

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

CHAPTER LIII.

JUDITH AND HOLOFERNES.

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

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the *valet de chambre*, had looked in with prying eyes, but seeing the emperor so busily engaged, he had always withdrawn cautiously and inaudibly.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

The noise caused the emperor to start up.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Whence did you obtain this information?"

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

"How too late?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Sire, the intentions of this lady are extremely suspicious. Since I have been in Vienna she has been incessantly watched by my agents, because she is the intellectual head of all the dangerous and hostile elements of the city. All the enemies of your majesty, all the so-called German patriots, meet at her house, and by closely watching *her*, we could learn all our enemies' plans and actions. Hence, it was necessary for us to find an agent in her house who would report to me every day what had been going on there, and I was so fortunate as to enlist the services of her mistress of ceremonies."

"By what means did you bribe her?" asked Napoleon. "By means of love or money?"

"Sire, thank God, money alone was sufficient for the purpose."

The emperor smiled. "The woman is old and ugly, then?"

"Very ugly, sire."

"And she hates her mistress because she is beautiful. For, I suppose, she is very beautiful?"

"Extremely so, sire; a most fascinating woman, and consequently the more dangerous as an intriguer."

Napoleon shrugged his shoulders. "Proceed with your report. You had bribed her mistress of ceremonies, then?"

"Yes, sire; she kept an accurate diary, containing a statement of what her mistress had been doing every hour, and brought it to me every evening. For the last few days the conduct of her mistress has seemed to her particularly suspicious; hence she watched her more closely, and my other agents dogged her steps in disguise whenever she left her mansion. All symptoms appeared suspicious enough, and pointed to the conclusion that she was meditating an attack upon some distinguished person. But I did not guess as yet whom she was aiming at. All at once, two hours ago, her mistress of ceremonies came to bring me her diary, and to report to me that her mistress had just left her mansion with Major von Brandt, and that her last words had indicated that she had gone to see your majesty at Schönbrunn. While I was still considering what ought to be done, another agent of mine made his appearance; I had commissioned him specially to watch M. von Brandt; for, although he seems to be extremely devoted to us, I do not trust him."

"And you are perfectly right," said Napoleon, sternly. "Traitors ought never to be trusted, and this M. von Brandt is a traitor, inasmuch as he adheres to us, the enemies of his country. What was the information brought to you by your agent?"

"Sire, my agent caused one of his men, who is a very skilful pickpocket, to steal the major's memorandum-book just at the moment when he was entering the lady's house."

"Indeed," said Napoleon, laughing. "Your agents are clever fellows. What did you find in the memorandum-book? Love letters and unpaid bills, I suppose?"

"No, sire, I found in it an important document; an agreement, by virtue of which the lady is to pay the major, in case he should obtain for her an interview with your majesty, a gold-piece for every minute of its duration."

Napoleon laughed. "The lady is as rich as Croesus, then?" he asked.

"Yes, sire, the princess is said to—"

"Princess! What princess?"

"Sire, the lady to whom your majesty has granted an audience is the Princess von Eibenberg."

"The Princess von Eibenberg," replied Napoleon, musingly. "Did I not hear that name on some former occasion? Yes, yes, I remember," he said, in a low voice, after a short pause, as if speaking to himself; "the agent of the Count de Provence, who delivered to me the letter, and whom I then expelled from Paris."

"Have you got the diary of the mistress of ceremonies and the other papers with you?" he then asked the governor.

"I have, sire, here they are," replied M. de Vincennes, drawing a few papers from his bosom. "Here is also the singular agreement of the princess."

"Give them to me," said Napoleon; and taking the papers, he looked over them and read a few lines here and there. "Indeed," he then said, "this affair is piquant enough; it begins to excite my curiosity. Constant, where is the lady?"

"Sire, M. de Bausset has taken her to the small reception-room of your majesty; she is waiting there."

"Well," said Napoleon, "she has waited long enough, and might become impatient; I will, therefore, go to her."

