

and my uncle and I, as we walked home at night, having made and divided with the Countess Liliengarten no inconsiderable profits that night, felt our triumphs greatly dashed by the perusal of the letter. "Has Magny," we asked, "robbed the Jew, or has his intrigue been discovered?" In either case, my claims on the Countess Ida were likely to meet with serious drawbacks; and I began to feel that my "great card" was played and perhaps lost.

Well, it *was* lost: though I say, to this day, it was well and gallantly played. After supper (which we never for fear of consequences took during play) I became so agitated in my mind as to what was occurring that I determined to sally out about midnight into the town, and inquire what was the real motive of Magny's apprehension. A sentry was at the door, and signified to me that I and my uncle were under arrest.

We were left in our quarters for six weeks, so closely watched that escape was impossible, had we desired it; but, as innocent men, we had nothing to fear. Our course of life was open to all, and we desired and courted inquiry. Great and tragical events happened during those six weeks; of which, though we heard the outline, as all Europe did, when we were released from our captivity, we were yet far from understanding all the particulars, which were not much known to me for many years after. Here they are, as they were told me by the lady, who of all the world perhaps was most likely to know them. But the narrative had best form the contents of another chapter.



CHAPTER XII.

Contains the Tragical History of the Princess of X—.

MORE than twenty years after the events described in the past chapters, I was walking with my Lady Lyndon in the Rotunda at Ranelagh. It was in the year 1790; the emigration from France had already commenced, the old counts and marquises were thronging to our shores: not starving and miserable, as one saw them a few years afterwards, but unmolested as yet, and bringing with them some token of their national splendour. I was walking with Lady Lyndon, who, proverbially jealous and always anxious to annoy me, spied out a foreign lady who was

evidently remarking me, and of course asked who was the hideous fat Dutchwoman who was leering at me so? I knew her not in the least. I felt I had seen the lady's face somewhere (it was now, as my wife said, enormously fat and bloated); but I did not recognise in the bearer of that face one who had been among the most beautiful women in Germany in her day.

It was no other than Madame de Liliengarten, the mistress, or as some said themorganatic wife, of the old Duke of X—, Duke Victor's father. She had left X— a few months after the elder Duke's demise, had gone to Paris, as I heard, where some unprincipled adventurer had married her for her money; but, however, had always retained her quasi-royal title, and pretended, amidst the great laughter of the Parisians who frequented her house, to the honours and ceremonial of a sovereign's widow. She had a throne erected in her state-room, and was styled by her servants and those who wished to pay court to her, or borrow money from her, "Altesse." Report said she drank rather copiously—certainly her face bore every mark of that habit, and had lost the rosy, frank, good-humoured beauty which had charmed the sovereign who had ennobled her.

Although she did not address me in the circle at Ranelagh, I was at this period as well known as the Prince of Wales, and she had no difficulty in finding my house in Berkeley Square; whither a note was next morning despatched to me. "An old friend of Monsieur de Balibari," it stated (in extremely bad French), "is anxious to see the Chevalier again and to talk over old happy times. Rosina de Liliengarten (can it be that Redmond Balibari has forgotten her?) will be at her house in Leicester Fields all the morning, looking for one who would never have passed her by *twenty years ago*."

Rosina de Liliengarten it was indeed—such a full-blown Rosina I have seldom seen. I found her in a decent first-floor in Leicester Fields (the poor soul fell much lower afterwards) drinking tea, which had somehow a very strong smell of brandy in it; and after salutations, which would be more tedious to recount than they were to perform, and after further straggling conversation, she gave me briefly the following narrative of the events in X—, which I may well entitle the "Princess's Tragedy."

"You remember Monsieur de Geldern, the Police Minister.

He was of Dutch extraction, and, what is more, of a family of Dutch Jews. Although everybody was aware of this blot in his scutcheon, he was mortally angry if ever his origin was suspected; and made up for his fathers' errors by outrageous professions of religion, and the most austere practices of devotion. He visited church every morning, confessed once a week, and hated Jews and Protestants as much as an inquisitor could do. He never lost an opportunity of proving his sincerity, by persecuting one or the other whenever occasion fell in his way.

"He hated the Princess mortally; for her Highness in some whim had insulted him with his origin, caused pork to be removed from before him at table, or injured him in some such silly way; and he had a violent animosity to the old Baron de Magny, both in his capacity of Protestant, and because the latter in some haughty mood had publicly turned his back upon him as a sharper and a spy. Perpetual quarrels were taking place between them in council; where it was only the presence of his august masters that restrained the Baron from publicly and frequently expressing the contempt which he felt for the officer of police.

"Thus Geldern had hatred as one reason for ruining the Princess, and it is my belief he had a stronger motive still—interest. You remember whom the Duke married, after the death of his first wife?—a princess of the house of F—. Geldern built his fine palace two years after, and, as I feel convinced, with the money which was paid to him by the F— family for forwarding the match.

