

ABBOTT JOHN CABOT

HORTENSE. MAKERS OF
HISTORY SERIES

John Abbott

Hortense. Makers of History Series

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John S. C. Abbott

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PREFACE

The French Revolution was perhaps as important an event as has occurred in the history of nations. It was a drama in three acts. The first was the Revolution itself, properly so called, with its awful scenes of terror and of blood—the exasperated millions struggling against the accumulated oppression of ages.

The second act in the drama was the overthrow of the Directory by Napoleon, and the introduction of the Consulate and the Empire; the tremendous struggle against the combined dynasties of Europe; the demolition of the Empire, and the renewed crushing of the people by the triumph of the nobles and the kings.

Then came the third act in the drama—perhaps the last, perhaps not—in which the French people again drove out the Bourbons, re-established the Republican Empire, with its principle of equal rights for all, and placed upon the throne the heir of the great Emperor.

No man can understand the career of Napoleon I. without being acquainted with those scenes of anarchy and terror which preceded his reign. No man can understand the career of Napoleon III. unless familiar with the struggle of the people against the despots in the Revolution, their triumph in the Empire, their defeat in its overthrow, and their renewed triumph in its restoration.

Hortense was intimately associated with all these scenes. Her father fell beneath the slide of the guillotine; her mother was imprisoned and doomed to die; and she and her brother were turned penniless into the streets. By the marriage of her mother with Napoleon, she became the daughter of the Emperor, and one of the most brilliant and illustrious ladies of the imperial court. The triumph of the Allies sent her into exile, where her influence and her instruction prepared her son to contribute powerfully to the restoration of the Empire, and to reign with ability which is admired by his friends and acknowledged by his foes. The mother of Napoleon III. never allowed her royally-endowed son to forget, even in the gloomiest days of exile and of sorrow, that it might yet be his privilege to re-establish the Republican Empire, and to restore the dynasty of the people from its overthrow by the despotic Allies.

In this brief record of the life of one who experienced far more than the usual vicissitudes of humanity, whose career was one of the saddest upon record, and who ever exhibited virtues which won the enthusiastic love of all who knew her, the writer has admitted nothing which can not be sustained by incontrovertible evidence, and has suppressed nothing sustained by any testimony worthy of a moment's respect. This history will show that Hortense had her faults. Who is without them? There are not many, however, who will read these pages without profound admiration for the character of one of the noblest of women, and without finding the eye often dimmed, in view of her heart-rending griefs.

This volume will soon be followed by the History of Louis Philippe.

Chapter I. Parentage and Birth

1776-1794

Josephine's voyage to France.

In the year 1776 a very beautiful young lady, by the name of Josephine Rose Tascher, was crossing the Atlantic Ocean from the island of Martinique to France. She was but fifteen years of age; and, having been left an orphan in infancy, had been tenderly reared by an uncle and aunt, who were wealthy, being proprietors of one of the finest plantations upon the island. Josephine was accompanied upon the voyage by her uncle. She was the betrothed of a young French nobleman by the name of Viscount Alexander de Beauharnais, who had recently visited Martinique, and who owned several large estates adjoining the property which Josephine would probably inherit.

Viscount de Beauharnais.

It was with great reluctance that Josephine yielded to the importunities of her friends and accepted the proffered hand of the viscount. Her affections had long been fixed upon a play-mate of her childhood by the name of William, and her love was passionately returned. William was then absent in France, pursuing his education. De Beauharnais was what would usually be called a very splendid man. He was of high rank, young, rich, intelligent, and fascinating in his manners. The marriage of Josephine with the viscount would unite the properties. Her friends, in their desire to accomplish the union, cruelly deceived Josephine. They intercepted the letters of William, and withheld her letters to him, and represented to her that William, amidst the gayeties of Paris, had proved a false lover, and had entirely forgotten her. De Beauharnais, attracted by the grace and beauty of Josephine, had ardently offered her his hand. Under these circumstances the inexperienced maiden had consented to the union, and was now crossing the Atlantic with her uncle for the consummation of the nuptials in France.

Upon her arrival she was conducted to Fontainebleau, where De Beauharnais hastened to meet her. Proud of her attractions, he took great pleasure in introducing her to his high-born friends, and lavished upon her every attention. Josephine was grateful, but sad, for her heart still yearned for William. Soon William, hearing of her arrival, and not knowing of her engagement, anxiously repaired to Fontainebleau. The interview was agonizing. William still loved her with the utmost devotion. They both found that they had been the victims of a conspiracy, though one of which De Beauharnais had no knowledge.

Josephine's reluctance.

Josephine, young, inexperienced, far from home, and surrounded by the wealthy and powerful friends of her betrothed, had gone too far in the arrangements for the marriage to recede. Her anguish, however, was so great that she was thrown into a violent fever. She had no friend to whom she could confide her emotions. But in most affecting tones she entreated that her marriage might be delayed for a few months until she should regain her health. Her friends consented, and she took refuge for a time in the Convent of Panthemont, under the tender care of the sisters.

It is not probable that De Beauharnais was at all aware of the real state of Josephine's feelings. He was proud of her, and loved her as truly as a fashionable man of the world could love. It is also to be remembered that at that time in France it was not customary for young ladies to have

much influence in the choice of their husbands. It was supposed that their parents could much more judiciously arrange these matters than the young ladies themselves.

Marriage.

Birth of Eugene.

Josephine was sixteen years of age at the time of her marriage. Her attractions were so remarkable that she immediately became a great favorite at the French court, to which the rank of her husband introduced her. Marie Antoinette was then the youthful bride of Louis XVI. She was charmed with Josephine, and lavished upon her the most flattering attentions. Two children were born of this marriage, both of whom attained world-wide renown. The first was a son, Eugene. He was born in September, 1781. His career was very elevated, and he occupied with distinguished honor all the lofty positions to which he was raised. He became duke of Leuchtenberg, prince of Eichstedt, viceroy of Italy. He married the Princess Augusta, daughter of the King of Bavaria.

"Prince Eugene, under a simple exterior, concealed a noble character and great talents. Honor, integrity, humanity, and love of order and justice were the principal traits of his character. Wise in the council, undaunted in the field, and moderate in the exercise of power, he never appeared greater than in the midst of reverses, as the events of 1813 and 1814 prove. He was inaccessible to the spirit of party, benevolent and beneficent, and more devoted to the good of others than his own."¹

Birth of Hortense.

The second child was a daughter, Hortense, the subject of this brief memoir. She was born on the 10th of January, 1783. In the opening scenes of that most sublime of earthly tragedies, the French Revolution, M. de Beauharnais espoused the popular cause, though of noble blood, and though his elder brother, the Marquis de Beauharnais, earnestly advocated the cause of the king and the court.