"But, sire, you will not see her alone, I hope?" asked Duroc, anxiously. "I trust your majesty will permit me to accompany you?"

"Ah, you are anxious to see the famous belle?" asked Napoleon, laughing. "Another time, M. grand-marshal—but this time I shall go alone. Just remember that the princess is passionately enamoured of me, and that it, therefore, would terribly offend her if I should not come alone to the interview with her."

He advanced a few steps toward the door. But now Constant rushed toward him, and kneeling before him, exclaimed, in a voice trembling with anguish: "Sire, your majesty must have pity on me. Do not expose your priceless life to such a danger! Do not plunge my poor heart which adores your majesty into everlasting

despair! It was I who first dared to request your majesty to receive this lady! Now, sire, I implore your majesty on my knees—do not receive her!”

“Sire, I venture to unite my prayers with those of Constant,” said Duroc, urgently. “Sire, do not receive this lady!”

“Your majesty, permit me rather to arrest her immediately,” exclaimed M. de Vincennes.

Napoleon’s flaming eyes glanced in succession smilingly at the three men. “Truly,” he said, “on hearing you, one might almost believe this beautiful woman to be a mine, and that it was merely necessary to touch her in order to explode and be shattered! Reassure yourselves, I believe we will save our life this time. You have warned me, and I shall be on my guard. Not another word, no more prayers! My resolution is fixed; I will see this beautiful woman, and, moreover, alone!”

“Sire,” exclaimed Constant, anxiously, “suppose this crazy woman should fire a pistol at your head at the moment when your majesty appears before her?”

“In that case the bullets would harmlessly glance off from me, or the pistol would miss fire,” replied Napoleon, in a tone of firm conviction. “Fate did not place me here to fall by the hands of an assassin! Go, gentlemen, and accept my thanks for your zeal and sympathy. M. de Vincennes, return to Vienna; I shall keep your papers here. Is Count Haugwitz still at your rooms, Duroc?”

“Yes, sire, we were just engaged in drawing up the several sections of the treaty, when M. de Vincennes sent for me.”

“Return to the count, and you, Constant, go to M. von Brandt and count with him the minutes which his lady will pass in my company. I should not be surprised if he should earn a great many gold-pieces, for I do not intend dismissing the interesting *belle* so soon.”

He nodded to them, and hastily crossing the room, passed through the door which Constant opened. With rapid steps, and without any further hesitation, he walked across the two large reception-halls, and then opened the door of the small reception-room where the lady, as Constant had told him, was waiting for him.

He remained for a moment on the threshold, and his burning glances turned toward Marianne, who, as soon as she saw him coming in, had risen from the arm-chair in which she had been sitting.

“It is true,” murmured Napoleon to himself, “she is really beautiful!”

He advanced a few steps; then, as if remembering only at this moment that he had left the door wide open, he turned around and closed it. “I suppose you want to speak to me without witnesses?” he asked, approaching Marianne.

“Sire, the words of love and adoration fail too often in the presence of others,” whispered Marianne, casting a flaming glance on him.

Napoleon smiled. “Well, why did you hesitate, then, just now to write the words of love and adoration between my shoulders?” he asked. “I turned my back to you intentionally; I wished to give you an opportunity for carrying out your heroic deed.”

“What?” exclaimed Marianne, in terror, “has your majesty any doubts of my intentions?”

“No,” said Napoleon, laughing, “I have no doubts whatever of your intentions; on the contrary, I am quite sure of them. I know that you have come hither to translate the Bible, the truth of which has been questioned so often, into reality. You intended to make of the chapter of Judith and Holofernes a tragedy of our times. But although you are as beautiful and seductive as Judith, I am no Holofernes, who allows himself to be ruled by his passion, and forgets the dictates of prudence in the arms of a woman. I never was the slave of my passions, madame, and it is not sufficient for a woman to be beautiful in order to win my heart; I must be able, too, to esteem her, and never should I be able to esteem a woman capable of loving the conqueror of her country. You see, therefore, that I am no Holofernes, and that I should not have opened my arms to you if I should have believed you to be a recreant daughter of your country. But I know that you are a patriot, and that alters the case: I know that I may esteem you; hence, I do not say that I cannot love you, for it is true, you are enchantingly beautiful.”