"To go to Prince Victor, and report to his Highness a case which everybody knew, was not by any means Geldern's desire. He knew the man would be ruined for ever in the Prince's estimation who carried him intelligence so disastrous. His aim, therefore, was to leave the matter to explain itself to his Highness; and, when the time was ripe, he cast about for a means of carrying his point. He had spies in the houses of the elder and younger Magny; but this you know, of course, from your experience of Continental customs. We had all spies over each other. Your black (Zamor, I think, was his name) used to give me reports every morning; and I used to entertain the dear old Duke with stories of you and your uncle practising picquet and dice in the morning, and with your quarrels and intrigues. We levied similar contributions on everybody in X—, to amuse

the dear old man. Monsieur de Magny's valet used to report both to me and Monsieur de Geldern.

"I knew of the fact of the emerald being in pawn; and it was out of my exchequer that the poor Princess drew the funds which were spent upon the odious Löwe, and the still more worthless young Chevalier. How the Princess could trust the latter as she persisted in doing, is beyond my comprehension; but there is no infatuation like that of a woman in love: and you will remark, my dear Monsieur de Balibari, that our sex generally fix upon a bad man."

"Not always, madam," I interposed; "your humble servant has created many such attachments."

"I do not see that that affects the truth of the proposition," said the old lady drily, and continued her narrative. "The Jew who held the emerald had had many dealings with the Princess, and at last was offered a bribe of such magnitude, that he determined to give up the pledge. He committed the inconceivable imprudence of bringing the emerald with him to X—, and waited on Magny, who was provided by the Princess with money to redeem the pledge, and was actually ready to pay it.

"Their interview took place in Magny's own apartments, when his valet overheard every word of their conversation. The young man, who was always utterly careless of money when it was in his possession, was so easy in offering it, that Löwe rose in his demands, and had the conscience to ask double the sum for which he had previously stipulated.

"At this the Chevalier lost all patience, fell on the wretch and was for killing him; when the opportune valet rushed in and saved him. The man had heard every word of the conversation between the disputants, and the Jew ran flying with terror into his arms; and Magny, a quick and passionate, but not a violent man, bade the servant lead the villain downstairs, and thought no more of him.

"Perhaps he was not sorry to be rid of him, and to have in his possession a large sum of money, four thousand ducats, with which he could tempt fortune once more; as you know he did at your table that night."

"Your ladyship went halves, madam," said I; "and you know how little I was the better for my winnings."

"The man conducted the trembling Israelite out of the palace, and no sooner had seen him lodged at the house of one of his

brethren, where he was accustomed to put up, than he went away to the office of his Excellency the Minister of Police, and narrated every word of the conversation which had taken place between the Jew and his master.

"Geldern expressed the greatest satisfaction at his spy's prudence and fidelity. He gave him a purse of twenty ducats, and promised to provide for him handsomely: as great men do sometimes promise to reward their instruments; but you, Monsieur de Balibari, know how seldom those promises are kept. 'Now, go and find out,' said Monsieur de Geldern, 'at what time the Israelite proposes to return home again, or whether he will repent and take the money.' The man went on this errand. Meanwhile, to make matters sure, Geldern arranged a play-party at my house, inviting you thither with your bank, as you may remember; and finding means, at the same time, to let Maxime de Magny know that there was to be *farò* at Madame de Liliengarten's. It was an invitation the poor fellow never neglected."

I remembered the facts, and listened on, amazed at the artifice of the infernal Minister of Police.

"The spy came back from his message to Löwe, and stated that he had made inquiries among the servants of the house where the Heidelberg banker lodged, and that it was the latter's intention to leave X—that afternoon. He travelled by himself, riding an old horse, exceedingly humbly attired, after the manner of his people.

"'Johann,' said the Minister, clapping the pleased spy upon the shoulder, 'I am more and more pleased with you. I have been thinking, since you left me, of your intelligence, and the faithful manner in which you have served me; and shall soon find an occasion to place you according to your merits. Which way does this Israelitish scoundrel take?'

"'He goes to R—to-night.'

"'And must pass by the Kaiserwald. Are you a man of courage, Johann Kerner?'

"'Will your Excellency try me?' said the man, his eyes glittering: 'I served through the Seven Years' War, and was never known to fail there.'

"'Now, listen. The emerald must be taken from that Jew: in the very keeping it the scoundrel has committed high treason. To the man who brings me that emerald I swear I will give five

hundred louis. You understand why it is necessary that it should be restored to her Highness. I need say no more.'

"'You shall have it to-night, sir,' said the man. 'Of course your Excellency will hold me harmless in case of accident.'

