

count on any more joyful days, but I say that we will meet at the right hour. And the right hour will be for us only the hour when we shall have reached the goal of our secret league; when we shall have aroused the German people, and when they will rise like a courageous giant whom no one is able to withstand, and who will expel the invader with his hordes from the soil of Germany! Farewell!"

"Farewell," said Marianne, feelingly. "My friend will always be welcome, and cordial greetings will be in store for him whenever he comes. Remember that, my friend; I say no more 'my beloved,' for the Countess of Lankoronska might be jealous!"

"And she might inform Lord Paget of it," said Gentz, smiling. He then kissed Marianne's hand, and took his hat and overcoat. "Farewell, Marianne, and do not forget our league and my manuscript."

"I shall not forget any thing, for I shall not forget you," she replied, giving him her hand.

Thus, hand in hand, they walked to the door; then they nodded a last silent greeting to each other, and Gentz left the room.

Marianne listened to his steps until they had died away. She then drew a deep breath, and commenced once more slowly pacing the room.

The tapers on the silver chandeliers had burned down very low, and their liquid wax trickled slowly and lazily on the marble table. Whenever Marianne passed them, the draught fanned them to a blaze; then they shed a lurid light on the tall, queenly form in the magnificent dress, and grew dim again when Marianne stepped back into the darker parts of the long room.

Suddenly she exclaimed in a joyful voice: "Yes, I have found it at last! That is the path leading to the goal; that is the path I have to pursue." With rapid steps she hastened back to the looking-glass. "Marianne Meier," she cried aloud—"Marianne Meier, listen to what I am going to tell you. The Princess von Eibenberg has discovered a remedy to dispel her weariness and dull repose—a remedy that will immortalize her name. Good-night, Marianne Meier, now you may go to sleep, for the Princess von Eibenberg will take care of herself!"

CHAPTER LI.

JUDITH.

MARIANNE was awakened after a short and calm slumber by the low sound of stealthy steps approaching her couch. She opened her eyes hastily, and beheld her mistress of ceremonies, who stood at

her bedside, holding in her hand a golden salver with a letter on it.

"What, Camilla," she asked, in terror, "you have not yet dispatched the letter which I gave you last night? Did I not instruct you to have it delivered by the footman early in the morning?"

"Yes, your highness, and I have faithfully carried out your orders."

"Well, and this letter?"

"Is the major's reply. Your highness ordered me to awaken you as soon as the footman would bring the answer."

Marianne hastily seized the letter and broke the seal.

"He will come," she said, loudly and joyfully, after reading the few lines the letter contained. "What o'clock is it, Camilla?"

"Your highness, it is just ten o'clock."

"And I am looking for visitors already at eleven o'clock. Quick, Madame Camilla, tell my maid to arrange every thing in the dressing-room. Please see to it yourself that I may find there an elegant, rich, and not too matronly, morning costume."

"Will your highness put on the dress which Lord Paget received the other day for you from London?" asked Madame Camilla. "Your highness has never yet worn it, and his lordship would doubtless rejoice at seeing your highness in this charming costume."

"I do not expect Lord Paget," said Marianne, with a stern glance; "besides, you ought to confine your advice to matters relating to my toilet. Do not forget it any more. Now bring me my chocolate, I will take it in bed. In the mean time cause an invigorating, perfumed bath to be prepared, and tell the cook that I wish him to serve up a sumptuous breakfast for two persons in the small dining-room in the course of an hour. Go."

Madame Camilla withdrew to carry out the various orders her mistress had given her, but she did not do so joyfully and readily as usual, but with a grave face and careworn air.

"There is something going on," she whispered, slowly gliding down the corridor. "Yes, there is something going on, and at length I shall have an opportunity for spying and reporting what I have discovered. Well, I get my pay from two men, from the French governor of Vienna and from Lord Paget. Would to God I could serve both of them to-day! As for Lord Paget, I have already some news for him, for Mr. von Gentz was with her last night, and remained for two hours; my mistress then wrote a letter to Major von Brandt, which I had to dispatch early in the morning. And this is exactly the point, concerning which I do not know whether it ought to be reported to my French customer or to the English lord. Well, I will consider the matter. I will watch every step

of hers, for it is certain that something extraordinary is going on here, and I want to know what it is."

And, after taking this resolution, Madame Camilla accelerated her steps to deliver the orders of the princess to the cook.

An hour later, the lady's maid had finished the toilet of the princess, who approached the large looking-glass in order to cast a last critical look on her appearance.

A charming smile of satisfaction overspread her fair face when she beheld her enchanting image in the glass, and she said, with a triumphant air, "Yes, it is true, this woman is beautiful enough even to court the favor of an emperor. Do you not think so, too, Madame Camilla?"

Madame Camilla had watched, with a very attentive and grave face, every word her mistress uttered, but now she hastened to smile.

