

CHAPTER L.

NAPOLEON AT SCHÖNBRUNN.

WHILE the regiments were forming in the palace-yard below, and the spectators were thronging about them, Napoleon was still in his cabinet. But he was not alone. Some of his adjutants and marshals were with him, and stood, like the emperor, in front of a table covered with strange articles. There lay a leg encased in a magnificent boot, a hand covered with a white glove, an arm clad in the sleeve of a uniform, by the side of which was a foot cut off close above the ankle, and encased in a neat shoe.

Napoleon contemplated these things with grave glances, and then turned his eyes toward a small man who was standing in humble attire and attitude, and who was no other than the celebrated mechanic and inventor of the metronome, Leonard Mälzl. "You are a genius indeed!" said the emperor, with an air of genuine admiration; "people did not say too much in calling you the most skilful member of your profession. You really suppose that it is possible to walk with such a leg?" And the emperor pointed at that lying on the table.

"Sire, I do not only suppose it, I know it," said M. Mälzl, gravely; "a man may use these limbs and feet as easily and naturally as though he were born with them. Please be so kind, your majesty, as to look at this." M. Mälzl took the article and placed it in front of a chair. "Your majesty sees that it is a foot with about half a leg. It is fastened with these two suspenders, that are thrown over the shoulders, and a man may then walk with it."

"Yes, walk, but he would not be able to sit down."

"Yes, he would, sire; you touch this spring, and—your majesty sees, the knee bends and the upper part drops on the chair."

"So it does!" exclaimed Napoleon, joyously, but suddenly his brow became dark and his eyes gloomy. "Alas," he said, thoughtfully, "were Lannes still alive, I might have at least offered him a substitute for the limbs he lost." He stared at the ingenious work, and stroking his face quickly said, "You assert, also, sir, that a man may use that hand, and hold any

thing with it?" asked Napoleon, lifting up the neatly-gloved hand.

"Sire, it is just as good as one new-grown. The human will controls every limb and moves these artificial fingers just as well as the natural ones. Will your majesty be so kind as to order me to take something from the table with this hand which you see now stretched out?"

The emperor drew a ring, adorned with a large diamond, from his finger, and laid it on the table. "Let the machine pick up this ring," he said.

Mälzl took the hand, and, touching the spring fixed at the wrist, the fingers bent immediately and seized the ring. Napoleon looked humorously at his astonished marshals and generals. "Now, gentlemen," he said, "we need no longer be afraid of bullets, for if we lose the hands and feet that God has given us, we can replace them by those made by Mr. Mälzl."

"Sire," said Mr. Mälzl, smiling, "will you convince yourself that my artificial hand cannot merely pick up, but also retain an object? Will your majesty try to take the ring from it?"

Napoleon seized the ring, but the fingers held it with irresistible tenacity. "Indeed, these are very sensible fingers," exclaimed Napoleon; "they do not give up what they once get hold of."

"Yes, sire, they will. I touch this spring, and the fingers open again."

"No, no," exclaimed the emperor, "let them keep this time what they have, and wear the ring as a memento. I will allow them only to deliver it to their maker, who knows not only how to use his own hands so skilfully, but also to manufacture serviceable ones for others. No thanks, sir! we are greatly indebted to you, and not you to us, and it certainly behooves me to thank you in the name of the brave soldiers whose lost limbs you replace so ingeniously. When the precious day of peace will come, people will be able to do without your invention, but I am afraid we shall not live to see that day. We are, I fear, always exposed to the horrors of war. Hence, your invention is a blessing that cannot be appreciated too highly, for, thanks to you, there will be fewer cripples and unsightly wooden legs. I shall issue orders to select five of the bravest and most deserving invalids from every regiment of my army, and you will restore to them their lost arms, legs

and hands, at my expense. Indeed, sir, you imitate the Creator, and the wonder would be complete if you knew also how to replace lost heads."

"Sire, I do know that, too," said Mälzl, smiling.

"Yes, a head of wax or painted wood!"

"No, sire, a head that moves, opens, and closes its eyes, and—thinks."

"A head that thinks?" exclaimed Napoleon, laughing.

"Ah, that is a pretty strong assertion, which you could hardly prove."

"Pardon me, your majesty, I engage to furnish the proof."

"How so?"

"If your majesty will acknowledge that one must think in order to play a game of chess, then the artificial man in my possession is able to think."

"Where have you that man with the thinking head?"

"Sire, I have caused my assistants to set it up in the adjoining room. But I must observe that this man was not made by myself; it is the master-piece of the late Mr. Kempeler, a well-known mechanician, of whose son I bought my slave."

