

"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

this new princely cloak; Prussia had given the larger portion of it, the Duchy of Cleves, and Bavaria, grateful for so many favors, had added to it the principality of Berg, so that these two German states together formed a nice grand-duchy for the son of the French inn-keeper—for Joachim Murat, for the brother-in-law of the French emperor.

And when the joyful sounds had died away in Munich, Carlsruhe, and the new grand-duchy of Berg, they resounded again in Stuttgart, for in that capital the betrothal of Jerome, youngest brother of Napoleon, and of a daughter of the Elector of Wurtemberg, who now, by the grace of Napoleon, had become King of Wurtemberg, was celebrated. It is true Jerome, the emperor's brother, wore no crown as yet; it is true this youngest son of the Corsican lawyer had hitherto been nothing but an "imperial prince of France," but his royal father-in-law of Wurtemberg felt convinced that his august brother, Napoleon, would endow the husband of his daughter in a becoming manner, and place some vacant or newly-to-be-created crown on his head. Napoleon, moreover, had just then endowed his elder brother Joseph in such a manner, and made him King of Naples, after solemnly declaring to Europe in a manifesto, that "the dynasty of Naples had ceased to reign, and that the finest country on earth was to be delivered at length from the yoke of the most perfidious persons." And in accordance with his word, Napoleon had overthrown the Neapolitan dynasty, expelled King Ferdinand and Queen Caroline from their capital, and placed his brother Joseph on the throne of Naples.\*

Hence, the King of Wurtemberg was not afraid; he was sure that Napoleon would discover somewhere a falling crown for his brother Jerome, and give to the daughter of the most ancient German dynasty a position worthy of the honor of her house.

But the joyful bells were not only rung in Germany; they resounded also from the borders of Holland, which now, by the grace of Napoleon, had become a kingdom, and to which, again by the grace of Napoleon, a king had been given, in the person of Louis, another brother of the Emperor of France. They resounded, too, from Italy, where, in this blessed year of 1806, so productive of new crowns, on one day, March 30, 1806, suddenly twelve duchies sprang

\* Napoleon rewarded his generals and ministers, besides, with duchies, which he created for them in Italy, and the rich revenues of which he assigned to them. Thus Marmont became Duke of Ragusa; Mortier, Duke of Treviso; Bessières, Duke of Istria; Savary, Duke of Rovigo; Lannes, Duke of Montebello; Bernadotte, Prince of Pontecorvo; Talleyrand, Prince of Benevento; Fouché, Duke of Otranto; Maret, Duke of Bassano; Sault, Duke of Dalmatia; Berthier, Prince of Neufchatel; Duroc, Duke of Frioul, etc.

from the ground and placed as many ducal crowns on the heads of Napoleon's friends and comrades.

The year of 1806, therefore, was a blessed and happy year; joy and exultation reigned everywhere, and Napoleon was the author of all this happiness.

Still there was in the German empire a city which, in spite of all these recent festivals and demonstrations of satisfaction, maintained a grave and gloomy aspect, and apparently took no part whatever in the universal joy, but lived in its sullen, dull quiet as it had done for centuries.

This city was Ratisbon, the seat of the German Diet, and now the property and capital of the archchancellor of the German empire, Baron Dalberg.

For centuries Ratisbon had enjoyed the proud honor of having the ambassadors of all the German states meet in its old city-hall, for the purpose of deliberating on the welfare of Germany. From the arched windows of the large session-hall the new laws flitted all over Germany, and what the gentlemen at Ratisbon had decided on, had to be submitted to by the princes and people of Germany.

And, just as hundreds and hundreds of years ago, they were still in session at Ratisbon—the ambassadors of the emperor, of the kings, electors, dukes, free cities, counts, and barons of the German empire. There met every day in their old hall the states of Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Hanover, Wurtemberg, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Mecklenberg, Brunswick, and whatever might be the names of the different members of the great German empire.

They met, but they did not deliberate any longer; they merely guessed what might be the fate of Germany, how long they would sit there in gloomy idleness, and when it might please the new protector of Germany, the Emperor of France, to remember them and say to them: "Go home, gentlemen, for your time has expired. The German Diet has ceased to exist, and I will deliver Germany from this burden."