"Your highness," she said, "if we lived still in the days of the ancient gods, I would not trust any butterfly nor any bird, nay, not even a gold-piece, for, behind every thing, I should suspect Jove disguised, for the purpose of surprising my beautiful mistress."

Marianne laughed. "Ah, how learned you are," she said. "You refer even to the disguised bull of poor Europa and to the golden rain of Danaë. But fear not; no disguised god will penetrate into my rooms, for unhappily the time of gods and demi-gods is past."

"Nevertheless, those arrogant French would like to make the world believe that M. Bonaparte had restored that time," said Madame Camilla, with a contemptuous air; "they would like to persuade us that the son of that Corsican lawyer was a last and belated son of Jove."

"Oh!" exclaimed Marianne, triumphantly; "the world shall discover soon enough that he is nothing but a miserable son of earth, and that his immortality, too, will find sufficient room between six blackboards. I know, Camilla, you hate the usurper as ardently, as bitterly and vindictively as I do, and this hatred is the sympathetic link uniting me with you. Well, let me tell you that your hatred will speedily be gratified, and that your vindictiveness will be satiated. Pray to God, Camilla, that He may bless the hand about to be raised against the tyrant; pray to God that He may sharpen the dagger which may soon be aimed at his heart! The world has suffered enough; it is time that it should find an avenger of its wrongs!"

"Major von Brandt," announced a footman, entering the room.

"Conduct the major to the drawing-room," said Marianne, hastily; "I will join him directly."

She cast a last triumphant look on the mirror, and then left the room.

Madame Camilla watched her, with a scowl, until the door had closed behind her. "Now I know whom I have to inform of her doings," she muttered. "They concern the French governor; I have to take pains, however, to find out more about her schemes, so that my report may embrace as much important information as possible. The better the news, the better the pay."

Marianne had meanwhile gone to the drawing-room. A tall, elderly officer, in Austrian uniform, with the epaulets of a major, came to meet her, and bent down to kiss reverentially the hand which she offered to him.

Marianne saluted him with a fascinating smile. "You have entirely forgotten me, then, major?" she asked. "It was necessary for me to invite you in order to induce you to pay me a visit?"

"I did not know whether I might dare to appear before you, most gracious princess," said the major, respectfully. "The last time I had the honor of waiting on you, I met your highness in the circle of your distinguished friends who used to be mine, too. But nobody had a word of welcome, a pleasant smile for me, and your highness, it seemed to me, did not notice me during the whole evening. Whenever I intended to approach you, you averted your face and entered into so animated a conversation with one of the bystanders, that I could not venture to interrupt it. Hence I withdrew, my heart filled with grief and despair, for I certainly believed that your highness wished to banish me from your reception-room forever."

"And you consoled yourself for this banishment in the reception-room of the French governor whom the great Emperor Napoleon had given to the good city of Vienna, I suppose?" asked the princess, with an arch smile. "And you would have never come back to me unless I had taken the bold resolution to invite you to my house?"

"By this invitation you have rendered me the happiest of mortals, most gracious princess," exclaimed the major, emphatically. "You have reopened to me the gates of Paradise, while, in my despair, I believed them to be closed against me forever."

"Confess, major," said Marianne, laughing, "that you did not make the slightest attempt to see whether these gates were merely ajar or really closed. Under the present circumstances we may speak honestly and frankly to each other. You believed me to be an ardent patriot, one of those furious adversaries of the French and their rule, who do not look upon Napoleon as a hero and genius, but only as a tyrant and usurper. Because I was the intimate friend of Lord Paget and M. von Gentz, of the Princesses von Carolath and Clary, of the Countess von Colloredo, and Count Cobenzl, you believed that my political sentiments coincided with theirs?"

"Yes, your highness, indeed that is what I believed," said Major von Brandt, "and as you want me to tell the truth, I will confess that it was the reason why I did not venture to appear again in your drawing-room. I have never denied that I am an enthusiastic admirer of that great man who is conquering and subjugating the whole world, because God has destined him to be its master. Hence, I never was able to comprehend the audacity of those who instigated our gracious and noble Emperor Francis to wage war against the victorious hero, and as a true and sincere patriot I now bless the dispensations of fate which compels us to make peace with Napoleon the Great, for Austria can regain her former prosperity only by maintaining peace and harmony with France. The war against France has brought the barbarian hordes of Russia to Germany; after the conclusion of peace, France will assist us in expelling these unclean and unwelcome guests from the soil of our fatherland."

Marianne had listened to him smilingly and with an air of unqualified assent. Only once a slight blush, as if produced by an ebullition of suppressed anger, had mantled her cheeks—only for a brief moment she had frowned, but she quickly overcame her indignation and appeared as smiling and serene as before.

"I am precisely of your opinion, my dear major," she said, with a fascinating nod.

"Your highness assents to the views I have just uttered?" exclaimed the major, in joyful surprise.

