

an Austrian just as Brutus became a servant of the kings; become an Austrian in order to save Germany!"

"Ah, you want to entice me, Delilah!" exclaimed Gentz. "You want to show me a beautiful goal in order to make me walk the tortuous paths which may lead thither! No, Delilah, it is in vain! I shall stay here; I shall not go to Austria, for Austria is the state that is going to betray Germany. Prussia may be able to save her; she stands perhaps in need of my arm, my pen, and my tongue for that purpose. I am a German, but first of all I am a Prussian, and every good patriot ought first to serve his immediate country, and wait until she calls him. I still hope that the king will prove the right man for his responsible position; I still expect that he will succeed in rendering Prussia great and Germany free. I must, therefore, remain a Prussian as yet and be ready to serve my country."

"Poor enthusiast! You will regret some day having lost your time by indulging in visionary hopes."

"Well, I will promise, whenever that day comes, whenever Prussia declares that she does not want my services, then I will come to you—then you shall enlist me for Austria, and perhaps I may then still be able to do something for Germany. But until then, leave me here. I swear to you, not a word of what you have just told me here shall be betrayed by my lips; but I cannot serve him who has betrayed Germany."

"You cannot be induced; then, to accept my offer? You want to stay here? You refuse to accompany me to Vienna, to Rastadt, in order to save what may yet be saved for Germany?"

"If I had an army under my command," exclaimed Gentz, with flaming eyes, "if I were the King of Prussia, then I should assuredly go to Rastadt, but I should go thither for the purpose of dispersing all those hypocrites, cowards, and scribblers who call themselves statesmen, and of driving those French republicans who put on such disgusting airs, and try to make us believe they had a perfect right to meddle with the domestic affairs of Germany—beyond the Rhine! I should go thither for the purpose of garrisoning the fortresses of the Rhine—which the Emperor of Germany is going to surrender to the tender mercies of the enemy—with my troops, and of defending them against all foes from without or from within. That would be my policy if I were King of Prussia. But being merely the poor military counsellor, Frederick Gentz, and having nothing but some ability and a sharp pen, I shall stay here and wait to see whether or not Prussia will make use of my ability and of my pen. God save Germany and protect her from her physicians who are concocting a fatal draught for her at Rastadt! God save Germany!"

FRANCE AND GERMANY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CITOYENNE JOSEPHINE BONAPARTE.

A JOYFUL commotion reigned on the eighth of November, 1797, in the streets and public places of the German fortress of Rastadt. The whole population of the lower classes had gathered in the streets, while the more aristocratic inhabitants appeared at the open windows of their houses in eager expectation of the remarkable event for which not only the people of the whole city, but also the foreign ambassadors, a large number of whom had arrived at Rastadt, were looking with the liveliest symptoms of impatience.

And, indeed, a rare spectacle was in store for them. It was the arrival of General Bonaparte and his wife Josephine that all were waiting for this morning. They were not to arrive together, however, but both were to reach the city by a different route. Josephine, who was expected to arrive first, was coming from Milan by the shortest and most direct route; while Bonaparte had undertaken a more extended journey from Campo Formio through Italy and Switzerland. It was well known already that he had been received everywhere with the most unbounded enthusiasm, and that all nations had hailed him as the Messiah of liberty. There had not been a single city that had not received him with splendid festivities, and honors had been paid to him as though he were not only a triumphant victor, but an exalted ruler, to whom every one was willing to submit. Even free Switzerland had formed no exception. At Geneva the daughters of the first and most distinguished families, clad in the French colors, had presented to him in the name of the city a laurel-wreath. At Berne, his carriage had passed through two lines of handsomely decorated coaches, filled with beautiful and richly adorned ladies, who had hailed him with the jubilant shout of "Long live the pacificator!"

In the same manner the highest honors had been paid to his wife Josephine, who had been treated everywhere with the deference due to a sovereign princess. The news of these splendid receptions had reached Rastadt already; and it was but natural that the authorities

and citizens of the fortress did not wish to be outdone, and that they had made extensive arrangements for welcoming the conqueror of Italy in a becoming manner.

A magnificent triumphal arch had been erected in front of the gate through which General Bonaparte was to enter the city, and under it the city fathers, clad in their official robes, were waiting for the victorious hero, in order to conduct him to the house that had been selected for him. In front of this house, situated on the large market-place, a number of young and pretty girls, dressed in white, and carrying baskets with flowers and fruits which they were to lay at the feet of the general's beautiful wife, had assembled. At the gate through which Josephine was to arrive, a brilliant cavalcade of horsemen had gathered for the purpose of welcoming the lady of the great French chieftain, and of escorting her as a guard of honor.

Among these cavaliers there were most of the ambassadors from the different parts of Germany, who had met here at Rastadt in order to accomplish the great work of peace. Every sovereign German prince, every elector and independent count had sent his delegates to the southwestern fortress for the purpose of negotiating with the French plenipotentiaries concerning the future destinies of Germany. Even Sweden had sent a representative, who had not appeared so much, however, in order to take care of the interests of Swedish Pomerania, as to play the part of a mediator and reconciler.

All these ambassadors had been allowed to enter Rastadt quietly and entirely unnoticed. The *German* city had failed to pay any public honors to these distinguished *German* noblemen; but every one hastened to exhibit the greatest deference to the French general—and even the ambassadors deemed it prudent to participate in these demonstrations: only they tried to display, even on this occasion, their accustomed diplomacy, and instead of receiving the victorious chieftain in the capacity of humble vassals, they preferred to present their respects as gallant cavaliers to his beautiful wife and to escort her into the city.

