

and to inform him that I shall not claim the subsidy of six million dollars, which England offered to pay me for my auxiliary army. Six million dollars! I believe General Tempelhof was right when he said the siege of a second-rate fortress would cost a million dollars, and in Holland we should have to take more than ten fortresses from the stubborn and intrepid French. This would cost us more than ten million dollars, and, moreover, we should have to use up the powder and ammunition destined for our own defence. Those six million dollars that England would pay me would not cover our outlay; I should be obliged to add four million dollars more, and to shed the blood of my brave and excellent soldiers without obtaining, perhaps, even the slightest advantage for Prussia. Hasten, general, to communicate my fixed and irrevocable resolution to Count Haugwitz. Prussia remains neutral, and takes no part whatever in the war against France!"

"I hasten to carry out your majesty's orders," exclaimed General von Kockeritz, walking toward the door, "and I know that Count Haugwitz will submit to the royal decision with the same joyful humility and obedience as myself."

The king's eyes followed him with an expression of genuine emotion.

"He is a faithful and honest friend," he said, "and that is, indeed, a rare boon for a king. Ah, I have succeeded, then, in averting this bloody thunder-cloud, once more from Prussia, and I shall preserve the blessings of peace to my people. And now, I believe, I may claim some credit for the manner in which I have managed this delicate affair, and repose a little from the cares of government. I will go to Louisa—her sight and the smiles of my children will reward me for having done my duty as a king."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LEGITIMATE WIFE.

THE Prince von Reuss, Henry XIV., Austrian ambassador at Berlin, had died an hour ago. A painful disease had confined him to his bed for weeks, and Marianne Meier had nursed him during this time with the greatest love and devotion. She had never left his bedside, and no one except herself, the physicians, and a few servants had been permitted to enter the sick-room. The brothers and nephews of the prince, who had come to Berlin in order to see their dying relative once more, had vainly solicited this favor. The physicians had told them that the suffering prince was un-

able to bear any excitement, there being great danger that immediate death would be the consequence of a scene between them. The prince, moreover, had sent his trusted *valet de chambre* to his brother, and informed him, even if he were entirely well, he would not accept the visits of a brother who had shown him so little fraternal love, and caused him so much grief by opposing his faithful and beloved friend Marianne Meier in the most offensive and insulting manner.

The distinguished relatives of the prince, therefore, had to content themselves with watching his palace from afar, and with bribing a few of his servants to transmit to them hourly reports about the condition of the patient.

And now Prince Henry XIV. was dead, and his brother was his successor and heir, the prince having left no legitimate offspring. It was universally believed that he had never been married, and that his immense fortune, his estates and titles, would devolve on his brother. It is true there was still that mistress of his, fair Marianne Meier, to whom the prince, in his sentimental infatuation, had paid the honors of a legitimate wife. But, of course, she had no claims whatever to the inheritance; it would be an act of generosity to leave her in possession of the costly presents the prince had made to her, and to pay her a small pension.

The prince had hardly closed his eyes, therefore, and the doctors had just pronounced him dead, when his brother, now Prince Henry XV., accompanied by a few lawyers, entered the palace of the deceased in order to take possession of his property, and to have the necessary seals applied to the doors. However, to give himself at least a semblance of brotherly love, the prince desired first to repair to the death-room, and to take a last leave of the deceased. But in the anteroom he met the two footmen of his brother, who dared to stop his passage, telling him that no one was allowed to enter.

"And who dares to issue such orders?" asked the prince, without stopping a moment.

"Madame has done so," said the first *valet de chambre*. "Madame wants to be alone with the remains of her husband."

The prince shrugged his shoulders, and, followed by the legal gentlemen, he walked to the door, which he vainly tried to open.

"I believe that woman has locked the door," said the prince, angrily.

"Yes, sir, madame has locked the door," said the *valet de chambre*; "she does not want to be disturbed in her grief by mere visits of condolence."

"Well, let us leave her, then, to her grief," exclaimed the prince, with a sarcastic smile. "Come, gentlemen, let us attend to our

business. Let us take an inventory of the furniture in the several rooms and then seal them. You may be our guide, valet."

But the *valet de chambre* shrugged his shoulders and shook his head. "Pardon me, sir, that is impossible. His highness, our late prince and master, several days ago, when he felt that his end was drawing near, caused every room to be locked and sealed by the first *attaché* of the legation in the presence of all the members of the embassy. The keys to all the rooms, however, were handed by order of the prince to madame, his wife."

