

his tall, slender form, and youthful countenance, whose manly expression contrasted with his long golden hair. He hastened down-stairs, and crossed the hall into the street. The noise had ceased, and nearly all the lights had burnt out. As he turned a corner rapidly, he was attracted by a transparency. The inscription, in large letters on a crimson ground, read: "*Güb's jetzt noch einen Göttersohn, so wäre es Napoleon!*"*

A flash of anger burst from the youth's eyes, and he raised his clinched fist menacingly. "You miserable dogs," he said, in a low voice, "when the true Germans come, you will hide yourselves in the dust!" He walked rapidly until he reached a small house at the lower end of the street, and softly entering, glided across the hall, cautiously ascended the staircase, halted in front of a door up-stairs, and gently rapped. It opened immediately, and a young woman of surpassing beauty appeared on the threshold. "Oh, Frederick, is it really you?" she whispered, embracing him. "You are mine again, beloved Frederick! You did not draw the fatal lot! Heaven refused the sacrifice which you were ready to make."

"It is so, Anna," said the young man. "But why do you weep, dearest? You were formerly so courageous, and approved my determination to engage in that desperate enterprise!"

She clasped her hands, lifting her large black eyes to heaven. "Abraham was ready to sacrifice his son," she said, "but when his offering was not accepted, he was thankful. Thus I also thank and praise God at this moment!"

"Yes," said the young man, gloomily, "He rejected my offering, and for the present I am free. I come to take leave of you, beloved Anna; I must depart this very night."

"You are going to leave me!" she exclaimed in dismay. "Ah, you have deceived me, then—you have drawn the fatal lot! You come to bid me farewell, because you are to perpetrate the terrible deed!"

"No, Anna. I swear to you by our love I am free! I did not draw the lot. But I must go to Leipsic. My mission here has been accomplished, and I must be about my business. The president of the patriotic brethren must descend from his exalted position, and once more become a poor insignificant merchant. But I know, and predict it, Anna, there will be a day when Germany will choose me to deliver her from the tyrant. A presentiment tells me that the two who

* "If there were now a son of the gods, he would be Napoleon."

have drawn the black balls to-day will not succeed. Their hands trembled when they held up the balls, and I saw that they started when they perceived them to be black. Yes, they will fail; but I shall not! It is reserved for me; a shout of joy will resound throughout the country, and the people will exclaim, 'We are delivered from the tyrant; Germany is free, and the name of our deliverer is Frederick Staps!'"

CHAPTER XLI.

THE FESTIVITIES OF ERFURT AND WEIMAR.

FESTIVITIES were succeeded by festivities, amusements by amusements, and these days of Erfurt glided by in friendship, pleasure, and love. Napoleon was the host. It was he who received the Emperor of Russia, the kings, the dukes, and the princes, with their legions of courtiers and cavaliers, and treated all the members of these different petty courts with imperial munificence. In return there were universal manifestations of homage and devotion. The kings and princes every morning attended his levee. He arranged the entertainments that were to take place, and designated those who were to participate in them. All bowed to him, even the Emperor Alexander himself. The most cordial feeling prevailed between the two emperors. They were always seen arm in arm, like two loving youths, jealous of every minute that separated them. At the dinner-table, at the theatre, at the balls and concerts, they always came together into the proud society that awaited them. At dinner, Napoleon, playing the polite and obliging host, always had Alexander placed at his right. At the theatre, directly behind the orchestra, were two gilded easy-chairs on a small platform, and the two emperors were enthroned on them near each other; on the floor behind this stood four small arm-chairs, occupied by the Kings of Bavaria, Würtemberg, Saxony, and Westphalia; and in the rear, on common chairs, sat the dukes, princes, counts, and the large array of cavaliers and courtiers. The queens and princesses were seated in the proscenium-boxes on both sides of the stage, and the ladies of the *haute-volée* in their rich toilets and wealth of jewelry filled the first tier.

