

farther into the interior of the country, incessantly alluring him forward by insignificant victories, rendering him eager for a great battle. In strict obedience to the plans he has adopted, she will especially endeavor to weaken Napoleon, and cut him off from his supplies and base of operations. She will successively fight him at every important point with a strong army, supported by large reserves, tire him out, and ruin him in detail. This plan she will adhere to until her great ally approaches from Siberia—grim Winter, covering Russia with an invulnerable defence, so that her sons may at last take the offensive, and expel the terrified enemy."

"That is a grand, but an infernal scheme!" exclaimed the king, who had risen, and was walking up and down with hasty steps. "Who conceived it?"

"No single brain; it is the result of the consultations of the most eminent Russian generals. They also have studied Macchiavelli, and found that significant axiom, 'He who knows how to resist will conquer in the end.' The Russians, therefore, will resist, and they will conquer."

"But who tells you that this is the plan which Russia will adopt?" asked the king. "Whence have you derived such accurate information?"

"Your majesty," said Hardenberg, smiling, "though we publicly act as the enemies of Russia, and are compelled to send our army against her, she secretly regards us as her ally, and knows well that we are only waiting for the favorable moment to drop the mask and become the open enemy of the usurper. We have, therefore, warm friends in Russia, who will keep us informed about every thing going on, that we may prudently use the favorable moment when we also can take up arms against Napoleon."

"No rash steps—no *coups de main*," exclaimed Frederick William, gravely and imperiously, standing in front of Hardenberg, and looking him full in the face. "I am opposed to any sort of underhand games; when you are not strong enough to attack your enemy openly and honestly, you ought to be too proud to shoot at him from an ambuscade, like a coward and bandit. The bullet may miss him, and he who fired it dies as a traitor, overwhelmed with disgrace. I have concluded this alliance with France; I am now her ally, and thereby compelled to furnish her an auxiliary corps of twenty thousand men against Russia; so long, therefore, as this campaign lasts, I must, by virtue of the pledges I have given,

stand by France, and woe to the general of mine who should forget this, and disobey the orders I have given him!"

"There may be circumstances, however, your majesty," said Hardenberg, in an embarrassed tone, "circumstances—"

"There can be none," interrupted the king, "justifying us to turn traitors. A man has but one word to pledge, and that I have pledged to Napoleon. When my soldiers forsake the colors under which I have placed them, they shall be punished as deserters. No one knows the anguish with which I say this, but as a man who must keep his word, and as a commander-in-chief who, above all, must maintain discipline and subordination, I cannot speak otherwise. Tell your friends in Russia so. I am sad and dejected enough, compelled as I am to become Napoleon's ally. But I will not perjure myself!"

"Your majesty, I bow in admiration of these noble words of my king," exclaimed Hardenberg, enthusiastically; "I wish the whole world could hear them. At this hour you obtained a greater victory than Napoleon ever gained on the battlefield—a victory of duty and fidelity over your own inclinations and wishes! Far be it from me to oppose this magnanimous resolution. Our army, then, will march out side by side with the French troops and will return, if it ever should, as an auxiliary corps of the grand army. But then, your majesty, the new day will dawn, for which we must prepare while Napoleon is in Russia. It must be in secret—in the dead of night—but the rising sun will find us ready. The world is now united for the great work; brethren are offering their hands to brethren from the shores of the Mediterranean to those of the Atlantic and the Baltic. Their common sufferings have filled their hearts with the same love and hatred. All the nations are uniting into one family, and in their wrath will destroy him who is menacing all alike. Secret messengers keep the brethren in the west and north, in the south and east, well informed of what is done by their friends. Patriotic poets are arousing the nations from the lethargy that enthralled them during so many years; they make them hear the gospel of liberty, and awaken them from their indifference. In secret workshops the brethren are forging arms; in the night the sisters are at work upon uniforms, and their children are making lint for warriors to be wounded in the holy war of liberation. They are quietly preparing for it in the offices, the students' halls, and the workshops. At the first



call they will fling aside their pens and tools, take up the sword, and hasten into the field, to deliver the fatherland. All Europe, at the present moment, is but one vast secret society, which has even in France active and influential members. Napoleon stands on a volcano, which will soon engulf him."