The new prince, Henry XV., turned somewhat uneasily to the legal gentlemen.

"Have we a right to open the doors forcibly?"

"No, that would be contrary to law," said one of the lawyers, in a low voice. "The late prince has doubtless left some directions in relation to this matter and intrusted them to the officers of the legation. Your highness ought to apply to those gentlemen."

"Is the first *attaché* of the legation, Baron Werdern, in the palace?" said the prince to the *valet de chambre*.

"No, your highness, he has just gone out with a few other gentlemen of the legation to request the attendance of two officers of the law, that the will may be opened and read in their presence."

"My brother has made a will, then?" asked the prince, in a somewhat frightened tone.

"Yes, your highness, and he laid it, in the presence of every member of the legation, of two officers of the law, and of every servant, three days ago, in a strong box, the key of which he handed to the officers of the law, when the box was deposited in the archives of the legation."

"And why did Baron Werdern go now for the officers of the law?"

"In order to request their attendance in the palace, the late prince having left the verbal order that his will should be opened two hours after his death. The baron was going to invite your highness likewise to be present."

"Well, let us wait here for the arrival of the gentlemen," said Prince Henry XV., shrugging his shoulders. "It seems a little strange to me, however, that I must wait here in the anteroom like a supplicant. Go and announce my visit to madame!"

The *valet de chambre* bowed and left the room. The prince called the two lawyers to his side. "What do you think of this whole matter?" he asked, in a low voice.

The two representatives of the law shrugged their shoulders. "Your highness, every thing seems to have been done here legally. We must wait for the return of the gentlemen and for the opening of the will."

The *valet de chambre* now reëntered the room, and approached the prince. "Madame sends her respects to the prince, and begs him to excuse her inability to admit her brother-in-law just now, as she is dressing at the present moment. She will have the honor to salute her gracious brother-in-law at the ceremony."

"Does that woman call myself her gracious brother-in-law?" asked the prince, with an air of the most profound contempt, turning his back to the *valet de chambre*. "We will wait here, then, gentlemen," he added, turning to the lawyers. "It seems that woman intends to take a petty revenge at this moment for the contempt with which I have always treated her. I shall know, however, how to chastise her for it, and—"

"Hush, your highness," whispered one of the lawyers, "they are coming!"

In fact, the large folding-doors were opened at that moment, and on a catafalque, hung with black cloth, the remains of the prince were lying in state; on both sides of the catafalque large tapers were burning in heavy silver chandeliers.

Prince Henry, awed by this solemn scene, walked forward, and the grave countenance of his brother, with whom he had lived so long in discord, and whom he had not seen for many years, filled his heart with uneasiness and dismay.

He approached the room, followed by the legal gentlemen, with hesitating, noiseless steps. On the threshold of the door there now appeared the first *attaché* of the legation, Baron Werdern, who, bowing deeply, invited the prince whisperingly to come in.

The prince walked in, and on crossing the threshold, it seemed to him as if his brother's corpse had moved, and as if his half-opened eyes were fixed upon him with a threatening expression.

The prince averted his eyes from the corpse in dismay and saluted the gentlemen standing around a table covered with black cloth. Two large chandeliers, with burning tapers, a strong box, and writing-materials, had been placed upon this table; on one side, two arm-chairs, likewise covered with black cloth, were to be seen.

The baron conducted the prince to one of these arm-chairs, and invited him to sit down. Prince Henry did so, and then looked anxiously at the officers of the law, who were standing at the table in their black robes, and behind whom were assembled all the members of the legation, the physicians, and the servants of the late prince.

A long pause ensued. Then, all at once, the folding-doors opened, and the prince's steward appeared on the threshold.

"Her highness the Princess Dowager von Reuss," he said, in a loud, solemn voice, and Marianne's tall, imposing form entered the

room. She was clad in a black dress with a long train; a black veil, fastened above her head on a diadem, surrounded her noble figure like a dark cloud, and in this cloud beamed her expansive, thoughtful forehead, and her large flaming eyes sparkled. Her features were breathing the most profound and majestic tranquillity; and when she now saluted the gentlemen with a condescending nod, her whole bearing was so impressive and distinguished that even Prince Henry was unable to remain indifferent, and he rose respectfully from his arm-chair.