Napoleon kept the promise he had made to Talma: that celebrated actor played before a pit of kings, and it was, per-

haps, this fact, or the expectant face of Napoleon, whose eyes were on him, or the presence of Alexander, who was never weary of praising him—it was probably all this that enkindled the actor's enthusiasm. Never before had Talma played more effectively—never before had he assumed such a dignity for enthroned greatness, or better studied its bearing in adversity. His expression of hatred, love, and grief, in his impersonations, were never more famous than in these gala-days of Erfurt. A sort of inspiration pervaded the great artist, and his enthusiasm infected the spectators, especially Alexander, who was carried away by Talma's passion in the representation of "Œdipus." When the actor exclaimed, "The friendship of a great man is a boon of the gods!" the Russian emperor bent over Napoleon, and seizing his hand pressed it against his breast. A murmur of applause was heard; all appeared astonished at this public demonstration; even Œdipus on the stage seemed to be impressed, and his voice trembled. Napoleon alone remained grave and calm, not a feature changed or betrayed the satisfaction that his heart could not, but feel at this moment; he thanked Alexander only by a glance, and his attention seemed to be again directed to the stage.

Late at night Napoleon found, as usual, a letter from his minister Champagny. "Old Romanzoff insists on the prompt fulfilment of the promises of Tilsit," wrote the minister. "Constantinople—nothing but Constantinople—seems to the stubborn Russian an equivalent for Spain. I believe the peremptory orders only of his master will subdue this obstinacy."

"Ah," murmured Napoleon, crumpling the paper in his hand, "I must put a stop to this. We must arrive at a definite result. I shall utter the decisive word to-morrow!"

On the following morning the kings and princes appeared in vain in the anteroom of the Emperor Napoleon to attend his levee. He had risen at an unusually early hour, and, allured by the sunny autumnal morning, visited his friend Alexander, who had just risen when Napoleon, unannounced, entered with a smiling face.

"Ah," exclaimed Alexander, rushing toward him with a cry of exultation, and embracing him affectionately, "sire, I dreamed of you all night; you were here at my side, while I was sleeping, and all seemed bright, but when I opened my eyes and did not see you, the room appeared dark, although the sun was shining. But now you are here, and my dreams are realized."

Napoleon's face suddenly turned gloomy, and the smile disappeared from his lips. "I also had a dream," he said, gravely. "It seemed to me as though I lay on a bed of flowers, and two stars were twinkling above me, and as they came nearer I saw that they were not stars, but bright eyes beaming in a manly face, and looking at me with tenderness. I was fascinated. I raised myself as if borne on angel-wings, and stretched out my arms toward the approaching form. Suddenly I uttered a scream; the friend had been changed into a wolf that rushed toward me, and fixing his eyes on mine, tore my breast and fed upon my heart. Oh, I was in horrible pain—not imaginary but real—for I screamed so loudly that Constant, my *valet de chambre*, hastened from the adjoining room and awakened me. Even now that I think of it I tremble, and sadness fills my soul." He bent his head on his breast, and, folding his hands behind him, paced the room slowly.

Alexander looked smilingly at him, but approaching, said: "Sire, why this melancholy? In truth, when looking at you, one might think, my august friend, that you believed in dreams."

"I do," exclaimed Napoleon, quickly raising his head. "Dreams are revelations from on high! Had Julius Cæsar believed in his dreams, and in the prophecies of the astrologers, he would not have fallen by the daggers of assassins."

"But how will your majesty interpret the dream that tormented you last night?" asked Alexander.

Napoleon bent a strange look on his frank countenance. "Alexander," he said, in a low voice, "could you ever transform yourself into a wolf, and tear out my heart?"

"I, Napoleon, I?" ejaculated Alexander, starting back in dismay. "Your majesty, then, does not believe in my friendship, in the profound admiration for you that fills my soul? All I have said and done has then been in vain! Instead of having won your esteem, your majesty distrusts me, and believes the follies of the imagination in sleep rather than the protestations of reason, interest, and friendship!"