"Enough!" exclaimed the king, anxiously. "Say no more; I will know nothing about secret societies and conspiracies. They are perhaps an inevitable evil in these times, but still they *are* an evil, destroying those for whose benefit they were intended."

"May God in His mercy favor them in advancing our cause," exclaimed Hardenberg, "that from them may arise the army that is to deliver the nations from the yoke of the tyrant! I am convinced that it will be so, and that the moment will come when Prussia will be able to redeem the oath which I am sure every Prussian took when he saw the coffin of the august Queen Louisa. On the day, your majesty, when I saw it, I resolved to strive for no other object than to deliver my country. For this I will devote my whole strength—my life, if need be! Heaven heard my oath, and I shall not die before its fulfilment."

The king gazed long and mournfully upon the queen's portrait which hung over his desk, and represented her in the attire in which Frederick William had seen her for the first time. "But she died before the hour of deliverance struck," he said, gloomily, to himself. "Her heart was broken, and she did not even take hope with her into the grave. She,—" he stopped suddenly, and turned his eyes toward Hardenberg. "I will communicate something to you," he said briefly and impulsively; "I will confess to you that I comprehend your oath; for I also took one when I held the queen's corpse in my arms. In the beginning the terrible blow paralyzed my soul, and I felt as though I had been hurled into a dark abyss. Suddenly I heard, as from a voice resounding in my ears, 'You must not die before you avenge her death upon him who broke her heart!' I bent over her, and kissing her lips, swore that I would live only to obey. I have not forgotten that oath and that hour, and, you may depend on it, I shall ever remember it; but I will wait for the favorable moment and it must not be supposed that I can allow myself to be carried away by imprudent projects."

"No one would wish that, your majesty," said Hardenberg

hastily. "On the contrary, prudence, above all, is necessary at the present time, and for this reason I would entreat you to overcome your feelings and go to Dresden, to pay your respects to the emperor."

"Never!" exclaimed Frederick William, starting up and blushing with indignation. "No, nowhere else than in battle can I meet again this man, who has destroyed my happiness, my honor, and my hopes! Do not allude to this any more. It cannot be. How can I meet him, whom I have not seen since the days of Tilsit? Who can ask me to go to Dresden, to stand there as a courtier at the door of an arrogant victor, and mingle with the crowd of his trainbearers?"

"Your majesty, the Emperor of Austria will also go to Dresden," said Hardenberg, entreatingly.

"The Emperor of Austria does so, because he is unfortunate enough to be Napoleon's father-in-law."

"Nevertheless, the Emperor Francis saw his son-in-law for the last time on the day when, after the battle of Austerlitz, he repaired as a supplicant to the bivouac-fire of Napoleon, and implored the conqueror to grant him peace. That was even worse than Tilsit, and still the Emperor of Austria comes to Dresden, to become, as your majesty said, the trainbearer of the victor."

"Why does he do so?" asked the king, shrugging his shoulders. "Because he must—because at the present time every wish of Napoleon is almost an order, even for princes. Napoleon caused his ambassador at Vienna verbally to inform the emperor that he wished to see his father-in-law at Dresden, and witness the meeting of his consort, Maria Louisa, with her parents. The Emperor Francis hastened to comply with this request, and is expected to arrive to-morrow."

"Well, Bonaparte, fortunately, expressed to me no such wish, and it will not be expected that I should go thither without being requested to do so."

"Pardon me, your majesty, our ambassador at Dresden received a similar communication from the French envoy at the court of Saxony. The Emperor Napoleon desires likewise to see your majesty at Dresden. Here is the letter from the ambassador."