The entire renunciation of the Christian religion was then popular in France. Alexander de Beauharnais, like most of his young pleasure-loving companions, was an infidel. His conduct soon became such that the heart of poor Josephine was quite broken. Her two children, Eugene and Hortense, both inherited the affectionate and gentle traits of their mother, and were her only solace. In her anguish she unguardedly wrote to her friends in Martinique, who had almost forced her into her connection with Beauharnais:

"Were it not for my children, I should, without a pang, renounce France forever. My duty requires me to forget William. And yet, if *we* had been united together, I should not to-day have been troubling you with my griefs."

Viscount Beauharnais chanced to see this letter. It roused his jealousy fearfully. A sense of "honor" would allow him to lavish his attentions upon guilty favorites, while that same sense of "honor" would urge him to wreak vengeance upon his unhappy, injured wife, because, in her neglect and anguish, with no false, but only a true affection, her memory turned to the loved companion of her childhood. According to the standard of the fashionable world, Beauharnais was a very honorable man. According to the standard of Christianity, he was a sinner in the sight of God, and was to answer for this conduct at the final judgment.

Separation from Beauharnais.

He reproached his wife in the severest language of denunciation. He took from her her son Eugene. He applied to the courts for a divorce, demanding his daughter Hortense also. Josephine pleaded with him in vain, for the sake of their children, not to proclaim their disagreement to the world. Grief-stricken, poor Josephine retired to a convent to await the trial. The verdict was triumphantly in her favor. But her heart was broken. She was separated from her husband, though the legal tie was not severed.

¹ Encyclopædia Americana.

Return to Martinique.

Her friends in Martinique, informed of these events, wrote, urging her to return to them. She decided to accept the invitation. Hortense was with her mother. M. de Beauharnais had sent Eugene, whom he had taken from her, to a boarding-school. Before sailing for Martinique she obtained an interview with M. de Beauharnais, and with tears entreated that she might take Eugene with her also. He was unrelenting; Josephine, with a crushed and world-weary heart, folded Hortense to her bosom, then an infant but three years of age, and returned to her tropical home, which she had sadly left but a few years before. Here, on the retired plantation, soothed by the sympathy of her friends, she strove to conceal her anguish.

There was never a more loving heart than that with which Josephine was endowed. She clung to Hortense with tenderness which has rarely been equalled. They were always together. During the day Hortense was ever by her side, and at night she nestled in her mother's bosom. Living amidst the scenes of tropical luxuriance and beauty, endeared to her by the memories of childhood, Josephine could almost have been happy but for the thoughts of her absent Eugene. Grief for her lost child preyed ever upon her heart.

Revisits France.

Her alienated husband, relieved from all restraint, plunged anew into those scenes of fashionable dissipation for which Paris was then renowned. But sickness, sorrows, and misfortunes came. In those dark hours he found that no earthly friend can supply the place of a virtuous and loving wife. He wrote to her, expressing bitter regret for his conduct, and imploring her to return. The wounds which Josephine had received were too deep to be easily healed. Forgiving as she was by nature, she said to her friends that the memory of the past was so painful that, were it not for Eugene, she should very much prefer not to return to France again, but to spend the remainder of her days in the seclusion of her native island. Her friends did every thing in their power to dissuade her from returning. But a mother's love for her son triumphed, and with Hortense she took ship for France.

The jewel caskets.

An event occurred upon this voyage which is as instructive as it is interesting. Many years afterwards, when Josephine was Empress of France, and the wealth of the world was almost literally at her feet, on one occasion some young ladies who were visiting the court requested Josephine to show them her diamonds. These jewels were almost of priceless value, and were kept in a vault, the keys of which were confided to the most trusty persons. Josephine, who seldom wore jewels, very amiably complied with their request. A large table was brought into the saloon. Her maids in waiting brought in a great number of caskets, of every size and form, containing the precious gems.

As these caskets were opened, they were dazzled with the brilliancy, the size, and the number of these ornaments. The different sets composed probably by far the most brilliant collection in Europe. In Napoleon's conquering career, the cities which he had entered lavished their gifts upon Josephine. The most remarkable of these jewels consisted of large white diamonds. There were others in the shape of pears formed of pearls of the richest colors. There were opals, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds of such marvellous value that the large diamonds that encircled them were considered as mere mountings not regarded in the estimation made of the value of the jewels.

As the ladies gazed upon the splendor of this collection, they were lost in wonder and admiration. Josephine, after enjoying for a while their expressions of delight, and having allowed them to examine the beautiful gems thoroughly, said to them kindly:

"I had no other motive, in ordering my jewels to be opened before you, than to spoil your fancy for such ornaments. After having seen such splendid sets, you can never feel a wish for inferior ones; the less so when you reflect how unhappy I have been, although with so rare a collection at my command. During the first dawn of my extraordinary elevation, I delighted in these trifles, many of

which were presented to me in Italy. I grew by degrees so tired of them that I no longer wear any, except when I am in some respects compelled to do so by my new rank in the world. A thousand accidents may, besides, contribute to deprive me of these brilliant, though useless objects. Do I not possess the pendants of Queen Marie Antoinette? And yet am I quite sure of retaining them? Trust to me, ladies, and do not envy a splendor which does not constitute happiness. I shall not fail to surprise you when I relate that I once felt more pleasure at receiving an old pair of shoes than at being presented with all the diamonds which are now spread before you."

The old pair of shoes.

The young ladies could not help smiling at this observation, persuaded as they were that Josephine was not in earnest. But she repeated her assertions in so serious a manner that they felt the utmost curiosity to hear the story of this *wonderful pair of shoes*.

"I repeat it, ladies," said her majesty, "it is strictly true, that the present which, of all others, has afforded me most pleasure was a pair of old shoes of the coarsest leather; and you will readily believe it when you have heard my story.

"I had set sail from Martinique, with Hortense, on board a ship in which we received such marked attentions that they are indelibly impressed on my memory. Being separated from my first husband, my pecuniary resources were not very flourishing. The expense of my return to France, which the state of my affairs rendered necessary, had nearly drained me of every thing, and I found great difficulty in making the purchases which were indispensably requisite for the voyage. Hortense, who was a smart, lively child, sang negro songs, and performed negro dances with admirable accuracy. She was the delight of the sailors, and, in return for their fondness, she made them her favorite company. I no sooner fell asleep than she slipped upon deck and rehearsed her various little exercises, to the renewed delight and admiration of all on board.