Marianne, however, paid no attention to him, but approached the remains of her husband. With inimitable grace she knelt down on one side of the catafalque. The priest who had entered with her knelt down on the other.

Both of them muttered fervent prayers for the deceased. Marianne then arose, and, bending over the corpse, imprinted a long kiss upon the forehead of her departed husband.

"Farewell, my husband!" she said, in her full, melodious voice, and then turned around and stepped toward the table. Without deigning to glance at the prince, she sat down in the arm-chair.

"I request the officers of the law now to open the strong box," she said, in an almost imperious voice.

One of the officers handed the key to Baron Werdern; the latter opened the strong box, and took from it a sealed paper, which he gave to the officer.

"Do you recognize the paper as the same yourself locked in this strong box?" she asked. "Is it the same which his highness the late Prince von Reuss, Henry XIV., handed to you?"

"Yes, it is the same," said the two officers; "it is the will of the late prince."

"And you know that his highness ordered us to open it immediately after his death, and to promulgate its contents. Proceed, therefore, according to the instructions of the deceased."

One of the officers broke the seal, and now that he unfolded the paper, Marianne turned her head toward the prince, and fixed her burning eyes piercingly upon his countenance.

The officer commenced reading the will. First came the preamble, to be found in every will, and then the officer read in a louder voice, as follows:

"In preparing to appear before the throne of the Lord, I feel especially called upon to return my most heart-felt thanks, in this public manner, to my wife, Princess Marianne, *née* Meier, for the constancy, love, and devotion which she has shown to me during our whole married life, and for the surpassing patience and self-abnegation with which she nursed me during my last sickness. I

deem myself especially obliged to make this acknowledgment, inasmuch as my wife, in her true love for me, has suffered many undeserved aspersions and insults, because, in accordance with my wishes, she kept our marriage secret, and in consequence had to bear the sneers of evil-disposed persons, and the insults of malicious enemies. But she is my lawful wife before God and man, and she is fully entitled to assume the name of a Princess Dowager von Reuss. I hereby expressly authorize her to do so, and, by removing the secret that has been observed during my life in relation to our marriage, I authorize my wife to assume the title and rank due to her, and hereby command my brother, as well as his sons and the other members of my family, to pay to the Princess Dowager von Reuss, *née* Meier, the respect and deference due to her as the widow of the late head of the family, and to which she is justly entitled by her virtue, her blameless conduct, her respectability, beauty, and amiability. The Princess Dowager von Reuss is further authorized to let her servants wear the livery and color of my house, to display the coat-of-arms of the princes von Reuss on her carriages, and to enjoy the full privileges of her rank. If my brother Henry, the heir of my titles, should have any doubts as to her rights in this regard, the officer reading my will is requested to ask him whether or not he desires to obtain further evidence in relation to the legitimacy of my marriage."

"Does your highness require any further evidence?" asked the officer, interrupting the reading of the will.

"I do," said the prince, who had listened to the reading of the will with a pale and gloomy mien.

"Here is that evidence," said the priest, beckoning the sexton, who stood on the threshold of the door. The latter approached the priest, and handed him a large volume bound in black morocco.

"It is the church register, in which I have entered all the marriages, christenings, and funeral masses performed in the chapel of the Austrian embassy," said the priest. "On this page you find the minutes of the marriage of the Prince von Reuss, Henry XIV., and Miss Marianne Meier. The ceremony took place two years ago. I have baptized the princess myself, and thereby received her into the pale of the holy Catholic Church, and I have likewise performed the rite of marriage on the occasion referred to. I hereby certify that the princess is the lawful wife of the late prince, as is testified by the minutes entered on the church register. The marriage was performed in the chapel, and in the presence of witnesses, who have signed the minutes, like myself."

"I witnessed the marriage," said Baron Werdern, "and so did

the military counsellor Gentz, who, if your highness should desire further testimony, will be ready to corroborate our statements."

"No," said the prince, gloomily, "I require no further testimony. I am fully satisfied of the truth of your statements, and will now pay my respects to my sister-in-law, the Princess Dowager von Reuss, *née* Meier."

He bowed, with a sarcastic smile, which, for a moment, caused the blood to rush to Marianne's pale cheeks, and then carelessly leaned back into his arm-chair.