"Ah," said Napoleon, laughing, "do you not know that the trade in human chattels is now prohibited in our civilized states? But let us see your slave.—Come, gentlemen," added Napoleon, turning toward his marshals and adjutants, "let us look at the work of this modern Prometheus." He walked toward the door, but, before leaving the cabinet, he turned to the chamberlain. "When the Duke de Cadore comes bring me word immediately." He then stepped into the adjoining room and the marshals and Mr. Mälzl followed him.

In the middle of the room, at a small table, on which was a chess-board, sat a neatly-dressed male figure, looking like a boy fourteen years old.

"That, then, is the celebrated chess-player," remarked Napoleon, advancing quickly. "The face is made of wax, but who will warrant that there is not a human countenance concealed under it, and that this prepossessing and well-proportioned form does not really consist of flesh and blood?"

"Sire, this will convince your majesty that such is not the case," said Mälzl, touching a spring on the neck of the automaton, and taking the head from the trunk.

"You are right," exclaimed Napoleon, laughing, "I am fully convinced. It is true men are walking about without

heads, but they are not so honest as to reveal the fact so openly as your automaton does."

"Sire, will your majesty grant the favor of playing a game of chess with him?" asked Mälzl, fastening on again the head of the automaton.

"What! the thing will dare to play a game of chess with me?"

"With your majesty's permission."

"And alone?"

"Yes, sire; your majesty will permit me, however, to take position behind the chair?"

"Certainly. I see the chessmen are already on the board; let us commence." The emperor sat down opposite the automaton, and saluted it with a pleasant nod.

"Well, comrade, let us commence," said Napoleon.

The automaton made a graceful bow, and beckoned to the emperor with its uplifted right hand, as though he wished him to commence.

"Well, I shall commence," said Napoleon, advancing a pawn.

The automaton took the pawn in front of the king and advanced it two squares. The emperor made another move, and so did his opponent. Looking smilingly at the figure, Napoleon played his black bishop as a knight, occupying the oblique white square. The automaton, shaking its head, put the bishop on the square it ought to occupy.

"Ah, it does not like cheating," exclaimed Napoleon, laughing; "it is a very earnest and conscientious player." And the emperor made another move. The automaton continued the game. Another attempt was made to cheat by moving the castle in an oblique direction. His adversary took the castle with an impetuous gesture and placed it aside like a pawn it had won.

"It very properly punishes me," said the emperor. "We must play seriously."

The game proceeded. It became more and more intricate; the chances were soon in favor of the automaton, and the emperor was in danger of losing the game. Forgetting who was his antagonist, he remembered only that he was about to lose a game, and became serious. He played hastily, and for the third time tried to cheat by moving a knight contrary to the rules. The automaton shook its head vehemently, and upset the whole chess-board.

"Ah, it refuses to continue the game," exclaimed Napoleon; "it despises my swindling, and forgets that it is itself a swindle. You may be thankful, M. Mälzl, that we are no longer in the middle ages; formerly they would have burned you at the stake as a sorcerer, attempting to do what God alone is able to do."

"Sire, permit me to repeat that this machine was not made by myself, but by Kempeler. But I hope your majesty will permit me to show you my own automaton, and allow it to indulge in a little music before you."

"Where is it?"

"Here," said Mälzl, opening the closed curtains of one of the windows, and pointing at the handsome figure visible behind them.

"Ah, a postilion!" exclaimed Napoleon, "and it will blow us a tune on the bugle?"

"Sire, it begs leave to play the *Marseillaise* to your majesty," said Mälzl, moving the figure on rollers into the middle of the room.

"Let it commence," said Napoleon.

The postilion raised its arm, seized the bugle hanging on a silken string around its neck, put it to its mouth and commenced blowing.

At this moment the door of the cabinet opened; the chamberlain entered and approached the emperor. "Sire," he said, the "Duke de Cadore has just arrived and begs to be admitted."

"Conduct him immediately into my cabinet," replied Napoleon, rising hastily. He then beckoned the mechanic to his side. "Let your postilion still play to the marshals. As to your chess-player, I must buy it of you. You may apply to Grand-Marshal Duroc for the money. In order to punish the automaton for nearly beating me at the game, I will buy it, and it is henceforth to be my slave."*

"Sire, that is no punishment, but a reward, for which I beg leave to thank you in the name of my chess-player."

"You have invented a most acceptable substitute for such of my invalids as have lost arms or legs," said the emperor; "now you must invent something else for me, and come to the assistance of the wounded on the battle-field. Make me the model of an ambulance into which the disabled can be

*This chess-player, which Napoleon bought of Mälzl, remained at the Villa Bonaparte, near Milan, until 1812, when it was removed to Paris, where it is at the present time.

placed safely and comfortably, and which is arranged in such a manner that it may be taken asunder and transported on horseback with the train of the army. You are an inventive genius, and I shall expect you with your model in the course of a week. Now let your postilion blow again. Good-by!" He waved his hand kindly to the mechanic, and then hastened back into his cabinet. The Duke de Cadore was there already, and saluted the emperor with a low bow.