"An old mate was particularly fond of her, and whenever he found a moment's leisure from his daily occupations, he devoted it to his little friend, who was also exceedingly attached to him. My daughter's shoes were soon worn out with her constant dancing and skipping. Knowing as she did that I had no other pair for her, and fearing lest I should prevent her going upon deck if I should discover the plight of those she was fast wearing away, she concealed the trifling accident from my knowledge. I saw her once returning with bleeding feet, and asked her, in the utmost alarm, if she had hurt herself; 'No, mamma.' 'But your feet are bleeding.' 'It really is nothing.' I insisted upon ascertaining what ailed her, and found that her shoes were all in tatters, and her flesh dreadfully torn by a nail.

"We had as yet only performed half the voyage; a long time would necessarily elapse before I could procure a fresh pair of shoes; I was mortified at the bare anticipation of the distress my poor Hortense would feel at being compelled to remain confined in my wretched little cabin, and of the injury her health might experience from the want of exercise. At the moment when I was wrapped up in sorrow, and giving free vent to my tears, our friend the mate made his appearance, and inquired, with his honest bluntness, the cause of our *whimperings*. Hortense replied, in a sobbing voice, that she could no longer go upon deck because she had torn her shoes, and I had no others to give her.

"'Is that all?' said the sailor. 'I have an old pair in my trunk; let me go for them. You, madame, will cut them up, and I shall sew them over again to the best of my power; every thing on board ship shall be turned to account; this is not the place for being too nice or particular; we have our most important wants gratified when we have the needful.'

"He did not wait for our reply, but went in quest of his old shoes, which he brought to us with an air of exultation, and offered them to Hortense, who received the gift with every demonstration of delight.

"We set to work with the greatest alacrity, and my daughter was enabled, towards the close of the day, to enjoy the pleasure of again amusing the ship's company. I repeat it, that no present was ever received by me with more sincere gratitude. I greatly reproach myself for having neglected

to make inquiries after the worthy seaman, who was only known on board by the name of James. I should have felt a sincere satisfaction in rendering him some service, since it was afterwards in my power to do so."

Commencement of the Reign of Terror. Arrest of Beauharnais.

Josephine had spent three years in Martinique. Consequently, upon her return to France, Hortense was six years of age. Soon after her arrival the Reign of Terror commenced. The guillotine was erected, and its knife was busy beheading those who were suspected of not being in full sympathy with the reformers whom revolution had brought into power. Though Viscount Beauharnais had earnestly espoused the popular cause; though he had been president of the National Assembly, and afterwards general of the Army of the Rhine, still he was of noble birth, and his older brother was an aristocrat, and an emigrant. He was consequently suspected, and arrested. Having conducted him to prison, a committee of the Convention called at the residence of Josephine to examine the children, hoping to extort from them some evidence against their father. Josephine, in a letter to her aunt, thus describes this singular scene:

Domiciliary visit.

"You would hardly believe, dear aunt, that my children have just undergone a long and minute examination. That wicked old man, the member of the committee whom I have already mentioned to you, called upon me, and, affecting to feel uneasy in regard to my husband, and to converse with me respecting him, opened a conversation with my children. I acknowledge that I at first fell into the snare. What surprised me, however, was the sudden affability of the man. But he soon betrayed himself by the malignity and even bitterness which he displayed when the children replied in such a manner as to give him no advantage over their unhappy parents. I soon penetrated his artful intentions.

"When he found me on my guard, he threw off the mask, and admitted that he was desired to procure information from my children, which, he said, might be more relied on, as it would bear the stamp of candor. He then entered into a formal examination. At that moment I felt an indescribable emotion; and the conflicting effects of fear, anger, and indignation alternately agitated me. I was even upon the point of openly giving vent to my feelings against the hoary revolutionist, when I reflected that I might, by so doing, materially injure M. de Beauharnais, against whom that atrocious villain appeared to have vowed perpetual enmity. I accordingly checked my angry passions. He desired me to leave him alone with my children; I attempted to resist, but his ferocious glance compelled me to give way.

"He confined Hortense in the closet, and began to put questions to her brother. My daughter's turn came next. As for this child, in whom he discovered a premature quickness and penetration far above her age, he kept questioning her for a great length of time. After having sounded them respecting our common topics of conversation, our opinions, the visits and letters we were in the habit of receiving, but more particularly the occurrences they might have witnessed, he came to the main point—I mean, to the expressions used by Alexander. My children gave very proper replies; such, in fact, as were suited to their respective dispositions. And notwithstanding the artfulness of a mischievous man whose object is to discover guilt, the frankness of my son and the quick penetration of my daughter disconcerted his low cunning, and even defeated the object he had in view."

Beauharnais in prison.

Viscount Beauharnais, when arrested, was conveyed to the palace of the Luxembourg, where he was imprisoned with many other captives. To spare the feelings of the children, the fact of his imprisonment was concealed from them by Josephine, and they were given to understand that their father, not being very well, had placed himself under the care of a celebrated physician, who had recommended him to take up his residence at the Luxembourg, where there was much vacant space, and consequently purer air. The imprisoned father was very anxious to see his wife and children.

The authorities consented, allowing the children to go in first under the care of an attendant, and afterwards their mother.

Hortense, child as she was, was bewildered by the scene, and her suspicions were evidently excited. As she came out, she said to her mother, "I think papa's apartments are very small, and the patients are very numerous."

Affecting interview.

After the children had left, Josephine was introduced. She knew that her husband's life was in imminent peril. His penitence and grateful love had produced entire reconciliation, and had won back Josephine's heart. She was not willing that the children should witness the tender and affecting interview which, under such circumstances, must take place.

Beauharnais had but little hope that he should escape the guillotine. As Josephine, bathed in tears, rushed into his arms, all his fortitude forsook him. His emotion was so great that his wife, struggling against her own anguish, used her utmost endeavors to calm and console him.

In the midst of this heart-rending scene, to their consternation, the children, by some misunderstanding, were again led into the apartment. The father and mother struggled to disguise from them the cause of that emotion which they could not conceal. For a time the children were silent and bewildered; then Hortense, though with evident misgivings, attempted to console her parents. The events of her saddened life had rendered her unusually precocious. Turning to her mother, she begged her not to give way to so much sorrow, assuring her that she could not think that her father was dangerously ill. Then addressing Eugene, she said, in a peculiar tone which her parents felt as a reproach,

"I do not think, brother, that papa is very sick. At any rate, it is not such a sickness as doctors can cure." Josephine felt the reproach, and conscious that it was in some degree deserved, said:

"What do you mean, my child? Do you think your father and I have combined to deceive you?"