"No, no," said Napoleon, affectionately, and almost touched by the profound grief depicted in Alexander's countenance, "I believe that your majesty returns a little the love I feel for you. I believe in your noble heart, in spite of all dreams."

"And I swear to your majesty that you may believe in me," exclaimed Alexander. "My whole policy, the new course

upon which I have entered, will prove to you, more convincingly than words, sire, that I am most anxious to establish a firm alliance between Russia and France; oh, believe me, sire, I gladly acknowledge you as my superior; all promptings of jealousy are extinct in my heart; and when, in the face of the enormous territorial aggrandizements of France, I desire an enlargement of Russia, too, I do so not for my sake, but in order to satisfy my people, that they may bear more patiently your operations in Spain. For my part, I approve all you have done in that country. King Charles and his son Ferdinand have abundantly deserved their present fate by their incapacity and baseness, and I do not pity them. But one must comprehend the system of the great Napoleon as clearly and thoroughly as I do, to be able to pass over the great catastrophes which your majesty has caused the world to witness. My people, and, above all, my nobility, have not yet progressed so far as that, and hence the attention of the Russians should be turned to important changes in the Orient that they may look more indifferently at what you are undertaking in the Occident. As for myself, I am your most faithful friend, and I have proved it to your majesty by becoming the enemy of your enemies. In accordance with your wishes, I have declared war against England, and shall probably soon have to do the same against Austria, for I shall require her in the most energetic manner to explain why she is secretly arming; and, if her explanations should not be satisfactory, draw the sword against her. Then, I suppose, your majesty will believe in my friendship?"

"Oh, I believe in it now," exclaimed Napoleon, pressing the proffered hand of Alexander. "For this friendship is my hope. United, we shall be able to carry out the grand schemes which we formed at Tilsit. Striding across the world, we shall lay it at our feet, and one day there will be only two thrones; but in the beginning we must proceed carefully. It took the Creator six days to make the world, and each day, most likely, comprehended a vast number of our years. We shall create our world in six years, and then we shall look at it, and pronounce it 'very good.' But caution is indispensable, for our empires labor under many burdens. You are waging war in Finland, and I am doing so in Spain. Prudence advises us not to increase these embarrassments by seeking at this moment for Russia an aggrandizement which would fill the world with astonishment, and reëcho like a war-

cry throughout Europe. Let the dissolution of Turkey and her annexation to Russia be the keystone of our creation, the last work of the sixth day. Let us erect the new empires on solid foundations, which all the storms of this world may not shake!"

"When Constantinople is mine, I shall not be afraid," exclaimed Alexander, ardently.

"Constantinople belongs to the sixth day of creation," said Napoleon, "but we are only at the second. Tilsit was the first, Erfurt is the second."

"And on the second day you take from me what you promised on the first?" asked Alexander, whose brow was losing its serenity.

"No, I only want to secure it to you," said Napoleon—"to give a firm base to the edifice of our future. If your majesty should take possession of Turkey to-day, one-half of Europe would arm to-morrow to take it from you, and at this moment Russia is unable to brave so many enemies. Austria would rise against you, for, whatever offers you might make, she would prefer war to a partition of Turkey. England would see her commerce endangered, and enter into the contest from calculations of self-interest. Besides, Turkey herself would wage war with the fanaticism of her menaced nationality. Where are the armies which your majesty could oppose to the united forces of England, Austria, and Turkey? It is true, you have an army on the Danube, sufficiently strong to oppose Turkey, but too weak if the whole nation should rise. Your principal army is in Finland, and you have no troops to war against Austria. I alone, therefore—for, as a matter of course, I shall remain your faithful ally—I should have to struggle with Austria, England, Spain, and, perhaps, with the whole of Germany. To be sure, I might do so, for I have sufficient power to cope with all my enemies. But would it be wise to enter at once into enterprises so vast? And what for? To pursue a chimerical project which, how grand soever it may be, is not attainable at this time."

