

standing at his bedside. Before falling asleep, the chancellor read the two notes which Conrad had delivered to him. "Protestations of love!" he whispered, smiling and folding them up. "Protestations of love—that is to say, falsehoods. But I must confess that this arrow, which *mes chers amis mes ennemis* have discharged at me, is at least very finely feathered and very attractive. At eight o'clock in the morning, then! Well, I shall see whether I do not succeed in playing my hostile friends a little trick, and in returning the arrow to their own breast."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CLAIRVOYANTE.

FOR some time past the inhabitants of Berlin had paid a great deal of attention to the doings of Doctor Binder, and told each other wonderful stories of the new medical system of this strange physician. He treated his patients in an entirely novel way, and performed his cures in a manner bordering strongly on the romantic and miraculous. He neither felt the pulse of his sick friends, nor did he examine their tongue; he only gazed on them for a minute with his sombre, flaming eyes, and the patients then felt as if fascinated by them. Their pain ceased, their blood burned less ardently, and an indescribable feeling pervaded their body for a moment. When the doctor perceived this, he would raise both his hands, and with the palms softly and repeatedly stroke his subject's face. Then the sufferer's cheeks colored; a wondrous, long-forgotten smile played round the lips which, for many months, had opened only to utter prayers, or sighs and complaints; the dimmed eyes began to brighten, and fixed themselves with a radiant expression on the face of the doctor, whose steadfast, piercing glances seemed to penetrate the sick one's countenance, and reach down into his soul, in order to divine, in its innermost recesses, his most secret feelings and thoughts. By and by a sweet peace pervaded the soul of the patient; his aching limbs relaxed; he folded his hands, which had hitherto moved convulsively and restively on the counterpane; the eyes, which had steadfastly rested on the face of the wonderful physician, closed gradually, and soon his long and regular breathings indicated that he had at length found the slumber

which, during his sickness, he had so long sought and yearned for.

It is true, the patient awoke after a time, and his sufferings returned; the end of his slumber was often accompanied by painful convulsions, an indescribable feeling of depression, and the most profound sadness, but Dr. Binder was present; his eyes exorcised the patient's pain, his hands quieted the quivering limbs, and chased away the tears, and the sufferer fell again into a sweet and refreshing slumber. This lulling the patient to sleep, this fascinating gaze, and laying on of hands, were the only medicines which the doctor administered, and by which he succeeded in freeing them from their sufferings and diseases. People related the most wonderful cures which he had performed; they spoke of persons who had been blind ever since their birth, and whom he had caused to see—of deaf-mutes, to whom he had given the power of speech and hearing after a few days' treatment—of lame men, who suddenly, after being touched by the doctor's hands, had thrown away their crutches, and walked freely and easily.

But the public's attention was particularly riveted by the case of a young girl who had been for some time past under Dr. Binder's treatment. She had come from a distant city to seek a cure at the hands of the famous physician and pupil of Mesmer. A bad cold had brought about a paralysis of all her limbs; she was unable to move her hands and feet, and had for months lain on her bed as motionless, rigid, and dumb, as a marble statue. Her parents had, in the anguish of their heart, at length applied to Dr. Binder. The doctor received her into his house. He publicly invited all the physicians of Berlin to visit his patient, to examine her condition, and to satisfy themselves of the efficacy of his cure. He also requested the public to watch the progress of it, and to come to his house at the hours when he lulled his patient to sleep. The physicians had disdainfully refused to have any thing to do with the "quack doctor," who pretended to cure diseases without medicines; but the public appeared the more eagerly.

And this public enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing that the motionless form of the young girl, who at first had lain on the bed as rigid as stone, very slowly commenced to move. It was seen that, a few days afterward, she raised her right hand, and, shortly after, her right foot; gradually life and motion

were restored to her limbs, and at length, at a truly solemn hour, the young girl, at the doctor's loudly-uttered command, arose from her couch and paced the room with firm and steady steps. It is true she uttered a piercing cry, and fell at the feet of the doctor, her limbs quivering as though she were seized with convulsion, but gradually she grew more quiet; a peaceful expression beamed from her features, and she commenced talking in a tone of joyous enthusiasm. She spoke of the wonderful world on which she was gazing with her inward eyes, of the visions which burst on her soul, and her lips whispered strange prophecies. This condition of the patient repeatedly occurred every day, and with unflinching regularity followed every "crisis."

The young woman had become a clairvoyante; and it was a truly wonderful fact that she, who, according to the statements of her relatives, had never cared for politics or public affairs, and to whom it was entirely indifferent whether Napoleon or any other sovereign ruled Germany, suddenly, in her clairvoyant state, devoted her whole attention to political questions, and that she had, as it were, become a prophetess of the destinies of states.

It was not very strange, therefore, that this phenomenon excited even the attention of statesmen, and that they too went to see the clairvoyante in her political ecstasy, and to put to her questions on public affairs, which she answered always with truly wonderful tact, and with the most profound insight into all such questions.