“Sire,” said Marianne, indignantly, “if you have only received me to insult and mortify me, pray permit me to withdraw!”

“No, I have received you because I wanted to give you good advice,” said Napoleon, gravely; “I, therefore, pray you to remain. You must choose your servants more cautiously, madame; you must confide in them less and watch them better; for slavish souls are easily led astray, and money is a magnet they are unable to withstand. Your mistress of ceremonies is a traitress; beware of her!”

“Then she has slandered me?” asked Marianne, with quivering lips.

“No, she has only betrayed you,” said Napoleon, smiling. “Even the diamond ring which you gave her as a souvenir did not touch her heart. Do you yet remember what you said to her when you handed it to her?”

“Sire, how should I remember it?” asked Marianne.

“Well, I will repeat it to you,” exclaimed Napoleon, unfolding the papers which M. de Vincennes had given to him, and which he had kept all the time rolled up in his hand. “Here it is. You

said: 'I know you are a good and enthusiastic Austrian; like myself, you hate the tyrant who wants to subjugate us, and you will bless the hand which will order him to stop, and put an end to his victorious career.' Well, was it not so, madame?"

Marianne made no reply; her cheeks were pale, and her eyes stared at the emperor, who looked at her smilingly.

"A moment before you had concealed a flashing object in your bosom," continued Napoleon. "That object which your mistress of ceremonies did not see distinctly was a dagger which you had bought this forenoon. Shall I tell you where?"—He glanced again at the papers, and then said: "You bought this dagger in a gun store on the *Kohlmarkt*, and paid four ducats for it. You have now got this dagger with you; truly, it occupies an enviable hiding-place, and I might be jealous of it. Why do you not draw it forth and carry out your purpose? Do you really believe what so many fools have said about me, viz., that I was in the habit of wearing a coat-of-mail? I pledge you my imperial word, my breast is unprotected, and a dagger will meet with no resistance provided it is able to reach my breast. Just try it!"

Marianne, who, while the emperor was speaking, had dropped on a chair as if stupefied, now rose impetuously. "Sire," she said, proudly, "it is enough. Your officers doubtless await me in the adjoining room, in order to arrest me like a criminal. Permit me to go thither and surrender to them."

She was about turning toward the door, but Napoleon seized her hand and kept her back. "Oh, no," he said, "our interview is not yet over; it has scarcely lasted fifteen minutes, and remember that M. von Brandt would consequently get only fifteen gold-pieces. Ah, you look at me in surprise. You wonder that I should be aware of that, too? I am no magician, however, and have acquired my knowledge of this laughable incident in a very simple manner. Look here, this is the written agreement you gave to M. von Brandt!"

He offered the paper to Marianne; she did not take it, however, but only glanced at it. "Your majesty may see from it how ardently I longed for an interview with you," she said. "Had M. von Brandt asked half my fortune for this interview with your majesty, I should have joyfully given it to him, for an hour in the presence of your majesty is worth more than all the riches of the world."

"And yet you were going to leave me just now!" exclaimed Napoleon, reproachfully. "How ingenuous that would have been toward your friend who is standing in the anteroom with Constant, and, watch in hand, calculating the number of his gold-pieces. We will be generous and grant him three hours. Three hours—that is a

good time for a rendezvous; when you leave me, then, you will pay M. von Brandt one hundred and eighty louis-d'or, and I shall receive the congratulations of my confidants."

Marianne's eyes flashed angrily, and a deep blush mantled her cheeks. "Sire," she exclaimed almost menacingly, "call your officers—have me arrested like a criminal—take my life if I have deserved it, but let me leave this room!"