The German ambassadors, therefore, were waiting for Mme. General Bonaparte on their magnificent prancing steeds in front of the gate through which she was to pass. Even old Count Metternich, the delegate of the Emperor of Austria and ruler of the empire, notwithstanding the stiffness of his limbs, had mounted his horse; by his side the other two ambassadors of Austria were halting—Count Lehrbach, the Austrian member of the imperial commission, and Count Louis Cobenzl, who was acting as a delegate for Bohemia and Hungary. Behind old Count Metternich, on a splendid and most fiery charger, a young cavalier of tall figure and rare manly beauty

might be seen; it was young Count Clemens Metternich, who was to represent the corporation of the Counts of Westphalia, and to begin his official diplomatic career here at Rastadt under the eye of his aged father. By his side the imposing and grave ambassadors of Prussia made their appearance—Count Goertz, who at the time of the war for the succession in Bavaria had played a part so important for Prussia and so hostile to Austria; and Baron Dohm, no less distinguished as a cavalier, than as a writer. Not far from them the representatives of Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemberg, and of the whole host of the so-called "Immediates" * might be seen, whom the editors and correspondents had joined, that had repaired to Rastadt in the hope of finding there a perfect gold-mine for their greedy pens. But not merely the German diplomatists and the aristocratic young men of Rastadt were waiting here for the arrival of Mme. General Bonaparte; there was also the whole crowd of French singers, actors, and adventurers who had flocked to the Congress of Rastadt for the purpose of amusing the distinguished noblemen and delegates by their vaudevilles, comedies, and gay operas. Finally, there were also the French actresses and ballet-girls, who, dressed in the highest style of fashion, were occupying on one side of the road a long row of splendid carriages. Many of these carriages were decorated on their doors with large coats-of-arms, and a person well versed in heraldry might have easily seen therefrom that these escutcheons indicated some of the noble diplomatists on the other side of the road to be the owners of the carriages. In fact, a very cordial and friendly understanding seemed to prevail between the diplomatists and the ladies of the French theatre. This was not only evident from the German diplomatists having lent their carriages to the French ladies for the day's reception, but likewise from the ardent, tender, and amorous glances that were being exchanged between them, from their significant smiles, and from their stealthy nods and mute but eloquent greetings.

Suddenly, however, this mimical flirtation was interrupted by the rapid approach of a courier. This was the signal announcing the impending arrival of Josephine Bonaparte. In fact, the heads of four horses were seen already in the distance; they came nearer and nearer, and now the carriage drawn by these horses, and a lady occupying it, could be plainly discerned.

It was a wonderful warm day in November. Josephine, therefore, had caused the top of her carriage to be taken down, and the spectators were able, not merely to behold her face, but to scan most leisurely her whole figure and even her costume. The carriage had

* The noblemen owning territory in the states of secondary princes, but subject only to the authority of the emperor, were called "*Immediates*."

approached at full gallop, but now, upon drawing near to the crowd assembled in front of the gate, it slackened its speed, and every one had time and leisure to contemplate the lady enthroned in the carriage. She was no longer in the first bloom of youth; more than thirty years had passed already over her head; they had deprived her complexion of its natural freshness, and left the first slight traces of age upon her pure and noble forehead. But her large dark eyes were beaming still in the imperishable fire of her inward youth, and a sweet and winning smile, illuminating her whole countenance as though a ray of the setting sun had fallen upon it, was playing around her charming lips. Her graceful and elegant figure was wrapped in a closely fitting gown of dark-green velvet, richly trimmed with costly furs, and a small bonnet, likewise trimmed with furs, covered her head, and under this bonnet luxuriant dark ringlets were flowing down, surrounding the beautiful and noble oval of her face with a most becoming frame.

Josephine Bonaparte was still a most attractive and lovely woman, and on beholding her it was easily understood why Bonaparte, although much younger, had been so fascinated by this charming lady and loved her with such passionate tenderness.

The French actors now gave vent to their delight by loud cheers, and rapturously waving their hats, they shouted: "*Vive la citoyenne Bonaparte! Vive l'auguste épouse de l'Italique!*"

Josephine nodded eagerly and with affable condescension to the enthusiastic crowd, and slowly passed on. On approaching the diplomatists, she assumed a graver and more erect attitude; she acknowledged the low, respectful obeisances of the cavaliers with the distinguished, careless, and yet polite bearing of a queen, and seemed to have for every one a grateful glance and a kind smile. Every one was satisfied that she had especially noticed and distinguished him, and every one, therefore, felt flattered and elated. From the diplomatists she turned her face for a moment to the other side, toward the ladies seated in the magnificent carriages. But her piercing eye, her delicate womanly instinct told her at a glance that these ladies, in spite of the splendor surrounding them, were no representatives of the aristocracy; she therefore greeted them with a rapid nod, a kind smile, and a graceful wave of her hand, and then averted her head again.

Her carriage now passed through the gate, the cavaliers surrounding it on both sides, and thereby separating the distinguished lady from her attendants, who were following her in four large coaches. These were joined by the carriages of the actresses, by whose sides the heroes of the stage were cantering and exhibiting their horsemanship to the laughing belles with painted cheeks.