"'Psha!' answered the Minister; 'I will pay you half the money beforehand; such is my confidence in you. Accident's impossible if you take your measures properly. There are four leagues of wood; the Jew rides slowly. It will be night before he can reach, let us say, the old Powder-Mill in the wood. What's to prevent you from putting a rope across the road, and dealing with him there? Be back with me this evening at supper. If you meet any of the patrol, say "foxes are loose,"—that's the word for to-night. They will let you pass them without questions.'

"The man went off quite charmed with his commission; and when Magny was losing his money at our *farò*-table, his servant waylaid the Jew at the spot named the Powder-Mill, in the Kaiserwald. The Jew's horse stumbled over a rope which had been placed across the road; and, as the rider fell groaning to the ground, Johann Kerner rushed out on him, masked, and pistol in hand, and demanded his money. He had no wish to kill the Jew, I believe, unless his resistance should render extreme measures necessary.

"Nor did he commit any such murder; for, as the yelling Jew roared for mercy, and his assailant menaced him with a pistol, a squad of patrol came up, and laid hold of the robber and the wounded man.

"Kerner swore an oath. 'You have come too soon,' said he to the sergeant of the police. '*Foxes are loose.*' 'Some are caught,' said the sergeant, quite unconcerned; and bound the fellow's hands with the rope which he had stretched across the road to entrap the Jew. He was placed behind a policeman on a horse; Löwe was similarly accommodated, and the party thus came back into the town as the night fell.

"They were taken forthwith to the police quarter; and, as the chief happened to be there, they were examined by his Excellency in person. Both were rigorously searched; the Jew's papers and cases taken from him: the jewel was found in a private pocket. As for the spy, the Minister, looking at him angrily, said, 'Why, this is the servant of the Chevalier de Magny, one of her Highness's equerries!' and without hearing

a word in exculpation from the poor frightened wretch, ordered him into close confinement.

"Calling for his horse, he then rode to the Prince's apartments at the palace, and asked for an instant audience. When admitted, he produced the emerald. 'This jewel,' said he, 'has been found on the person of a Heidelberg Jew, who has been here repeatedly of late, and has had many dealings with her Highness's equerry, the Chevalier de Magny. This afternoon the Chevalier's servant came from his master's lodgings, accompanied by the Hebrew; was heard to make inquiries as to the route the man intended to take on his way homewards; followed him, or preceded him rather, and was found in the act of rifling his victim by my police in the Kaiserwald. The man will confess nothing; but, on being searched, a large sum in gold was found on his person; and though it is with the utmost pain that I can bring myself to entertain such an opinion, and to implicate a gentleman of the character and name of Monsieur de Magny, I do submit that our duty is to have the Chevalier examined relative to the affair. As Monsieur de Magny is in her Highness's private service, and in her confidence I have heard, I would not venture to apprehend him without your Highness's permission.'

"The Prince's Master of the Horse, a friend of the old Baron de Magny, who was present at the interview, no sooner heard the strange intelligence, than he hastened away to the old general with the dreadful news of his grandson's supposed crime. Perhaps his Highness himself was not unwilling that his old friend and tutor in arms should have the chance of saving his family from disgrace; at all events, Monsieur de Hengst, the Master of the Horse, was permitted to go off to the Baron undisturbed, and break to him the intelligence of the accusation pending over the unfortunate Chevalier.

"It is possible that he expected some such dreadful catastrophe, for, after hearing Hengst's narrative (as the latter afterwards told me), he only said, 'Heaven's will be done!' for some time refused to stir a step in the matter, and then only by the solicitation of his friend was induced to write the letter which Maxime de Magny received at our play-table.

"Whilst he was there, squandering the Princess's money, a police visit was paid to his apartments, and a hundred proofs, not of his guilt with respect to the robbery, but of his guilty connection with the Princess, were discovered there,—tokens of

her giving, passionate letters from her, copies of his own correspondence to his young friends at Paris,—all of which the Police Minister perused, and carefully put together under seal for his Highness, Prince Victor. I have no doubt he perused them, for, on delivering them to the Hereditary Prince, Geldern said that, *in obedience to his Highness's orders*, he had collected the Chevalier's papers; but he need not say that, on his honour, he (Geldern) himself had never examined the documents. His difference with Messieurs de Magny was known; he begged his Highness to employ any other official person in the judgment of the accusation brought against the young Chevalier.

"All these things were going on while the Chevalier was at play. A run of luck—you had great luck in those days, Monsieur de Balibari—was against him. He stayed and lost his 4000 ducats. He received his uncle's note, and such was the infatuation of the wretched gambler, that, on receipt of it, he went down to the courtyard, where the horse was in waiting, absolutely took the money which the poor old gentleman had placed in the saddleholsters, brought it upstairs, played it, and lost it; and when he issued from the room to fly, it was too late: he was placed in arrest at the bottom of my staircase, as you were upon entering your own home.