But neither the Emperor of France nor the sovereigns of Germany seemed to remember that there was a Diet still in session at the ancient city-hall of Ratisbon, which formerly had to sanction all treaties of peace, all cessions of territory, and all political changes whatever, so that they might be recognized and become valid in the German empire.

Now, the Emperor of Germany had not even deemed it necessary to submit to the Diet at Ratisbon the treaty of peace concluded with Napoleon at Presberg for ratification, but had contented himself with merely notifying the Diet of its conclusion. In the same manner, and on the same day, the ambassadors of Bavaria and

Wurtemberg had risen from their seats to announce to the Diet that they were now no longer representatives of electors, but of kings—Bavaria and Wurtemberg, with the consent of the Emperor of France, having assumed the royal title; and when these two gentlemen had resumed their seats, the ambassador of the Elector of Baden rose for the purpose of declaring that he was representing no longer an electorate, but a grand-duchy—the Elector of Baden, with the consent of the Emperor of France, having assumed the grand-ducal title.

The Diet had received these announcements silently and without objection; it had been silent, also, when, a few days later, the French ambassador, M. Bacher, appeared in the session-hall and announced that Murat, as Duke of Cleves, had become a member of the German empire. Every ambassador, however, had asked himself silently how it happened that the new member of the empire did not hasten to avail himself of his rights, and to send an ambassador to take his seat at the Diet of Ratisbon.

The Diet, as we have stated already, received all these announcements in silence, and what good would it have done to it to speak? Who still respected its voice? Who still bowed to its name?"

Only for appearance sake, only for the purpose of conversing with each other in a low tone about their own misfortunes, their weakness and impotence, did the ambassadors of the German princes and cities meet still, and instead of giving laws to Germany, as formerly, they only communicated to each other their suppositions concerning the fate that might be in store for Germany and the German Diet at Ratisbon.

The gentlemen were assembled again to-day in the large session-hall, and all the German states, which elsewhere were bitterly quarrelling with each other, were sitting peaceably around the large green-table and chatting about the events that had taken place in the German empire, and might occur in the near future.

"Have you read the new pamphlets which are creating so great a sensation at the present time?" said Prussia to Saxony, who was seated by her side.

"No, I never read any pamphlets," replied Saxony.

"It is worth while, however, to read these pamphlets," said Prussia, smiling; "for they treat of an absurd idea in a most eloquent and enthusiastic manner. Just think of it, they advocate in dead earnest the idea of placing the German empire, now that the power of Austria has been paralyzed, under the protection of Bavaria, and of appointing the new King of Bavaria chief of Germany."

"The idea is not so bad, after all," said Saxony, smiling; "the Bavarian dynasty is one of the most ancient in Germany, and its

power is greater than ever, inasmuch as it may boast of the friendship and favor of the Emperor of France. The Emperor Napoleon would, perhaps, raise no objections in case the King of Bavaria should be elected Emperor of Germany."

"Oh, no," whispered Brunswick, Saxony's neighbor on the left; "I received late and authentic news yesterday. The Emperor Napoleon intends completely to restore the German empire of the middle ages, and will himself assume the imperial crown of Germany."\*

"What," exclaimed Hesse, who had overheard the words, "the Emperor Napoleon wants to make himself Emperor of Germany?"

And Hesse had spoken so loudly in her surprise that the whole Diet had heard her words, and every one repeated them in great astonishment, while every face assumed a grave and solemn air.

"Yes, you may believe that such is the case," said Bavaria, in an audible tone; "important changes are in store for us, and I know from the best source that Minister Talleyrand said the other day, quite loudly and positively, 'That the fate of the German empire would be decided on toward the end of this month.'"<sup>†</sup>

"And to-day is already the 23d of May," said Oldenburg, musingly; "we may look, therefore, every hour for a decision."

"Yes, we may do so," exclaimed Würzburg; "I know for certain that they are already engaged in Paris in drawing up a new constitution for Germany."