"Do you doubt it still?" she asked. "Have I followed, then, the example of all my friends, even that of Lord Paget and Gentz? Have I fled from the capital because the Emperor Napoleon, with his army, has turned his victorious steps toward Vienna? No, I have remained, to the dismay of all of them; I have remained, although my prolonged sojourn in Vienna has deprived me of two of my dearest friends, and brought about an everlasting rupture between myself and Lord Paget, as well as Herr von Gentz. I have remained because I was unable to withstand any longer the ardent yearning of my heart—because I wished to get at length a sight of the hero to whom the whole world is bowing. But look, my footman comes to tell me that my breakfast has been served. You must consent to be my guest to-day and breakfast with me."

She took the major's arm and went with him to the dining-room. In the middle of it a table had been set, on which splendid *pâtés*, luscious tropical fruits, and well-spiced *salamis* agreeably surprised the major by their appetizing odor, while golden Rhenish wine and dark Tokay in the white decanters seemed to beckon him.

They took seats at the table in elastic, soft arm-chairs, and for a

while the conversation was interrupted, for the pastry and the other dainty dishes absorbed their whole attention. The major, who was noted for his epicurism, enjoyed the delicacies served up to him with the profound seriousness and immovable tranquillity of a philosopher. Besides, the princess shared his enjoyment after a while by her conversation, sparkling with wit and humor; she was inexhaustible in telling piquant anecdotes and merry *bon-mots*; she portrayed her friends and acquaintances in so skilful a manner that the major did not know whether to admire their striking resemblance or the talent with which she rendered their weak traits most conspicuous.

When they had reached the dessert, the princess made a sign to the footman to leave the room, and she remained alone with the major. With her own fair hand she poured fragrant Syracusan wine into his glass, and begged him to drink the health of Napoleon the Great.

"And your highness will not do me the honor to take wine with me?" asked the major, pointing at the empty glass of the princess.

She smiled and shook her head. "I never drink wine," she said; "wine is a magician who suddenly tears the mask from my face and compels my lips to speak the truth which they would otherwise, perhaps, never have uttered. But I will make an exception this time; this time I will fill my glass, for I must drink the health of the great emperor. Pour some wine into it, and let us cry: 'Long live Napoleon the Great!'"

She drank some of the fiery southern wine, and her prediction was fulfilled. The wine took the mask from her face, and loosened the fetters of her tongue.

Her eyes beamed now with the fire of enthusiasm, and the rapturous praise of Napoleon flowed from her lips like a torrent of the most glowing poetry.

She was wondrously beautiful in her enthusiastic ardor, with the flaming blush on her cheeks, with her flashing eyes and quivering lips, the sweet smile of which showed two rows of pearly teeth.

"Oh," exclaimed the major, fascinated by her loveliness, "why is the great emperor not here—why does he not hear your enchanting words—why is he not permitted to admire you in your radiant beauty!"

"Why am I not allowed to hasten to him in order to sink down at his feet and worship him?" exclaimed Marianne, fervently. "Why am I not allowed to lie for a blissful hour before him on my knees in order to beg with scalding tears his pardon for the hatred which formerly filled my soul against him, and to confess to him that my hatred has been transformed into boundless love and ecstatic

adoration? Where shall I find the friend who will pity my longing, and open for me the path leading to him? Such a friend I should reward with a gold-piece for every minute of my bliss, for every minute I should be allowed to remain near the great emperor."

"Do you speak in earnest, your highness?" asked Major von Brandt, gravely and almost solemnly.

"In solemn earnest!" asseverated Marianne. "A gold-piece for every minute of an interview with the Emperor Napoleon."

"Well, then," said the major, joyfully, "I shall procure this interview for you, your highness, and your beauty and fascinating loveliness will cause the emperor not to count the minutes, nor the hours either, so that it will be only necessary for me to reduce the hours to minutes."

"A gold-piece for every minute!" repeated Marianne, whose face was radiant with joy and happiness. "Oh, you look at me doubtfully, you believe that I am only joking, and shall not keep afterward what I am now promising."

"Most gracious princess, I believe that enthusiasm has carried you away to a promise the acceptance of which would be an abuse of your generosity. Suppose the emperor, fascinated by your wit, your beauty, your charming conversation, should remain four hours with you, that would be a very handsome number of gold-pieces for me!"

Instead of replying to him, Marianne took the silver bell and rang it.

"Bring me pen, ink, and paper, a burning candle and sealing-wax," she said to the footman who entered.

In a few minutes every thing had been brought to her, and Marianne hastily wrote a few lines. She then drew the seal-ring from her finger and affixed her seal to the paper, which she handed to the major.

"Read it aloud," she said.

The major read:

"I promise to Major von Brandt, in case he should procure me an interview with the Emperor Napoleon, to pay him for every minute of this interview a louis-d'or as a token of my gratitude.