"Even when he came in under the charge of the soldiery sent to arrest him, the old General, who was waiting, was overjoyed to see him, and flung himself into the lad's arms, and embraced him: it was said, for the first time in many years. 'He is here, gentlemen,' he sobbed out,—'thank God he is not guilty of the robbery!' and then sank back in a chair in a burst of emotion; painful, it was said by those present, to witness on the part of a man so brave, and known to be so cold and stern.

"'Robbery!' said the young man. 'I swear before Heaven I am guilty of none!' and a scene of almost touching reconciliation passed between them, before the unhappy young man was led from the guard-house into the prison which he was destined never to quit.

"That night the Duke looked over the papers which Geldern had brought to him. It was at a very early stage of the perusal, no doubt, that he gave orders for your arrest; for you were taken at midnight, Magny at ten o'clock; after which time the old Baron de Magny had seen his Highness, protesting of his grandson's innocence, and the Prince had received him most graciously

and kindly. His Highness said he had no doubt the young man was innocent; his birth and his blood rendered such a crime impossible; but suspicion was too strong against him: he was known to have been that day closeted with the Jew; to have received a very large sum of money which he squandered at play, and of which the Hebrew had, doubtless, been the lender,—to have despatched his servant after him, who inquired the hour of the Jew's departure, lay in wait for him, and rifled him. Suspicion was so strong against the Chevalier, that common justice required his arrest; and, meanwhile, until he cleared himself, he should be kept in not dishonourable durance, and every regard had for his name, and the services of his honourable grandfather. With this assurance, and with a warm grasp of the hand, the Prince left old General de Magny that night; and the veteran retired to rest almost consoled, and confident in Maxime's eventual and immediate release.

“But in the morning, before daybreak, the Prince, who had been reading papers all night, wildly called to the page, who slept in the next room across the door, bade him get horses, which were always kept in readiness in the stables, and, flinging a parcel of letters into a box, told the page to follow him on horseback with these. The young man (Monsieur de Weissenborn) told this to a young lady who was then of my household, and who is now Madame de Weissenborn, and a mother of a score of children.

“The page described that never was such a change seen as in his august master in the course of that single night. His eyes were bloodshot, his face livid, his clothes were hanging loose about him, and he who had always made his appearance on parade as precisely dressed as any serjeant of his troops, might have been seen galloping through the lonely streets at early dawn without a hat, his unpowdered hair streaming behind him like a madman.

“The page, with the box of papers, clattered after his master,—it was no easy task to follow him; and they rode from the palace to the town, and through it to the General's quarter. The sentinels at the door were scared at the strange figure that rushed up to the General's gate, and, not knowing him, crossed bayonets, and refused him admission. ‘Fools,’ said Weissenborn, ‘it is the Prince!’ And, jangling at the bell as if for an alarm of fire, the door was at length opened by the porter, and

his Highness ran up to the General's bedchamber, followed by the page with the box.

“‘Magny—Magny,’ roared the Prince, thundering at the closed door, ‘get up!’ And to the queries of the old man from within, answered, ‘It is I—Victor—the Prince!—get up!’ And presently the door was opened by the General in his *robe-de-chambre*, and the Prince entered. The page brought in the box, and was bidden to wait without, which he did; but there led from Monsieur de Magny's bedroom into his antechamber two doors, the great one which formed the entrance into his room, and a smaller one which led, as the fashion is with our houses abroad, into the closet which communicates with the alcove where the bed is. The door of this was found by M. de Weissenborn to be open, and the young man was thus enabled to hear and see everything which occurred within the apartment.

“The General, somewhat nervously, asked what was the reason of so early a visit from his Highness; to which the Prince did not for a while reply, farther than by staring at him rather wildly, and pacing up and down the room.

“At last he said, ‘Here is the cause!’ dashing his fist on the box; and, as he had forgotten to bring the key with him, he went to the door for a moment, saying, ‘Weissenborn perhaps has it;’ but seeing over the stove one of the General's *couteaux de chasse*, he took it down, and said, ‘That will do,’ and fell to work to burst the red trunk open with the blade of the forest knife. The point broke, and he gave an oath, but continued haggling on with the broken blade, which was better suited to his purpose than the long pointed knife, and finally succeeded in wrenching open the lid of the chest.

“‘What is the matter?’ said he, laughing. ‘Here's the matter;—read that!—here's more matter, read that!—here's more—no, not that; that's somebody else's picture—but here's hers! Do you know that, Magny? My wife's—the Princess's! Why did you and your cursed race ever come out of France, to plant your infernal wickedness wherever your feet fell, and to ruin honest German homes? What have you and yours ever had from my family but confidence and kindness? We gave you a home when you had none, and here's our reward!’ and he flung a parcel of papers down before the old General; who saw the truth at once;—he had known it long before, probably, and sank down on his chair, covering his face.