"It might be good, perhaps," said her neighbor, "if we should also commence to draw up a new constitution for Germany, and then send it to Minister Talleyrand, because we are certainly more familiar with the customs and requirements of the German empire than the statesmen of France. We ought to consult with the archchancellor, Baron Dalberg, about this matter. But where is the archchancellor; where is Dalberg?"

"Yes, it is true, the archchancellor has not yet made his appearance," exclaimed Oldenburg, wonderingly. "Where can he be? Where is Dalberg?"

And the question was whispered from mouth to mouth, "Where is Dalberg?"

Formerly, in the glorious old times of the German empire, it had been the German emperor who, at the commencement of the sessions of the Diet, had always asked in a loud voice, "Is there no Dalberg?" And at his question, the Dalbergs had come forward and placed themselves around the emperor's throne, always ready to undertake great things and to carry out bold adventures.

\* Häusser's "History of Germany," vol. ii., p. 721.

† *Ibid.*, p. 723.

Now, it was not the emperor who called for his Dalberg, but the Diet that whispered his name.

And it seemed as if the man who had been called for, had heard these whispers, for the large doors of the old session-hall opened, and the archchancellor of the empire, Baron Dalberg, entered.

Clad in his full official costume, he stepped into the hall and approached his seat at the green table. But instead of sitting down on the high-backed, carved arm-chair, he remained standing, and his eyes glided greetingly past all those grave and gloomy faces which were fixed on him.

"I beg the august Diet to permit me to lay a communication before it," said the archchancellor of the empire, with a bow to the assembly.

The grave faces of the ambassadors nodded assent, and Dalberg continued, in a loud and solemn voice: "I have to inform the Diet that, as I am growing old and feel a sensible decline of my strength, I have deemed it indispensable for the welfare of Germany and myself to choose already a successor and coadjutor. Having long looked around among the noble and worthy men who surround me in so great numbers, I have at length made my selection and come to such a decision as is justified by the present state of affairs. The successor whom I have selected is a worthy and high-minded man, whose ancestors have greatly distinguished themselves in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the service of the German empire. It is the Archbishop and Cardinal Fesch, uncle of the Emperor of France."

A long and painful pause ensued; the members of the Diet looked, as if stupefied with terror and astonishment, at this man who, himself a German prince, dared to inform the German Diet that he had invited a foreigner to share with him the high dignity of a first German elector and of inheriting it after his death.

Dalberg read, perhaps, in the gloomy mien of the gentlemen the thoughts which they dared not utter, for he hastened to communicate to the Diet the motives which had influenced him in making the above-named selection. He told them he had acted thus, not in his own interest, but in order to maintain the menaced constitution of the German empire, and to place it under Napoleon's powerful protection. He then informed them joyfully that the Emperor of the French had already approved of the appointment of his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, and promised, moreover, that he would devote his personal attention to the regeneration of the German empire and always afford it protection.

The members of the Diet had moodily listened to him; their air

had become more and more dissatisfied and gloomy; and when the elector paused, not a single voice was heard to propose the vote of thanks which Dalberg, on concluding his remarks, had asked for, but only a profound, ominous stillness followed his speech.

This, however, was the only official demonstration which the German Diet ventured to make against the appointment of Cardinal Fesch, and their silence did not prevent the consummation of this unparalleled measure. A foreigner, not even familiar with the German language, now became coadjutor of the archchancellor of the German empire—a foreigner became the first member of the German electoral college—a foreigner was to have the seals of the empire in his hands, keep the laws of Germany in his archives, and preside at the election of the emperors and at the sessions of the Diet! And this foreigner was the uncle of the Emperor of the French, of the conqueror of the world. But the German Diet was silent and suffered on.

The horizon of Germany became more and more clouded; the Diet continued its sessions quietly, calmly, and inaudibly in the old city-hall at Ratisbon.

It was reported everywhere that the Emperor of France was about to give a new constitution to the German empire, and that the Emperor of Germany had pledged himself in the treaty of Presburg not to oppose the plans of Napoleon in relation to Germany.