"*MARIANNE, PRINCESS VON EIBENBERG.*"

"Are you content and convinced?" asked the princess.

"I am, your highness."

"And you will and can procure me this interview?"

"I will and can do so."

"When will you conduct me to Schönbrunn?"

The major reflected some time, and seemed to make a calculation.

"I hope to be able to procure for your highness to-morrow even-

ing an interview with the emperor," he said. "I am quite well acquainted with M. de Bausset, intendant of the palace, and I besides know Constant, his majesty's *valet de chambre*. These are the two channels through which the wish of your highness will easily reach the emperor, and as his majesty is a great admirer of female beauty, he will assuredly be ready to grant the audience applied for."

"Will you bring me word to-day?" asked Marianne.

"Yes, princess, to-day. I will immediately repair to Schönbrunn. The emperor arrived there yesterday."

"Hasten, then," said Marianne, rising from her seat—"hasten to Schönbrunn, and remember that I am waiting for your return with trembling impatience and suspense."

She gave her hand to the major.

"Good Heaven, your highness!" he exclaimed, in terror, "your hand is as cold as marble."

"All my blood is here," she said, pointing to her heart. "Hasten to Schönbrunn."

He imprinted a kiss on her hand and left the room.

Marianne smiled until the door had closed behind him. Then her features underwent a sudden change, and assumed an air of horror and contempt.

"Oh, these miserable men, these venal souls!" she muttered. "They measure every thing by their own standard, and cannot comprehend the longings and schemes of a great soul. Accursed be all those who turn traitors to their country and adhere to its enemies! May the wrath of God and the contempt of their fellow-creatures punish them! But I will use the traitors as tools for the purpose of accomplishing the sacred task which the misfortunes of Germany have obliged me to undertake. I will put my house in order, that I may be ready when the hour has come."

Madame Camilla was right, indeed; something was going on, and she was able to collect important news for the French governor.

The Princess von Eibenberg, since her interview with the major, had been a prey to a feverish agitation and impatience which caused her to wander restlessly through the various rooms of her mansion. At length, toward evening, the major returned, and the news he had brought must have been highly welcome, for the countenance of the princess had been ever since radiant with joy, and a wondrous smile was constantly playing on her lips.

During the following night she was incessantly engaged in writing, and Madame Camilla as well as the maid were waiting in vain for their mistress to call them; the princess did not leave her cabinet, and did not go to bed at all. Early next morning she took a ride in

her carriage, and Madame Camilla, who had heretofore invariably accompanied the princess on her rides, was ordered to stay at home. When Marianne returned after several hours, she was pale and exhausted, and her eyes showed that she had wept. Then officers of the city courts made their appearance, and asked to see the princess, stating that she had sent for them. The princess locked her room while conferring with them, and the officers withdrew only after several hours. At the dinner-table, to which, by her express orders, no guests had been admitted to-day, she scarcely touched any food, and seemed absorbed in deep reflections.

Soon after dinner she repaired to her dressing-room, and never before had she been so particular and careful in choosing the various articles of her costume; never before had she watched her toilet with so much attention and anxiety. At last the work was finished, and the princess looked radiantly beautiful in her crimson velvet dress, floating behind her in a long train, and fastened under her bosom, only half veiled by a clear lace collar, by means of a wide, golden sash. Her hair, framing her expansive brow in a few black ringlets à la *Joséphine*, was tied up in a Greek knot, adorned with pearls and diamonds. Similar jewels surrounded her queenly neck and the splendidly-shaped snow-white arms. Her cheeks were transparently pale to-day, and a gloomy, sinister fire was burning in her large black eyes.

She looked beautiful, proud, and menacing, like Judith, who has adorned herself for the purpose of going to the tent of Holofernes. Madame Camilla could not help thinking of it when she now saw the princess walk across the room in her proud beauty, and with her stern, solemn air. Madame Camilla could not help thinking of it when she saw the princess draw an oblong, flashing object from a case which the mistress of ceremonies had never beheld before, and hastily concealed it in her bosom.

Was it, perhaps, a dagger, and was the princess a modern Judith, going to kill a modern Holofernes in her voluptuous arms?

The footman now announced that Major von Brandt was waiting for the princess in the reception-room, and that the carriage was at the door. A slight shudder shook the whole frame of the princess, and her cheeks turned even paler than before. She ordered the footman to withdraw, and then made a sign to Madame Camilla to give her her cloak and bonnet. Camilla obeyed silently. When the princess was ready to depart, she turned to Camilla, and, drawing a valuable diamond ring from her finger, she handed it to her.

"Take this ring as a souvenir from me," she said. "I know you are a good and enthusiastic Austrian; like myself, you hate the tyrant who wants to subjugate us, and you will bless the hand

which will order him to stop, and put an end to his victorious career. Farewell!"

She nodded once more to her and left her cabinet to go to the reception-room, where Major von Brandt was waiting for her.

