding this, the rest of the princes of the victorious allies followed the example of Alexander. They all came to Malmaison to visit the Empress Josephine; so that again, as in the days of her imperial glory, she received at her residence the conquerors of Europe, and saw around her emperors and kings. The Emperor Alexander, with his brothers; the King Frederick William, with his sons; the Duke of Coburg, and many others of the little German princes, were guests at her table, and endeavored, through the respect they manifested to her, and the expressions of their esteem and devotedness, to turn away from her the sad fate which had come upon all the Bonapartes.

But her heart was mortally wounded. "I cannot overcome the fearful sadness which has seized me," said she to Mlle. Cochelet, the friend of her daughter Hortense; "I do all I can to hide my cares from my children, but I suffer only the more."\*

"You will see," said she to the Duchess d'Abrantes, who had visited her at Malmaison, "you will see that Napoleon's misfortune will cause my death. My heart is broken—it will not be healed."†

She was right, her heart was broken, it would not be

\* Mlle. Cochelet. "Mémoires," vol. ii.

† Abrantes, "Mémoires," vol. xvii.

healed! It seemed at first but merely an indisposition which seized the empress, and which obliged her to decline the announced visit of the Emperor Alexander, nothing but a slight inflammation of the neck, accompanied by a little fever. But the disease increased hour after hour. On the 27th of May, Josephine was obliged to keep her bed; on the 29th her sufferings in the neck were so serious that she nearly suffocated, and her fever had become so intense that she had but few moments of consciousness. In her fancy she often called aloud for Napoleon, and the last word which her dying lips uttered was his name.

Josephine died on the 29th of May, 1814. That love which had illumined her life occasioned her death, and will sanctify her name for ever as with a saintly halo.

She was buried on the 2d of June in the church at Rueil. It was a solemn funeral procession, to which all the kings and princes assembled in Paris sent their substitutes in their carriages; but the most beautiful mourning procession which followed her to the grave were the tears, the sighs of the poor, the suffering of the unfortunate, for all whom Josephine had been a benefactress, a good angel, and who lost in her a comforter, a mother.

In the church of Rueil, Eugene and Hortense erected a monument to their mother; and when in 1837 Queen Hortense, the mother of the Emperor Napoleon III., died at Arenenberg, her corpse was, according to her last wishes, brought to Rueil and laid at her mother's side. Her son erected there a monument to her; and this son, the grandchild of Josephine, is now the Emperor of the French, Napoleon III.

Josephine's sacrifice has been in vain. Napoleon's dynasty, for whose sake she sacrificed happiness, love, and a crown, has not been perpetuated through the woman to whom Josephine was sacrificed—not through Maria Louisa, who gave to France and to the emperor a son, but through

the daughter of Josephine, who gave to Napoleon more than a son, her love, her heart, and her life!

Providence is just! Upon the throne from which the childless empress was rejected, sits now the grandchild of Josephine, and his very existence demonstrates how vain are all man's calculations and desires, and how like withered leaves they are carried away and tossed about by the breath of destiny!

It was not the emperor's daughter who perpetuated Napoleon's dynasty, but the widow of General Beauharnais, Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie.

Josephine, therefore, is avenged in history; she was also avenged in Napoleon's heart, for he bitterly lamented that he had ever been separated from her. "I ought not to have allowed myself to be separated from Josephine," said he, a short time before his death in St. Helena, "no, I ought not to have been divorced from her; that was my misfortune!"

THE END.

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