The Diet paid no attention to these rumors; it remained in session, and did not interrupt its silence. It remained in session while the secondary German princes, whose ambassadors were assembled in Ratisbon, hastened in person to Paris, in order to appear there as humble supplicants in the anterooms of the Emperor and Talleyrand, and to win the favor of Napoleon and his minister. This favor, they hoped, would gain for them crowns and states, render them powerful and influential, and give them a brilliant position. For Talleyrand had secretly whispered into the ears of all of them: "Those who oppose the emperor's plans, and refuse to accept his protection, will be *mediatized!*"\* Every one of these secondary German princes hoped, therefore, that the others would be *mediatized*, and that he would receive the possessions of his neighbors.

Every one, therefore, was most jealous in protesting his entire submission to the emperor's will, and in trying to gain as much as possible by flattery, bribery, and humble supplication. It seemed as though in Paris, in the anterooms of the emperor and his minister Talleyrand, a market-booth had been opened, in which dice were

\* *Mediatized* position of the small German states, when their princes were under an emperor!

being thrown for German states and German crowns, or where they were sold at auction to the highest bidder!\*

The Diet heard only rumors, vague rumors, about these proceedings, and remained quietly in session. It met every day and waited.

And at length, on the 1st of August, 1806, the large doors of the hall, in which the ambassadors of the German empire were assembled, opened, and the minister of the French emperor appeared in their midst, and approached in solemn earnest the green table, on which hitherto Germany alone had had the right to depose her notes and declarations, and on which hitherto the German Diet alone had written laws for Germany.

But Bacher, the French minister, came to force a new law upon the German Diet—the law of the French emperor.

The representative of the French emperor addressed the German Diet in a solemn tone, and as the vast session-hall echoed the loud, imperious voice of the foreigner, it seemed as if he called up from their graves the ghosts of past centuries, and as if they then placed themselves like a protecting gray cloud before the menaced Diet.

"The German constitution," said the minister of France—"the German constitution is now but a shadow; the Diet has ceased to have a will of its own. Hence his majesty, the Emperor of France and Italy, is not obliged to recognize the existence of this German constitution any longer; a new confederation of German princes will be formed under his protection, and his majesty will assume the title of Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine. In order to maintain peace, he declared formerly that he would never extend the boundaries of France beyond the Rhine, and he has faithfully kept his word." †

And after Bacher had uttered these words, sixteen members of the Diet, twelve princes, and four electors, rose from their seats. The first of the German electors, the archchancellor of the empire, Charles Theodore von Dalberg, was their speaker, and he explained to the Diet, in the name of his fifteen colleagues, their intentions and views.

\* Enormous bribes were paid by the German princes to win the favor of the prominent functionaries of the French empire, in order to be saved by their influence from being *mediatized*, and to obtain as valuable additions to their territories as possible. Diplomatic gifts were not even secretly distributed, but the business was carried on as publicly as if the persons concerned in it had been on 'change. Everybody knew that the Prince of Salm-Kyrburg had bought of one of the French ministers two hundred thousand bottles of champagne at an enormous rate; that Labesnardière, Talleyrand's first secretary, had received half a million of francs from Hesse Darmstadt; and that the Duke of Mecklenburg had promised him one hundred and twenty thousand Fredericks d'ors if he should retain his sovereignty.—Vide Montgallard, "Histoire de France," vol. x., p. 115.

† "Mémoires d'un Homme d'État," vol. ix., p. 160.

"The last three wars have demonstrated," he exclaimed, "that the German empire is rotten and virtually destroyed; hence we German princes of the south and west of Germany will sever our connection with a constitution which has ceased to exist, and place ourselves under the protection of the Emperor of the French, who is anxious to secure the welfare and prosperity of Germany. We have formed a confederation among ourselves, and the Emperor of the French will be the head and protector of this league, which will be called the Confederation of the Rhine. Solemnly and forever do we, princes of the German Confederation of the Rhine, renounce the German empire and the German Diet, acknowledging none but the Emperor of the French as our head and protector."