"The Prince went on gesticulating, and shrieking almost. 'If a man injured you so, Magny, before you begot the father of that gambling lying villain yonder, you would have known how to revenge yourself. You would have killed him! Yes, would have killed him. But who's to help me to my revenge? I've no equal. I can't meet that dog of a Frenchman,—that pimp from Versailles,—and kill him, as if he had played the traitor to one of his own degree.'

"'The blood of Maxime de Magny,' said the old gentleman proudly, 'is as good as that of any prince in Christendom.'

"'Can I take it?' cried the Prince; 'you know I can't. I can't have the privilege of any other gentleman in Europe. What am I to do? Look here, Magny: I was wild when I came here; I didn't know what to do. You've served me for thirty years; you've saved my life twice: they are all knaves and harlots about my poor old father here—no honest men or women—you are the only one—you saved my life; tell me what am I to do?' Thus from insulting Monsieur de Magny, the poor distracted Prince fell to supplicating him; and, at last, fairly flung himself down, and burst out in an agony of tears.

"Old Magny, one of the most rigid and cold of men on common occasions, when he saw this outbreak of passion on the Prince's part, became, as my informant has described to me, as much affected as his master. The old man from being cold and high, suddenly fell, as it were, into the whimpering querulousness of extreme old age. He lost all sense of dignity; he went down on his knees, and broke out into all sorts of wild incoherent attempts at consolation; so much so, that Weissenborn said he could not bear to look at the scene, and actually turned away from the contemplation of it.

"But, from what followed in a few days, we may guess the results of the long interview. The Prince, when he came away from the conversation with his old servant, forgot his fatal box of papers and sent the page back for them. The General was on his knees praying in the room when the young man entered, and only stirred and looked wildly round as the other removed the packet. The Prince rode away to his hunting-lodge at three leagues from X—, and three days after that Maxime de Magny died in prison; having made a confession that he was engaged in an attempt to rob the Jew, and that he had made away with himself, ashamed of his dishonour.

"But it is not known that it was the General himself who took his grandson poison: it was said even that he shot him in the prison. This, however, was not the case. General de Magny carried his grandson the draught which was to carry him out of the world; represented to the wretched youth that his fate was inevitable; that it would be public and disgraceful unless he chose to anticipate the punishment, and so left him. But *it was not of his own accord*, and not until he had used every means of escape, as you shall hear, that the unfortunate being's life was brought to an end.

"As for General de Magny, he quite fell into imbecility a short time after his grandson's death, and my honoured Duke's demise. After his Highness the Prince married the Princess Mary of F—, as they were walking in the English park together they once met old Magny riding in the sun in the easy chair, in which he was carried commonly abroad after his paralytic fits. 'This is my wife, Magny,' said the Prince affectionately, taking the veteran's hand; and he added, turning to his Princess, 'General de Magny saved my life during the Seven Years' War.'

"'What, you've taken her back again?' said the old man. 'I wish you'd send me back my poor Maxime.' He had quite forgotten the death of the poor Princess Olivia, and the Prince, looking very dark indeed, passed away.

"And now," said Madame de Liliengarten, "I have only one more gloomy story to relate to you—the death of the Princess Olivia. It is even more horrible than the tale I have just told you." With which preface the old lady resumed her narrative.

"The kind weak Princess's fate was hastened, if not occasioned, by the cowardice of Magny. He found means to communicate with her from his prison, and her Highness, who was not in open disgrace yet (for the Duke, out of regard to the family, persisted in charging Magny with only robbery), made the most desperate efforts to relieve him, and to bribe the gaolers to effect his escape. She was so wild that she lost all patience and prudence in the conduct of any schemes she may have had for Magny's liberation; for her husband was inexorable, and caused the Chevalier's prison to be too strictly guarded for escape to be possible. She offered the State jewels in pawn to the Court banker; who of course was obliged to decline the transaction. She fell down on her knees, it is said, to Geldern, the

Police Minister, and offered him Heaven knows what as a bribe. Finally, she came screaming to my poor dear Duke, who, with his age, diseases, and easy habits, was quite unfit for scenes of so violent a nature; and who, in consequence of the excitement created in his august bosom by her frantic violence and grief, had a fit in which I very nigh lost him. That his dear life was brought to an untimely end by these transactions I have not the slightest doubt; for the Strasbourg pie, of which they said he died, never, I am sure, could have injured him, but for the injury which his dear gentle heart received from the unusual occurrences in which he was forced to take a share.

"All her Highness's movements were carefully, though not ostensibly, watched by her husband, Prince Victor; who, waiting upon his august father, sternly signified to him that if his Highness (*my Duke*) should dare to aid the Princess in her efforts to release Magny, he, Prince Victor, would publicly accuse the Princess and her paramour of high treason, and take measures with the Diet for removing his father from the throne, as incapacitated to reign. Hence interposition on our part was vain, and Magny was left to his fate.