"Pardon me, mamma, but I do think so."

"Oh, sister," exclaimed Eugene, "how can you speak so strangely?"

"On the contrary," Hortense replied, "it is very plain and natural. Surely affectionate parents may be allowed to deceive their children when they wish to spare their feelings."

Josephine was seated in the lap of her husband. Hortense sprang into her mother's arms, and encircled the neck of both father and mother in a loving embrace. Eugene caught the contagion, and by his tears and affecting caresses added to this domestic scene of love and woe.

It is the universal testimony that Eugene and Hortense were so lovely in person and in character that they instantly won the affection of all who saw them. The father was conscious that he was soon to die. He knew that all his property would be confiscated. It was probable that Josephine would also be led to her execution. The guillotine spared neither sex who had incurred the suspicions of enthroned democracy. Both parents forgot themselves, in their anxiety for their children. The execution of Beauharnais would undoubtedly lead to the arrest and execution of Josephine. The property of the condemned was invariably confiscated. There was thus danger that the children would be turned in beggary into the streets. It is difficult to conceive the anguish which must have rent the hearts of affectionate parents in hours of woe so awful.

Scene in prison.

The prisons were crowded with victims. Brief as were the trials, and rapid as was the execution of the guillotine, there was some considerable delay before Beauharnais was led before the revolutionary tribunal. In the mean time Josephine made several calls, with her children, upon her imprisoned husband. Little Hortense, whose suspicions were strongly excited, watched every word, and soon became so convinced that her father was a prisoner that it became impossible for her parents any longer to conceal the fact.

"What has papa done," inquired Hortense, "that they will not let him come home?"

"He has done nothing wrong," said Josephine, timidly, for she knew not what spies might be listening. "He is only accused of being unfriendly to the Government."

Holding the hand of Eugene, Hortense exclaimed impetuously, "Oh, we will punish your accusers as soon as we are strong enough."

"Be silent, my child," said her father anxiously. "If you are overheard I am lost. Both your mother and I may be made to suffer for any imprudent remark which you may make."

"But, papa, have you not often told us," said Eugene, "that it was proper to resist an act of oppression?"

"Yes," said the father proudly, though conscious that his words might be reported and misrepresented to his merciless judges. "And I repeat it. Our conduct, however, must be guided by rules of prudence; and whoever attempts to defeat the views of tyranny must beware of awaking it from its slumbers."

No philosophy has yet been able to explain the delicate mechanism of the human soul; its fleeting and varying emotions of joy and sadness, its gleams of hope and shades of despair come and go, controlled by influences which entirely elude human scrutiny. In these days of gloom, rays of hope occasionally penetrated the cell of Beauharnais.

Trial of Beauharnais.

At last the hour of dread came. Beauharnais was led before the terrible tribunal. He was falsely accused of having promoted the surrender of Mentz to the Allies. He was doomed to death, and was sent to the Conciergerie, whence he was to be conducted to his execution. This was in July, 1794. Beauharnais was then thirty-four years of age.

It seems that the conversation which we have reported as having taken place in the cell of Beauharnais had been overheard by listening ears, and reported to the committee as a conspiracy for the overthrow of the Republic. The arrest of Josephine was ordered. A warning letter from some friend reached her a few moments before the officers arrived, urging her to fly. It was an early hour in the morning. There was little sleep for Josephine amidst those scenes of terror, and she was watching by the side of her slumbering children. What could she do? Should she abandon her children, and seek to save her own life by flight? A mother's love rendered that impossible. Should she take them with her in her flight? That would render her arrest certain; and the fact of her attempting to escape would be urged as evidence of her guilt.

Anguish of Josephine.

While distracted with these thoughts, the clatter of armed men was heard at her door. With anguish which none but a mother can comprehend, she bent over her children and imprinted, as she supposed, a last kiss upon their cheeks. The affectionate little Hortense, though asleep, was evidently agitated by troubled dreams. As she felt the imprint of her mother's lips, she threw her arms around her neck and exclaimed, "Come to bed, dear mamma; they shall not take you away to-night. I have prayed to God for you."

Arrest of Josephine.

Josephine, to avoid waking the children, stepped softly from the room, closed the door, and entered her parlor. Here she was rudely seized by the soldiers, who regarded her as a hated aristocrat. They took possession of the house and all its furniture in the name of the Republic, left the children to suffer or to die as fate might decide, and dragged the mother to imprisonment in the Convent of the Carmelites.

When the children awoke in the morning, they found themselves alone and friendless in the heart of Paris. The wonderful events of their lives thus far had rendered them both unusually precocious. Eugene in particular seemed to be endowed with all the thoughtfulness and wisdom of a full-grown man. After a few moments of anguish and tears, in view of their dreadful situation, they

sat down to deliberate upon the course to be pursued. Hortense suggested that they should repair to the Luxembourg and seek the protection of their father in his imprisonment there. But Eugene, apprehensive that such a step might in some way compromise the safety of their father, recalled to mind that they had a great-aunt, far advanced in life, who was residing at Versailles in deep retirement. He proposed that they should seek refuge with her. Finding a former domestic of the family, she kindly led them to their aunt, where the desolate children were tenderly received.

Beauharnais was now in the Conciergerie, doomed to die, and awaiting his execution. Josephine was in the prison of the Carmelites, expecting hourly to be led to the tribunal to receive also her doom of death.

Impulsiveness of Hortense.

Hortense, an affectionate child, ardent and unreflecting in her impatience to see her mother, one morning left her aunt's house at Fontainebleau, to which place her aunt had removed, and in a market-cart travelled thirty miles to Paris. Here the energetic child, impelled by grief and love, succeeded in finding her mother's maid, Victorine. It was however impossible for them to obtain access to the prison, and Hortense the next day returned to Fontainebleau. Josephine, upon being informed of this imprudent act, to which affection had impelled her child, wrote to her the following letter:

Letter from Josephine.

"I should be entirely satisfied with the good heart of my Hortense, were I not displeased with her bad head. How is it, my daughter, that, without permission from your aunt, you have come to Paris? 'But it was to see me, you will say.' You ought to be aware that no one can see me without an order, to obtain which requires both means and precautions. And besides, you got upon M. Dorset's cart, at the risk of incommoding him, and retarding the conveyance of his merchandise. In all this you have been very inconsiderate. My child, observe: it is not sufficient to do good, you must also do good properly. At your age, the first of all virtues is confidence and docility towards your relations. I am therefore obliged to tell you that I prefer your tranquil attachment to your misplaced warmth. This, however, does not prevent me from embracing you, but less tenderly than I shall do when I learn that you have returned to your aunt."