"Alas!" sighed Alexander, "I see that your majesty is right, and that mountain difficulties rise between me and my cherished project! I shall have to return empty-handed to my ancestors, and when Peter the Great asks me, 'What have you done to fulfil my will? Where are the provinces that you have added to my empire?' I must hang my head in confusion and say that—"

"No," exclaimed Napoleon, in a loud and solemn voice; "you will proudly raise your head and reply: 'Look at Russia! I have made her great at home and abroad. I have given to my people civilization and culture, and added to my empire new provinces which promote its greatness and power more substantially than Constantinople itself would have done. The possession of that city is a dream. I have annexed to my country real provinces.' That is what you will reply to your great ancestor, sire, provided you go to him before having arrived at your sixth day of creation."

Alexander was speechless for a moment, as if fascinated by Napoleon's countenance, beaming with energy and determination.

"What provinces does your majesty allude to?" he asked, dreamily.

"They lie at the feet of Russia, and seem only to wait for your majesty to pick them up. Moldavia and Wallachia you will present as new crown jewels to your empire. They are substantial realities in place of visionary wishes; solid possessions far more important than Constantinople."

"That is true," exclaimed Alexander. "I have myself thought so for a long time, but I dare not avow it, because I was afraid your majesty would not agree with me."

"France knows no envy," said the emperor, "and Napoleon loves his friend Alexander; he will gladly grant to him what he desires, and what is attainable. Take Moldavia and Wallachia, sire!"

"You grant them to me," exclaimed Alexander, "and it is no empty promise, but a definite and immutable agreement?"

"I say, sire, take them at once, and woe to those who would dare touch your new possessions!"

"I thank you, sire," Alexander said. "You have given me a proof of your friendship to-day, and old Romanzoff will have to acknowledge that he is wrong in thinking that you only intended to amuse us with idle promises. Ah, he is a hard head, and I believe your Minister Champagny cannot get along with him very well."

"That is so," exclaimed Napoleon, laughing, and Alexander joined heartily in his mirth.

"He will now demand guaranties," said Alexander, still laughing. "He is so distrustful that he believes in no words, though from heaven. My old Romanzoff believes only in black and white."

"We will so guarantee Moldavia to him," said Napoleon.

"Oh, not for my sake," exclaimed Alexander, carelessly. "Your majesty's word is amply sufficient for me; let Romanzoff and Champagny quarrel about the formalities."

"I will come to the assistance of poor Champagny," said Napoleon, "if your majesty, in return, will be kind enough to make stubborn Romanzoff somewhat more tractable. You have already occupied these provinces; it will, therefore, be easy for you to annex them. France will give her consent by a formal treaty, and not only engage to recognize this annexation so far as she herself is concerned, but also to compel Turkey, Austria, and England, to acknowledge it. Your majesty, therefore, will break the armistice with Turkey, and advance your army to the foot of the Balkan, then to Adrianople, and, if need be, to Constantinople, in order to wrest these territories from the Porte. In case Austria should intervene, we shall both declare war against her. As for England, we are already at war with her. It will only be necessary for me to give her a bloody defeat in Spain to render her insensible to any enterprises we may enter into on the continent. All this we stipulate not only verbally, but in writing. Will that satisfy your majesty?"

"Me? I am satisfied with your majesty's word," exclaimed Alexander.

"Well, then," said Napoleon, with a smile, "the question is, Will your minister be satisfied?"

"Of course, he will; and, moreover, I shall command him to raise no further objections. Let Champagny and Romanzoff draw up the treaty; it will then be merely necessary for us to sign it, and the whole matter is settled. Our friendship will have been rendered more intimate and lasting by new bonds, which nothing in the world will be able to break."

"As to our other plans," said Napoleon, "we shall never lose sight of them. Every day we draw nearer to their fulfilment. There is yet a vast future before us in which to accomplish our purposes with regard to the Orient, and to remodel its political affairs. Romanzoff is aged, and hence, impatient to enjoy what he desires. But you are young; you can wait."