"Ah, you would die rather than that people should believe you had granted me a rendezvous of three hours' duration," asked Napoleon. "It is true, this rendezvous, if it should result peacefully and without the *éclat* which you hoped for when you came hither to play the part of Judith, would discredit you with your friends! Your party will distrust you as soon as it learns that, after being three hours with me, you left Schönbrunn in the middle of the night, while I was not found on my couch with a dagger in my heart. I cannot spare you this humiliation; it shall be the only punishment I shall inflict on you. You remain here!"

"Sire, let me go," exclaimed Marianne, "and I swear to you that I will never dare again to approach you; I swear to you that I will live in some remote corner in the most profound retirement, far from the noise and turmoil of the world."

"Oh, the world would never forgive me if I should deprive it in this manner of its most beautiful ornament," said the emperor, smiling. "You are too lovely to live in obscurity and solitude. You will now grant me three hours, and you are free to tell everybody during the whole remainder of your life that you hate me; but it is true, people will hardly believe in the sincerity of your hatred."

"Then you will not permit me to withdraw?" asked Marianne, with quivering lips. "You want me to stay here?"

"Only three hours, madame; then you may go. Let us improve this time and speak frankly and honestly to each other. Forget where we are; imagine we were the heads of two parties, meeting on neutral ground and telling each other the truth with respectful frankness for the purpose of thereby bringing about peace, if possible. Well, then, tell me honestly: do you really hate me so ardently as to have come hither for the purpose of assassinating me?"

"You ask me to tell you the truth," exclaimed Marianne, her eyes sparkling with anger, "well, you shall hear it! Yes, I hate you; I swore to you in Paris, at the time when you sent me like a criminal to the frontier, the most ardent and implacable hatred, and in accordance with my oath I came hither to accomplish a work which would be a boon for Germany, nay, for the whole world. Yes, I wanted to assassinate you, I wanted to deliver the world from

the tyrant who intends to enslave it. Yes, I had concealed a dagger in my bosom to kill you as Judith killed Holofernes. Had I accomplished my purpose, the world would have blessed me and paid the highest honors to my name; but now that I have failed in carrying out my plan, I shall be laughed and sneered at. Now I have told you the truth, and in order that you may not doubt it, I will show you the dagger which was intended for your breast, and which I shall now hurl down at your feet as the dragon's feet, from which one day full-grown warriors will spring for our cause in order to combat you."

She drew the dagger from her bosom, and, with a violent gesture, threw it at Napoleon's feet. "Sire," she then asked, in an imploring voice, "will you not yet order me to be arrested?"

"Why?" asked Napoleon. "Words falling from the lips of beautiful women are never insulting, and I do not punish thoughts which have not yet become actions. Your hands are free from guilt, and the only criminal here in this room is that dagger on the floor. I trample it under foot, and it is unable to rise any more against me."

He placed his foot on the flashing blade, and fixed his piercing eyes on the princess. "Madame," he said, "when you came to me in Paris, it was the Count de Provence who had sent you. He sent me a letter through you at that time. Tell me, did he send me this dagger to-day?"

"No, I will take the most solemn oath that he knows nothing about it," replied Marianne. "Nobody knew of my undertaking; I had no confidants and no accomplices."

"You had only your own hatred, madame," said Napoleon, musingly. "Why do you hate me so bitterly? What have I done to all of you that you should turn away from me?"

"Why I hate you?" asked Marianne, impetuously. "Because you have come to trample Germany in the dust, to transform her into a French province, and to defraud us of our honor, our good rights, and independence. What have you done, that all honest men should turn away from you? You have broken your most sacred oaths—you are a perjurer!"

"Oh, that goes too far," cried Napoleon, passionately. "What hinders me, then—"

"To have me arrested?" Marianne interrupted him, defiantly—"please do so."