"It came, as you are aware, very suddenly. Geldern, Police Minister, Hengst, Master of the Horse, and the colonel of the Prince's guard, waited upon the young man in his prison two days after his grandfather had visited him there and left behind him the phial of poison which the criminal had not the courage to use. And Geldern signified to the young man that unless he took of his own accord the laurel-water provided by the elder Magny, more violent means of death would be instantly employed upon him, and that a file of grenadiers was in waiting in the courtyard to despatch him. Seeing this, Magny, with the most dreadful self-abasement, after dragging himself round the room on his knees from one officer to another, weeping and screaming with terror, at last desperately drank off the potion, and was a corpse in a few minutes. Thus ended this wretched young man.

"His death was made public in the *Court Gazette* two days after, the paragraph stating that Monsieur de M——, struck with remorse for having attempted the murder of the Jew, had put himself to death by poison in prison; and a warning was added to all young noblemen of the duchy to avoid the dreadful sin of gambling, which had been the cause of the young man's ruin, and had brought upon the grey hairs of one of the noblest

and most honourable of the servants of the Duke irretrievable sorrow.

"The funeral was conducted with decent privacy, the General de Magny attending it. The carriages of the two Dukes and all the first people of the Court made their calls upon the General afterwards. He attended parade as usual the next day on the Arsenal-Place, and Duke Victor, who had been inspecting the building, came out of it leaning on the brave old warrior's arm. He was particularly gracious to the old man, and told his officers the oft-repeated story how at Rosbach, when the X—— contingent served with the troops of the unlucky Soubise, the General had thrown himself in the way of a French dragoon, who was pressing hard upon his Highness in the rout, had received the blow intended for his master, and killed the assailant. And he alluded to the family motto of 'Magny sans tache,' and said, 'It had been always so with his gallant friend and tutor in arms.' This speech affected all present very much; with the exception of the old General, who only bowed and did not speak: but when he went home he was heard muttering 'Magny sans tache, Magny sans tache!' and was attacked with paralysis that night, from which he never more than partially recovered.

"The news of Maxime's death had somehow been kept from the Princess until now: a *Gazette* even being printed without the paragraph containing the account of his suicide; but it was at length, I know not how, made known to her. And when she heard it, her ladies tell me, she screamed and fell, as if struck dead; then sat up wildly and raved like a madwoman, and was then carried to her bed, where her physician attended her, and where she lay of a brain-fever. All this while the Prince used to send to make inquiries concerning her; and from his giving orders that his Castle of Schlangenfels should be prepared and furnished, I make no doubt it was his intention to send her into confinement thither: as had been done with the unhappy sister of His Britannic Majesty at Zell.

"She sent repeatedly to demand an interview with his Highness; which the latter declined, saying that he would communicate with her Highness when her health was sufficiently recovered. To one of her passionate letters he sent back for reply a packet, which, when opened, was found to contain the emerald that had been the cause round which all this dark intrigue moved.

"Her Highness at this time became quite frantic; vowed in the presence of all her ladies that one lock of her darling Maxime's hair was more precious to her than all the jewels in the world: rang for her carriage, and said she would go and kiss his tomb; proclaimed the murdered martyr's innocence, and called down the punishment of Heaven, the wrath of her family, upon his assassin. The Prince, on hearing these speeches (they were all, of course, regularly brought to him), is said to have given one of his dreadful looks (which I remember now), and to have said, 'This cannot last much longer.'

"All that day and the next the Princess Olivia passed in dictating the most passionate letters to the Prince her father, to the Kings of France, Naples, and Spain, her kinsmen, and to all other branches of her family, calling upon them in the most incoherent terms to protect her against the butcher and assassin her husband, assailing his person in the maddest terms of reproach, and at the same time confessing her love for the murdered Magny. It was in vain that those ladies who were faithful to her pointed out to her the inutility of these letters, the dangerous folly of the confessions which they made; she insisted upon writing them, and used to give them to her second robe-woman, a Frenchwoman (her Highness always affectioned persons of that nation), who had the key of her cassette, and carried every one of these epistles to Geldern.

"With the exception that no public receptions were held, the ceremony of the Princess's establishment went on as before. Her ladies were allowed to wait upon her and perform their usual duties about her person. The only men admitted were, however, her servants, her physician and chaplain; and one day when she wished to go into the garden, a heyduc, who kept the door, intimated to her Highness that the Prince's orders were that she should keep her apartments.

"They abut, as you remember, upon the landing of the marble staircase of Schloss X—; the entrance to Prince Victor's suite of rooms being opposite the Princess's on the same landing. This space is large, filled with sofas and benches, and the gentlemen and officers who waited upon the Duke used to make a sort of antechamber of the landing-place, and pay their court to his Highness there, as he passed out, at eleven o'clock, to parade. At such a time, the heyducs within the Princess's suite of rooms used to turn out with their halberts and present to Prince Victor

—the same ceremony being performed on his own side, when pages came out and announced the approach of his Highness. The pages used to come out and say, 'The Prince, gentlemen!' and the drums beat in the hall, and the gentlemen rose, who were waiting on the benches that ran along the balustrade.

