

clared, with a voice tremulous with emotion, that all was lost, and that but one means of confounding tyranny remained; a scene, portraying the whole terror, dismay, and grief of the capital at the approach of the hated enemy, should be arranged. In accordance with this plan, the whole population of Paris—the entire National Guard, the mothers, the young girls, the children, the old and the young—were to pass out of the city, and await the tyrant; and this aspect of a million of men fleeing from the face of a single human being was to move or terrify him who came to rob them of their peace!

In her enthusiastic and energetic manner, Madame de Staël pronounced an anathema against the usurper who was about to kindle anew, in weeping, shivering France, the flames of war.

All were touched, enthusiastic, and agitated, but they could do nothing but utter fine phrases; and all that fell from the eloquent lips of these celebrated poets and politicians was, as it were, nothing more than a bulletin concerning the condition of the patient, and concerning the mortal wounds which he had received. This patient was France; and the royalists, who were assembled in the house of Count de la Pere, now felt that the patient's case was hopeless, and that nothing remained to them but to go into exile, and bemoan his sad fate!*

* Mémoires d'une Femme de Qualité, vol. i., p. 99.

CHAPTER XI.

LOUIS XVIII.'S DEPARTURE AND NAPOLEON'S ARRIVAL.

WHILE the royalists were thus considering, hesitating, and despairing, King Louis XVIII. had alone retained his composure and sense of security. That is to say, they had taken care not to inform him of the real state of affairs. On the contrary, he had been informed that Bonaparte had been everywhere received with coldness and silence, and that the army would not respond to his appeal, but would remain true to the king. The exultation with which the people everywhere received the advancing emperor found, therefore, no echo in the Tuileries, and the crowd who pressed around the king when he repaired to the hall of the *Corps Législatif* to hold an encouraging address, was not the people, but the royalists—those otherwise so haughty ladies and gentlemen of the old nobility, who again, as on the day of the first entrance, acted the part to which the people were not disposed to adapt themselves, and transformed themselves for a moment into the people, in order to show to the king the demonstrations of his people's love.

The king was completely deceived. M. de Blacas told the king of continuous reverses to Napoleon's arms, while the emperor's advance was in reality a continuous triumph. They had carried this deception so far that they had informed the king that Lyons had closed its gates to Napoleon, and that Ney was advancing to meet

him, vowing that he would bring the emperor back to Paris in an iron cage.

The king was therefore composed, self-possessed, and resolute, when suddenly his brother, the Count d'Artois; and the Duke of Orleans, who, according to the king's belief, occupied Lyons as a victor, arrived in Paris alone, as fugitives, abandoned by their soldiers and servants, and informed Louis that Lyons had received the emperor with open arms, and that no resource had been left them but to betake themselves to flight.

And a second, and still more terrible, item of intelligence followed the first. Ney, the king's hope, the last support of his tottering throne, Ney had not had the heart to maintain a hostile position toward his old companion in arms. Ney had gone over to the emperor, and his army had followed him with exultation.

The king's eyes were now opened, he now saw the truth, and learned how greatly he had been deceived.

"Alas," cried he, sadly, "Bonaparte fell because he would not listen to the truth, and I shall fall because they would not tell me the truth!"

At this moment, and while the king was eloquently appealing to his brothers and relatives, and to the gentlemen of his court who surrounded him, to tell him the whole truth, the door opened, and the Minister Blacas, until then so complacent, so confident of victory, now stepped in pale and trembling.

The truth, which he had so long concealed from the king, was now plainly impressed on his pale, terrified

countenance. The king had desired to hear the truth; it stood before him in his trembling minister.

A short interval of profound silence occurred; the eyes of all were fastened on the count, and, in the midst of the general silence, he was heard to say, in a voice choked with emotion: "Sire, all is lost; the army, as well as the people, betray your majesty. It will be necessary for your majesty to leave Paris."

The king staggered backward for an instant, and then fastened an inquiring glance on the faces of all who were present. No one dared to return his gaze with a glance of hope. They all looked down sorrowfully.

The king understood this mute reply, and a deep sigh escaped his breast.

"The tree bears its fruit," said he, with a bitter smile; "heretofore it has been your purpose to make me govern for you, hereafter I shall govern for no one. If I shall, however, return to the throne of my fathers once more, you will be made to understand that I will profit by the experience you have given me!"*

A few hours later, at nightfall, supported on the arm of Count Blacas, without any suite, and preceded by a single lackey bearing a torch, the king left the once more desolate and solitary Tuileries, and fled to Holland.

Twenty-four hours later, on the evening of the 20th of March, Napoleon entered the Tuileries, accompanied

* The king's own words. *Mémoires d'une Femme de Qualité*, vol. i., p. 156.

by the exulting shouts of the people, and the thundering "*Vive l'empereur*" of the troops. On the same place where the white flag of the Bourbons had but yesterday fluttered, the *tricolore* of the empire now flung out its folds to the breeze.

In the Tuileries the emperor found all his old ministers, his generals, and his courtiers, assembled. All were desirous of seeing and greeting him. An immense concourse of people surged around the entrance on the stairways and in the halls.

Borne aloft on the arms and shoulders of the people, the emperor was carried up the stairway, and into his apartments; and, while shouts of joy were resounding within, the thousands without joined the more fortunate ones who had borne the emperor to his apartments, and rent the air with exulting cries of "*Vive l'empereur!*"

In his cabinet, to which Napoleon immediately repaired, he was received by Queen Julia, wife of Joseph Bonaparte, and Queen Hortense, who had abandoned her place of concealment, and hurried to the Tuileries to salute the emperor.

Napoleon greeted Hortense coldly, he inquired briefly after the health of her sons, and then added, almost severely: "You have placed my nephews in a false position, by permitting them to remain in the midst of my enemies."

Hortense turned pale, and her eyes filled with tears. The emperor seemed not to notice it. "You have accepted the friendship of my enemies," said he, "and

have placed yourself under obligations to the Bourbons. I depend on Eugene; I hope he will soon be here. I wrote to him from Lyons."

This was the reception Hortense received from the emperor. He was angry with her for having remained in France, and at the same time the flying Bourbons, who were on their way to Holland, said of her: "The Duchess of St. Leu is to blame for all! Her intrigues alone have brought Napoleon back to Paris."

CHAPTER XII.

THE HUNDRED DAYS.

THE hundred days that followed the emperor's return are like a myth of the olden time, like a poem of Homer, in which heroes destroy worlds with a blow of the hand, and raise armies out of the ground with a stamp of the foot; in which nations perish, and new ones are born within the space of a minute.

These hundred days stand in history as a giant era, and these hundred days of the restored empire were replete with all the earth can offer of fortune, of magnificence, of glory, and of victory, as well as of all that the earth contains that is disgraceful, miserable, traitorous, and perfidious.

Wondrous and brilliant was their commencement. All France seemed to hail the emperor's return with ex-