"Be kind enough to proceed," he said, turning to the officer.

The latter took up the will again and read its several sections and clauses. The prince bequeathed his palace, with every thing in it, to his wife Marianne, and likewise his carriages, his horses, and the family diamonds he had inherited from his mother. The remainder of his considerable property he left to his brother, asking him to agree with the Princess Marianne on a pension corresponding with her rank and position in society. Then followed some legacies and pensions for the old servants of his household, a few gifts to the poor, and last the appropriation of a sum for which a mass was to be read on every anniversary of his death, for the peace of his soul.

The ceremony was over. The officers of the law and the members of the embassy had left the death-room, and on a sign from Marianne the servants had also withdrawn.

The prince had exchanged a few words in a low voice with his two lawyers, whereupon they likewise had left the room. No one except the brother and the wife of the deceased remained now in this gloomy room, illuminated by the flickering tapers. Marianne, however, seemed to take no notice of the presence of her brother-in-law; she had approached the corpse again, and gazed at it with the most profound emotion.

"I thank you, Henry," she said, loudly and solemnly. "I thank you from the bottom of my heart; you have given back to me my honor; you have revenged me upon your haughty relatives, and upon the sneering world!"

"Do not thank him, respected sister-in-law, for he has left you poor," said the prince, approaching her, and contemplating her with a freezing smile. "My brother has made you a princess, it is true, but he has not given you the means to live as a princess. He has bequeathed to you this palace, with its costly furniture; he has bequeathed to you his carriages and diamonds; but a palace and furniture are no estates, and in order to keep carriages one has to feed men and horses. It is true, you can sell the palace and the diamonds, and obtain for them several hundred thousand florins. That sum would be amply sufficient for a person leading a retired

life, but it is very little for one who desires to keep up a princely household, and to live in the style becoming a lady of your beauty and social position. My brother has foreseen all this, and he indirectly gave us a chance to come to an understanding, by asking me to agree with you on a pension to be paid you. Hence I ask you, how much do you demand? How high will be the sum for which you will sell me your mourning veil, your name, and your title of princess dowager? For you doubtless anticipate, madame, that I do not propose to acknowledge you publicly as my sister-in-law, and to receive a — Marianne Meier among the members of my family. Tell me your price, therefore, madame."

Marianne looked at him with flaming eyes, a deep blush of anger mantling her cheeks. "Prince von Reuss," she said, proudly, "you will have to permit the world to call me your sister-in-law. I am your sister-in-law, and I shall prove to the world and to you that it is unnecessary to have been born under a princely canopy in order to live, think, and act like a princess. My husband has rewarded me in this hour for years of suffering and humiliation. Do you believe that my reward is for sale for vile money? And if you should offer me millions, I should reject them if, in return, I were to lead a nameless, disreputable, and obscure existence. I will sooner die of starvation as a Princess Dowager von Reuss than live in opulence as Marianne Meier. This is my last word; and now, sir, begone! Do not desecrate this room by your cold and egotistic thoughts, and by your heartless calculations! Honor the repose of the dead and the grief of the living. Begone!"

She proudly turned away from him, and bent once more over the corpse. While she was doing so her black veil, with a gentle rustle, fell down over her face and wrapped her, as well as the corpse, as in a dark mist, so that the two forms seemed to melt into one.

The prince felt a shudder pervading his frame, and the presence of the corpse embarrassed him.

"I will not disturb you now in your grief, madame," he said; "I hope your tears will flow less copiously as soon as the funeral is over, and I shall then send my lawyer, for the purpose of treating further with you."

He bowed, and hastened to the door. She seemed neither to have heard his words, nor to have noticed that he was withdrawing. She was still bending over the remains of her husband, the black cloud surrounding her and the corpse.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE EIGHTEENTH OF BRUMAIRE.

"NEWS from France!" exclaimed Counsellor Gentz, entering Marianne's boudoir in breathless haste. "Do you already know what has occurred? Did you hear, Marianne, how France has closed the eighteenth century?"

Marianne looked up into the face of her friend, with a gentle and peculiar smile. "That must have been exciting intelligence," she said, "inasmuch as it was even able to arouse the dreamer, Frederick Gentz, from his political sleep, and to cause him to take interest again in the affairs of the world. Well, let us hear the news; what has occurred in France?"