It was a long and brilliant procession with which Mme. General Bonaparte made her entrance into Rastadt, and the last of the carriages had not yet reached the gate, when Josephine's carriage had already arrived on the market-place and halted in front of the house she was to occupy with her husband. Before the footman had had time to alight from the box, Josephine herself had already opened the coach door in order to meet the young ladies who were waiting for her at the door of her house, and to give them a flattering proof of her affability. In polite haste she descended from the carriage and stepped into their midst, tendering her hands to those immediately surrounding her, and whispering grateful words of thanks to them for the beautiful flowers and fruits, and thanking the more distant girls with winning nods and smiling glances. Her manners were aristocratic and withal simple; every gesture of hers, every nod, every wave of her hand was queenly and yet modest, unassuming and entirely devoid of haughtiness, just as it behooved a prominent daughter of the great Republic which had chosen for her motto "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité.*"

Laden with flowers, and laughing as merrily as a young girl, Josephine finally entered the house; in the hall of the latter the ladies of the French ambassadors, the wives and daughters of Bonnier Reberjot and Jean Debry, were waiting for her. Josephine, who among the young girls just now had been all hilarity, grace, and familiarity, now again assumed the bearing of a distinguished lady, of the consort of General Bonaparte, and received the salutations of the ladies with condescending reserve. She handed, however, to each of the ladies one of her splendid bouquets, and had a pleasant word for every one. On arriving at the door of the rooms destined for her private use, she dismissed the ladies and beckoned her maid to follow her.

"Now, Amelia," she said hurriedly, as soon as the door had closed behind them—"now let us immediately attend to my wardrobe. I know Bonaparte—he is always impetuous and impatient, and he regularly arrives sooner than he has stated himself. He was to be here at two o'clock, but he will arrive at one o'clock, and it is now almost noon. Have the trunks brought up at once, for it is high time for me to dress."

Amelia hastened to carry out her mistress's orders, and Josephine was alone. She hurriedly stepped to the large looking-glass in the bedroom and closely scanned in it her own features.

"Oh, oh! I am growing old," she muttered after a while. "Bonaparte must love me tenderly, very tenderly, not to notice it, or I must use great skill not to let him see it. *Eh bien, nous verrons!*"

And she glanced at herself with such a triumphant, charming

smile that her features at once seemed to grow younger by ten years. "Oh, he shall find me beautiful—he shall love me," she whispered, "for I love him so tenderly."

Just then Amelia entered loaded with bandboxes and *cartons*, and followed by the servants carrying the heavy trunks. Josephine personally superintended the lowering of the trunks for the purpose of preventing the men from injuring any of those delicate *cartons*; and when every thing was at last duly arranged, she looked around with the triumphant air of a great general mustering his troops and conceiving the plans for his battle.

"Now lock the door and admit no one, Amelia," she said, rapidly divesting herself of her travelling-dress. "Within an hour I must be ready to receive the general. But stop! We must first think of Zephyr, who is sick and exhausted. The dear little fellow cannot stand travelling in a coach. He frequently looked at me on the road most dolorously and imploringly, as if he wanted to beseech me to discontinue these eternal travels. Come, Zephyr; come, my dear little fellow."

On hearing her voice, a small, fat pug-dog, with a morose face and a black nose, arose from the trunk on which he had been lying, and waddled slowly and lazily to his mistress.

"I really believe Zephyr is angry with me," exclaimed Josephine, laughing heartily. "Just look at him, Amelia—just notice this reserved twinkling of his eyes, this snuffling pug-nose of his, this proudly-erect head that seems to smell roast meat and at the same time to utter invectives! He exactly resembles my friend Tallien when the latter is making love to the ladies. Come, my little Tallien, I will give you some sweetmeats, but in return you must be kind and amiable toward Bonaparte; you must not bark so furiously when he enters; you must not snap at his legs when he gives me a kiss; you must not snarl when he inadvertently steps on your toes. Oh, be gentle, kind, and amiable, my beautiful Zephyr, so as not to exasperate Bonaparte, for you know very well that he does not like dogs, and that he would throw you out of the window rather than suffer you at my feet."

Patting the dog tenderly, she lifted him upon an arm-chair, and then spread out biscuits and sweetmeats before him, which Zephyr commenced examining with a dignified snuffling of the nose.

"Now, Amelia, we will attend to my toilet," said Josephine, when she saw that Zephyr condescended to eat some of the biscuits.

Amelia had opened all the trunks and placed a large number of small jars and vials on the dressing-table. Josephine's beauty stood already in need of some assistance, and the amiable lady was by no means disinclined to resort to cosmetics for this purpose. It is true,

the republican customs of the times despised rouge, for the latter had been very fashionable during the reign of the "tyrant" Louis XVI., and Marie Antoinette had greatly patronized this fashion and always painted her cheeks. Nevertheless Josephine found rouge to be an indispensable complement to beauty, and, as public opinion was adverse to it, she kept her use of it profoundly secret. Amelia alone saw and knew it—Amelia alone was a witness to all the little secrets and artifices by which Josephine, the woman of thirty-three years, had to bolster up her beauty. But only the head stood in need of some artificial assistance. The body was as yet youthful, prepossessing, and remarkable for its attractiveness and luxuriant forms, and when Josephine now had finished her task, she was truly a woman of enchanting beauty and loveliness. Her eyes were so radiant and fiery, her smile so sweet and sure of her impending triumph, and the heavy white silk dress closely enveloped her figure, lending an additional charm to its graceful and classical outlines.

"Now, a few jewels," said Josephine; "give me some diamonds, Amelia; Bonaparte likes brilliant, sparkling trinkets. Come, I will select them myself."

She took from Amelia's hands the large case containing all of her caskets, and glanced at them with a smile of great satisfaction.