"Come," she said, hastily, "it is high time. I hope you have got a watch with you, so as to be able to count the minutes."

"Yes, your highness," said Major von Brandt, smiling, "I have got my watch with me, and I shall have the honor of showing it to you before you enter the imperial cabinet."

Marianne made no reply, but rapidly crossed the room to go down-stairs to the carriage waiting at the door. Major von Brandt hastened after her and offered his arm to her.

Madame Camilla, who had not lost a single word of her short conversation with Major von Brandt, followed the princess down-stairs, and remained standing humbly at the foot of it till the princess and her companion had entered the carriage and the coach door had been closed.

But no sooner had the brilliant carriage of the princess rolled out of the court-yard in front of her mansion, than Madame Camilla hastened into the street, entered a hack, and ordered the coachman to drive her to the residence of the French governor as fast as his horses could run.

CHAPTER LII.

NAPOLEON AND THE PRUSSIAN MINISTER.

NAPOLEON had left Austerlitz, and had, for some days, again resided at Schönbrunn. The country palace of the great empress Maria Theresa was now the abode of him who had driven her grandson from his capital, defeated his army, and was just about to dictate a peace to him, the terms of which would be equivalent to a fresh defeat of Austria and a fresh victory for France.

The plenipotentiaries of Austria and France were already assembled at Presburg to conclude this treaty, and every hour couriers reached Schönbrunn, who reported to the emperor the progress of the negotiations and obtained further instructions from him.

But while Austria now, after the disastrous battle of the 2d of December, was treating with Napoleon about the best terms of peace, the Prussian envoy, Count Haugwitz, who was to deliver to Napoleon the menacing declaration of Prussia, was still on the road, or, at least, had not been able to lay his dispatch before the emperor. Prussia demanded, in this dispatch, which had been approved by

Russia, that Napoleon should give up Italy and Holland, and recognize the independence of both countries, as well as that of Germany. Prussia gave France a month's time to take this proposition into consideration; and if it should be declined, then Prussia would declare war against the Emperor Napoleon.

This month had expired on the 15th of December, and, as previously stated, Count Haugwitz had not yet succeeded in delivering his dispatch to the Emperor Napoleon.

It is true, he had set out from Berlin on the 6th of November, but the noble count liked to travel as comfortably as possible, and to repose often from the hardships of the journey. He had, therefore, travelled every day but a few miles, and stopped several days in every large city through which he had passed. Vainly had Minister von Hardenberg and the Russian and Austrian ministers in Berlin sent courier upon courier after him, in order to induce him to accelerate his journey.

Count Haugwitz declared himself *unable* to travel any faster, because he was afraid of stating that he was *unwilling* to do so.

Now, he was *unwilling* to travel any faster, because the message, of which he was the bearer, was a most oppressive burden to him, and because he felt convinced that the energetic genius, by some rapid and crushing victory, would upset all treaties, change all standpoints, and thereby render it unnecessary for him to deliver to him a dispatch of so harsh and hostile a description.

Thanks to his system of delay, Count Haugwitz had succeeded in obtaining a first interview with Napoleon on the day before the battle of Austerlitz. But instead of presenting the ominous note to the emperor, he had contented himself, after the fashion of a genuine courtier, with offering incense to the great conqueror, and Napoleon had prevented him from transacting any business by putting off all negotiations with him until after the great battle.

After the battle of Austerlitz, the emperor had received the envoy of the King of Prussia at Schönbrunn, and granted him the longed-for audience. Napoleon greeted him in an angry voice, and reproached him violently for having affixed his name to the treaty of Potsdam. But Haugwitz had managed, by his skilful politeness, to appease the emperor's wrath, and to regain his favor. Since then Count Haugwitz had been at Schönbrunn every day, and Napoleon had always received him with especial kindness and affability. For the emperor, who knew very well that Austria was still hoping for an armed intervention by Prussia, wished to delay his decision, as to the fate of Prussia at least, until he had made peace with Austria. Only when he had trampled Austria under foot, he would think of chastising Prussia for her recent arrogance, and to humiliate her as

he had hitherto humiliated all his enemies. Hence he had received Count Haugwitz every day, and succeeded gradually and insensibly in winning him for his plans. To-day, on the 13th of December, Count Haugwitz had repaired to Schönbrunn to negotiate with Napoleon. He wore his full court-costume, and was adorned with the *grand cordon* of the Legion of Honor, which he had received a year ago, and which the Prussian minister seemed to wear with especial predilection.

Napoleon received the count in the former drawing-room of Maria Theresa, which had now become Napoleon's study. On a large round table in the centre of the room, there lay maps, dotted with variously colored pins; the green pins designated the route fixed by Napoleon for the retreat of the Russian army; the dark-yellow pins surrounded the extreme boundaries of Austria, and according to the news which Napoleon received from Presburg, and which informed him of constantly new concessions made by the Austrian plenipotentiaries, who declared their willingness to cede several provinces, he changed the position of these pins, which embraced every day a more contracted space; while the blue pins, designating the boundaries of Bavaria, advanced farther and farther, and the red pins, representing the armies of France, seemed to multiply on the map.