Among those who took an interest in her was the chancellor of state, Minister von Hardenberg. Curiosity had at first induced him to call upon her; then her clever and piquant remarks struck him as something very strange, and at last he became a regular visitor. Of late, at his special request, the room of the patient, during her crises and clairvoyant trances, had been shut against all other visitors, and only the chancellor and the physician were present.

The young woman, who, during her trances, regularly announced at what hour of the following day she would relapse into this condition, had predicted that she would awake from her magnetic slumber at eight o'clock in the morning, and would then be in a state of clairvoyance. This hour had not yet arrived; the clock which stood in her room on the bureau under the looking-glass indicated that about ten minutes were still wanting to the stated time. A profound silence

reigned in the room of the young patient. The physician sat reading on a high-backed chair at her bedside—his book contained the history and revelations of Swedenborg, the great Swedish ghost-seer. From time to time, however, he turned his large, flashing eyes toward the young woman, and seemed to watch her slumber with searching glances.

The patient was motionless and rigid. A white, neat *negligée* enveloped her slender figure, which was stretched out on the bed without being covered with a counterpane. Her small, beautifully-shaped hands were folded on her breast, her head was thrown back sideways, and rested on a pillow of crimson velvet, which contrasted strangely with her pale face, and black hair, that overhung her marble cheeks in long tresses. The clock was striking eight. The doctor cast a quick glance on the patient, and then slowly closed his book. She began to stir and opened her lips, from which issued a long, painful sigh. At this moment there was heard the roll of a carriage on the street. The noise ceased, the carriage seemed to stop in front of the house. The clairvoyante shuddered, and joy kindled her countenance. "He is coming! he is coming!" she said, in a deep, melodious voice. "I see him ascending the staircase. He is pale and exhausted, and his eyes are dim, for he has slept but little. Government affairs have kept him awake. Oh, now I am well, for there he is!"

In fact, the door softly opened, and the chancellor cautiously entered. By a quick wave of his hand, he ordered the doctor not to meet him, and then approached the bed softly and on tiptoe.

The young woman did not change her position; her eye-lashes did not quiver, nor did she open her eyes, and yet she seemed to see Hardenberg, for she said in a mournful and tremulous voice: "Well, doctor, was I not right? Just see how pale he looks, and how the sweet smile with which he formerly used to come to us is to-day very faintly playing round his lips like a little will-o'-the-wisp! But I told you already he has slept only two hours; he had to be so long minister of state as to find scarcely two hours' rest for the poor, exhausted man."

The physician cast an inquiring glance on the chancellor. Hardenberg nodded smilingly. "You are right, Frederica," he said. "I was minister of state all day long yesterday."

"No, no," she exclaimed, "not all the day. At the commencement of Marshal Augereau's supper you were merry,

and succeeded in forgetting your onerous business; and had not the secretary of Count St. Marsan made his appearance and brought the dispatches, you would have finished your pheasant's wing with good appetite and in the best of spirits."

The minister's face assumed an air of astonishment, and almost of terror. "Ah," he said, "it seems you were present at that supper?"

"Certainly I was, for my soul is accompanying you all the time, and my soul is the eye of my body. I see all you do, and know all your thoughts."

"Well, then," said Hardenberg, smiling, "tell me what you saw last night. Look backward, Frederica, and tell me where I was, and what I did."

"Then you doubt my words?" she asked, reproachfully. "You want to see whether I am able to tell you the truth? You know that it makes my eyes ache to look backward, and that my spirit soars with easier flight into the future than the past!"

"Do so nevertheless, Frederica," said Hardenberg, imperiously. "I wish you to do so!" He laid his hand upon her arm, and the contact made her start as an electric shock.

"I will obey," she whispered, in an humble tone. "I see you sitting at the table of Marshal Augereau. You are in excellent spirits; you are just telling the marshal that the betrothed of the crown prince with a princess of the house of Napoleon will take place before long; Count Narbonne is complaining of the political conversations with which you are spicing the supper in too piquant a manner; dispatches arrive and disturb your mirth."

"From whom do these dispatches come?" asked Hardenberg.

"From Marshal Macdonald, who addressed them to the French ambassador, Count St. Marsan."

"Do you know their contents?"

"I am reading them. There is, in the first place, a letter from General York—"

"Hush!" interrupted Hardenberg; "we will speak of that hereafter; do not allude to it now. Tell me what else I did last night."

"After reading the dispatches, you hastened to the king to inform him of the dreadful news. Scarcely had you been with him for a few minutes, when a courier from General

York arrived and delivered dispatches concerning the same subject to which the others had referred. After a protracted interview with the king, you went to the French ambassador, and informed him of the sentiments and resolutions of his majesty. The count declared himself satisfied with what you told him, and you then hastened back to the king. You there met Major Natzmer, whom the king intended to dispatch as a courier to Murat and General York. You entered the king's room and had another protracted interview with him. Thereupon you returned to your residence."

"With whom did I speak there first of all?"

The clairvoyante was silent for a moment. "I do not see it," she said, "the night is so dark."

"Open your eyes until you see!"

