

no doubt welcome him and us. Come!" Walking between her father and her husband, and followed by the princesses and her oldest sons, the queen hastened through the suite of rooms, hallowed by the remembrances of other days, and which now seemed to her as beautiful as the halls of a fairy-palace. "How tasteful, how brilliant!" exclaimed Louisa. "Formerly, the magnificence of these rooms did not strike me at all; but now I am able to perceive and appreciate it. Our houses at Memel and Königsberg were much plainer, and I thought of the beauty of our residence at Berlin.—Ah, and there is my piano! Oh, how often have I longed for it! Will you grant me a favor, my king and husband?"

"The queen is in her own rooms; she has to ask no favors here, but only to command," said the king.

"You will then permit me to salute the good spirits of our house with music, and to sing a hymn of welcome to them?" asked the queen.

The king smilingly nodded, and Louisa, hastening to the piano, quickly took off her gloves, and sat down on a chair in front of the instrument. Her fingers swept over the keys in many brilliant cadences. Her face was cheerful, but gradually she became grave, and, turning her large eyes toward heaven, her concords were slow and solemn. She thought of the past—of the day when, seized with forebodings, she sang here a hymn which she repeated at the peasant's cottage during her flight to Königsberg, when her presentiments were fulfilled. Her hands played almost spontaneously that simple and beautiful air, and again she sang with emotion:

"Who never ate his bread with tears,  
Who never in the sorrowing hours  
Of night, lay sunk in gloomy fears,  
He knows you not, ye Heavenly Powers!"\*

## CHAPTER LIV.

### THE EMPEROR FRANCIS AND METTERNICH.

THE Emperor Francis was pacing his cabinet in evident uneasiness and excitement. Count Clement Metternich, since Stadion's withdrawal from the cabinet, prime minister

\*"Wer nie sein Brot mit Thränen ass,  
Wer nie die kummervollen Nächte  
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,  
Der kennt Euch nicht, Ihr himmlischen Mächte!"

and confidential adviser, was standing at the emperor's desk, and whenever Francis, in walking up and down, turned his back to him, a scornful smile overspread his handsome countenance; this manifestation of contempt disappeared, however, as soon as his master turned again toward him.

"It will stir up a great deal of ill-feeling throughout Germany," said the Emperor Francis, hastily. "No one will believe that I, who was hitherto the most implacable enemy of Bonaparte, should have suddenly done him so much honor."

"But at last every one will have to believe it, your majesty," said Metternich, in his gentle, melodious voice. "The facts will refute the surmises of the incredulous."

"But it is outrageous," cried the emperor, "and I can hardly think it possible that I am to assist Bonaparte in making a decent match, and that I am to stoop so low as to call the son of the Corsican lawyer my son-in-law! Let me tell you, it will never do; I should ever after be afraid of passing the church of the Capuchins; I should always imagine that the tombs of my ancestors opened, and their ghosts arose and asked me, 'How could you permit the imperial blood of the Hapsburgs to mingle with that of the little Corsican lawyer's son, the insurgent and revolutionary captain, who chances to be a successful warrior?' Yes, and I ask myself the question, How can I permit an archduchess, my daughter, to be married to a man seated on a throne which does not belong to him, and which the Bourbons, the legitimate rulers of France, will one day take from him? How can I permit it, I ask, and how am I to bear it, if this fellow without a pedigree should some day take the liberty to call me his dear father-in-law? How is it possible for me to expose myself to such risk?"

"Will your majesty permit me to answer these just questions of your imperial conscience?" asked Metternich.

"Do so," exclaimed Francis. "Explain the whole matter to me as though I were not the emperor, but a common citizen offended at the idea that the Emperor of Austria should permit his daughter to be married to the revolutionary leader who has the impudence to assume the imperial title. What would you say? How would you excuse me?"

Metternich advanced a step toward the emperor, and replied: "I would say the Emperor Francis has acted as a wise statesman and ruler, and as a father of his people. In order to preserve Austria from new wars, he has sacrificed his most precious treasure, his only child. It is a pledge securing