"Italy is very rich in precious trinkets and rare gems," she said, with a gentle shake of her head. "When, a few months ago, I came thither from Paris, I had only three caskets, and the jewelry they contained was not very valuable. Now, I count here twenty-four *étuis*, and they are filled with the choicest trinkets. Just look at these magnificent pearls which the Marquis de Lambertin has given to me. He is an old man, and I could not refuse his princely gift. This casket contains a bracelet which Mancini, the last Doge of Venice, presented to me, and which he assured me was wrought by Benvenuto Cellini for one of his great-great-grandmothers. This splendid set of corals and diamonds was given to me by the city of Genoa when she implored my protection and begged me to intercede with Bonaparte for her. And here—but do you not hear the shouts? What does it mean? Should Bonaparte—"

She did not finish the sentence, but hastened to the window. The market-place, which she was able to overlook from there, was now crowded with people, but the dense masses had not assembled for the purpose of seeing Josephine. All eyes were directed toward yonder street from which constantly fresh and jubilant crowds of people were hurrying toward the market-place, and where tremendous cheers, approaching closer and closer, resounded like the angry roar of the sea. Now some white dots might be discerned in the midst of the surging black mass. They came nearer and grew more

distinct; these dots were the heads of white horses. They advanced very slowly, but the cheers made the welkin ring more rapidly and were reëchoed by thousands and thousands of voices.

Amidst these jubilant cheers the procession drew near; now it turned from the street into the market-place. Josephine, uttering a joyful cry, opened the window and waved her hand, for it was Bonaparte whom the excited masses were cheering.

He sat all alone in an open barouche, drawn by six milk-white horses magnificently caparisoned in a silver harness.*

Leaning back into the cushions in a careless and fatigued manner, he scarcely seemed to notice the tremendous ovation that was tendered to him. His face looked pale and tired; a cloud had settled on his expansive marble forehead, and when he from time to time bowed his thanks, he did so with a weary and melancholy smile. But it was exactly this cold, tranquil demeanor, this humble reserve, this pale and gloomy countenance that seemed to strike the spectators and fill them with a feeling of strange delight and wondering awe. In this pale, cold, sombre, and imposing face there was scarcely a feature that seemed to belong to a mortal, earth-born being. It seemed as though the spectre of one of the old Roman emperors, as though the shadow of Julius Cæsar had taken a seat in that carriage, and allowed the milk-white horses to draw him into the surging bustle and turmoil of life. People were cheering half from astonishment, half from fear; they were shouting, "Long live Bonaparte!" as if they wanted to satisfy themselves that he was really alive, and not merely the image of an antique imperator.

The carriage now stopped in front of the house. Before rising from his seat, Bonaparte raised his eyes hastily to the windows. On seeing Josephine, who stood at the open window, his features became more animated, and a long, fiery flash from his eyes struck her face. But he did not salute her, and the cloud on his brow grew even gloomier than before.

"He is in bad humor and angry," whispered Josephine, closing the window, "and I am afraid he is angry with me. Good Heaven! what can it be again? What may be the cause of his anger? I am sure I have committed no imprudence—"

Just then the door was hastily opened, and Bonaparte entered.

* "These six horses with their magnificent harness were a gift from the Emperor of Austria, who had presented them to Bonaparte after the peace of Campo Formio. Bonaparte had rejected all other offers."—*Bourrienne*, vol. i., p. 339.

CHAPTER XIX.

BONAPARTE AND JOSEPHINE.

BONAPARTE had scarcely deigned to glance at the French ambassadors and their ladies, who had received him at the foot of the staircase. All his thoughts centred in Josephine. And bowing slightly to the ladies and gentlemen, he had impetuously rushed upstairs and opened the door, satisfied that she would be there and receive him with open arms. When he did not see her, he passed on, pale, with a gloomy face, and resembling an angry lion.

Thus he now rushed into the front room where he found Josephine. Without saluting her, and merely fixing his flashing eyes upon her, he asked in a subdued, angry voice: "Madame, you do not even deem it worth the trouble to salute me! You do not come to meet me!"

"But, Bonaparte, you have given me no time for it," said Josephine, with a charming smile. "While I thought you were just about to alight from your carriage, you burst already into this room like a thunder-bolt from heaven."

"Oh, and that has dazzled your eyes so much that you are even unable to salute me?" he asked angrily.

"And you, Bonaparte?" she asked, tenderly. "You do not open your arms to me! You do not welcome me! Instead of pressing me to your heart, you scold me! Oh, come, my friend, let us not pass this first hour in so unpleasant a manner! We have not seen each other for almost two months, and—"

"Ah, madame, then you know that at least," exclaimed Bonaparte; "then you have not entirely forgotten that you took leave of me two months ago, and that you swore to me at that time eternal love and fidelity, and promised most sacredly to write to me every day. You have not kept your oaths and pledges, madame!"

"But, my friend, I have written to you whenever I was told that a courier would set out for your headquarters."

"You ought to have sent every day a courier of your own for the purpose of transmitting your letters to me," exclaimed Bonaparte, wildly stamping his foot, so that the jars and vials on the table rattled violently, while Zephyr jumped down from his arm-chair and commenced snarling. Josephine looked anxiously at him and tried to calm him by her gestures.

Bonaparte continued: "Letters! But those scraps I received from time to time were not even letters. Official bulletins of your health they were, and as cold as ice. Madame, how could you write

such letters to me, and moreover only every fourth day? If you really loved me, you would have written every day. But you do not love me any longer; I know it. Your love was but a passing whim. You feel now how ridiculous it would be for you to love a poor man who is nothing but a soldier, and who has to offer nothing to you but a little glory and his love. But I shall banish this love from my heart, should I have to tear my heart with my own teeth.*

"Bonaparte," exclaimed Josephine, half tenderly, half anxiously, "what have I done that you should be angry with me? Why do you accuse me of indifference, while you know very well that I love you?"