On the evening of the 24th of July M. de Beauharnais received the announcement in his cell, that with the dawn of the next morning he was to be led to the guillotine. Under these circumstances he wrote the following farewell letter to his wife:

Letter from Beauharnais.

"I have yet a few minutes to devote to affection, tears, and regret, and then I must wholly give myself up to the glory of my fate and to thoughts of immortality. When you receive this letter, my dear Josephine, your husband will have ceased to live, and will be tasting true existence in the bosom of his Creator. Do not weep for him. The wicked and senseless beings who survive him are more worthy of your tears, for they are doing mischief which they can never repair. But let us not cloud the present moments by any thoughts of their guilt. I wish, on the contrary, to brighten these hours by the reflection that I have enjoyed the affection of a lovely woman, and that our union would have been an uninterrupted course of happiness, but for errors which I was too late to acknowledge and atone for. This thought wrings tears from my eyes, though your generous heart pardons me. But this is no time to revive the recollection of my errors and of your wrongs. What thanks I owe to Providence, who will reward you.

"That Providence disposes of me before my time. This is another blessing, for which I am grateful. Can a virtuous man live happy when he sees the whole world a prey to the wicked? I should rejoice in being taken away, were it not for the thought of leaving those I love behind me. But if the thoughts of the dying are presentiments, something in my heart tells me that these horrible butcheries are drawing to a close; that the executioners will, in their turn, become victims; that the

arts and sciences will again flourish in France; that wise and moderate laws will take the place of cruel sacrifices, and that you will at length enjoy the happiness which you have deserved. Our children will discharge the debt for their father.

"I resume these incoherent and almost illegible lines, which were interrupted by the entrance of my jailer. I have submitted to a cruel ceremony, which, under any other circumstances, I would have resisted at the sacrifice of my life. Yet why should we rebel against necessity? Reason tells us to make the best of it we can. My hair has been cut off. I had some idea of buying a part of it, in order to leave to my wife and children an unequivocal pledge of my last recollection of them. Alas! my heart breaks at the very thought, and my tears bedew the paper on which I am writing. Adieu, all that I love. Think of me, and do not forget that to die the victim of tyrants and the martyrs of liberty sheds lustre on the scaffold."

Execution of Beauharnais.

Josephine did not receive this letter until after her husband's execution. The next afternoon one of the daily papers was brought into the prison of the Carmelites. Josephine anxiously ran her eye over the record of the executions, and found the name of her husband in the fatal list. She fell senseless to the floor in a long-continued swoon. When consciousness returned, she exclaimed at first, in the delirium of her anguish, "O God, let me die! let me die! There is no peace for me but in the grave." And then again a mother's love, as she thought of her orphan children, led her to cling to the misery of existence for their sake. Soon, however, the un pitying agents of the revolutionary tribunal came to her with the announcement that in two days she was to be led to the Conciergerie, and thence to her execution.

In the following letter Josephine informed her children of the death of their father, and of her own approaching execution. It is a letter highly characteristic of this wonderful woman in the attempt, by the assumption of calmness, to avoid as far as possible lacerating the feelings of Eugene and Hortense.

Josephine to her children.

"The hand which will deliver this to you is faithful and sure. You will receive it from a friend who knows and has shared my sorrows. I know not by what accident she has hitherto been spared. I call this accident fortunate; she regards it as a calamity. 'Is it not disgraceful to live,' said she yesterday, 'when all who are good have the honor of dying?' May Heaven, as the reward of her courage, refuse her the fatal honor she desires.

"As to me, I am qualified for that honor, and I am preparing myself for receiving it. Why has disease spared me so long? But I must not murmur. As a wife, I ought to follow the fate of my husband, and can there now be any fate more glorious than to ascend the scaffold? It is a patent of immortality, purchased by a prompt and pleasing death.

"My children, your father is dead, and your mother is about to follow him. But as before that final stroke the assassins leave me a few moments to myself, I wish to employ them in writing to you. Socrates, when condemned, philosophized with his disciples. A mother, on the point of undergoing a similar fate, may discourse with her children.

"My last sigh will be for you, and I wish to make my last words a lasting lesson. Time was, when I gave you lessons in a more pleasing way. But the present will not be the less useful, that it is given at so serious a moment. I have the weakness to water it with my tears. I shall soon have the courage to seal it with my blood.

"Hitherto it was impossible to be happier than I have been. While to my union with your father I owed my felicity, I may venture to think and to say that to my character I was indebted for that union. I found in my heart the means of winning the affection of my husband's relations. Patience and gentleness always succeed in gaining the good-will of others. You also, my dear children, possess

natural advantages which cost little, and are of great value. But you must learn how to employ them, and that is what I still feel a pleasure in teaching you by my example.

"Here I must record the gratitude I owe to my excellent brother-in-law, who has, under various circumstances, given me proofs of the most sincere friendship, though he was of quite a different opinion from your father, who embraced the new ideas with all the enthusiasm of a lively imagination. He fancied liberty was to be secured by obtaining concessions from the king, whom he venerated. But all was lost, and nothing gained but anarchy. Who will arrest the torrent? O God! unless thy powerful hand control and restrain it, we are undone.

"For my part, my children, I am about to die, as your father died, a victim of the fury he always opposed, but to which he fell a sacrifice. I leave life without hatred of France and its assassins, whom I despise. But I am penetrated with sorrow for the misfortunes of my country. Honor my memory in sharing my sentiments. I leave for your inheritance the glory of your father and the name of your mother, whom some who have been unfortunate will bear in remembrance."

Chapter II.

The Marriage of Josephine and General Bonaparte

1794-1799

Release of Josephine.

The day before Josephine was to be led to her execution there was a new revolution in Paris. Robespierre and the party then in power were overthrown. From condemning others, they were condemned themselves. They had sent hundreds, in the cart of the executioner, to the guillotine. Now it was their turn to take that fatal ride, to ascend the steps of the scaffold, and to have their own heads severed by the keen edge of the knife. Those whom they had imprisoned were set at liberty.

As Josephine emerged from the gloom of her prison into the streets of Paris, she found herself a widow, homeless, almost friendless, and in the extreme of penury. But for her children, life would have been a burden from which she would have been glad to be relieved by the executioner's axe. The storms of revolution had dispersed all her friends, and terror reigned in Paris. Her children were living upon the charity of others. It was necessary to conceal their birth as the children of a noble, for the brutal threat of Marat ever rang in her ears, "We must exterminate all the whelps of aristocracy."

Apprenticeship of Eugene and Hortense.