"Romanzoff is a Russian of the old school," said Alexander, smiling. "He has passions and inclinations from which I am free. I attach a higher value to civilizing than enlarging my empire. Hence, I desire the provinces of the Danube more

for my nation than for myself. I shall be able to wait patiently until our plans can be carried into effect. But you, my noble friend, you ought to enjoy in tranquillity the great things which you have accomplished, and no longer expose yourself to the danger of war. Have you not obtained glory and power enough? Alexander and Cæsar gained no more laurels than you! Be happy, and let us leave the execution of our projects to the future."

"Yes, let us do so," replied Napoleon. "I am also longing for repose. I am tired of conquest; it has charms for me no longer, and battle-fields seem to me what they are—the graveyards of brave men prematurely taken from their country and their families. No more war! Peace with the whole world, made more desirable by the friendship of Alexander!" He offered his hand with that smile which no one could withstand. "Oh!" he continued, "I am so happy at having at length arrived at an understanding with you, and strengthened our alliance, that I wish your majesty had some desire that I might grant, and which it would be difficult for me to fulfil. Is there nothing at all that you could demand of me?"

"Yes, sire, there is," responded Alexander, "and I have both a wish and a prayer to address your majesty. Sire, my ally, the poor King of Prussia, and his noble consort, are still living in exile. I saw them, with your consent, on passing through Königsberg, and confess that I promised to intercede for them, and procure an alleviation of their unfortunate condition."

"An alleviation of their unfortunate condition!" exclaimed Napoleon, frowning. "Do they not owe their present fate entirely to themselves? Why do they not pay punctually the contributions which I have imposed upon them?"

"Sire, because they cannot! Prussia, exhausted, and reduced to one-half of her former territory, is unable to pay war contributions amounting to one hundred and fifty millions of dollars, in the short space of two years, and to feed, besides, a French army of forty thousand men. Your majesty ought to be magnanimous, and restore at least a semblance of independence to my poor ally, by putting an end to the occupation."

"If I do so, Prussia would think no longer of fulfilling her obligations to me," exclaimed Napoleon. "Instead of paying the war contributions, she would be foolish enough to rise in open hostility against me. Queen Louisa hates me; she will never cease to intrigue against me, and to instigate her hus-

band to pursue a course hostile to me. She surrounds herself and her husband by men who share her sentiments, and are plotting to revolutionize Prussia—nay, all Germany. There is, for instance, a certain Baron von Stein, whom the king appointed minister at the request of the queen, and who is nothing but a tool in the hands of this intriguing woman. That Stein is a bad and dangerous man; he is at the head of secret societies, and I shall immediately take steps to render him harmless. He and the queen alone make Prussia oppose me, and refuse paying the stipulated contributions."

"Sire," said Alexander, almost imploringly, "I repeat to your majesty, Prussia is unable to pay the enormous amount which has even been increased after the conclusion of the treaty of Tilsit, and, moreover, in the short space of two years. Oh, your majesty, the fate of the royal family of Prussia is truly pitiable and weighs down my soul with remorse. Do for my sake what you are unwilling to do for the sake of Prussia. Let me not return without consolation to that mourning royal family. Let me enjoy the triumph of proving to them that my words and intercession were able to obtain from your majesty what neither the queen's letter, nor all the solicitations of Prince William, and of the Prussian diplomatists, had been able to accomplish! Oh, sire, you see I am vain, and would like to demonstrate your friendship for me."

Napoleon's countenance grew milder while Alexander was impressively uttering these words. "Sire," he said, "who could withstand your grace and magnanimity? I wished a few minutes ago to be allowed to grant you some request, difficult for me to fulfil, in order to give you a proof of my regard! Well, your majesty has really asked something very difficult for me to grant. But I will comply for your sake, sire! I will deduct twenty millions from the sum to be paid by Prussia, extend the time in which the contributions are to be paid from two to three years, and withdraw my troops and officials in the course of six months. Is your majesty satisfied with this, and will you regard it as a proof of my friendship?"