"Ah, it is a very cold love, at all events," he said, sarcastically. "It is true, I am only your husband, and it is not in accordance with aristocratic manners to love one's husband; that is mean, vulgar, republican! But I am a republican, and I do not want any wife with the manners and habits of the *ancien régime*. I am your husband, but woe to him who seeks to become my wife's lover! I would not even need my sword in order to kill him. My eyes alone would crush him!† And I shall know how to find him; and if he should escape to the most remote regions, my arm is a far-reaching one, and I will extend it over the whole world in order to grasp him."

"But whom do you allude to?" asked Josephine, in dismay.

"Whom?" he exclaimed in a thundering voice. "Ah, madame, you believe I do not know what has occurred? You believe I see and hear nothing when I am no longer with you? Let me compliment you, madame! The handsome aide-de-camp of Leclerc is a conquest which the ladies of Milan must have been jealous of; and Botot, the spy, whom Barras sent after me, passes even at Paris for an Adonis. What do you mean by your familiarities with these two men, madame? You received Adjutant Charles at eleven o'clock in the morning, while you never leave your bed before one o'clock. Oh, that handsome young fellow wanted to tell you how he was yearning for his home in Paris, and what his mother and sister had written to him, I suppose? For that reason so convenient an hour had to be chosen? For that reason he came at eleven o'clock while you were in bed yet. His ardor was so intense, and if he had been compelled to wait until one o'clock, impatience would have burned his soul to ashes!‡

"He wanted to set out for Paris precisely at twelve o'clock. That

* Bonaparte's own words.—Vide "Lettres à Joséphine. Mémoires d'une Contemporaine," vol. i., p. 353.

† Bonaparte's own words.—Ibid.

‡ Bonaparte's own words.—Vide "Mémoires d'un Contemporaine," vol. ii., p. 360.

was the only reason why I received him so early, my friend," said Josephine, gently.

"Oh, then, you do not deny that you have actually received him?" shouted Bonaparte, and his face turned livid. With flaming eyes and uplifted hand, he stepped up close to Josephine. "Madame," he exclaimed, in a thundering voice, "then you dare to acknowledge that Charles is your lover?"

Before Josephine had time to reply to him Zephyr, who saw him threaten his mistress, furiously pounced upon Bonaparte, barking and howling, showing his teeth, and quite ready to lacerate whom he supposed to be Josephine's enemy.

"Ah, this accursed dog is here, too, to torment me!" exclaimed Bonaparte, and raising his foot, he stamped with crushing force on the body of the little dog. A single piercing yell was heard; then the blood gushed from Zephyr's mouth, and the poor beast lay writhing convulsively on the floor.*

"Bonaparte, you have killed my dog," exclaimed Josephine, reproachfully, and bent over the dying animal.

"Yes," he said, with an air of savage joy, "I have killed your dog, and in the same manner I shall crush every living being that dares to step between you and myself!"

Josephine had taken no notice of his words. She had knelt down by the side of the dog, and tenderly patted his head and writhing limbs till they ceased moving.

"Zephyr is dead," she said rising. "Poor little fellow, he died because he loved me. Pardon me, general, if I weep for him. But Zephyr was a cherished souvenir from a friend who died only a short while ago. General Hoche had given the dog to me."

"Hoche?" asked Bonaparte, in some confusion.

"Yes, Lazarus Hoche, who died a few weeks ago. A few days before his death he sent the dog to me while at Milan—Lazarus Hoche who, you know it very well, loved me, and whose hand I rejected because I loved you," said Josephine, with a noble dignity and calmness, which made a deeper impression upon Bonaparte than the most poignant rebuke would have done.

"And now, general," she proceeded, "I will reply to your reproaches. I do not say that I shall *justify* myself, because I thereby would acknowledge the justice of your charges, but I will merely answer them. I told you already why I admitted Charles at so early an hour. He was about to set out for Paris, and I wished to intrust to him important and secret letters and other commissions."

"Why did not you send them by a special courier?" asked Bonaparte, but in a much gentler voice than before.

* Vide "Rheinischer-Antiquar.," vol. ii., p. 574.

"Because it would have been dangerous to send my letters to Botot by a courier," said Josephine, calmly.

"To Botot? Then you admit your familiarities with Botot, too? People did not deceive me, then, when they told me that you received this spy Botot, whom Barras had sent after me, in order to watch me, every morning in your boudoir—that you always sent your maid away as soon as he came, and that your interviews with him frequently lasted for hours?"

"That is quite true; I do not deny it," said Josephine, proudly.

Bonaparte uttered an oath, and was about to rush at her. But she receded a step, and pointing at the dead dog with a rapid gesture, she said: "General, take care! There is no other dog here for you to kill, and I am only a weak, defenceless woman; it would assuredly not behoove the victor of Arcole to attack me!"

Bonaparte dropped his arm, and, evidently ashamed of himself, stepped back several paces.

"Then you do not deny your intimate intercourse with Botot and Charles?"

"I do not deny that both of them love me, that I know it, and that I have taken advantage of their love. Listen to me, general: I have taken *advantage* of their love. That is mean and abominable; it is playing in an execrable manner with the most exalted feelings of others, I know it very well, but I did so for your sake, general—I did so in your interest."

"In my interest?" asked Bonaparte, in surprise.