Hoping to conceal the illustrious lineage of Eugene and Hortense, and probably also impelled by the necessities of poverty, Josephine apprenticed her son to a house carpenter, and her daughter was placed, with other girls of more lowly birth, in the shop of a milliner. But Josephine's beauty of person, grace of manners, and culture of mind could not leave her long in obscurity. Every one who met her was charmed with her unaffected loveliness. New friends were created, among them some who were in power. Through their interposition, a portion of her husband's confiscated estates was restored to her. She was thus provided with means of a frugal support for herself and her children. Engaging humble apartments, she devoted herself entirely to their education. Both of the children were richly endowed; inheriting from their mother and their father talents, personal loveliness, and an instinctive power of attraction. Thus there came a brief lull in those dreadful storms of life by which Josephine had been so long buffeted.

Napoleon Bonaparte.

Josephine and Napoleon.

But suddenly, like the transformations of the kaleidoscope, there came another and a marvellous change. All are familiar with the circumstances of her marriage to the young and rising general, Napoleon Bonaparte. This remarkable young man, enjoying the renown of having captured Toulon, and of having quelled a very formidable insurrection in the streets of Paris, was ordered by the then existing Government to disarm the whole Parisian population, that there might be no further attempt at insurrection. The officers who were sent, in performance of this duty, from house to house, took from Josephine the sword of her husband, which she had preserved as a sacred relic. The next day Eugene repaired to the head-quarters of General Bonaparte to implore that the sword of his father might be restored to him. The young general was so much impressed with the grace and beauty of the boy, and with his artless and touching eloquence, that he made many inquiries respecting his parentage, treated him with marked tenderness, and promptly restored the sword. Josephine was so

grateful for the kindness of General Bonaparte to Eugene, that the next day she drove to his quarters to express a mother's thanks. General Bonaparte was even more deeply impressed with the grace and loveliness of the mother than he had been with the child. He sought her acquaintance; this led to intimacy, to love, and to the proffer of marriage.

In the following letter to a friend Josephine expressed her views in reference to her marriage with General Bonaparte:

Josephine to her aunt.

"I am urged, my dear, to marry again by the advice of all my friends, and I may almost say, by the commands of my aunt and the prayers of my children. Why are you not here to help me by your advice, and to tell me whether I ought or not to consent to a union which certainly seems calculated to relieve me from the discomforts of my present situation? Your friendship would render you clear-sighted to my interests, and a word from you would suffice to bring me to a decision.

"Among my visitors you have seen General Bonaparte. He is the man who wishes to become a father to the orphans of Alexander de Beauharnais, and husband to his widow.

"Do you love him?' is naturally your first question. My answer is perhaps '*no*.' 'Do you dislike him?' 'No,' again. But the sentiments I entertain towards him are of that lukewarm kind which true devotees think worst of all, in matters of religion. Now love being a sort of religion, my feelings ought to be very different from what they really are. This is the point on which I want your advice, which would fix the wavering of my irresolute disposition. To come to a decision has always been too much for my Creole inertness, and I find it easier to obey the wishes of others.

"I admire the general's courage, the extent of his information on every subject on which he converses; his shrewd intelligence, which enables him to understand the thoughts of others before they are expressed. But I confess that I am somewhat fearful of that control which he seems anxious to exercise over all about him. There is something in his scrutinizing glance that can not be described. It awes even our Directors. Therefore it may well be supposed to intimidate a woman. He talks of his passion for me with a degree of earnestness which renders it impossible to doubt his sincerity. Yet this very circumstance, which you would suppose likely to please me, is precisely that which has withheld me from giving the consent which I have often been upon the point of uttering.

"My spring of life is past. Can I then hope to preserve for any length of time that ardor of affection which in the general amounts almost to madness? If his love should cool, as it certainly will after our marriage, will he not reproach me for having prevented him from forming a more advantageous connection? What, then, shall I say? What shall I do? I may shut myself up and weep. Fine consolation truly, methinks I hear you say. But unavailing as I know it is, weeping is, I assure you, my only consolation whenever my poor heart receives a wound. Write to me quickly, and pray scold me if you think me wrong. You know every thing is welcome that comes from you.

"Barras² assures me that if I marry the general, he will get him appointed commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy. This favor, though not yet granted, occasions some murmuring among Bonaparte's brother-officers. When speaking to me on the subject yesterday, General Bonaparte said:

"Do they think that I can not get forward without their patronage? One day or other they will all be too happy if I grant them mine. I have a good sword by my side, which will carry me on.'

"What do you think of this self-confidence? Does it not savor of excessive vanity? A general of brigade to talk of patronizing the chiefs of Government? It is very ridiculous. Yet I know not how it happens, his ambitious spirit sometimes wins upon me so far that I am almost tempted to believe in the practicability of any project he takes into his head; and who can foresee what he may attempt?

"Madame Tallien desires me to present her love to you. She is still fair and good as ever. She employs her immense influence only for the benefit of the unfortunate. And when she performs a

² Barras, a leading member of the Directory, and a strong friend of General Bonaparte.

favor, she appears as pleased and satisfied as though she herself were the obliged party. Her friendship for me is most affectionate and sincere. And of my regard for her I need only say that it is equal to that which I entertain for you.

"Hortense grows more and more interesting every day. Her pretty figure is fully developed, and, if I were so inclined, I should have ample reason to rail at Time, who confers charms on the daughter at the expense of the mother. But truly I have other things to think of. I try to banish gloomy thoughts, and look forward to a more propitious future, for we shall soon meet, never to part again.

"But for this marriage, which harasses and unsettles me, I could be cheerful in spite of every thing. Were it once over, happen what might, I could resign myself to my fate. I am inured to suffering, and, if I be destined to taste fresh sorrow, I can support it, provided my children, my aunt, and you remain to comfort me.

"You know we have agreed to dispense with all formal terminations to our letters. So adieu, my friend,

"Josephine."

Marriage of Josephine.

In March, 1796, Josephine became the bride of Napoleon Bonaparte, then the most promising young general in France, and destined to become, in achievements and renown, the foremost man in all the world. Eugene was immediately taken into the service of his stepfather.

In the following letter to Eugene we have a pleasing revelation of the character of Hortense at that time, and of the affectionate relations existing between the mother and her children:

Letter to Eugene.

"I learn with pleasure, my dear Eugene, that your conduct is worthy of the name you bear, and of the protector under whom it is so easy to learn to become a great captain. Bonaparte has written to me that you are every thing that he can wish. As he is no flatterer, my heart is proud to read your eulogy sketched by a hand which is usually far from being lavish in praise. You well know that I never doubted your capability to undertake great things, or the brilliant courage which you inherit. But you, alas! know how much I dislike your removal from me, fearing that your natural impetuosity might carry you too far, and that it might prevent you from submitting to the numerous petty details of discipline which must be very disagreeable when the rank is only subaltern.