"As if fate impelled her to her death, one day the Princess, as her guards turned out, and she was aware that the Prince was standing, as was his wont, on the landing, conversing with his gentlemen (in the old days he used to cross to the Princess's apartment and kiss her hand)—the Princess, who had been anxious all the morning, complaining of heat, insisting that all the doors of the apartments should be left open; and giving tokens of an insanity which I think was now evident, rushed wildly at the doors when the guards passed out, flung them open, and before a word could be said, or her ladies could follow her, was in presence of Duke Victor, who was talking as usual on the landing: placing herself between him and the stair, she began apostrophising him with frantic vehemence:—

"'Take notice, gentlemen!' she screamed out, 'that this man is a murderer and a liar; that he lays plots for honourable gentlemen, and kills them in prison! Take notice, that I too am in prison, and fear the same fate: the same butcher who killed Maxime de Magny, may, any night, put the knife to my throat. I appeal to you, and to all the kings of Europe, my Royal kinsmen. I demand to be set free from this tyrant and villain, this liar and traitor! I adjure you all, as gentlemen of honour, to carry these letters to my relatives, and say from whom you had them!' and with this the unhappy lady began scattering letters about among the astonished crowd.

"'Let no man stoop!' cried the Prince, in a voice of thunder. 'Madame de Gleim, you should have watched your patient better. Call the Princess's physicians: her Highness's brain is affected. Gentlemen, have the goodness to retire.' And the Prince stood on the landing as the gentlemen went down the stairs, saying fiercely to the guard, 'Soldier, if she moves, strike with your halbert!' on which the man brought the point of his weapon to the Princess's breast; and the lady, frightened, shrank back and re-entered her apartments. 'Now, Monsieur de Weisenborn,' said the Prince, 'pick up all those papers;' and the Prince went into his own apartments, preceded by his pages, and never quitted them until he had seen every one of the papers burnt.

"The next day the *Court Gazette* contained a bulletin signed by the three physicians, stating that 'her Highness the Hereditary Princess laboured under inflammation of the brain, and had passed a restless and disturbed night.' Similar notices were issued day after day. The services of all her ladies, except two, were dispensed with. Guards were placed within and without her doors; her windows were secured, so that escape from them was impossible: and you know what took place ten days after. The church-bells were ringing all night, and the prayers of the faithful asked for a person *in extremis*. A *Gazette* appeared in the morning, edged with black, and stating that the high and mighty Princess Olivia Maria Ferdinanda, consort of His Serene Highness Victor Louis Emanuel, Hereditary Prince of X —, had died in the evening of the 24th of January 1769.

"But do you know *how* she died, sir? That, too, is a mystery. Weissenborn, the page, was concerned in this dark tragedy; and the secret was so dreadful, that never, believe me, till Prince Victor's death, did I reveal it.

"After the fatal *esclandre* which the Princess had made, the Prince sent for Weissenborn, and binding him by the most solemn adjuration to secrecy (he only broke it to his wife many years after: indeed, there is no secret in the world that women cannot know if they will), despatched him on the following mysterious commission.

"'There lives,' said his Highness, 'on the Kehl side of the river, opposite to Strasbourg, a man whose residence you will easily find out from his name, which is *Monsieur de Strasbourg*. You will make your inquiries concerning him quietly, and without occasioning any remark; perhaps you had better go into Strasbourg for the purpose, where the person is quite well known. You will take with you any comrade on whom you can perfectly rely: the lives of both, remember, depend on your secrecy. You will find out some period when *Monsieur de Strasbourg* is alone, or only in company of the domestic who lives with him (I myself visited the man by accident on my return from Paris five years since, and hence am induced to send for him now, in my present emergency). You will have your carriage waiting at his door at night; and you and your comrade will enter his house masked; and present him with a purse of a hundred louis; promising him double that sum on his return from his expedition. If he refuse, you must use force and bring him; menacing him with instant

death should he decline to follow you. You will place him in the carriage with the blinds drawn, one or other of you never losing sight of him the whole way, and threatening him with death if he discover himself or cry out. You will lodge him in the old Tower here, where a room shall be prepared for him; and his work being done, you will restore him to his home with the same speed and secrecy with which you brought him from it.'

"Such were the mysterious orders Prince Victor gave his page; and Weissenborn, selecting for his comrade in the expedition Lieutenant Bartenstein, set out on his strange journey.