The king took the paper and hastily glanced over it. He then heaved a profound sigh, and, returning it to Hardenberg, fixed his eyes once more upon the portrait of the queen. He gazed steadfastly upon it. Gradually the expression of



his features became milder, and his gloomy eye more cheerful. With a wave of his hand he called Hardenberg to his side; looking again at the portrait, and saluting it with a gentle nod, he said, "She overcame her feelings, and went to Tilsit, because she believed it necessary, for the welfare of Prussia, to pacify the wrath of Napoleon. I will follow the example of my beloved Louisa. I will conquer myself, and go to Dresden. But you, Hardenberg, must accompany me."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE WHITE LADY.

GREAT commotion reigned at the palace of Baireuth. Servants hurried through the brilliantly-decorated rooms, spreading out here and there an additional carpet, placing everywhere vases filled with fragrant flowers, or dusting the finely-polished furniture. It was a great and important day for Baireuth. All felt it, and excitement and curiosity drove the inhabitants into the streets. No one cared to stay at home, or be absent at that historic hour which was to shed upon Baireuth a ray of her ancient glory.

The man at whose feet the world was prostrate, to whom kings and princes were bowing, before whom empires trembled and thrones passed away, who had only to stretch out his hand to establish new dynasties, and whom the world admired while it hated—Napoleon—was to arrive at Baireuth. The quartermasters had arrived already early in the morning, and ordered in the name of the emperor that the rooms at the palace should be put in readiness, because he intended to reach Baireuth in the afternoon of the 14th of May, and stop overnight.

The whole population seemed to be in the streets. The windows of the houses along the route of the emperor were open, crowded with the most distinguished ladies of the city; they were dressed in their most beautiful toilets, and held in their hands bouquets, with which they intended to salute Napoleon. But the greatest commotion, as we have remarked, reigned at the new palace, for the emperor had given express orders that apartments should be prepared for him there, and not at the old palace of the Margraves of Brandenburg.

Count Munster, intendant of the palaces, had, of course, complied with these orders, and four brilliant rooms were ready for the reception of Napoleon. All the arrangements were completed, and the intendant, followed by the castellan, walked for the last time through the imperial rooms to satisfy himself that every thing was in good order.

"No, nothing has been left undone," said the count, when he stepped into the bedchamber destined for the emperor. "Every thing is as comfortable as it is splendid; the arrangement reflects a great deal of credit upon you, my dear Schluter, and will, doubtless, procure you a liberal reward from the emperor, who is said to be very munificent."

"I do not wish to accept any presents at the tyrant's hands," growled the castellan, with a gloomy face; "I do not want to stain my hands with the plunder which he brings from foreign lands, and which is accompanied with a curse rather than a blessing."

"You are a fool, my dear Schluter," exclaimed the count, laughing. "You see at least that curses do not incommode the emperor, for his power and authority are constantly on the increase. He is now going to Dresden, to see at his feet all the princes of Germany; and he will then hasten northward, to gain new victories and humiliate the only man in the world who still dares to defy him, the Emperor Alexander of Russia."

"I know some one else who will not bow to him, and whom he will not humiliate," said the castellan, contemptuously shrugging his shoulders.

"Well, and who is that?" asked Count Munster, quickly.

"It is the White Lady!" exclaimed the castellan, solemnly and loudly.

Count Munster shuddered and glanced around in evident terror. "For Heaven's sake, hush!" he said, hastily. "Pray forget these foolish hallucinations, and, above all, do not venture to talk about them at the present time."

The castellan shook his head slowly. "You ought not to talk of hallucinations, count," he said, solemnly. "The White Lady is awake and walking, and she knows that the enemy of her house, the house of Brandenburg, will spend the coming night at this palace. I repeat it to your excellency, she is walking, and her eyes are filled with wrath, and there is a curse on her lips against the enemy of the Hohenzollerns. I would not be surprised if she should shout to-night into the