peace to his exhausted people. Austria is not now able to resist Napoleon in case he should again attack her. Our frontiers are defenceless; our finances are exhausted. Hitherto every war has caused us grievous losses in money, men, and territory; and so long as we stand alone, so long as Russia persists in her absurd policy of being the cat's-paw of France, it would be senseless and criminal again to endanger the existence of the monarchy. We have suffered such immense losses, that we must have peace to recover what we have lost. Hence we must be reconciled with France, and this reconciliation strengthens us against Russia. The very fact that Napoleon desires to conclude an alliance with Austria indicates a change in his political system, by which we should try to profit, and if (what is unavoidable) a rupture with Russia ensues, Austria ought to derive as much benefit therefrom as possible, and enlarge her territories. We ought to render our present position toward France as profitable as possible. The archduchess will be a precious guaranty to Napoleon, for he will feel convinced that the emperor will be unwilling to sacrifice his child, and this conviction will fill him with confidence and a feeling of security. Austria becomes closely connected with the political interests of Napoleon, and shares the hatred which all Europe feels against the Emperor of the French. But this very hatred incurred by Austria will be regarded by Napoleon as another surety for his fidelity. He will ally himself more closely with us, and become more hostile to Russia, the natural enemy of Austria; hence it is better for us to fight in company with France against Russia than to allow Russia and France to fight against us. Moreover, our finances are in such a deplorable condition, that a bankruptcy of the state would be the inevitable consequence of another war; not only the future of the emperor's dynasty, but the fortunes of his subjects would be endangered. In consideration of this, the emperor, in his wisdom, has preferred to secure peace, the source of prosperity, to his beloved subjects, and, like the patriarch, he sacrifices his own child willingly and joyously. The noble emperor ought to be blessed and praised for this, and his wisdom, which despises prejudice, and only weighs and respects the benefits to be secured by such a measure, should be gratefully acknowledged. That, sire," said Metternich, concluding his speech, "is what I would reply to him who would dare in my presence censure the marriage of the archduchess to the Emperor Napoleon."

"It sounds well enough," said the emperor, thoughtfully, "but it is still an unpalatable dish for me, and my tongue will cling to the roof of my mouth when I am to say, 'My son-in-law the Emperor Napoleon!' He is no real emperor, although he has placed three crowns on his head, and even had the impudence of dividing my order of the Golden Fleece, contrary to law, into three classes; he can never become a real emperor; he must always remain the son of a Corsican lawyer."

"Whom the pope, however, has anointed and crowned emperor," said Metternich, with a sneer.

"Yes, and, in return, this ungrateful fellow has deprived the holy father of his throne, and imprisoned him! In short, I detest the usurper. It always deeply pained me to hear of Bonaparte and his new victories; and since I saw him on that day after the battle of Austerlitz, he is more hateful to me than ever. Oh, how superciliously this fellow then looked at me! He talked to me so haughtily that I felt quite miserable, and did not know what to say. I shall never forgive M. Bonaparte, and yet I am to allow him to become my son-in-law! I tell you, Metternich, it will not do, for the end will be bad."

"But the commencement," said Metternich, smiling, "will be good for Austria, and that is the chief point. We shall take care that the end will not be bad for us either, and that Austria will not be the loser by it."

"It is all right," said Francis, nodding, "but the mischief is, that when the unhappy time comes, M. Bonaparte will be my son-in-law, and that it may be necessary for me to support him and his cause."

"Your majesty," said Metternich, in a low voice, and glancing cautiously over the room, "if you do not now hesitate to sacrifice your own child for the welfare of your country, at a later time you will not shrink from sacrificing your son-in-law. There are no relatives in politics; Austria has no sisters and brothers, no daughters and sons-in-law; that is what the august uncle of your majesty, the Emperor Joseph, often said, and he was right."

"Yes, indeed, my great uncle Joseph was right," exclaimed the emperor, laughing; "there are no sons-in-law in politics! Oh, it would do my heart good if I could revenge myself one day on M. Bonaparte for all the humiliations that I have to bear now."

"Your majesty," said Metternich, in a lower voice than before, "there is an excellent Italian proverb, 'Revenge must be eaten cold.' Your majesty knows it?"

"Of course I do," whispered the emperor. "I know it, and shall surely remember it. 'Revenge must be eaten cold;' he who wants to eat it hot, will burn his tongue. Let us wait, therefore."