"No, I shall not do you that favor. Proceed, proceed! You stand before me as though you were Germania herself rising before me to accuse me. Well, then, accuse me. When have I broken my oaths?"

"From the moment when you raised the banner in the name of

the republic which you intended to upset; from the moment when you called the nations to you in the name of liberty, in order to rule over them as their tyrant and oppressor!"

"To those who wanted to keep up the despotism of liberty under which France had bled and groaned so long, I was a tyrant," said Napoleon, calmly; "to those who entertained the senseless idea of restoring the Bourbons, under whom France had bled and groaned as long and longer, I was an oppressor. The family of the Bourbons has become decrepit; it resembles a squeezed lemon, the peel of which is thrown contemptuously aside, because there is no longer any juice in it. Did you really believe I should have been such a fool as to pick up this empty peel, which France had thrown aside, and to clothe it in a purple cloak and crown? Did you believe I had, like those Bourbons and all legitimate princes, learned nothing from history, and not been taught by the examples it holds up to all those who have eyes to see with? I have learned from history that dynasties dry up like trees, and that it is better to uproot the hollow, withered-up trunk rather than permit it, in its long decay, to suck up the last nourishing strength from the soil on which it stands."

"Sire, you do not only uproot the decaying trunk, but with the axe of the tyrant you deprived this trunk of its fresh, green branches also," exclaimed Marianne.

"Ah, you refer to the Duke d'Enghien," said Napoleon, quietly. "It was an act of policy, which I do not regret. The Bourbons had to understand at length that France wanted to give them up and create a new era for herself. I stood at the head of this new era, and I had to fill in a becoming manner the position Providence had conferred on me. Providence destined me to become the founder of a new dynasty, and there will be a day when my family will occupy the first thrones of the world."*

"That is to say, you declare war against all princes," exclaimed Marianne.

"Against the princes, yes," said Napoleon, "for they are nothing but over-ripe fruits only waiting for the hand that is to shake them off. I shall be this hand, and before me they will fall to the ground, and I shall rise higher and higher above them. You call me a conqueror, but how could I stop now in my work? If I should pause now in my conquests and sheathe my sword, what should I have gained by so many efforts but a little glory, without having approached the goal to which I was aspiring? What should I have gained by setting all Europe in a blaze if I should be contented with having overthrown empires and not hasten to build up *my own* empire on solid foundations? It is not birth that entitles me to im-

* Napoleon's own words.—Vide "Le Normand," vol. ii., p. 29.

mortality. The man who is possessed of courage, who does good service to his country, and renders himself illustrious by great exploits, that man needs no pedigree, for he is everything by himself." *

"But in the eyes of the legitimists he is always nothing but an upstart," said Marianne, shrugging her shoulders.

"In that case he must overthrow and annihilate all legitimists," said Napoleon, quickly; "so that a new dynasty may arise, of which he will be the founder. I am the man of Destiny, and shall found a new dynasty, and one day the whole of Europe will be but one empire, *my* empire! All of you, instead of cursing me, should joyfully hail my coming and welcome me as your liberator sent by Providence to raise you from your degradation and disgrace. Just look around, you Germans, and see what sort of princes and governments you have got. Are you being ruled by noble, high-minded sovereigns; are men of ability and character at the head of your governments? I only behold impotence, infamy, and venality everywhere in the German cabinets. The system of nepotism is everywhere in force; offices are gifts of favor, and not rewards of merit; intrigues and corrupt influences succeed in placing the foremost positions of the state into the hands of incapable men, and great minds, if there be any at all, are utterly ignored. The result of this system is, of course, that men cease cultivating their minds, and that the virtues and talents which are not rewarded with a just tribute of glory, lose their vigor and enthusiasm; nay, often their very existence. When a nation sees none but incapable favorites and venal intriguers at the head of the various departments of its administration and of its armies, how is it to prosper and expand, to increase its wealth, and to win victories! Woe to the nation which allows itself to be governed by such ministers, and to be defended by such generals as I have found everywhere in Germany! As the man of Destiny, I have come to devote to her my hand, my mouth, and my heart for the purpose of liberating her and delivering her from her disgraceful chains." †