"General Bonaparte has overthrown the Directory, and dispersed the Council of Five Hundred."

"And you call that news?" asked Marianne, shrugging her shoulders. "You tell me there the history of the ninth and tenth of November, or, as the French republicans say, of the eighteenth and nineteenth of Brumaire. And you believe that I have not yet heard of it to-day, on the twenty-sixth of December? My friend Gentz, Bonaparte's deeds need not more than a month in order to penetrate through the world; they soar aloft with eagle-wings, and the whole world beholds them, because they darken the horizon of the whole world."

"But you have only heard the preamble of my news," ejaculated Gentz, impatiently. "I have no doubt that you know the history of the eighteenth of Brumaire, and that you are aware that France, on that day, placed herself under the rule of three consuls, one of whom was General Bonaparte."

"The other two consuls are Sieyes and Ducos," interrupted Marianne. "I know that, and I know, too, that Lucien, Bonaparte's brother, president of the Legislative Assembly, upon receiving the oath of office of the three consuls, said to them: 'The greatest nation on earth intrusts you with its destinies; the welfare of thirty millions of men, the preservation of order at home, and the reestablishment of peace abroad, are your task. Three months from to-day public opinion will expect to hear from you how you have accomplished it.'"

"Well, M. Bonaparte did not make public opinion wait so long," said Gentz; "or rather, he asserts public opinion had not given him

* "Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire," par A. Theils, vol. I, p. 16.

time to wait so long, and that it was public opinion itself that called upon him to proclaim himself sovereign of France."

"Sovereign of France?" asked Marianne, in surprise. "Bonaparte has made himself king?"

"Yes, king, but under another name; he has caused himself to be elected consul for ten years! Ah, he will know how to shorten these ten years, just as he knew how to shorten those three months!"

"And this report is reliable?" asked Marianne, musingly.

"Perfectly so. Bonaparte was elected first consul on the twenty-fifth of December, and on the same day the new constitution was promulgated throughout France. That is a very fine Christmas present which France has made to the world! A box filled with dragon's teeth, from which armed hosts will spring up. It is true the first consul now pretends to be very anxious to restore peace to Europe. He has sent special ambassadors to all courts, with profuse assurances of his friendship and pacific intentions, and he sent them off even previous to his election, in order to announce the news of the latter to the foreign courts on the same day on which he was proclaimed first consul at Paris. Such a peace-messenger of the general has arrived at Berlin; he has brought us the strange and startling news."

"What is the name of this peace-messenger of the modern god of war?" asked Marianne.

"He sent his adjutant, General Duroc; the latter reached Berlin yesterday, and appeared even to-day as the petted guest of our court, at the great *soirée* of the queen. Oh, my friend, my stupid German heart trembled with anger when I saw the kind and flattering attentions that were paid to this Frenchman, while German gentlemen of genius, merit, and ability were kept in the background, neither the king nor the queen seeming to take any notice of their presence! There were Count Hardenberg, and the noble President of Westphalia, Baron Stein; they stood neglected in a bay window, and looked sadly at the royal couple, who treated the Frenchman in the midst of the court in the most distinguished manner; there were Blucher and Gneisenau, overlooked by everybody, although their uniforms were no less brilliant than that of the French envoy; and there was finally Frederick Gentz, myself, who had only appeared at this court festival owing to the special desire and order of the queen, and whose presence she had entirely forgotten, although Gualtieri reminded her of it at least three times, and told her that I was there, and had only come because the queen had expressly ordered it so. But what did her beautiful majesty care that a German writer was vainly waiting for a smile of her affability, and a gracious nod of her lovely head? The French envoy was by far more

