

this proud column, I will show you a picture of the past. Do you wish to see it?"

His gaze fastened on the imperial column, Louis Napoleon silently nodded assent.

Hortense went to her room, and soon returned to the balcony with a book, bound in red velvet. Often, during the quiet days of Arenenberg, the prince had seen her writing in this book, but never had Hortense yielded to his entreaties and permitted him to read any part of her memoirs. Unsolicited it was her intention to unfold before him to-day a brilliant picture; in view of the sad and desolate present, she wished to portray to him the bright and glittering past, perhaps only for the purpose of entertaining him, perhaps in order to console him with the hope that all that is passes away, and that the present would therefore also come to an end, and that which once was, again become reality for him, the heir of the emperor.

She seated herself at her son's side, on a little sofa that stood on the balcony, and, opening her book, began to read.

CHAPTER XI.

FRAGMENT FROM THE MEMOIRS OF QUEEN HORTENSE.

"THE emperor had returned from Italy. The beautiful ceremony of the distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honor had taken place before his departure, and I had been present on the occasion; the emperor

now repaired to Boulogne, in order to make a second distribution of the order in the army on his birthday. He had made my husband general of the army of the reserve, and sent him a courier, with the request that he should come with me and our son to the camp at Boulogne. My husband did not wish to interrupt the baths he was taking at St. Amand, but he requested me to go to Boulogne, to spend a week with the emperor.

"The emperor resided at Boulogne in a little villa called *Pont de Brique*. His sister, Caroline, and Murat, lived in another little villa near by. I lived with them, and every day we went to dine with the emperor. During two years, our troops had been concentrating in full view of England, and every one expected an attack. The camp at Boulogne was erected on the sea-side, and resembled a long and regularly-built city. Each hut had a little garden, flowers, and birds. In the middle of the camp, on an elevation, stood the emperor's tent; near by, that of Marshal Berthier. All the men-of-war on the water were drawn up in a line, only waiting the signal of departure. In the distance we could see England, and its beautiful ships that were cruising along the coast seemed to form an impenetrable barrier. This grand spectacle gave us for the first time an illustration of an unknown, hitherto not-dreamed-of power that stood opposed to us. Here every thing was calculated to excite the imagination. This boundless sea might soon transform itself into a battle-field, and swallow up the *élite* of the two greatest nations. Our troops, proud in the feeling that there were

no obstacles for them, made impatient by two years' repose, glowing with energy and bravery, already imagined themselves to have attained the opposite coast. When one considered their bravery and confidence, success seemed certain; but when the eye turned to the impenetrable forest of masts on the hostile ships, a feeling of anxiety and fear suddenly took possession of the heart. And yet nothing seemed to be wanting to the expedition but a favorable wind.

"Of all the homage that a woman can receive, military homage has in the highest degree the chivalrous character, and it is impossible not to feel flattered by it.

"There could not be any thing more delightful or imposing than the homage of which I was here the object, and it was only here that it made any impression on me.

"The emperor gave me as an escort his equerry, General Defrance. Whenever I approached a camp division, the guard was called out and presented arms.

"I had interceded for several soldiers who were undergoing punishment for breaches of discipline, and was on this account received everywhere with the liveliest enthusiasm. The entire mounted general staff escorted my carriage, and my approach was everywhere hailed by brilliant music. It was on such an occasion that I saw for the first time the urn which a grenadier wore attached to his belt; I was told that the emperor, in order to do honor to the memory of the gallant Latour d'Auvergne,*

* Latour d'Auvergne, a descendant of the celebrated Turenne, was known and honored throughout the whole army on account of the

had caused his heart to be enclosed in a leaden casket, which he had intrusted to the oldest soldier of the regiment, commanding that his name should always be called at the roll-call, as though he were present. He who bore the heart replied: 'Dead on the field of honor.'

"One day, a breakfast was given me at the camp of Ambleteuse. I desired to go by water, and, notwithstanding a contrary wind, the admiral took me. I saw the English ships, and we passed so near them, that they might easily have captured our yacht. I also visited the Dutch fleet commanded by Admiral Versuelt, where I was received with great applause, the sailors little dreaming that I would be their queen within the space of a year.*

"On another occasion, the emperor ordered a review. The English, who felt disquieted, by the appearance of so many troops drawn up before them, approached nearer and nearer to our coasts, and even fired a few cannon-shots at us; the emperor was at the head of his French columns when they replied to these shots, and was thus placed between two fires. As we had followed him, we

lion-hearted courage which he had exhibited on so many occasions. As he invariably declined the many advancements and honors that were tendered him, Napoleon appointed him first grenadier of the army. He fell in the action at Neuburg, and the Viceroy of Italy, Eugene Beauharnais, afterward caused a monument to be erected there in his memory.

