

looked in. "Sire, the Duke de Vicenza requests an audience," he said.

"Caulaincourt!" exclaimed Napoleon, surprised, rising and throwing the penknife on the floor. "Caulaincourt! Let him come in!"

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

#### THE TRAITORS.

ROUSTAN stepped back, and the imposing form of the Duke de Vicenza appeared on the threshold. The emperor hastily met him and looked at him with a keen, piercing glance. "Caulaincourt," he exclaimed, "whence do you come, and what do you want here?"

"Sire," said the duke, gravely and solemnly, "I come from Prague, whither the order of your majesty had sent me, to attend the congress and to conduct the negotiations in the name of your majesty."

"These negotiations are broken off, then, as you have come without having been recalled?"

"No, they are not broken off, but I have important news to communicate to your majesty, and as I think that we are served best when serving ourselves, I have made myself the bearer of my own dispatches, to be sure that they reach your majesty in time. I have travelled post-haste, and shall return to Prague in the same manner."

"Well, then, inform me of the contents of your dispatches orally and quickly."

"Sire, I inform your majesty that the Count de Metternich is on the road to this city to convey to you the ultimatum of Austria."

A flash of anger burst from the emperor's eyes. "He dares meet me! does he not fear lest I crush him by hurling his duplicity and treachery into his face? For I know that Austria is playing a double game, negotiating at the same time with me and my enemies."

"But it is still in the power of your majesty to attach Austria to France, and secure a continued alliance with her," exclaimed the Duke de Vicenza. "This is the reason why I have hastened hither: to implore your majesty not to reject entirely, in the first outburst of your anger, the proposals of

Austria, however inadmissible they may appear to be. I left Vienna simultaneously with Count Metternich, but succeeded in getting somewhat the start of him; he will be here in an hour, and I have, therefore, time enough to communicate to your majesty important news which I learned at Prague yesterday, and which is sufficiently grave to influence perhaps your resolutions."

"Speak!" commanded the emperor, throwing himself again into the chair, and taking, for want of a penknife, a pair of scissors from his desk, in order to bore the back of the chair with it. "Speak!"

"In the first place, I have to inform your majesty that the Emperor of Austria has left Vienna for Castle Gitschin, in Bohemia, and that an interview of the Emperor Francis with the allied monarchs took place there on the 20th of June."

"Ah, the first step to open hostility has been taken, then," cried Napoleon.

"This interview, however, led to no results," added Caulaincourt. "The Emperor Francis, on the contrary, declared emphatically that he was still merely a mediator, and would consider the alliance with France as dissolved, if your majesty should reject the ultimatum with which he should send Metternich to Dresden."

"That is the equivocal and insidious language which the Austrian diplomacy has always used," exclaimed the emperor, shrugging his shoulders. "They want to keep on good terms with all, in order to succeed in being the friend of him who is victorious. My father-in-law, it seems, has learned by heart, and recited the lesson which Metternich taught him. Proceed, Caulaincourt."

"Next, I have to inform your majesty that a definite treaty was concluded yesterday between Austria and the allies. It was concluded at Reichenbach. Austria has solemnly engaged to declare war against you if you refuse to accept her terms, the last she would send. Besides, Prussia and Russia concluded a treaty with England, which engaged to assist both powers with money and *matériel*, and which, in return, received the promise that Hanover, England's possession in Germany, should be considerably enlarged at the end of the war, and that new territories should be added to it."

"And the short-sighted monarchs have been foolish enough to grant this to England!" cried Napoleon, with a sneer. "In their blind hatred against me they grant more territory

in Germany to their most dangerous enemy, that England may spread still further the vast net of her egotism, and catch all Germany in it, flood the country with her manufactured goods, and drive the commerce of the continent into British hands! Ah, those gentlemen will soon perceive what a mistake they have committed in yielding to the demands of those greedy English traders. For if England gives money instead of asking it, she must have a great many substantial advantages in view, and these she can obtain only at the expense of the German sovereigns, to whom she will furnish subsidies now. Are you through with your news, Caulaincourt?"

"No, sire, I have still something to add," said the Duke of Vicenza, in a melancholy voice.

The emperor looked at him with a piercing glance, which seemed to fathom the depths of his soul.

"Speak!" he said, quickly.

"Your majesty knows that the crown prince of Sweden, Bernadotte, landed with his army at Stralsund on the 20th of May?"

"Yes, I do," said Napoleon, shrugging his shoulders. "My former marshal, who acquired in my service a name and some fame, whom I permitted to accept the dignity of crown prince of Sweden that was offered him, a Frenchman, had the meanness to turn his arms against his country, and ally himself with the enemies of France. But still it seems that his courage is failing him. A month ago he disembarked in Germany, and is idle with his troops in Mecklenburg. He allowed Hamburg to fall; he did nothing to save Brandenburg, and appears ready to embark again for Sweden. Looking the crime of treason full in the face, he was unable to bear the thought of it, and will retreat from it to the steps of the Swedish throne."

"No, sire," said Caulaincourt, gravely, "the crown prince of Sweden has made up his mind, and hesitates no longer. The Emperor Alexander sent an envoy to Bernadotte, and requested of him an interview with the monarchs of Prussia and Russia, for the purpose of concerting with them a joint plan of operations for the campaign. Bernadotte, thanks to the persuasive eloquence of the Russian envoy, eagerly accepted this invitation, and the interview is to take place on the 9th of July at Trachenberg, in Silesia. The crown prince is already on the road with a truly royal suite, and he has been solemnly assured that the sovereigns will receive him

at Trachenberg with all the honors due his rank as a sovereign and legitimate prince. The envoy of the Emperor of Russia is accompanying Bernadotte on this journey, to strengthen the favorable dispositions of the crown prince, and render him at once an active and energetic member of the alliance."