"Yes, in your interest," she said. "Now I can tell and confess every thing to you. But as long as Charles and Botot were present, I could not do so, for if you had ceased being jealous—if, warned by myself, you had treated these two men kindly instead of showing your jealous distrust of them by a hostile and surly demeanor, they might have suspected my game and divined my intrigue, and I would have been unable to avail myself any longer of their services."

"But, for God's sake, tell me what did you need their services for?"

"Ah, sir, I perceive that you know better how to wield the sword than unravel intrigues," said Josephine, with a charming smile. "Well, I made use of my two lovers in order to draw their secrets from them. And secrets they had, general, for you know Botot is the most intimate and influential friend of Barras, and Madame Tallien adores Charles, the handsome aide-de-camp. She has no secrets that he is not fully aware of, and she does whatever he wants her to do; and again, whatever she wants to be done, her husband will do—her husband, that excellent Tallien, who with Barras is one of the five directors of our republic."

"Oh, women, women!" muttered Bonaparte.

Josephine continued: "In this manner, general, I learned every scheme and almost every idea of the Directory; in this manner, through my devoted friends, Botot and Charles, I have succeeded in averting many a foul blow from your own head. For you were menaced, general, and you are menaced still. And what is menacing you? That is your glory and your greatness—it is the jealousy of the five kings of France, who, under the name of directors, are now reigning at the Luxemburg. The Quintumvirate beheld your growing power and glory with terror and wrath, and all endeavors of theirs only aimed at lessening your influence. A favorite way of theirs for carrying out their designs against you was the circulation of false news concerning you. Botot told me that Barras had even hired editors to write against you, and to question your integrity. These editors now published letters purporting to come from Verona, and announcing that Bonaparte was about to proclaim himself dictator. Then, again, they stated in some letter from the frontier, or from a foreign country, that the whole of Lombardy was again on the eve of an insurrection; that the Italians detested the tyranny imposed upon them by the conqueror, and that they were anxious to recall their former sovereigns."

"Ah, the miserable villains!" exclaimed Bonaparte, gnashing his teeth, "I—"

"Hush, general! listen to my whole reply to your reproaches," said Josephine, with imperious calmness. "At some other time these hirelings of the press announced in a letter from Turin that an extensive conspiracy was about to break out at Paris; that the Directory was to be overthrown by this conspiracy, and that a dictatorship, at the head of which Bonaparte would be, was to take place. They further circulated the news all over the departments, that the ringleaders of the plot had been arrested and sent to the military commissions for trial; but that the conqueror of Italy had deemed it prudent to avoid arrest by running away."*

"That is a truly infernal web of lies and infamies!" ejaculated Bonaparte, furiously. "But I shall justify myself, I will go to Paris and hurl the calumnies of these miserable Directors back into their teeth!"

"General, there is no necessity for you to descend into the arena in order to defend yourself," said Josephine, smiling. "Your actions speak for you, and your friends are watching over you. Whenever such an article appeared in the newspapers, Botot forwarded it to me; whenever the Directory sprang a new mine, Botot sent me word of it. And then I enlisted the assistance of my friend

* Le Normand, Mémoires, vol. i., p. 267.

Charles, and he had to refute those articles through a journalist who was in my pay, and to foil the mine by means of a counter-mine."

"Oh, Josephine, how can I thank you for what you have done for me!" exclaimed Bonaparte, enthusiastically. "How—"

"I am not through yet, general," she interrupted him, coldly. "Those refutations and the true accounts of your glorious deeds found an enthusiastic echo throughout the whole of France, and every one was anxious to see you in the full splendor of your glory, and to do homage to you at Paris. But the jealous Directory calculated in advance how dangerous the splendor of your glory would be to the statesmen of the Republic, and how greatly your return would eclipse the five kings. For that reason they resolved to keep you away from Paris; for that reason exclusively they appointed you first plenipotentiary at the congress about to be opened at Rastadt, and intrusted the task to you to exert yourself here for the conclusion of peace. They wanted to chain the lion and make him feel that he has got a master whom he must obey."

"But the lion will break the chain, and he will not obey," exclaimed Bonaparte, angrily. "I shall leave Rastadt on this very day and hasten to Paris."

"Wait a few days, general," said Josephine, smiling. "It will be unnecessary for you to take violent steps, my friends Botot and Charles having worked with me for you. Botot alone not being sufficiently powerful, inasmuch as he could influence none but Barras, I sent Charles to his assistance in order to act upon Madame Tallien. And the stratagem was successful. Take this letter which I received only yesterday through a special messenger from Botot—you know Botot's handwriting, I suppose?"

"Yes, I know it."

"Well, then, satisfy yourself that he has really written it," said Josephine, drawing a sheet of paper from her memorandum-book and handing it to Bonaparte.

He glanced at it without touching the paper. "Yes, it is Botot's handwriting," he murmured.

"Read it, general," said Josephine.

"I do not want to read it; I believe all you tell me!" he exclaimed, impetuously.

"I shall read it to you," she said, "for the contents will interest you. Listen therefore: 'Adored Citoyenne Josephine.—We have reached the goal—we have conquered! The Directory have at length listened to wise remonstrances. They have perceived that they stand in need of a strong and powerful arm to support them, and of a pillar to lean against. They will recall Bonaparte in order that he may become their pillar and arm. In a few days a courier will

reach Bonaparte at Rastadt and recall him to Paris.—BOTOT.' That is all there is in the letter, General; it contains nothing about love, but only speaks of you."