"Well, Champagne," exclaimed Napoleon, quickly, "do you not yet bring us peace?"

"No, sire, the ambassadors of Austria refuse peremptorily to accept the terms proposed to them."

"Ah," exclaimed the emperor, menacingly, "those Austrians believe they can bid me defiance. They have not yet been humbled enough, although I have defeated their army, foiled the plans of their commander-in-chief, expelled their emperor from his capital, and am residing at his palace. They wish for further humiliations, and they shall have them. If they do not change their mind very speedily, I shall send for the Grand-duke of Würzburg and adorn his head with the imperial crown of Austria."

"Sire, that would be replacing one puppet by another, but not removing the men pulling the wires; and they are all animated by the same spirit. Prince Lichtenstein and Count Bubna are no less inflexible than was Count Metternich. It is true they have already yielded in some points, and declared to-day that the Emperor Francis had authorized them to accept some of the conditions proposed."

"Which?" asked Napoleon, hastily.

"The emperor is ready to cede to France Dalmatia and Croatia, the territories demanded by your majesty."

"Well!" exclaimed Napoleon, "we obtain thereby the chief point. I shall extend the territory of France to the Save, and become the immediate neighbor of Turkey. Let the Emperor of Russia try then to carry his plans against Constantinople into effect: France will know how to protect her neighbor, and her troops will always be ready to defend the Porte. When I have extended my frontiers into the interior of Dalmatia and Croatia, Russia's influence in the Orient is paralyzed, and France will be all-powerful in Constantinople. What is it that Austria refuses after granting our principal demands?"

"Sire, she consents further to cede to Bavaria part of Upper

Austria, namely: Salzburg, Berchtesgaden, and part of the district of the Inn and Hausruck, but she refuses to give up one-half of Upper Austria, which we claimed; she refuses further to cede to Saxony such large territories in Bohemia, and to Russia in Galicia, as was demanded by your majesty."

"We may yield a little as to these points," said Napoleon. "It is always better to make exorbitant demands, because it is easier then to abate, and appear accommodating. I do not attach, moreover, any great value to the enlargement of Bavaria, Saxony, and Russia. Only the aggrandizement of France by the extension of our frontiers to the boundaries of Turkey was to be the object of our ambition. Having attained this, we will yield as to the cession of other territories, and be satisfied with less, provided that Austria accept unreservedly and fully the two other conditions I refer to."

"Your majesty refers to the reduction of the Austrian army, and the war contribution of one hundred millions of francs, which we have demanded."

"Which we have demanded, and which must be paid, unless they wish me to resume hostilities," said Napoleon, menacingly.

"Sire, these are the two points as to which Austria shows the greatest reluctance," said Champagny, shrugging his shoulders. "She contends that a reduction of her army, brought about by the imperious demands of France, is incompatible with the honor and dignity of her emperor; and further, that she is unable to pay a war contribution of one hundred millions of francs."

"She dares then to reject my demands!" exclaimed Napoleon, with a gloomy air. "She will compel me to recommence the war for the sake of a few miserable millions of francs!"

"Sire, Austria makes counter-propositions, and hopes that an understanding will be arrived at. She promises to reduce her army considerably in the course of six months, to disband the militia, and to place the regiments on a peace footing. She further offers one-half of the sum which we have demanded, namely, fifty millions."

"And she believes that I will be satisfied with that?" said Napoleon. "She attempts to beat me down as though I were a British shopkeeper! She dares to offer me one-half, and talks to me about the honor and dignity of her emperor! As if it did not depend on me to trample under foot his honor

and dignity, and to cast the imperial crown of Austria into the waves of the Danube, or to place it on my own head, just as I prefer!"

"Sire, I believe the Emperor Francis is fully aware of the danger menacing him, and he is conscious, too, that his dynasty is at stake in these negotiations. I do not believe, therefore, that hostilities will break out again, owing to his reluctance to submit to these two conditions."

"I shall not yield," said Napoleon, "although it seems to me disgraceful to commence another war for the sake of fifty millions, and when I know that my own army is in need of repose. I—" The emperor interrupted himself, and listened to the clock, which struck twelve. "Indeed, it is already twelve o'clock! My guard must have been waiting for me in the palace-yard for some time." He stepped to the window and looked down. "My splendid guard has already formed in line," he said, "and there is a vast crowd of spectators from Vienna to see the parade."