"And to load her with even more disgraceful ones," exclaimed Marianne, her eyes flaming with anger; "for there is nothing more disgraceful on earth than a nation submitting to a foreign barbarian and humbly kissing the feet of its oppressor, instead of expelling him by the majesty of its wrath. If you, a modern Attila, go on with your murderous sword, Europe is ruined, and all dignity of the nations, all the centres of scientific eminence, all the hopes of humanity are lost. For nations can only perform great things, and create great things, when they are independent; and freedom itself

* Napoleon's own words.—Vide "Le Normand," vol. ii., p. 49.

† Ibid., p. 39.

is of no use to them if they must receive it as a favor at the hands of their conqueror."

"Earth ought to have but one ruler, as heaven has but one God," said Napoleon, solemnly. "I have only begun my task; it is not yet accomplished. Hitherto I have subjected only France, Italy, Switzerland; and Holland to my sceptre, but my goal is even more sublime than that. And who will prevent me from seizing Westphalia, the Hanseatic cities, and Rome, and from annexing the Illyrian provinces, Etruria, and Portugal to France? I do not know yet where to fix the boundaries of my empire. Perhaps it will have no other boundaries than the vast space of the two hemispheres; perhaps, like Americus Vesputius and Columbus, I shall obtain the glory of discovering and conquering another unknown world!" *

"And if you should discover a third world," exclaimed Marianne, "God may decree, perhaps, that in this new world, an avenger of the two old worlds may arise and tell you in the thundering voice of Jehovah: 'Here are the boundaries of your empire! So far and no farther!'"

"But I should not shrink back," said Napoleon, smiling, "but advance to fight for my good right with the avenger sent by Providence, for I was also sent by Providence; I am a chosen son of Heaven, and if there is a misfortune for me, it is that I have come too late. Men are too enlightened or too sober; hence, it is impossible to accomplish great things."

"Ah, you say so," exclaimed Marianne, "you, whose fate is so brilliant and exalted? You, who once were a humble officer of artillery, and now are seated as emperor on a mighty throne?"

"Yes," said Napoleon, in a low voice, as if to himself, "I admit, my career was brilliant enough,—I have pursued a splendid path! But how much difference there is between me and the heroes of antiquity! How much more fortunate was Alexander! After conquering Asia, he declared he was the son of Jove, and the whole Orient believed it, except Olympias, who knew very well what to think of it, and except Aristotle, and a few other pedants of Athens! But if I, who have made more conquests and won greater victories than Alexander,—if I should declare to-day I were the son of God, and offer Him my thanksgiving under this title, there would be no fishwoman that would not laugh at me. The nations are too enlightened and too sober; it is impossible to accomplish great things." †

* Napoleon's own words.—"Le Normand, Mémoires," vol. ii., p. 69.

† Napoleon's own words.—Vide "Mémoires du Maréchal Duc de Raguse," vol. ii., p. 243.

"There will be a day, sire, when the nations will rise and prove to you that they are able to accomplish great things!"