"I see that I am the happiest of mortals," exclaimed Bonaparte, joyfully; "for I shall return to Paris, and my beautiful, noble, and adored Josephine will accompany me."

"No, general," she said, solemnly, "I shall return to Italy; I shall bury myself in some convent in order to weep there over the short dream of my happiness, and to pray for you. Now I have told you every thing I had to say to you. I have replied to your reproaches. You see that I have meanly profited by the love of these poor men, that I have made a disgraceful use of the most sacred feeling in order to promote your interests. I did so *secretly*, for I told you already, general, your valorous hand knows better how to wield the sword than to carry on intrigues. A strong grasp of this hand might have easily destroyed the whole artificial web of my plans, and for this reason I was silent. But I counted on your confidence, on your esteem. I perceive now, however, that I do not possess them, and this separates us forever. Unreserved confidence is not only the nourishment that imparts life to friendship, but without it love also pines away and dies.* Farewell, then, general; I forgive your distrust, but I cannot expose myself any longer to your anger. Farewell!"

She bowed and turned to the door. But Bonaparte followed her, and keeping her back with both hands, he said, in a voice trembling with emotion: "Where are you going, Josephine?"

"I told you already," she sighed, painfully; "I am going to a convent to weep and pray for you."

"That means that you want to kill me!" he exclaimed, with flaming eyes. "For you know I cannot live without you. If I had to lose you, your love, your charming person, I would lose every thing rendering life pleasant and desirable for me. Josephine, you are to me a world that is incomprehensible to me, and every day I love you more passionately. Even when I do not see you, my love for you is constantly growing; for absence only destroys small passions; it increases great passions.† My heart never felt any of the former. It proudly refused to fall in love, but you have filled it with a boundless passion, with an intoxication that seems to be almost degrading. You were always the predominant idea of my soul; your whims even were sacred laws for me. To see you is my highest bliss; you are beautiful and enchanting; your gentle, angelic soul is depicted in your features. Oh, I adore you just as

* Josephine's own words.—Vide *Le Normand*, vol. i., p. 248.

† Bonaparte's words.—Vide "*Mémoires d'une Contemporaine*," vol. ii., p. 363.

you are; if you had been younger, I should have loved you less intensely. Every thing you do seems virtuous to me; every thing you like seems honorable to me. Glory is only valuable to me inasmuch as it is agreeable to you and flatters your vanity. Your portrait always rests on my heart, and whenever I am far from you, not an hour passes without my looking at it and covering it with kisses.* The glass broke the other day when I pressed it too violently against my breast. My despair knew no bounds, for love is superstitious, and every thing seems ominous to it. I took it for an announcement of your death, and my eyes knew no sleep, my heart knew no rest, till the courier whom I immediately dispatched to you, had brought me the news that you were well, and that no accident had befallen you.† See, woman, woman, such is my love! Will you now tell me again that you wish to leave me?"

"I must, general," she said, firmly. "Love cannot be lasting without esteem, and you do not esteem me. Your suspicion has dishonored me, and a dishonored and insulted woman cannot be your wife any longer. Farewell!"

She wanted to disengage herself from his hands, but he held her only the more firmly. "Josephine," he said, in a hollow voice, "listen to me, do not drive me to despair, for it would kill me to lose you. No duty, no title would attach me any longer to earth. Men are so contemptible, life is so wretched—you alone extinguish the ignominy of mankind in my eyes.‡ Without you there is no hope, no happiness. I love you boundlessly."

"No, general, you despise me; you do not love me!"

"No, no!" he shouted, wildly stamping his foot. "If you go on in this manner, I shall drop dead at your feet. Do not torment me so dreadfully. Remember what I have often told you: Nature has given to me a strong, decided soul, but it has made you of gauze and lace. You say I do not love. Hear it, then, for the last time. Since you have been away from me, I have not passed a single day without loving you, not a single night without mentally pressing you to my heart. I have not taken a single cup of tea without cursing the glory and ambition separating me from the soul of my life.§ Amidst my absorbing occupations—at the head of my troops, on the march and in the field—my heavenly Josephine ever was foremost in my heart. She occupied my mind; she absorbed my thoughts. If I left you with the impetuosity of the Rhone, I only did so in order to return the sooner to your side. If I ran from my

* Vide "Correspondance inédite avec Joséphine," Lettre v.

† "Mémoires sur Napoléon, par Constant," vol. i., p. 809.

‡ "Correspondance inédite avec Joséphine," p. 375.

§ "Correspondance," etc., p. 552.

bed at night and continued working, I did so for the purpose of accelerating the moment of our reunion. The most beautiful women surrounded me, smiled upon me, gave me hopes of their favor, and tried to please me, but none of them resembled you; none had the gentle and melodious features so deeply imprinted on my heart. I only saw *you*, only thought of you, and that rendered all of them intolerable to me. I left the most beautiful women in order to throw myself on my couch and sigh, 'When will my adored wife be again with me?'"* And if I just now gave way to an ebullition of anger, I only did so because I love you so boundlessly as to be jealous of every glance, of every smile. Forgive me, therefore, Josephine, forgive me for the sake of my infinite love! Tell me that you will think no more of it, and that you will forget and forgive every thing."

He looked at her anxiously and inquiringly, but Josephine did not reply to his glances. She averted her eyes and remained silent.

"Josephine," he exclaimed, perfectly beside himself, "make an end of it. Just touch my forehead; it is covered with cold perspiration, and my heart is trembling as it never trembled in battle. Make an end of it; I am utterly exhausted. Oh, Josephine, my dear Josephine, open your arms to me."