"Yes, we renounce the German empire and the German Diet," exclaimed the sixteen princes, in one breath. "We renounce them now and forever!"

And they noisily pushed aside the high-backed arm-chairs, on which the representatives of their states had sat for centuries, and left the session-hall in a solemn procession, headed by the arch-chancellor of the empire.\*

The remaining members of the Diet gazed on them in profound silence, and when the door closed behind the disappearing princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, it seemed as though strange sounds and whisperings filled the old hall, and as though low sighs and lamentations resounded from the walls where the portraits of the emperors were hanging.

The remaining members of the Diet were filled with awe; the sixteen vacant chairs struck terror into their souls; they rose silently from their seats and left the hall with hasty steps.

But on the following day the German Diet met again. It wanted to consult and deliberate as to what ought to be done in relation to the desertion of sixteen of its members.

And it consulted and deliberated for six days without coming to any decision. But on the sixth day a stop was put to the debates.

On the 6th of August a special envoy of the Emperor of Germany appeared at the city-hall of Ratisbon while the Diet was in session.

He approached the green table and saluted the small remnant of the great assembly, and producing a large letter bearing the emperor's privy seal, said in a loud and solemn voice: "In the name of the emperor!"

And the members of the Diet rose from their seats to listen rever-

\* The members of the Confederation of the Rhine were Bavaria, Wurtemberg, Baden, the archchancellor with his territory, Berg, Hesse-Darmstadt, Nassau-Weilburg, Nassau-Usingen, Hohenzollern-Hechingen, Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Salm-Salm, Salm-Kyrberg, Isenburg, Aremberg, Lichtenstein, and Von der Leyen.

entially to the imperial message which his majesty had addressed to the German Diet in an autograph letter. He had commissioned his envoy to read the letter to the Diet, and the minister read as follows:

"Feeling convinced that it is impossible for us to exercise our imperial rights any longer, we deem it our duty to renounce a crown which was of value to us only so long as we enjoyed the confidence of the electors, princes, noblemen, and states of the German empire, and so long as we were able to fulfil the duties they imposed upon us. Hence we are obliged to declare by these presents in the most solemn manner, that, considering the ties which united us with the German empire as broken by the Confederation of the Rhine, we hereby give up the imperial crown of Germany; at the same time we release by these presents the electors, princes, and states, as well as the members of the supreme court and other magistrates from the duties which they owed to us as legal head of the German empire. Given under our own hand and seal. Francis the Second, Emperor of Austria, and ruler of the hereditary states of Austria."\*

A long and awful silence greeted the reading of this letter, which put an end to the ancient German empire after an existence of one thousand and six years, from Charlemagne, crowned in 800, to Francis II., dispossessed in 1806.

The members of the German Diet then rose from their seats; they were as silent and shy as night-owls startled from their dark hiding-places by a stray sunbeam. They left the old session-hall at Ratisbon in gloomy silence, and when the door closed behind them, the German Diet had been buried, and the lid on its coffin had been closed.

The last night-owls of the deceased German empire hurried in mournful silence from the session-hall at Ratisbon, where the old portraits henceforth watched alone over the grave of the German empire.

When they stepped out into the market-place, a carriage just rolled past the city-hall, and the gentleman seated in it leaned smilingly out of the coach-door, and saluted kindly and affably the pale, grave, and sad men who came from the city-hall.

This gentleman was Count Clement Metternich, who was going to Paris as special envoy of the Emperor of Austria for the purpose of offering to the Emperor of France on his birthday the congratulations of the Emperor of Austria.†

On the 6th of August the German empire had died and was buried!

\* "Mémoires d'un Homme d'État," vol. ix., p. 160.

† Ibid., p. 162.

On the 15th of August the Emperor of the French celebrated his birthday; and the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, the Emperor of Austria, the King of Prussia, and all the sovereigns who had been members of the late German empire, celebrated the great day in the most solemn manner.

Napoleon had a new victory—a victory which laid the whole of Germany at his feet. He had buried the German empire, but stood on the grave of the august corpse as its lord and master.