"And on that day they will trample me in the dust, I suppose?" asked Napoleon, with an almost compassionate smile. "Do not hope too sanguinely for this day, for your hopes might deceive you. I have spoken so freely and frankly to you," he continued, rising, "because I knew that, by speaking to you, I was speaking, through you, to the most eminent, high-minded, and patriotic men of your nation, and because I wished to be comprehended and appreciated by them. Go, then, and repeat my words to them—repeat them to those, too, who believe that the throne which I have erected belongs to *them*, and that the tri-colored flag would have to disappear one day before the lilies. Go, madame, and tell those enthusiastic Bourbons the lilies were so dreadfully steeped in the misery and blood of France that nobody would recognize them there, and that everybody was shrinking back from their cadaverous smell and putridity. Empires and dynasties, like flowers, have but one day of bloom; the day of the Bourbons is past; they are faded and stripped of their leaves. State it to those who one day sent you *certainly* to me, and *perhaps* again to-day. If you relate to them to-day's scene, they may deplore, perhaps, that fate did not permit you to become a Judith, but they will have to acknowledge at least that I am no Holofernes. For although the most beautiful woman of my enemies came to my couch to visit me, she did not kill me, and her dagger lies at my feet! I shall preserve it as a remembrancer, and Grand-marshal Duroc, M. von Brandt, and Constant, my *valet de chambre*, who are waiting for you in the anteroom, will believe that dagger to be a souvenir of your love and of a delightful hour of my life. We will not undeceive them! Farewell, madame!"

He gave Marianne no time to answer him, but took the silver bell and rang it so loudly and violently that Constant appeared in evident terror in the door.

"Constant," said the emperor, "conduct the lady to her carriage; she will return to Vienna; and as for M. von Brandt, tell him the princess had allowed me to be her paymaster, and to pay him in her place for the happy minutes of our interview."

"Sire," ejaculated Marianne, in dismay, "you will—"

"Hush," the emperor interrupted her proudly, "I will pay my tribute to Dame Fortune! Farewell, madame; remember this hour sometimes!"

He waved a parting salutation to her with his hand, and then disappeared through the door leading to his bedroom.

Marianne stared at him until he was gone, as though she had just seen a ghost walking before her, and as though her whole

soul were concentrated in this look with which she gazed after him.

"Madame," said Constant, in a low voice, "if you please!" And he approached the large hall-door which he opened.

Marianne started when she heard his words as if she were awaking from a dream; she left the room silently, and without deigning to glance at Constant, and followed her smiling guide through the halls. In the first anteroom she beheld Grand-marshal Duroc and several generals, who looked at the princess with threatening and sorrowful glances. Marianne felt these glances as if they were daggers piercing her soul, and daggers seemed to strike her ears when she heard Constant say to Major von Brandt: "You will stay here, sir; for the emperor has ordered me to pay you here for the hours his majesty has spent with the princess."

By a violent effort, Marianne succeeded in overcoming her emotions, and with a proudly erect head, with a cold and immovable face, she walked on across the anterooms and descended the staircase until she reached her carriage.

Only when the carriage rolled along the road toward Vienna through the silent night, the coachman, notwithstanding the noise of the wheels, thought he heard loud lamentations, which seemed to proceed from the interior of the carriage. But he must have certainly been mistaken, for when the carriage stopped in the courtyard in front of her mansion, and the footman hastened to open the coach-door, the princess alighted as proud and calm, as beautiful and radiant as ever, and ascended the staircase coolly and slowly. At the head of the stairs stood Madame Camilla, muttering a few words with trembling lips and pale cheeks. Marianne apparently did not see her at all, and walked coldly and proudly down the corridor leading to her rooms.

She ordered the maids, who received her in her dressing-room, with an imperious wave of her hand, to withdraw, and when they had left the room she locked the door behind them. She then went with rapid steps to the boudoir contiguous to the dressing-room, and here, where she was sure that no one could see or overhear her, she allowed the proud mask to glide from her face, and showed its boundless despair. With a loud shriek of anguish she sank on her knees and raising her folded hands to heaven, cried, in the wailing notes of terrible grief:

"Oh, my God, my God! let me succumb to this disgrace. Have mercy on me, and let me die!"

But after long hours of struggling and despair, of lamentations and curses, Marianne rose again from her knees with defiant pride and calm energy.

"No," she muttered, "I must not, will not die! Life has still claims on me, and the secret league, of which I have become the first member, imposes on me the duty of living and working in its service. I was unable to strike the tyrant with my dagger; well, then, we must try to kill him gradually by means of pin-pricks. Such a pin-prick is the manuscript which Gentz has intrusted to me in order to have it published and circulated throughout Germany. Somewhere a printing-office will be found to set up this manuscript with its types; I will seek for it, and pay the weight of its types in gold."