"Well, come then, you dear, cruel husband," she said, bursting into tears and extending her arms to him.

Bonaparte uttered a joyful cry, pressed her to his heart, and covered her with kisses.

"Now I am sure you have forgiven every thing," he said, encircling her all the time with his arms. "You forgive my madness, my abominable jealousy?"

"I forgive every thing, Bonaparte, if you will promise not to be jealous again," she said, with a charming smile.

"I promise never to be jealous again, but to think, whenever you give a rendezvous to another man, that you only do so for my sake, and for the purpose of conspiring for me. Ah, my excellent wife, you have worked bravely for me, and henceforth I know that I can intrust to your keeping my glory and my honor with implicit confidence. Yea, even the helm of the state I would fearlessly intrust to your hands. Pray, therefore, Josephine, pray that your husband may reach the pinnacle of distinction, for in that case I should give you a seat in my council of state and make you mistress of every thing except one point—"†

"And what is that?" asked Josephine, eagerly.

"The only thing I should not intrust to you, Josephine," he said, laughing, "would be the keys of my treasury; you never would get

* Ibid., p. 349.

† Le Normand, vol. i., p. 241.

them, my beautiful prodigal little wife of gauze, lace, diamonds, and pearls!"*

"Ah, then you would deprive me of the right to distribute charities in your name?" she asked, sadly. "Is not that the most precious and sublime duty of the wife of a great man, to conquer Heaven for him by charities while he is conquering earth by his deeds? And you would take from me the means for doing so? Yours is a wild and passionate nature, and I shall often have to heal the wounds that you have inflicted in your outbursts of anger. Happy for me if I should always be able to heal them, and if your anger should be less fatal to men than to my poor little dog, who merely wanted to defend me against your violence."

"Poor little dog!" said Bonaparte, casting a glance of confusion upon Zephyr. "I greatly regret the occurrence, particularly as the dog was a gift from Hoche. But no lamentations of mine being able to recall Zephyr to life, Josephine, I will immortalize him at all events. He shall not find an unknown grave, like many a hero; no, we will erect to this valiant and intrepid defender of the charming fortress Josephine, a monument which shall relate his exploits to the most remote posterity. Have Zephyr packed up in a box; couriers and convoys of troops will set out to-day for Milan. They shall take the corpse along, and I will issue orders that a monument be erected to your Zephyr in the garden of our villa.† But now, Josephine, I must leave you; life, with its stern realities, is calling me. I must go and receive the Austrian ambassadors."

CHAPTER XX.

THE RECEPTION OF THE AMBASSADORS.

A MOTLEY crowd of gentlemen in uniforms and glittering gauds had filled the anterooms of the French embassy ever since the arrival of General Bonaparte and Josephine. All these high-born representatives of German sovereigns and states hastened to do homage to the French lady and to commend themselves to the benevolence and favor of the victorious general of the republic. But the doors of the general and of his wife were as difficult to open as those of the French ambassadors, Bonnier, Jean Debry, and Roberjot. General Bonaparte had received the Austrian ambassadors, and

*Ibid., vol. i., p. 242.

†Bonaparte kept his word. The little victim of his jealousy, Zephyr, the dog, was buried in the gardens of Mondeza, near Milan, and a marble monument was erected on his grave.—Le Normand, vol. i., p. 498.

returned their visit. But nobody else had been admitted to him during the first day. The ambassadors, therefore, flocked the more eagerly on this second day after his arrival to the anterooms of the French ambassadors, for every one wanted to be the first to win for his sovereign and for his state the good-will of the French conqueror. Every one wished to obtain advantages, to avert mischief, and to beg for favors.

Happy were they already who had only succeeded in penetrating into the anterooms of the French embassy, for a good deal of money had to be spent in order to open those doors. In front of them stood the footmen of the ambassadors with grave, stern countenances, refusing to admit any but those who had been previously recommended to them, or who knew how to gain their favor by substantial rewards.* And when they finally, by means of such persuasive gifts, had succeeded in crossing the threshold of the anteroom, they found there the clerks and secretaries of the French gentlemen, and these men again barred the door of the cabinet occupied by the ambassadors themselves. These clerks and secretaries had to be bribed likewise by solicitations, flatteries, and money; only, instead of satisfying them with silver, as in the case of the doorkeepers, they had to give them heavy gold pieces.

Having finally overcome all these obstacles—having now penetrated into the presence of the French diplomatists—the ambassadors of the German powers met with a haughty reserve instead of the kindness they had hoped for, and with sarcastic sneers in lieu of a warm reception. It was in vain for Germany thus to humble herself and to crouch in the dust. France was too well aware of her victories and superiority, and the servility of the German aristocracy only excited contempt and scorn, which the French gentlemen did not refrain from hurling into the faces of the humble solicitors. The greater the abjectness of the latter, the more overbearing the haughty demeanor of the former, and both gained the firm conviction that France held the happiness and quiet of Germany in her hands, and that France alone had the power to secure to the German princes the possession of their states, to enlarge their dominions, or to deprive them thereof, just as she pleased, and without paying any deference to the wishes of the Germans themselves.

To-day, however, all these distinguished men—the counts and barons of the empire, the bishops and other ecclesiastical dignitaries

*The employés of the French embassy, from the first secretary down to the lowest footman and cook, received handsome gifts at the hands of the German delegates, for every one was anxious to secure the good-will of the French representatives; and in obedience to the old trick of diplomatists, they tried to gain the favor of the masters by means of that of their servants. The latter made a very handsome thing out of it.—Vide Haüsser, vol. ii., p. 163.