Napoleon, however, was not engaged in studying his maps when Count Haugwitz entered his room, but he was seated at the desk placed close to the table with the maps, and seemed to write assiduously. On the raised back part of this desk the busts of Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa had been placed. Napoleon sometimes, when he ceased writing, raised his gloomy eyes to them, and then it seemed as though these three heads, the two marble busts and the marble head of Napoleon, bent threateningly toward each other, as though the flashes bursting from Napoleon's eyes kindled the fire of life and anger in the marble eyes of the empress and the great king; their frowning brows seemed to ask him then, by virtue of what right the son of the Corsican lawyer had taken a seat between their two crowned heads, and driven the legitimate Emperor of Austria from the house of his fathers.

When Count Haugwitz entered, Napoleon cast the pen impetuously aside and rose. He saluted the count, who bowed to him deeply and respectfully, with a pleasant nod.

"You are there," said the emperor, kindly, "and it is very lucky. I was extremely impatient to see you."

"Lucky?" asked Count Haugwitz, with the inimitable smile of a well-bred courtier. "Lucky, sire? It seems to me as though there were neither luck nor ill-luck in the world, nay; I am now more

than ever convinced of it. Have not I heard men say more than a hundred times, 'He is lucky! he is lucky!' Since I have made the acquaintance of the great man who owes every thing to himself, I have become convinced that luck should not be taken into consideration, and that it is of no consequence."

Napoleon smiled. "You are a most adroit and well-bred cavalier and courtier," he said, "but it is a rule of wisdom for princes not to repose any confidence in the words of courtiers and flatterers, but always to translate them into the opposite sense. Therefore, I translate your words, too, into the contrary, and then they signify, 'It seems, unfortunately, as though luck had deserted us, and particularly the third coalition, forever, but still sticks to the colors of France.'"

"Oh, sire," exclaimed Count Haugwitz, in a tone of grievous reproach, "can your majesty really doubt my devotion and admiration? Was I not the first man to congratulate your majesty, the indomitable chieftain, on the fresh laurels with which you had wreathed your heroic brow, even in the cold days of winter?"

"It is true," said Napoleon, "you did so, but your compliment was intended for others; fate, however, had changed its address.* Of your sincerity I have hitherto had no proofs whatever, but a great many of your duplicity; for, at all events, you have affixed your name to the treaty of Potsdam?"

"I have done so, and boast of it," said Count Haugwitz, quickly. "A glance into the heart of Napoleon satisfied me that he who stands at the head of human greatness knew no higher aim than to give peace to mankind, and thus complete the great work which Providence has intrusted to him."

"Words, words!" said Napoleon. "Let me see actions at last. The instructions that were given to you before leaving Berlin have been annulled by the recent events in Moravia; we are agreed about this point. Now, you are a member of the Prussian cabinet. By sending you to me, the king has intrusted to you alone the welfare of his monarchy. We shall see, therefore, whether you will know how to profit by a rare, perhaps never-recurring opportunity, and to crown the work which Frederick II., notwithstanding his victories, left unfinished. Come hither and see."

He stepped rapidly to the table with the maps, and in obedience to a wave of his hand, Count Haugwitz glided, with his imperturbable smile, to his side.

"See here," exclaimed Napoleon, pointing at the map; "this is Silesia, your native country. The king does not rule over the whole

* The whole conversation is strictly in accordance with history.—Vide "Mémoires inédits du Comte de Haugwitz," 1837.

of it, the Emperor of Austria still retaining a portion of it; but that splendid province ought to belong exclusively to Prussia. We will see and consider how far your southern frontier ought to be extended. Just follow my finger on the map; it will designate to you the new boundaries of Prussian Silesia."*

And Napoleon's forefinger passed, flashing like a dagger-point, across the map, and encircled the whole Austrian portion of Silesia, from Teschen to the Saxon frontier, and from the mountains of Yablunka to the point where the Riesengebirge disappears in Lusatia.†

"Well," he then asked, hastily, "would not such an arrangement round off your Silesian province in the most desirable manner?"

Count Haugwitz did not reply immediately, but continued gazing at the map. Napoleon's eagle glance rested on him for a moment, and then passed on to the busts of Maria Theresa and Frederick the Great.

"Oh," he exclaimed, with a triumphant smile, pointing to the bust of Frederick, "that great man would have accepted my proposition without any hesitation whatever."

"Sire," said Count Haugwitz, hesitatingly, "but that great woman, Maria Theresa, would not have permitted it so easily."