Early next morning the travelling-coach of the princess stood at the door, and Marianne, dressed in a full travelling-costume, prepared for immediate departure. She had spent the whole night in arranging her household affairs. Now every thing was done, every thing was arranged and ready, and when about to descend the staircase, the princess turned around to Madame Camilla, who followed her humbly.

"Madame," she said, coldly and calmly, "you will be kind enough to leave my house this very hour, in order to write your diary somewhere else. The French governor of Vienna will assign to you, perhaps, a place with his *mouchards*; go, therefore, to him, and never dare again to enter my house. My steward has received instructions from me; he will pay you your wages, and see to it that you will leave the house within an hour. Adieu!"

Without vouchsafing to glance at Madame Camilla, she descended the staircase calmly and haughtily, and entered her carriage, which rolled through the lofty portal of the court-yard with thundering noise.

CHAPTER LIV.

THE FALL OF THE GERMAN EMPIRE.

THE peace of Presburg had been concluded; it had deprived Austria of her best provinces.

The offensive and defensive alliance between Prussia and France had been signed; it had deprived Prussia of the principalities of Cleves, Berg, and Neufchatel.

Germany, therefore, had reason enough in the beginning of 1806 to mourn and complain, for her princes had been humiliated and disgraced; her people had to bear with their princes the ignominy of degradation and dependence.

Germany, however, seemed to be joyful and happy; festivals

were being celebrated everywhere—festivals in honor of the Emperor Napoleon and his family, festivals of love and happiness.

After the victory Napoleon had obtained at Austerlitz over the two emperors, after the conclusion of the treaty of Presburg and the alliance with Prussia, all causes of war with Germany seemed removed, and Napoleon laid his sword aside in order to repose on his laurels in the bosom of his family, and, instead of founding new states, to bring about marriages between his relations and the scions of German sovereigns—marriages which were to draw closer the links of love and friendship uniting France with Germany, and to make all Germany the obedient son-in-law and vassal of the Emperor of France.

In Munich, the wedding-bells which made Napoleon the father-in-law of a German dynasty, were first rung. In Munich, in the beginning of 1806, Eugene Beauharnais, Napoleon's adopted son, was married to the beautiful and noble Princess Amelia of Bavaria, daughter of Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria, who, by the grace of Napoleon, had become King of Bavaria, as Eugene, by the same grace, had become Viceroy of Italy.

All Bavaria was jubilant with delight at the new and most fortunate ties uniting the German state with France; all Bavaria felt honored and happy when the Emperor Napoleon, with his wife Josephine, came to Munich to take part in the wedding-ceremonies. Festivals followed each other in quick succession in Munich; only happy faces were to be seen there, only jubilant shouts, laughter, and merry jests were to be heard; and whenever Napoleon appeared in the streets or showed himself on the balcony of the palace, the people received him with tremendous cheers, and waved their hats at the emperor, regardless of the blood and tears he had wrung but a few days before from another German state.

No sooner had the wedding-bells ceased ringing in Munich than they commenced resounding in Carlsruhe; for Napoleon wanted there, too, to become the father-in-law of another German dynasty, and the niece of Josephine, Mademoiselle Stephanie de Beauharnais, married the heir of the Elector of Baden, who now, by the grace of Napoleon, became Grand-duke of Baden.

And to the merry notes of the wedding-bells of Munich and Carlsruhe, were soon added the joyful sound of the bells which announced to Germany the rise of a new sovereign house within her borders, and inaugurated the elevation of the brother-in-law of the Emperor of France to the dignity of a sovereign German prince. Those solemn bells resounded in Cleves and Berg, and did homage to Joachim Murat, who, by the grace of Napoleon, had become Grand-duke of Berg. Prussia and Bavaria had to furnish the material for