"All this while the palace was hushed, as if in mourning, the bulletins in the *Court Gazette* appeared, announcing the continuance of the Princess's malady; and though she had but few attendants, strange and circumstantial stories were told regarding the progress of her complaint. She was quite wild. She had tried to kill herself. She had fancied herself to be I don't know how many different characters. Expresses were sent to her family informing them of her state, and couriers despatched *publicly* to Vienna and Paris to procure the attendance of physicians skilled in treating diseases of the brain. That pretended anxiety was all a feint: it was never intended that the Princess should recover.

"The day on which Weissenborn and Bartenstein returned from their expedition, it was announced that her Highness the Princess was much worse; that night the report through the town was that she was at the agony: and that night the unfortunate creature was endeavouring to make her escape.

"She had unlimited confidence in the French chamber-woman who attended her, and between her and this woman the plan of escape was arranged. The Princess took her jewels in a casket; a private door, opening from one of her rooms and leading into the outer gate, it was said, of the palace, was discovered for her: and a letter was brought to her, purporting to be from the Duke, her father-in-law, and stating that a carriage and horses had been provided, and would take her to B —: the territory where she might communicate with her family and be safe.

"The unhappy lady, confiding in her guardian, set out on the expedition. The passages wound through the walls of the modern part of the palace and abutted in effect at the old Owl Tower, as it was called, on the outer wall: the tower was pulled down afterwards, and for good reason.

"At a certain place the candle, which the chamber-woman was carrying, went out; and the Princess would have screamed with terror, but her hand was seized, and a voice cried 'Hush!' The next minute a man in a mask (it was the Duke himself) rushed forward, gagged her with a handkerchief, her hands and legs were bound, and she was carried swooning with terror into a vaulted room, where she was placed by a person there waiting, and tied in an arm-chair. The same mask who had gagged her, came and bared her neck and said, 'It had best be done now she has fainted.'

"Perhaps it would have been as well; for though she recovered from her swoon, and her confessor, who was present, came forward and endeavoured to prepare her for the awful deed which was about to be done upon her, and for the state into which she was about to enter, when she came to herself it was only to scream like a maniac, to curse the Duke as a butcher and tyrant, and to call upon Magny, her dear Magny.

"At this the Duke said, quite calmly, 'May God have mercy on her sinful soul!' He, the confessor, and Geldern, who were present, went down on their knees; and, as his Highness dropped his handkerchief, Weissenborn fell down in a fainting fit; while *Monsieur de Strasbourg*, taking the back hair in his hand, separated the shrieking head of Olivia from the miserable sinful body. May Heaven have mercy upon her soul!"

This was the story told by Madame de Liliengarten, and the reader will have no difficulty in drawing from it that part which affected myself and my uncle; who, after six weeks of arrest, were set at liberty, but with orders to quit the duchy immediately: indeed, with an escort of dragoons to conduct us to the frontier. What property we had, we were allowed to sell and realise in money; but none of our play debts were paid to us: and all my hopes of the Countess Ida were thus at an end.

When Duke Victor came to the throne, which he did when, six months after, apoplexy carried off the old sovereign his father, all the good old usages of X—were given up,—play forbidden; the opera and ballet sent to the right-about; and the regiments which the old Duke had sold recalled from their foreign service: with them came my Countess's beggarly cousin the ensign, and he married her. I don't know whether they

were happy or not. It is certain that a woman of such a poor spirit did not merit any very high degree of pleasure.

The now reigning Duke of X—himself married four years after his first wife's demise, and Geldern, though no longer Police Minister, built the grand house of which Madame de Liliengarten spoke. What became of the minor actors in the great tragedy, who knows? Only *Monsieur de Strasbourg* was restored to his duties. Of the rest—the Jew, the chamber-woman, the spy on Magny—I know nothing. Those sharp tools with which great people cut out their enterprises are generally broken in the using: nor did I ever hear that their employers had much regard for them in their ruin.

CHAPTER XIII.

I continue my Career as a Man of Fashion.

I FIND I have already filled up many scores of pages, and yet a vast deal of the most interesting portion of my history remains to be told, viz. that which describes my sojourn in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, and the great part I played there; moving among the most illustrious of the land, myself not the least distinguished of the brilliant circle. In order to give due justice to this portion of my Memoirs, then,—which is more important than my foreign adventures can be (though I could fill volumes with interesting descriptions of the latter),—I shall cut short the account of my travels in Europe, and of my success at the Continental Courts, in order to speak of what befell me at home. Suffice it to say that there is not a capital in Europe, except the beggarly one of Berlin, where the young Chevalier de Balibari was not known and admired; and where he has not made the brave, the high-born, and the beautiful talk of him. I won 80,000 roubles from Potemkin at the Winter Palace at Petersburg, which the scoundrelly favourite never paid me; I have had the honour of seeing his Royal Highness the Chevalier Charles Edward as drunk as any porter at Rome; my uncle played several matches at billiards against the celebrated Lord C— at Spa, and I promise you did not come off a loser. In fact, by a neat stratagem of ours, we raised the laugh against his Lordship, and something a great deal more substantial. My