"Judge, then, of my joy on learning that you remember my advice, and that you are as obedient to your superiors in command as you are kind and humane to those beneath you. This conduct, my child, makes me quite happy, and these words, I know, will reward you more than all the favors you can receive. Read them often, and repeat to yourself that your mother, though far from you, complains not of her lot, since she knows that yours will be brilliant, and will deserve so to be.

"Your sister shares all my feelings, and will tell you so herself. But that of which I am sure she will not speak, and which is therefore my duty to tell, is her attention to me and her aunt. Love her, my son, for to me she brings consolation, and she overflows with affection for you. She prosecutes her studies with uncommon success, but music, I think, will be the art she will carry to the highest perfection. With her sweet voice, which is now well cultivated, she sings romances in a manner that would surprise you. I have just bought her a new piano from the best maker, Erard, which redoubles her passion for that charming art which you prefer to every other. That perhaps accounts for your sister applying to it with so much assiduity.

"Were you here, you would be telling me a thousand times a day to beware of the men who pay particular attention to Hortense. Some there are who do so whom you do not like, and whom you seem to fear she may prefer. Set your mind at rest. She is a bit of a coquette, is pleased with her success, and torments her victims, but her heart is free. I am the confidante of all her thoughts and feelings, which have hitherto been just what they ought to be. She now knows that when she thinks

of marrying, it is not my consent alone she has to seek, and that my will is subordinate to that of the man to whom we owe every thing. The knowledge of this fact must prevent her from fixing her choice in a way that may not meet the approval of Bonaparte, and the latter will not give your sister in marriage to any one to whom you can object."

Rising greatness of Napoleon.

There was now an end to poverty and obscurity. The rise of Napoleon was so brilliant and rapid that Josephine was speedily placed at the head of society in Paris, and vast crowds were eager to do her homage. Never before did man move with strides so rapid. The lapse of a few months transformed her from almost a homeless, friendless, impoverished widow, to be the bride of one whose advancing greatness seemed to outvie the wildest creations of fiction. The unsurpassed splendor of Napoleon's achievements crowded the saloons of Josephine with statesmen, philosophers, generals, and all who ever hasten to the shrine of rising greatness.

Expedition to Egypt.

After the campaign of Italy, which gave Napoleon not only a French but a European reputation for military genius and diplomatic skill, he took command of the Army of Egypt. Josephine accompanied him to Toulon. Standing upon a balcony, she with tearful eyes watched the receding fleet which bore her husband to that far-distant land, until it disappeared beneath the horizon of the blue Mediterranean. Eugene accompanied his father. Hortense remained with her mother, who took up her residence most of the time during her husband's absence at Plombières, a celebrated watering-place.

Josephine, anxious in every possible way to promote the popularity of her absent husband, and thus to secure his advancement, received with cordiality all who came to her with their congratulations. She was endowed with marvellous power of pleasing. Every one who saw her was charmed with her. Hortense was bewitchingly beautiful and attractive.

Josephine had ample means to indulge her taste in entertainments, and was qualified eminently to shine in such scenes. The consequence was that her saloons were the constant resort of rank and wealth and fashion. Some enemy wrote to Napoleon, and roused his jealousy to a very high degree, by representing Josephine as forgetting her husband, immersed in pleasure, and coquetting with all the world.

Napoleon was exceedingly disturbed, and wrote Josephine a very severe letter. The following extract from her reply fully explains the nature of this momentary estrangement:

Letter to Bonaparte.

"Is it possible, general, that the letter I have just received comes from you? I can scarcely credit it when I compare that letter with others to which your love imparts so many charms. My eyes, indeed, would persuade me that your hands traced these lines, but my heart refuses to believe that a letter from you could ever have caused the mortal anguish I experience on perusing these expressions of your displeasure, which afflict me the more when I consider how much pain they must have caused you.

"I know not what I have done to provoke some malignant enemy to destroy my peace by disturbing yours. But certainly a powerful motive must influence some one in continually renewing calumnies against me, and giving them a sufficient appearance of probability to impose on the man who has hitherto judged me worthy of his affection and confidence. These two sentiments are necessary to my happiness. And if they are to be so soon withdrawn from me, I can only regret that I was ever blest in possessing them or knowing you.

"On my first acquaintance with you, the affliction with which I was overwhelmed led me to believe that my heart must ever remain a stranger to any sentiment resembling love. The sanguinary scenes of which I had been a witness and a victim constantly haunted my thoughts. I therefore

apprehended no danger to myself from the frequent enjoyment of your society. Still less did I imagine that I could for a single moment fix your choice.

"I, like every one else, admired your talents and acquirements. And better than any one else I foresaw your future glory. But still I loved you only for the services you rendered to my country. Why did you seek to convert admiration into a more tender sentiment, by availing yourself of all those powers of pleasing with which you are so eminently gifted, since, so shortly after having united your destiny with mine, you regret the felicity you have conferred upon me?

"Do you think I can ever forget the love with which you once cherished me? Can I ever become indifferent to the man who has blest me with the most enthusiastic and ardent passion? Can I ever efface from my memory your paternal affection for Hortense, the advice and example you have given Eugene? If all this appears impossible, how can you, for a moment, suspect me of bestowing a thought upon any but yourself?

"Instead of listening to traducers, who, for reasons which I can not explain, seek to disturb our happiness, why do you not silence them by enumerating the benefits you have bestowed on a woman whose heart could never be reached with ingratitude? The knowledge of what you have done for my children would check the malignity of these calumniators; for they would then see that the strongest link of my attachment for you depends on my character as a mother. Your subsequent conduct, which has claimed the admiration of all Europe, could have no other effect than to make me adore the husband who gave me his hand when I was poor and unfortunate. Every step you take adds to the glory of the name I bear. Yet this is the moment which has been selected for persuading you that I no longer love you! Surely nothing can be more wicked and absurd than the conduct of those who are about you, and are jealous of your marked superiority.

"Yes, I still love you, and no less tenderly than ever. Those who allege the contrary know that they speak falsely. To those very persons I have frequently written to inquire about you, and to recommend them to console you, by their friendship, for the absence of her who is your best and truest friend.

"I acknowledge that I see a great deal of company; for every one is eager to compliment me on your success, and I confess that I have not resolution to close my door against those who speak of you. I also confess that a great portion of my visitors are gentlemen. Men understand your bold projects better than women; and they speak with enthusiasm of your glorious achievements, while my female friends only complain of you for having carried away their husbands, brothers, or fathers.