"But now," exclaimed Napoleon, "now there is no Maria Theresa to hinder the King of Prussia; now I am here, and I grant the whole of Silesia to your king if he will conclude a close alliance with me. Consider well; can you be insensible of the glory which awaits you?"

And his eyes again pierced the embarrassed face of the count like two dagger-points.

"Sire," said Haugwitz, in a low voice, "your proposition is tempting, it is admirable; but as far as I know his majesty the king, I must—"

"Oh," said Napoleon, impatiently, "do not allude to the king and his person. We have nothing to do with that. You are minister, and it behooves you to fulfil the duties which your position demands from you, and to embrace the opportunity which will never return. One must be powerful, one can never be sufficiently so, believe me, and consider well before replying to me."

"But, perhaps, sire, it would be better for us to seek for aggrandizement on another side," said Haugwitz.

"On the side of Poland or France, I suppose?" asked Napoleon, harshly. "You would like to deprive me again of Mentz, Cleves, and the left bank of the Rhine, and you flirt with Russia and Aus-

* Napoleon's own words.—"Mémoires inédits," p. 17.

† Ibid., p. 18.

tria because you hope they might assist you one day, after all, in obtaining those territories? But, on the other hand, you would not like to quarrel with me, because there is a possibility that your hopes will not be fulfilled, and because, in such an eventuality, you would fear my enmity. You Prussians want to be the allies of every one; that is impossible, and you must decide for me or for the others. I demand sincerity, or shall break loose from you, for I prefer open enemies to false friends. Your king tolerates in Hanover a corps of thirty thousand men, which, through his states, keeps up a connection with the great Russian army; that is an act of open hostility. As for me, I attack my enemies wherever I may find them. If I wished to do so, I might take a terrible revenge for this dishonesty. I could invade Silesia, cause an insurrection in Poland, and deal Prussia blows from which she would never recover. But I prefer forgetting the past, and pursuing a generous course. I will, therefore, forgive Prussia's rashness, but only on condition that Prussia should unite with France by indissoluble ties; and as a guaranty of this alliance, I require Prussia to take possession of Hanover."*

"Sire," exclaimed Haugwitz, joyfully, "this was the desirable aggrandizement which I took the liberty of hinting at before, and I believe it is the only one which the king's conscience would allow him to accept."

"Very well, take Hanover, then," said Napoleon, "I cede my claims on it to Prussia; but in return Prussia cedes to France the principality of Neufchatel and the fortress of Wesel, and to Bavaria the principality of Anspach."

"But, sire," exclaimed Haugwitz, anxiously, "Anspach belongs to Prussia by virtue of family treaties which cannot be contested; and Neufchatel—"

"No objections," interrupted Napoleon, sternly; "my terms must be complied with. Either war or peace. War, that is to say, I crush Prussia, and become her inexorable enemy forever; peace, that is to say, I give you Hanover and receive for it Neufchatel, Wesel, and Anspach. Now, make up your mind quickly; I am tired of the eternal delay and procrastinations, I want you to come at length to a decision, and you will not leave this room until I have received a categorical reply. You have had time enough to take every thing into consideration; hence you must not equivocate any more. Tell me, therefore, quickly and categorically, what do you want, war or peace?"

"Sire," said Haugwitz, imploringly, "what else can Prussia want than peace with France."

* Napoleon's own words. — "Mémoires inédits," p. 20.

"Indeed, it is an excellent bargain you make on this occasion," exclaimed Napoleon. "Neufchatel is for Prussia a doomed position, to which, moreover, she has got but extremely doubtful rights. In return for it, for Wesel and Anspach, with their four hundred thousand inhabitants, you receive Hanover, which is contiguous to Prussia, and contains more than a million inhabitants! I believe Prussia ought to be content with such an aggrandizement."

"Sire," said Haugwitz, "she would be especially content if she should obtain the faithful and influential friendship of France, and be able to retain it forever."

"You may rely on my word," replied the emperor, "I am always faithful to my enemies as well as to my friends. I crush the former and promote the interests of the latter whenever an opportunity offers. We will, however, prove to each other that we are in earnest about this alliance, and draw up its stipulations even to-day. Grand-marshal Duroc has already received my instructions concerning this matter, and he will lay before you the particulars of the offensive and defensive alliance to be concluded between France and Prussia. Be kind enough to go to him and settle every thing with him, so that we may sign the document as soon as possible. Go, my dear count; but first accept my congratulations, for at this hour you have done an important service to Prussia: you have saved her from destruction. I should have crushed her like a toy in my hand if you had rejected my offers of friendship. Go, the grand-marshal is waiting for you."*

He nodded a parting greeting to the confused, almost stunned count, and returned to his maps, thus depriving the Prussian minister of the possibility of entering into further explanations. The latter heaved a profound sigh, and, walking backward, turned slowly to the door.