"Ah, I see now!" she exclaimed. "Your excellency spoke with old Conrad. He accompanied you to your bedroom and handed you two letters."

"She is right," muttered the chancellor, loudly enough to be heard by the young woman and the physician. "Yes, she is right; it is all precisely as she says." He then asked aloud: "Did I speak with any one else than Conrad?"

"No," she said; "I do not see anybody else. Conrad told you that I would open the eyes of my soul and see at eight o'clock this morning. You ordered him to awaken you at seven o'clock, and went to bed."

"What did I do before falling asleep?"

"You read the two little notes," she said, with a coy smile.

The chancellor turned his eyes toward the physician, who witnessed this scene in silent and solemn earnestness. "Doctor Binder," he said, "all that this young lady told me just now is strictly true. All my doubts are henceforth dispelled, and from this hour I am one of the believers. No; I say this is no deception, no imposition; it is a mystery of nature, which I am unable to explain, but in which I am compelled to believe. It is given to this young lady to look with the eyes of her soul into the past, as well as into the future, and to perceive and penetrate the most secret things. I believe in her, and shall henceforth allow myself to be directed and instructed by her revelations. I thank you for having brought this wonderful girl to my notice, and you may always count on my heart-felt gratitude."

"Belief in the high art of my science and doctrines is the only gratitude I am yearning for, and my only desire is not

to be prevented from healing poor patients and making suffering humanity happy by my holy science."

"No one shall be allowed to prevent you from doing so as long as I am minister, I pledge you my word," said Hardenberg, gravely. "Take heart, therefore, and do not be afraid. I am your disciple, and at the same time your protector. But now grant me a request: I should like to put to our charming seer yet a few questions in regard to last night's events. She shall, in her inspired and prophetic prescience, give me her advice and tell me what course I must pursue; but, in doing so, I shall have to allude to state secrets, and to speak of affairs which no one is allowed to know but the king and his ministers, and—"

"I pray your excellency to permit me to leave you alone with our young seer," interrupted Doctor Binder, with a polite smile. "I have to see several patients, and my presence is required at the 'Hall of Crises' below, for my two young assistants are scarcely able to restrain our female patients when the crisis sets in."

"Go, then, to your patients," said Hardenberg; "I shall stay here with our clairvoyante until she awakes."

"If your excellency needs any thing," said the doctor, approaching the door, "it will only be necessary for you to ring the bell; the nurse is in the reception-room, and will immediately call my assistants."

He bowed to Hardenberg, bent once more with a searching glance over the couch of his patient, drew with his hands a few circles over her head, and left the room with noiseless steps. The chancellor and the clairvoyante were alone.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN ADVENTURESS.

WHEN the physician left the room, the chancellor returned to the bedside of the young woman; her position was the same, and her eyes were still closed. She did not see, therefore, the sarcastic smile with which Hardenberg looked down upon her, or the proud, triumphant expression that was beaming from his eyes. Hers were closed, and, notwithstanding her clairvoyance, she saw nothing, nor did Hardenberg's voice

betray to her aught of the expression of his countenance or the character of his thoughts.

"Frederica," he said, in his soft, gentle voice, "speak to me now, my seer; be my prophetess now, and let me see the future. Tell me what I must do in order to reconcile all these dissensions, and harmonize all these clashing interests. On which side is justice, prosperity, and peace?"

"On the side of the great man whose gigantic strength has lifted the world out of its hinges, and given it a new aspect," she said, gravely. "Stand faithfully by the alliance with France, unless you wish the crown to fall from the head of your king, and Prussia to be divided into two provinces, one annexed to the kingdom of Westphalia, and the other to the duchy of Warsaw."

"But will France then still have power to do so?" asked Hardenberg; "is not France herself on the brink of the abyss into which she has hurled all states, princes, and crowns?"

"France is as powerful to-day as she ever was," responded the seer. "New armies at the beck of Napoleon will spring from the ground, his military chests will be filled with new millions, and the invincible chieftain will lead his legions to new victories. Woe then to Prussia if she proves faithless—woe to her, if, in insensate infatuation, she turns her back upon France, and allows herself to listen to the insinuations and promises by which Russia is trying to gain her over to her side! Russia herself is weak and exhausted; she will be unable to afford Prussia any adequate support. Be on your guard! Russia has always been a perfidious ally; she has always crushed the hand of her allies in her grasp, while seemingly giving a pledge of her good faith. France alone is offering to Prussia substantial guaranties of peace; Napoleon alone must remain the protector of Prussia. Banish, therefore, the insidious thoughts that are troubling your soul; try no longer to dissuade the king from adhering to the alliance. Do not try to persuade him to approve York's defection! He is a traitor, whose head must fall; for such is the decree of the laws of war. To approve his defection is to throw down the gauntlet to France, and annihilate Prussia!"

"You have played your part to perfection!" exclaimed Hardenberg, laughing. "Please accept my sincere congratulations, my dear child; the greatest actress in the world could not perform her *rôle* any better than you have done to-day, and ever since I became acquainted with you."