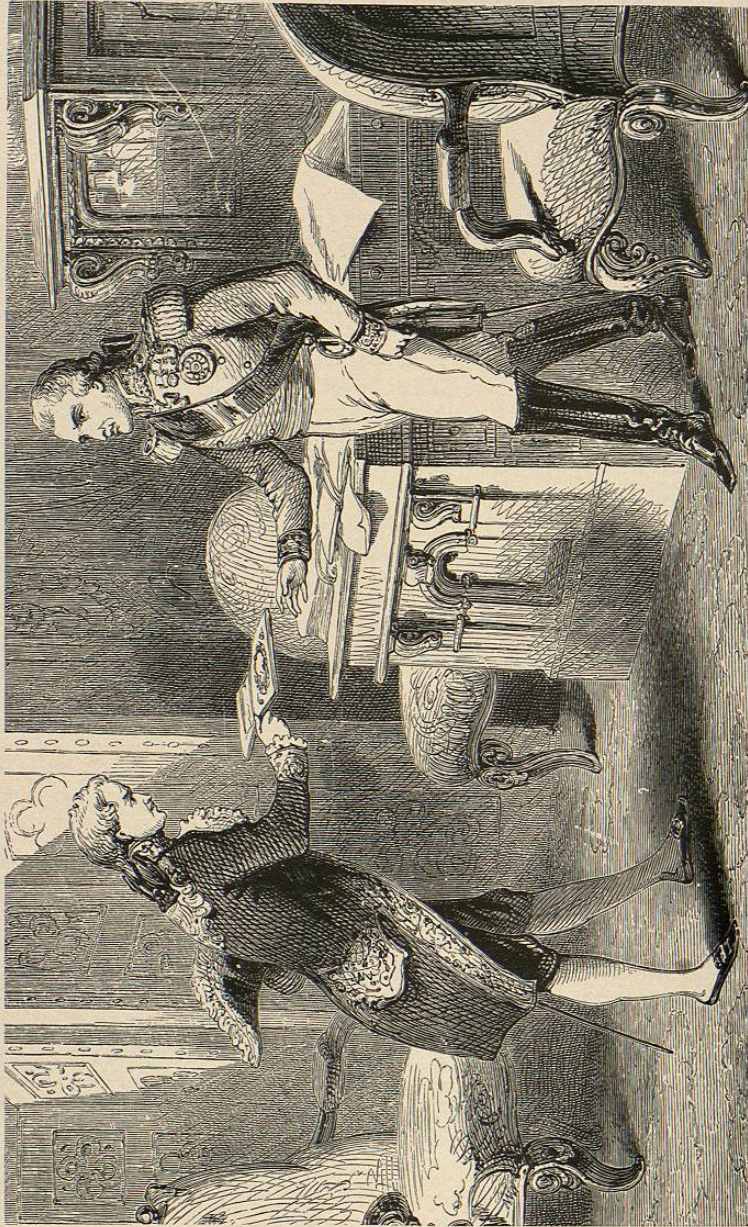
"Yes, let us wait," whispered Metternich. He then added in a loud voice: "Your majesty, then, will graciously accept the proposals of the Emperor Napoleon as to his union with the archduchess, order the marriage contracts to be made out, and permit the Prince de Neufchatel, Marshal Berthier, to apply to your majesty and the archduchess for the hand of the imperial princess?"

"Yes, I will," said Francis, hesitatingly, "but let me tell you, I am afraid of what the empress, my consort, will say about the matter, and also of Maria Louisa herself. The empress never liked Bonaparte, and I do not know how I shall break the news to her, that the man for whose sake, but a few months since, so much Austrian blood was shed, and to whom I had to sacrifice the brave Tyrolese, Andrew Hofer, is to become my son-in-law. And Maria Louisa will be greatly surprised; I am afraid she will weep a good deal on hearing the news."

"I believe the archduchess will cheerfully submit to her fate," said Metternich. "I heard her imperial highness speak in terms of intense admiration of the heroism and marvellous deeds of the Emperor Napoleon."

"Yes, she did," replied Francis, "but I commanded her not to give expression to such sentiments. I explained to her how much misery and ignominy Bonaparte had brought upon Austria and our house, and what a cruel, tyrannical, and bloodthirsty man he is; and my words made so deep an impression on the mind of my dutiful daughter, that she has detested Bonaparte ever since, and is afraid of him, as though he were a monster."

"Perhaps, if your majesty were to tell the archduchess that the Emperor Napoleon is not so bad after all," said Metternich, smiling—"if you were to assure her imperial highness that he is a very great and admirable man, and that his laurels are as good as a long line of ancestors, the words of your majesty would not fail to impress themselves on her mind, and her hatred would disappear, particularly if you should show



THE EMPEROR FRANCIS AND METTERNICH.

her a correct likeness of the emperor, for care has been hitherto taken to exhibit to the imperial princes and princesses only those representations of Napoleon in which he is horribly caricatured. I know that the mistress of ceremonies of the archduchess, Countess Colloredo, in her passionate hatred against him, and against France generally, tried this remedy to cure the imperial princess of her admiration for the conqueror, and the archduchess sees, hears, and reads nothing but what has been previously examined by the countess. I repeat, that if your majesty could have a really correct likeness of Napoleon brought to the young lady's notice, her ideas of him would be somewhat changed."

"But I have no good likeness of Bonaparte," said the emperor, somewhat embarrassed.

"Marshal Berthier brought one, which he is to present to the archduchess on solemnly applying for her hand. It is very costly and correct. The frame consists of twenty very large diamonds, for which one might buy a whole principality. I requested the marshal to let me have it an hour, when he permitted me to see it during the visit I paid to him. I told him frankly I wished to take it to the emperor, who would show it to the archduchess, that she might have some notion of the real emperor, and receive his suit. The marshal granted my request, and intrusted the miniature to me."