"It is a proof of your friendship and generosity, and I thank your majesty," exclaimed Alexander. "Oh, how happy I shall be when on my return I announce these glad tidings to the royal couple! Ah, my poor allies have suffered a great deal, and if your majesty does not object, I should like to invite King Frederick William and his consort, next winter, to

spend a few weeks at St. Petersburg. Does your majesty approve?"

Napoleon cast a quick and searching glance at Alexander. "I do not assume to decide whom your majesty should hospitably receive," he said, "and I confide in your friendship—you are henceforth my ally. Get the King of Prussia to join this alliance, as the latter induced you to join the alliance against me; that would indeed greatly promote the welfare of Frederick William, and put an end to the intrigues of his queen. But now, sire, a truce to politics and business! We are agreed and shall be united in peace as in war. Our business is accomplished, and the days we still spend here must be exclusively devoted to pleasure and friendly intercourse. The Duke of Weimar would like to receive us for a few days at his capital, to arrange a chase and a ball. Suppose we go thither this afternoon and spend two days? Would it be agreeable to you?"

"I would accompany your majesty anywhere, were it into Orcus," exclaimed Alexander. "Let us go to Weimar!"

"And if you please, sire, to Jena also. I should like to show the battle-field to your majesty."

"And I should like to learn from your majesty how to win such laurels. I follow you as a pupil."

CHAPTER XLII.

NAPOLEON AND GOETHE.

ON his return from the early visit he had paid to the Emperor of Russia, Napoleon immediately went to his cabinet and sent for Minister Champagny, whom he met with unusual animation; and now, that he deemed it no longer necessary to mask his countenance, it was beaming with joy. "Champagny," he said, "it will be no longer necessary for you to send letters to me. The emperor Alexander has accepted my offers, and Romanzoff will have to hang up his 'cat's tongue' in the smoko-house. For the present the appetite of the Russian Emperor for new territories has been satisfied with the provinces of the Danube, and he will compel his minister to yield. The stubborn old fellow will have to give way, but, we are obliged to give him our promises in black and white. I go this afternoon with the emperor to Weimar to spend a

few days. You may in the mean time carry on the negotiations with Romanzoff and draw up the treaty. I shall send you further instructions to-night."

"And will not your majesty be kind enough to give me also instructions as to the course I am to pursue toward the Austrian ambassador, Count Vincent?" said the minister. "He overwhelms me every day with questions and demands. He is very anxious to obtain an interview with your majesty, to learn from your own lips that Austria has nothing to fear from France, and that your majesty believes in the sincerity of the friendship and devotedness of his master."

"I believe in the sincerity of Austria!" exclaimed Napoleon, frowning. "I know her perfidy; I know that she is secretly arming to attack me as soon as she believes me to be embarrassed by the events in Spain. But I will unmask these hypocrites, and meet them with open visor. I will wage war against them, because they disdain to remain at peace with me. Now that I am sure of Russia, I am no longer afraid of Austria, for Russia will assist me in the war against her, or at least not prevent me from attacking and punishing her for her insolence. It was in my power to overthrow that monarchy as I have overthrown those of Naples and Spain. I refrained, and Austria is indebted to me for her existence. Now, however, I am inexorable, and when I once more make my entry into Vienna, it will be as dictator prescribing laws to the vanquished. Austria is arming, and France will arm for another Austerlitz. I authorize you to repeat these words to Count Vincent. I myself will write to his emperor and intrust my letter to the ambassador. Tell him so." He dismissed the minister and repaired to the dining-room.

Breakfast was ready, and had been served on a round table in the middle of the room. Talleyrand, Berthier, Savary, and Daru, received the emperor, and accompanied him to the table, not to participate in the repast, but to converse with him, as Napoleon liked to do while he was eating, and to reply to the questions which he addressed now to one, now to another.

"Well, Daru," he asked, taking his seat, "you come from Berlin? What about the payment of the contributions?"

"Ah, sire, the prospects are very discouraging," said Daru, shrugging his shoulders. "More rigorous measures will probably become necessary to coerce those stubborn Prussians, and—"