important than all of us. For the sake of the Frenchman, even 'Madame Etiquette,' the Countess von Voss, mistress of ceremonies, had been silenced, and the plain adjutant of the first consul was received with as much distinction as if he were a minister plenipotentiary, while he only came as the simple agent for a private individual. They asked him to tell them about the battle of the Pyramids, about the battles of Mount Tabor and Aboukir, and the whole court listened to him with a suspense as though Bonaparte's adjutant were preaching a new gospel. Whenever he paused in his narrative, the queen, with her fascinating smile, constantly addressed new questions to him, and praised the achievements of General Bonaparte as though he were the Messiah sent into the world to deliver it from the evils of war! In short, he had a perfect success; and at last, by means of an adroit trick, he managed to render it as magnificent as possible. The queen told General Duroc of our German customs, and informed him that this was the day on which the Germans everywhere made presents to each other, and that gifts were laid under Christmas-trees, adorned with burning tapers. At that moment Duroc turned to the king, and said, with his intolerable French amiability: 'Sire, if this is the day of universal presents in Germany, I believe I will be courageous enough to-day to ask your majesty for a present in the name of the first consul, General Bonaparte, if your majesty will permit me to do so.' The king, of course, gave him the desired permission, and Duroc continued: 'Sire, the present for which I am to ask your majesty, in the name of the first consul, is a bust of your great ancestor, Frederick the Second. The first consul recently examined the statues in the Diana Gallery at the Tuileries; there were the statues of Cæsar and Brutus, of Coriolanus and Cicero, of Louis XIV. and Charles V., but the first consul did not see the statue of Frederick the Great, and he deems the collection of the heroes of ancient and modern times incomplete as long as it does not embrace the name of Frederick the Great. Sire, I take the liberty, therefore, to ask you, in the name of France, for a bust of Frederick the Great!'"*

"Very adroit, indeed," said Marianne, smiling; "these republicans seem to be excellent courtiers."

"Yes, very adroit!" exclaimed Gentz; "the whole court was in ecstasy at this tremendous flattery, at this compliment paid by the great republic to little Prussia; but I could not stand it any longer in those halls, and in the presence of these fawning Germans, and I hastened away in order to unbosom to you my rage, my indignation, and my grief. Oh, my fair friend, what is to become of Germany, and what will be the end of all these troubles? Ruin is

* Historical.

staring us in the face, and we do not see it; we are rushing toward the precipice, and must fall a prey to France, to this wolf in sheep's clothing, which will caress and pet us until it will be able to devour us!"

"I like to hear you talk in this strain," said Marianne, joyfully. "That is again the friend of my heart, who is now talking to me. Listen to me. I have to communicate news to you, too, and you must not be surprised if I reply to your important political intelligence by a reference to my petty personal interests. But there is a connection between them, and you will see it by and by. Listen, then, to the news concerning myself."

"Yes, Marianne," said Gentz, kneeling down before her, and leaning his head upon her knees, "yes, tell me about yourself, my beautiful fairy queen; lull my political pains a little by the magic song which is flowing from your red lips like a fresh source of love. Oh, my charming princess, now that I am looking up into your radiant face, I feel a burning shame that I should have desecrated the delightful moments I passed by your side by such trivial complaints about the misery of German politics. What have we to do with politics? What do we care if Germany is going to be ruined? *Après nous le déluge!* Let us enjoy the bliss of the fleeting hour!"

Marianne played smilingly with her slender fingers, covered with sparkling diamond rings, in his hair, and looked upon him with a wondrous air.

"Enthusiast!" she said; "now an ardent politician, then an impassioned lover, and ready at all hours to exchange one rôle for the other! Will you not listen to my news? My quarrel with my dear brother-in-law, Henry XV., is ended; we have come to an agreement."

"And I hope my sagacious and prudent Marianne has subdued her proud and bold heart this time, and had a little regard for her advantage," replied Gentz. "A woman as beautiful and radiant as Marianne Meier needs no empty aristocratic title, for your beauty makes you the queen of the world; but you need wealth in order to add power to your beauty, and to adorn it with a cloak glittering with gold and purple. Well, my queen, are you again Marianne Meier and a millionaire besides?"

"What a fool!" she exclaimed, proudly, "what a fool you are to believe I would crawl back into the Jews' quarter and expose myself to the sneers of my enviable friends! No, my friend, money and beauty are insufficient for those who desire to play a rôle in the world; they stand in need of rank and titles, too, for these are the magic words opening to us the doors of royal palaces, and placing

us on a par with the privileged and inaccessible. I, for one, want to play my *rôle* in the world; hence I must have a distinguished title. It is true I also stand in need of wealth, and by means of a skilful arrangement I have secured both. The mote in my Jewish eye appearing to my aristocratic relatives like a very large beam, I have yielded and renounced the title of a Princess von Reuss; but, in spite of that, I remain a princess and retain the title of highness. The prince, my brother-in-law, has given me a splendid estate in fee-simple, the annual revenues of which amount to no less than twenty thousand dollars; in return, however, I surrender to him the family diamonds, this palace, the carriages with the coat-of-arms of the Reuss family, the horses and liveries, and last, the name and title of a Princess Dowager von Reuss."