"Did you bring it with you?"

"I did, your majesty. Here it is." Metternich drew a morocco case from his bosom and handed it to the emperor.

Francis opened it hastily, and contemplated the precious locket a good while. "These are splendid diamonds, indeed," he said, "and I am convinced Bonaparte did not inherit them of his father. Not the slightest blemish, not a single imperfection in them; I believe I have no more beautiful diamonds in my crown!"

"And the resemblance?" asked Metternich. "Does not your majesty think that it is excellent?"

"Yes, yes," exclaimed Francis, laughing. "I had almost forgotten that, in admiring the precious stones. Yes, it is a good likeness; he looks precisely like that, but you must admit it is a revolting face, looking as though there were but one man in the world, and he were that man."

"But the expression of so much haughtiness impresses the ladies very favorably," said Metternich. "They like the man who loves to consider himself a god, and he is one in their

eyes. I really believe it would be a good idea for your majesty to show this to the archduchess, and tell her afterward that it is the likeness of her future husband. If your majesty has no objection, I will, in the mean time, request an audience of the Empress Ludovica, and try to convince her majesty of the necessity of this marriage."

"Do so," exclaimed the emperor, joyously, "it will be very agreeable to me, and as soon as possible. In the mean time I will go to the archduchess, show her the miniature, and tell her plainly that it is that of her future husband. It is better to tell her so without circumlocution. The princess will not dare to oppose my wishes; she knows that it is the duty of an obedient daughter to accept the husband her father has selected for her. Go to the empress, Metternich; I shall go to the Archduchess Maria Louisa."

#### CHAPTER LV.

##### THE ARCHDUCHESS MARIA LOUISA.

THE imperial princes and princesses had just dined together, as had been their custom since the reign of the Emperor Joseph, and were still in the large dining-hall, which was also the play-room of the imperial children. The Emperor Francis, who had recently married his fourth wife, had children by his second marriage only, but numerous enough to secure the continued existence of the dynasty, and, at the same time, furnish beautiful princesses to other sovereign houses. Of these five daughters and two sons, Maria Louisa, who was seventeen years old, was the eldest. But though a grown young lady, she liked to be together with her younger brothers and sisters, and remained sometimes with them after dinner, in order to participate in their merry play and conversation. On this occasion, instead of returning with the mistress of ceremonies to her room, she remained with her brothers and sisters in the dining-hall. While the younger princes and princesses were engaged in playing round a large table, the two oldest, the archduchesses Maria Louisa and Leopoldine, retired into one of the bay-windows to converse without being disturbed.

It was a charming sight—those two young ladies standing in the niche, surrounded by curtains as in a frame, and whose

beauty seemed to have caught a celestial radiance from the light beaming through the windows. Both were in the morning of their age, but Maria Louisa, the older sister, was even more attractive than Leopoldine. Thick ringlets of light-brown hair floated around her forehead. She had large azure eyes, telling of her happiness and the kindly emotions of her soul. Her finely-cut nose gave an aristocratic expression to her countenance, while her crimson lips, in their voluptuous fulness, contrasted not unfavorably with the remarkable refinement of the rest of her features. An enchanting smile played about her mouth, and spoke of her noble simplicity and innocence.

She encircled the neck of her younger sister with her arms, and was gazing at her with a tender expression. "Ah, Leopoldine," she said to her in a sweet voice, "how happy I am that we are at length together again! When I remained here ill and alone, and the enemy was besieging our capital, I was always thinking of none but you, and yearned to be again with you. But when the shells struck our palace, I thanked Heaven that you were not here, and had not to undergo the fear and anguish which I was enduring. When this Bonaparte arrived, I was suffering of the scarlet fever, but the terror brought on an attack of intermittent fever. I shall never forgive him. But, thank God, these evil times are over! Now we need not be afraid of being expelled again from the palace of our ancestors by this bad man, and of seeing our dear Schönbrunn degraded by the presence of his marshals. Now we can live happily and delightfully in undisturbed tranquillity."

"Yes, we can," said the Archduchess Leopoldine, smiling. "But do you not think, sister, that our life is indescribably monotonous and tedious at the present time? Our third mother, the Empress Ludovica, is certainly a very amiable, virtuous, and pious lady, but she really believes us still to be small children, who ought to remain in the nursery, and it does not occur to her that amusements are sometimes necessary for young princesses of our age. We have passed the whole winter in an intolerably quiet and wearisome manner; we are already in the latter part of February, and have not had a single ball at court. Ah, Louisa, it is, after all, not so very pleasant to be a princess. Other girls of our age are at liberty to indulge in a little pleasure, to attend balls, concerts, and parties, where they see new faces and interesting persons.