"To see your majesty," corrected Champagny, approaching the window at a sign made by Napoleon.

"Just look at that crowd!" said the emperor, smiling. "There are at least three thousand men who have come hither to see me and my soldiers, and they do not belong exclusively to the lower classes, as is proved by the large number of carriages, the numerous elegant horsemen, and by the windows yonder." He pointed at the windows of the opposite wing of the palace; and when the minister turned his eyes, he beheld a large number of ladies, whose toilet seemed to indicate that they belonged to the higher classes of society.

"See!" said the emperor, "that beautiful lady in the ermine dress; it is the Princess von Fürstenberg, and the lady at her side is the wife of Field-Marshal von Bellegarde. They requested Bausset to lend them one of his windows, that they might witness the parade. The ladies at their side are all members of the highest aristocracy, and the citizens and the populace generally are in the yard below. You see, these good people regard us no longer as enemies; they love and esteem us, and perhaps it would be wisest and best for me to claim the crown of Austria in order to put an end to all further quarrels. The Austrians, it seems to me, would be content with it. Well, we shall see further about it! I will not make the ladies, the populace, and, above all, my soldiers, wait longer. You may remain here in my cabinet.

There is a note on the table which I want you to finish. I shall return soon.

The emperor took his hat, and, opening the door leading into the adjoining room, he called out: "Gentlemen of the staff—to the parade!"

CHAPTER LI.

FREDERICK STAPS.

THE bands played, and shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur!*" burst from the troops. Napoleon had emerged from the palace door, and the welcome was as a sunbeam brightening his cold and emotionless face. He slowly descended the steps of the outside staircase, with his eyes on the soldiers, and he did not notice the young man who stood below, presenting to him a petition with his left hand, while he concealed his right under his cloak.

"Sire," said the young man, loudly and urgently, "sire, here is a petition, and I request your majesty to listen to me for a moment. I—"

Napoleon passed on the other side without having heard these words. The youth, holding the petition still in his hand, was about to follow him, but Marshal Bessières, who walked behind, kept him back. "If you present a petition to the emperor," he said, "wait here until the parade is over, when he will return this way." The marshal proceeded, but the young man took no notice of his order, and mingled boldly with the emperor's suite.

General Rapp at length laid his hand on the youth's shoulder, and said:

"Sir, you must withdraw. This is no place for you."

"I have to present a petition to the emperor which cannot be delayed," said the young man, in a gentle voice, "pray permit me to give it to him at once."

"I tell you it is out of place here," exclaimed the general, vehemently. Beckoning to one of the second lieutenants, he said: "Conduct this man away from here."

"Come, sir," said the lieutenant; "stand back, soldiers; let this man pass." In spite of himself, he was soon hurried to the rear.

"I must attain my object—I must fulfil my oath," he muttered to himself. "Napoleon must die to-day, and Frederick Staps shall be his executioner. Forward!" He elbowed himself through the crowd that had assembled behind the soldiers, and, standing on tiptoe, tried to descry the emperor and his marshals while walking into the semicircle formed by the troops.

No one noticed that, seeing a passage in the ranks of the soldiers, Staps advanced, cautiously and quickly as a snake, until he was again inside the semicircle. "Fate is favorable to me," he muttered, "and the moment is at hand when I will deliver Germany!" He approached the emperor, who was just coming down the front from the other side. "Sire," he exclaimed, stretching out his paper toward Napoleon, "take my petition, and listen to me a few minutes."

The emperor looked for a moment on the pale countenance of the young man. "I do not understand you," he said; "apply to General Rapp."

Staps apparently had not heard Napoleon's words; he approached still closer, and put his right hand under his cloak. "Sire, listen to me," he exclaimed, "I—" A strong hand grasped his arm and pushed him back.

"Did you not hear that you are to apply to General Rapp?" asked Marshal Bessières. "Why did you come the second time to a place where you do not belong? Leave immediately, or you will be arrested!"

"I am going," muttered Staps, and turned to pass through the ranks of the soldiers.

At this moment a dark suspicion arose in the mind of Bessières, for which he was unable to give any good reasons, but which alarmed him. He beckoned to two soldiers, and, pointing at Staps, who was pressing his way outside, he said, "Arrest that man, and bring him hither!" His order was obeyed in a moment, and the soldiers, holding Staps by the arms, dragged him to the marshal, whom the Duke de Rovigo and General Rapp had now joined.

"Why did you have me arrested, general?" asked Staps, in a firm, calm voice.

"Because I distrust you," replied Bessières. "Take off your cloak!"

Staps hesitated. "Take off your cloak!" repeated Bessières; and, not obeying, the soldiers violently tore the cloak from his shoulders, and, as they did so, something flashed.