"And now, like all the fairies in the children's books, you are a wondrous child without name and rank, but showering with your snowy hands golden suns and glittering stars upon mankind?"

"No, I am no nameless woman now, but I adopt the name of my estate of Eibenberg, and from this day forward I shall be the Princess Marianne of Eibenberg, the Emperor of Germany himself having recognized my new title. The documents, signed by the emperor himself, are on the table there. The prince brought them to me to-day as a Christmas-present. Now, my friend, my real life is to commence; I have acquired wealth and a distinguished name. The poor Jewess, the daughter of the Ghetto, has moved into the palace of the aristocracy and become a princess."

"And I will be the first to do you homage as though you were my princess and queen!" exclaimed Gentz, "the first who will call himself your vassal. Come, my princess, let me place the sweet yoke upon my neck; let my forehead touch the ground on which you are walking; place your foot upon my neck, so that I may feel the sweet burden of your rule."

And bending down his head until his brow touched the floor, he placed her tiny foot, encased in a beautiful silken shoe, upon his neck. Marianne did not interfere with him, but looked down on him with a proud, triumphant smile.

"You lie at my feet, Frederick Gentz," she said, "nevertheless I will lift you up to me; you shall stand by my side, my equal, famous and great as you ought to be, owing to your genius! But a truce to tender trifling, my friend; both of us have to accomplish great purposes, and our thoughts and actions should be grave and stern. Come, rise from your knees, my vassal; you shall be a prince by my side, and we will rule the world together."

She withdrew her foot from his neck, but Gentz seized it with both hands and kissed it. He then quickly rose from his knees,

and drew himself up to his full height, looking at her sternly and almost angrily.

"You have often told me that you loved me," he said, "but it was a lie; you do not understand love, your heart is cold and your senses are silent, only your pride speaks."

"It is possible that you are right," she replied, "but, in that case, I love you with my pride and with my mind, and that is worth something, at all events. I want to see you honored, famous, and influential; is not that also love?"

"No, it is a mockery!" ejaculated Gentz, mournfully. "It is malice, for you see I am a poor, despised man, without money, without fame, without rank; a miserable military counsellor, out-ranked by every private counsellor, and persecuted day by day by my creditors, as if they were vultures following a poor dove whose wings have been clipped."

"But your wings shall grow again, so that you may escape from the vultures!" exclaimed Marianne, "and that you may soar, eagle-like, above the miseries of the world, and exercise a commanding influence over it. The time of dreams and expectations is over, the time for action has come for all energetic and able minds. Two years ago I asked you, as I do to-day, if you would not devote your services to Austria, and if you would not seek for fame and happiness in that country, in which your genius would be appreciated and rewarded. Do you remember what you replied to me at that time?"

"Yes, I remember," said Gentz, with a sarcastic smile; "I was foolish enough to reject your offers, and to declare that I would stay here at Berlin, and see if my native country would not need my abilities and my services, and if our rulers here would not avail themselves of my talents and of my pen. And thus I have lost, again, two years of my life, and only my debts have increased, but not my fame."

"Because you were an enthusiast, and expected to be appreciated in Prussia; believing this good king (who would like to make his people happy and prosperous, but who timidly shrinks back from all energetic resolutions) would be very grateful to you for exhorting him to grant freedom of the press to his subjects, and, in general, to introduce liberty and equality in his states. Do you still believe that Frederick William the Third will do so?"

"No, he will not," replied Gentz, mournfully; "no, this king does not understand the present age, and instead of being a step in advance of it, he will always remain a step behind it, and thus involve Prussia in untold misery and suffering. I have hoped and waited long enough; the time of patience and idleness is now over, and I therefore renounce, to-day, at the end of the eighteenth cen-

ture, my native state, in order to become a citizen and son of a larger fatherland. I cease to be a Prussian, in order to become a German; and Prussia having no desire to avail herself of my abilities, I am going to see whether or not Germany has any use for them. My beautiful Marianne, you shall be the priestess who receives the oath which I make on the altar of the fatherland: 'I swear to devote all my powers and talents to Germany; I swear to be a faithful and untiring son to my great fatherland!'