"Who is this envoy whom Alexander has dispatched to Bernadotte?" asked Napoleon.

"Sire, it is Count Pozzo di Borgo."

"Ah, my Corsican countryman, and once an ardent friend," exclaimed Napoleon. "He has never forgiven me for not having assisted him, the enthusiastic republican, in becoming King of Corsica, but having left France in possession of my native country. As he was unable to become a king, M. Pozzo di Borgo entered the service of the Czar of Russia to fight against me, his countryman, with the power of his tongue, as my other countryman with the arms of the Swedes. Well, I think it will not do the allies much good to unite with traitors and apostates, and to look for assistance against me from them. I gain more moral weight by this struggle against traitors than my enemies by their support. Bernadotte's treason is my ally."

"Sire, another man has joined the traitor, a Frenchman, who wants to fight against France, against his emperor and former comrade."

"Still another! A third traitor! Who is it?"

"Sire, it is General Moreau."

"What! has Moreau returned from America?" asked Napoleon, looking up quickly.

"Yes, sire; he has left the banks of the Delaware to fight against his country, as a general of the Emperor of Russia."

The emperor looked thoughtfully, and suddenly he raised his eyes, while a pleased expression lit up his countenance.

"My enemies assert that I have a heart of iron," he said, in a gentle voice; "they charge me with being insensible to human emotions—to compassion, friendship, and love. Well, then, I could have had Moreau and Bernadotte both killed; they were in my power, and deserved death. Moreau had entered into a conspiracy against me and the existing laws of our country—a conspiracy whose object was to assassinate me. I believe I would have been justified if I had made him feel the rigor of my laws, and expiate his murderous intent by death. Bernadotte disobeyed my orders in two battles; I

would have been justified in having him tried by a court-martial, which would certainly have passed sentence of death upon him. I permitted Moreau to emigrate to America, and indulge his republican predilections there without hindrance; and Bernadotte to go to Sweden, and gratify the desires of his ambitious heart. I pardoned both because I loved them. They now reward me by allying themselves with my enemies. This is all right, however, for I have placed both under heavy obligations, and nothing is more difficult to forgive than benefits."

"Sire, as I have alluded to these traitors, I must mention still another. General Jomini, adjutant-general of Marshal Ney, has deserted his post and gone over to the camp of the allies to offer his services to the sovereigns. He has become a member of the Emperor Alexander's staff."

"Well," cried Napoleon, with the semblance of unalloyed mirth, "the world and posterity will have to pardon me now if I lose a few battles in this campaign, for those who are fighting against me are commanded by generals who have learned the art of war from me—pupils of mine. I must, therefore, allow them to gain a battle or two to prove that I am a good teacher. Besides, Jomini is not as guilty as Moreau and Bernadotte. He is a native of Switzerland, and his treason is aimed only at myself, and not at his country."

"It seems such is Jomini's excuse, too," said Caulaincourt, "for I have been told that he treated General Moreau with surprising coolness, and when the latter offered him his hand he did not take it, but withdrew with a chilling salutation. To the Emperor Alexander, who rebuked him for it, he replied that he would gladly welcome General Moreau anywhere else than at the camp of the enemies of Moreau's own country. For if he, Jomini, were a native of France, he would assuredly at this hour not be at the camp of the Emperor of Russia."

"Ah!" exclaimed the emperor, "I am convinced that miserable Jomini imagines that he acted in a very noble and highly-dignified manner. A traitor who is ashamed of another traitor, and blushes for him! Ah, Caulaincourt, what a harrowing spectacle! These acts of treachery will in the end make me unhappy!\* For does not Austria, too, wish to betray me? Has she not entered into an alliance with me, and does she not now wish to forsake me merely because she

\* Napoleon's words.—Constant's "Mémoires," vol. v., p. 245.

imagines that it would be more advantageous to her to side with my enemies? Austria is oscillating, and Metternich thinks he can preserve her equilibrium by placing Austrian promises as weights now into this, now into that scale. But the cabinet of Vienna deceives itself. Count Metternich wants his intrigues to pass for policy, while the whole object of Austria is to recover what she has lost."\*

At this moment a carriage was heard to roll up to the palace and stop close under the windows of the cabinet. Maret, who, during the conversation between Napoleon and Caulaincourt, had retired into a window-niche, turned and looked out into the street.

"Sire," he then said, quickly, "Count Metternich has arrived, and already entered the palace."

"Ah, he is really coming, then!" exclaimed Napoleon, with an air of scornful triumph; "he wishes me to tear the mask from his smirking face! Well, I shall comply with his wishes; I, at least, shall not dissemble, nor veil my real thoughts! Austria shall learn what I think of her!"

The door opened, and Roustan entered again. "Sire," he said, "his excellency Count Metternich, minister plenipotentiary of his majesty the Emperor of Austria, requests an audience of your majesty."

Napoleon turned his head slowly toward the Dukes de Vicenza and Bassano. "Enter the cabinet of my private secretary, Fain," he said. "Leave the door ajar; I want you to hear all. Fain, if he pleases, may take notes of this interview, that he may afterward accurately testify to it. Go!"

The two gentlemen bowed in silence and withdrew. The emperor gazed after them until they disappeared through the door of the cabinet; then turning toward Roustan, "Let him come in," he said, with a quick nod.

A few minutes afterward the slender form, and the handsome, florid, and smiling face of Count Clement de Metternich appeared on the threshold of the imperial cabinet.

\* Napoleon's words.—Fain, "Manuscrit de 1813," vol. i.