

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."

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## 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-

ultation. Every one hastened to assure him of his unchangeable fidelity, and to persuade him that they had only obeyed the Bourbons under compulsion.

The old splendor of the empire once more prevailed in the Tuileries, where the emperor now held his glittering court again. There was, however, this difference: Queen Hortense now did the honors of the court, in the place of the Empress Marie Louise, who had not returned with her husband; and the emperor could not now show the people his own son, but could only point to his two nephews, the sons of Hortense.

The emperor had quickly reconciled himself to the queen; he had been compelled to yield to her gentle and yet decided explanations; he had comprehended that Hortense had sacrificed herself for her children, in continuing to remain in France notwithstanding her reluctance. After this reconciliation had taken place, Napoleon extended his hand to Hortense, with his irresistible smile, and begged her to name a wish, in order that he might fulfil it.

Queen Hortense, who had been so bitterly slandered and scorned by the royalists, and who was still considered by the fleeing Bourbons to be the cause of their overthrow—this same queen now entreated the emperor to permit the Duchess d'Orleans, who had not been able to leave Paris on account of a broken limb, to remain, and to accord her a pension besides. She told the emperor that she had received a letter from the duchess, in which she begged for her intercession in obtaining some assist-

ance from the emperor, assuring her that it was urgently needed, in her depressed circumstances.

The emperor consented to grant this wish of his step-daughter Hortense; and it was solely at her solicitation that Napoleon accorded a pension of four hundred thousand francs to the Duchess d'Orleans, the mother of King Louis Philippe.\*

A few days later, at Hortense's request, a pension of two hundred thousand francs was also accorded to the Duchess of Bourbon, who had also besought the queen to exert her influence in her behalf; and both ladies now hastened to assure Hortense of their everlasting gratitude. The fulfilment of her wish filled Hortense with delight; she was as proud of it as of a victory achieved.

"I considered it a sacred duty," said she, "to intercede for these ladies. They were as isolated and desolate as I had been a few days before, and I know how sad it is to be in such a state!"

But Hortense's present state was a very different one. She was now no longer the Duchess of St. Leu, but the queen and the ornament of the court once more; all heads now bowed before her again, and the high-born ladies, who had seemed oblivious of her existence during the past year, now hastened to do homage to the queen.

"Majesty," said one of these ladies to the queen, "unfortunately, you were always absent in the country when I called to pay my respects during the past winter."

\* *La Reine Hortense en Italie, en France, et en Angleterre. Ecrit par elle-même, p. 185.*

The queen's only response was a gentle "Indeed, madame," which she accompanied with a smile.

Hortense, as has before been said, was now again the grand point of attraction at court, and, at Napoleon's command, the public officials now also hastened to solicit the honor of an audience, in order to pay their respects to the emperor's step-daughter. Each day beheld new *fêtes* and ceremonies.

The most sublime and imposing of all these was the ceremony of the *Champ de Mai*, that took place on the first of June, and at which the emperor, in the presence of the applauding populace, presented to his army the new eagles and flags, which they were henceforth to carry into battle instead of the lilies of the Bourbons.

It was a wondrous, an enchanting spectacle to behold the sea of human beings that surged to and fro on this immense space, and made the welkin ring with their "*Vive l'empereur!*"—to behold the proud, triumphant soldiers receiving from Napoleon the eagles consecrated by the priests at the altar that stood before the emperor. It was a wondrous spectacle to behold the hundreds of richly-attired ladies glittering with diamonds, who occupied the tiers of seats that stood immediately behind the emperor's chair, and on which Hortense and her two sons occupied the first seats.

The air was so balmy, the sun shone so lustriously over all this splendor and magnificence, the cannon thundered so mightily, and the strains of music resounded so sweetly on the ear; and, while all were applauding and

rejoicing, Hortense sat behind the emperor's chair covertly sketching the imposing scene that lay before her, the grand ceremony, which, a dark foreboding told her, "might perhaps be the last of the empire."\*

Hortense alone did not allow herself to be deceived by this universal delight and contentment.

The heavens still seemed bright and serene overhead, but she already perceived the gathering clouds, she already heard the mutterings of the storm that was soon, and this time forever, to hurl the emperor's throne to the ground. She knew that a day would suddenly come when all this brightness would grow dim, and when all those who now bowed so humbly before him, would turn from him again—a day when they would deny and desert the emperor as they had already done once before, and that, from that day on, the present period of grandeur would be accounted to her as a debt. But this knowledge caused her neither anxiety nor embarrassment.

The emperor was once more there; he was the lord and father left her by her mother Josephine, and it was her duty and desire to be true and obedient to him as long as she lived.

The sun still shone lustriously over the restored empire, and in the parlors of Queen Hortense, where the diplomats, statesmen, artists, and all the notables of the empire were in the habit of assembling, gayety reigned supreme. There music and literature were discussed, and homage done to all the fine arts.

\* Cochelet, vol. iii., p. 97.

Benjamin Constant, who had with great rapidity transformed himself from an enthusiastic royalist into an imperial state-councillor, came to the queen's parlors and regaled her guests by reading to them his romance *Adolphe*; and Metternich, the Austrian ambassador, seemed to have no other destiny than to amuse the queen and the circle of ladies assembled around them, and to invent new social games for their entertainment.

Metternich knew how to bring thousands of charming little frivolities into fashion; he taught the ladies the charming and poetic language of flowers, and made it a symbolic means of conversation and correspondence in the queen's circle. He also, to the great delight of the court, invented the alphabet of gems; in this alphabet each gem represented its initial letter, and, by combinations, names and devices were formed, which were worn in necklaces, bracelets, and rings.

The little games with which the diplomatic Metternich occupied himself during the hundred days at the imperial court at Paris, were, it appears, of the most innocent and harmless nature.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### NAPOLEON'S LAST ADIEU.

THE storm, of the approach of which Queen Hortense had so long had a foreboding, was preparing to burst over France. All the princes of Europe who had once been Napoleon's allies had now declared against him. They

all refused to acknowledge Napoleon as emperor, or to treat with him as one having any authority.

"No peace, no reconciliation with this man," wrote the Emperor Alexander to Pozzo di Borgo; "all Europe is of the same opinion concerning him. With the exception of this man, any thing they may demand; no preference for any one; no war after this man shall have been set aside."\*

But, in order to "set this man aside," war was necessary. The allied armies therefore advanced toward the boundaries of France; the great powers declared war against France, or rather against the Emperor Napoleon; and France, which had so long desired peace, and had only accepted the Bourbons because it hoped to obtain it of them, France was now compelled to take up the gauntlet.

On the 12th of June the emperor left Paris with his army, in order to meet the advancing enemy. Napoleon himself, who had hitherto gone into battle, his countenance beaming with an assurance of victory, now looked gloomy and dejected, for he well knew that on the fate of his army now depended his own, and the fate of France.

This time it was not a question of making conquests, but of saving the national independence, and it was the mother-earth, red with the blood of her children, that was now to be defended.

Paris, that for eighty days had been the scene of splen-

\* Cochelet, vol. iii., p. 90.