"I have heard your oath, Frederick Gentz, and I accept it in the name of Germany," said Marianne, solemnly. "You shall be the champion of the honor and rights of Germany; your weapon, however, shall not be the sword, but the pen."

"But where will the lists be opened to my tournament?" asked Gentz, musingly.

"In Austria," replied Marianne, quickly; "the Emperor of Germany is expecting you, the son of Germany; the Emperor of Germany is calling you to serve and promote the interests of your fatherland. I am authorized to tell you that. The new Austrian envoy, Count Stadion, has requested me to do so; he has asked me to win you for Austria, that is, for Germany. For, believe me, the welfare of Germany is nowadays consulted in Austria, and not in Prussia!"

"No, not in Prussia!" exclaimed Gentz, mournfully. "Our government shuts its eyes in order not to behold the terrors which are rushing toward us with irresistible force, and will soon, like an avalanche, roll over Germany and annihilate us all, unless we skilfully calculate the danger, and raise sufficient bulwarks against it. They admire Bonaparte here, and only behold a hero, while I scent a tyrant—a tyrant who wants to subjugate us by his revolutionary liberty and his Jacobin's cap, which is but a crown in another shape. I hate Bonaparte, for I hate the revolution which, notwithstanding its phrases of liberty and equality, is but a bloody despotism that does not even grant freedom of opinion to the citizen, and drags such ideas as are distasteful to it upon the scaffold. I hate the revolution, I hate Bonaparte, and I hate every form of tyranny, and shall oppose it as long as I live!"

"And I shall be a faithful squire by your side, and sharpen the bolts which you are going to hurl at the enemy," said Marianne, with fervent enthusiasm. "We are both going to Vienna, in order to serve Germany. In Vienna a new century and a new country will open their arms to us. Thanks to my title, to my rank, and to my connections, every door will be open to us there, and the Jewess, Marianne Meier, princess of Eibenberg, will not even find the apartments of the emperor and empress closed; on the contrary, their imperial majesties will receive me as an honored and welcome guest,

for I am a princess by the act of the emperor, and the friend of the empress; Victoria de Poutet Colloredo is also my friend. And whithersoever I go, you shall go, too, my friend, and the doors that will open to me shall not be closed to you. My rank opens them to me, and your genius opens them to you. Come, let us be faithful allies; let us swear to support each other firmly and immovably, and to walk together step by step."

"Oh, my noble and generous friend," exclaimed Gentz, sadly, "how delicately you try to veil your protection! In such an alliance, I am unable to offer you any compensation, for I should find all doors closed if you should not open them to me. I have neither rank, money, nor friends at court!"

"Well, let me protect you now, and at some later period you will protect me," said Marianne. "Let us swear to pursue our path together."

"I swear it by all that is sacred to me!" exclaimed Gentz. "I swear that I will remain faithful to you and to Germany for my whole life. I swear that I will follow you everywhere; that I will serve you wherever and whenever I can, and to love you to my last breath."

"The alliance is closed," said Marianne, solemnly. "Henceforth, we will fight jointly, and pursue our goal together. It is our own greatness, and the greatness of Germany. The country is in danger—let us see if we cannot contribute something to its preservation, and if it does not need our hands and our heads in order to weather the storm. If we should be able, while assisting the country, to pick up a few laurels, titles, decorations, and treasures for ourselves, we would be fools not to avail ourselves of the opportunity."

"Yes, you are right," said Gentz, smiling, "we would be fools not to do so; and you are right, too, as to the perils of the country. Germany is in danger. The new century will dawn upon her with a bloody morning sun, and it will arouse us from our sleep by a terrific cannonade. But as for ourselves, we will not wait until the roar of the strife awakens us; we will be up and doing now and work on the lightning-rod with which we will meet the approaching thunderstorm, in order that its bolts may glance off harmlessly and not destroy Germany. I will be an untiring warrior in the great struggle against the revolution, and my pen, which is my sword, shall never be idle in the strife. From this hour I cease to be the insignificant Prussian counsellor, Frederick Gentz; from this hour I will strive to become the great political writer of Germany. May the genius of Germany be with me in my endeavors!"

"Amen!" said Marianne, fervently. "May the genius of Germany bless us and the new century. Amen!"