Napoleon took no further notice of him; he seemed wholly absorbed in his maps and plans; only when the door closed slowly behind the count, he said, in a low voice: "He will sign the treaty, and then Austria's last hope is gone! Now I shall assume a more

* The offensive and defensive alliance between the Emperor of France and the King of Prussia was concluded agreeably to the demands of Napoleon. Count Haugwitz, without obtaining further instructions from his sovereign, signed it on the 15th of December. The same day, in accordance with the treaty of Potsdam, he was to have delivered to Napoleon Prussia's declaration of war. Owing to the conclusion of this alliance, the position of Austria became utterly untenable, and she was obliged to accept the humiliating terms of Napoleon, and to sign, on the 26th of December, 1805, the peace of Presburg. This treaty deprived Austria of her best provinces, which were annexed to France, Bavaria, Wurtemberg and Baden. It is true, Prussia obtained the kingdom of Hanover by virtue of the treaty with France, but this was an illusory aggrandizement which Prussia would have to conquer, sword in hand, from England.

decided attitude in Presburg, and Austria will accept all my conditions: she will be obliged to cede to me the Netherlands, Venice, and Tuscany, for now she cannot count any longer on Prussia's armed intervention."

CHAPTER LIII.

JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES.

NAPOLEON was still engaged in studying his maps and in changing the positions of the pins on it. From time to time he was interrupted in this occupation by couriers bringing fresh dispatches from Presburg or France, but he constantly returned to his maps, and his finger passing over them extinguished kingdoms and boundaries to create new states in their places.

Evening was already drawing near, and the emperor was still in his cabinet. The door had already been opened repeatedly in a cautious manner, and Constant, the *valet de chambre*, had looked in with prying eyes, but seeing the emperor so busily engaged, he had always withdrawn cautiously and inaudibly. At length, however, he seemed tired of waiting any longer, and instead of withdrawing, again he entered and closed the door noiselessly.

The noise caused the emperor to start up.

"Well, Constant, what is the matter?" he asked.

"Sire," whispered Constant, in a low voice, as though he were afraid the walls might hear him, "sire, that distinguished lady has been here for an hour; she is waiting for the audience your majesty has granted to her."

"Ah, the countess or princess," said Napoleon, carelessly, "the foolish person who asserts that she hated me formerly but loves me now?"

"Sire, she speaks of your majesty in terms of the most unbounded enthusiasm!"

"Ah, bah! Women like to be enthusiastic admirers of somebody, and to worship him with the gushing transports of their tender hearts! Would so many women go into convents and call Christ their bridegroom, if it were not so? But what is the name of this lady who has been pleased to fall in love with me?"

"Sire, I believe, the only condition she stipulated was that your majesty should not ask for her name."

The emperor frowned. "And you would persuade me to receive this nameless woman? Who knows but she may be a mere intriguer anxious to penetrate to me for some dark purpose?"

"Sire, one of the most faithful adherents and admirers of your majesty, M. von Brandt, formerly major in the Austrian service, pledges his word of honor that she is not, and—"

At this moment the door was opened violently, and Grand-marshal Duroc entered.

"Ah, your majesty is here still!" he exclaimed, joyfully. "Your majesty has not yet received the lady?"

"Well, does that concern you?" asked Napoleon, smiling. "You are jealous, perhaps? This lady is said to be very beautiful."

"Sire," said Duroc, solemnly, "even though she were as beautiful as Cleopatra, your majesty ought not to receive her."

"I ought not?" asked Napoleon, sternly. "What should prevent me from doing so?"

"Sire, the sacred duty to preserve yourself to your people, to your empire. This lady who tries to penetrate with so much passionate violence to your majesty is a dangerous intriguer, a mortal enemy of France and your majesty."

Napoleon cast a triumphant glance on Constant, who, pale and trembling, was leaning against the wall.

"Well," he asked, "will you defend her still?"

Without waiting for Constant's reply, he turned again to the grand-marshal.

"Whence did you obtain this information?"

"Sire, the governor of Vienna, M. de Vincennes, has just arrived here in the utmost haste. His horse fell half dead to the ground when he entered the court-yard. He feared that he might be too late."

"How too late?"

"Too late to warn your majesty from this lady, who has evidently come to carry out some criminal enterprise."

"Ah, bah! she was, perhaps, going to assassinate me?"

"Sire, that is what M. de Vincennes asserts."

"Ah!" exclaimed Napoleon, turning once more toward Constant, "did you not tell me that she was deeply enamoured of me? Is the governor here still?"

"Yes, sire; he wants to know whether he shall not immediately arrest the lady and closely question her."

Napoleon was silent for a moment, and seemed to reflect.

"Constant," he then said, "tell M. de Vincennes to come hither. I myself want to speak to him."

Constant went at once into the anteroom and returned in a minute, to introduce the governor of Vienna, M. de Vincennes.

Napoleon hastily went to meet him. "You have come to warn me," he said, sternly. "What are your reasons for doing so?"