* In order to reach the harbor of Ambleteuse to which they had been assigned, the Dutch had first been compelled to do battle with the English fleet, and in this combat they had acquitted themselves with the greatest honor.

were now compelled to remain at his side. To his uncle's great joy, my son exhibited no symptom of fear whatever. But the generals trembled at seeing the emperor exposed to such danger. The ramrod of some awkward soldier might prove as dangerous as a ball. In the midst of this imposing spectacle, I was struck with astonishment at the contrast presented by the troops under different circumstances. When drawn up in line of battle, they glowed with gallantry and determination, but, in the days of repose, they resembled well-behaved children, who could amuse themselves with a flower or a bird. The most daring warrior was then often converted into the most diligent and submissive scholar.

"For the breakfast which Marshal Davoust gave me in his tent, the grenadiers had been preparing to entertain us with several songs, and came forward to sing them with the bashfulness of young girls. In the most embarrassed and timid manner, they sang a song full of the fiercest and most daring threats against England.

"From the emperor's parlor we often saw the soldiers of his guard assemble on the grass-plot before the castle; one of them would play the violin and instruct his comrades in dancing. The beginners would study the '*jétés*' and '*assemblés*' with the closest attention; the more advanced ones would execute a whole contre-dance. From behind the window-blinds we watched them with the greatest pleasure. The emperor, who often surprised us at this occupation, would laugh with us and rejoice at the innocent amusements of his soldiers.

"Was this project of a landing in England really intended? Or was it the emperor's purpose by these enormous preparations to divert attention from other points, and fix it on this one only? Even to-day this is a question which I cannot venture to decide; here, as elsewhere, I only report what I have seen.

"Madame Ney also gave me a brilliant festival at Montreuil, where her husband the marshal was in command. During the forenoon the troops were manœuvred before me, in the evening a ball took place. But this was suddenly interrupted by the intelligence that the emperor had just embarked.

"A number of young officers, who had been present at the ball, rushed out on the road to Boulogne; I followed them with the rapidity of lightning, escorted as usual by General Defrance, who burned with impatience to be again at the emperor's side. I myself felt unutterable emotion at the prospect of witnessing so great an occurrence. I imagined myself observing the battle from the summit of the tower that stood near the emperor's tent; beholding our fleet advance and sink down into the waves, I shuddered in anticipation.

"At last I arrived. I inquired after the emperor, and learned that he had actually attended the embarkation of all his troops during the night, but that he had just returned to his villa.

"I did not see him until dinner, at which he asked Prince Joseph, who was then colonel of a regiment, whether he had believed in this pretended embarkation,

and what effect it had had on the soldiers. Joseph said that he, like all the world, had believed that a departure was really intended, and that the soldiers had doubted it so little that they had sold their watches. The emperor also often asked if the telegraph had not yet announced the approach of the French squadron; his adjutant, Lauriston, was with the squadron, and the emperor seemed only to be awaiting Lauriston's arrival and a favorable wind, in order to set sail.

"The eight days' absence accorded me by my husband had expired, and I took leave of the emperor. I journeyed through Calais and Dunkirk. I saw troops defiling before me everywhere; and with regret and fear I left this magnificent army, thinking that they might perhaps in a few days be exposed to the greatest dangers.

"At St. Amand we were every day expecting to hear of the passage of our fleet to England, when we suddenly saw the troops arriving in our neighborhood and passing on in forced marches toward the Rhine. Austria had broken the peace. We hastened at once to Paris, to see the emperor once more before his departure for Germany."*

* La Reine Hortense en Italie, France, etc., p. 278.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PILGRIM.

ON the following morning the duchess left Boulogne with her son, in order to wander on with him through the land of her youth and of her memories.

It was a sad and yet heart-stirring pilgrimage; for, although banished and nameless, she was nevertheless in her own country—she still stood on French soil. For sixteen years she had been living in a foreign land, in a land whose language was unknown to her, and whose people she could therefore not understand. Now, on this journey through France, she rejoiced once more in being able to understand the conversation of the people in the streets, and of the peasants in the fields. It was a sensation of mingled bitterness and sweetness to feel that she was not a stranger among this people, and it therefore now afforded her the greatest delight to chat with those she met, and to listen to their *naïve* and artless words.

As soon as she arrived at her hotel in any city or village in which she purposed enjoying a day's rest, Hortense would walk out into the streets on her son's arm. On one occasion she stepped into a booth, seated herself, and conversed with the people who came to the store to purchase their daily necessaries; on another occasion, she accosted a child on the street, kissed it, and inquired after its parents; then, again, she would con-