"I take no pleasure in their society if they do not praise you. Yet there are some among them whose hearts and understandings claim my highest regard, because they entertain sincere friendship for you. In this number I may mention ladies Arquillon, Tallien, and my aunt. They are almost constantly with me; and they can tell you, ungrateful as you are, whether *I have been coquetting with every body*. These are your words. And they would be hateful to me were I not certain that you had disavowed them, and are sorry for having written them.

"I sometimes receive honors here which cause me no small degree of embarrassment. I am not accustomed to this sort of homage. And I see that it is displeasing to our authorities, who are always suspicious and fearful of losing their newly-gotten power. If they are envious now, what will they be when you return crowned with fresh laurels? Heaven knows to what lengths their malignity will then carry them. But you will be here, and then nothing can vex me.

"But I will say no more of them, nor of your suspicions, which I do not refute one by one, because they are all equally devoid of probability. And to make amends for the unpleasant commencement of this letter, I will tell you something which I know will please you.

"Hortense, in her efforts to console me, endeavors as far as possible to conceal her anxiety for you and her brother. And she exerts all her ingenuity to banish that melancholy, the existence of which you doubt, but which I assure you never forsakes me. If by her lively conversation and interesting talents she sometimes succeeds in drawing a smile, she joyfully exclaims, 'Dear mamma, that will be

known at Cairo.' The fatal word immediately calls to my mind the distance which separates me from you and my son, and restores the melancholy which it was intended to divert. I am obliged to make great efforts to conceal my grief from my daughter, who, by a word or a look, transports me to the very place which she would wish to banish from my thoughts.

"Hortense's figure is daily becoming more and more graceful. She dresses with great taste; and though not quite so handsome as your sisters, she may certainly be thought agreeable when even they are present.

"Heaven knows when or where you may receive this letter. May it restore you to that confidence which you ought never to have lost, and convince you, more than ever, that, long as I live, I shall love you as dearly as I did on the day of our separation. Adieu. Believe me, love me, and receive a thousand kisses.

"Josephine."

Madame Campan.

There was at that time a very celebrated female school at St. Germain, under the care of Madame Campan. This illustrious lady was familiar with all the etiquette of the court, and was also endowed with a superior mind highly cultivated. At the early age of fifteen she had been appointed reader to the daughter of Louis XV. Maria Antoinette took a strong fancy to her, and made her a friend and companion. The crumbling of the throne of the Bourbons and the dispersion of the court left Madame Campan without a home, and caused what the world would call her ruin.

But in the view of true intelligence this reverse of fortune only elevated her to a far higher position of responsibility, usefulness, and power. Impelled by necessity, she opened a boarding-school for young ladies at St. Germain. The school soon acquired celebrity. Almost every illustrious family in France sought to place their daughters under her care. She thus educated very many young ladies who subsequently occupied very important positions in society as the wives and mothers of distinguished men. Some of her pupils attained to royalty. Thus the boarding-school of Madame Campan became a great power in France.

School-girl days.

Hortense was sent to this school with Napoleon's sister Caroline, who subsequently became Queen of Naples, and with Stephanie Beauharnais, to whom we shall have occasion hereafter to refer as Duchess of Baden. Stephanie was a cousin of Hortense, being a daughter of her father's brother, the Marquis de Beauharnais.

In this school Hortense formed many very strong attachments. Her most intimate friend, however, whom she loved with affection which never waned, was a niece of Madame Campan, by the name of Adèle Auguié, afterwards Madame de Broc, whose sad fate, hereafter to be described, was one of the heaviest blows which fell upon Hortense. It would seem that Hortense was not at all injured by the flattery lavished upon her in consequence of the renown of her father. She retained, unchanged, all her native simplicity of character, which she had inherited from her mother, and which she ever saw illustrated in her mother's words and actions. Treating the humblest with the same kindness as the most exalted, she won all hearts, and made herself the friend of every one in the school.

But her cousin Stephanie was a very different character. Her father, the Marquis, had fled from France an emigrant. He was an aristocrat by birth, and in all his cherished sentiments. In his flight with the nobles, from the terrors of the revolution, he had left his daughter behind, as the protégée of Josephine. Inheriting a haughty disposition, and elated by the grandeur which her uncle was attaining, she assumed consequential airs which rendered her disagreeable to many of her companions. The eagle eye of Josephine detected these faults in the character of her niece. As Stephanie returned to school from one of her vacations, Josephine sent by her the following letter to Madame Campan:

Letter from Josephine.

"In returning to you my niece, my dear Madame Campan, I send you both thanks and reproof:—thanks for the brilliant education you have given her, and reproof for the faults which your acuteness must have noticed, but which your indulgence has passed over. She is good-tempered, but cold; well-informed, but disdainful; lively, but deficient in judgment. She pleases no one, and it gives her no pain. She fancies the renown of her uncle and the gallantry of her father are every thing. Teach her, but teach her plainly, without mincing, that in reality they are nothing.

"We live in an age when every one is the child of his own deeds. And if they who fill the highest ranks of public service enjoy any superior advantage or privilege, it is the opportunity to be more useful and more beloved. It is thus alone that good fortune becomes pardonable in the eyes of the envious. This is what I would have you repeat to her constantly. I wish her to treat all her companions as her equals. Many of them are better, or at least quite as deserving as she is herself, and their only inferiority is in not having had relations equally skillful or equally fortunate.

"Josephine Bonaparte."

Napoleon's return from Egypt.

On the 8th of October, 1799, Napoleon landed at Fréjus, on his return from Egypt. His mind was still very much disturbed with the reports which had reached him respecting Josephine. Fréjus was six hundred miles from Paris—a long journey, when railroads were unknown. The intelligence of his arrival was promptly communicated to the metropolis by telegraph. Josephine received the news at midnight. Without an hour's delay she entered her carriage with Hortense, taking as a protector Napoleon's younger brother Louis, who subsequently married Hortense, and set out to meet her husband. Almost at the same hour Napoleon left Fréjus for Paris.

Josephine's anguish.

When Josephine reached Lyons, a distance of two hundred and forty-two miles from Paris, she learned, to her consternation, that Napoleon had left the city several hours before her arrival, and that they had passed each other by different roads. Her anguish was dreadful. For many months she had not received a line from her husband, as all communication had been intercepted by the British cruisers. She knew that her enemies would be busy in poisoning the mind of her husband against her. She had traversed the weary leagues of her journey without a moment's intermission, and now, faint, exhausted, and despairing, she was to retrace her steps, to reach Paris only many hours after Napoleon would have arrived there. Probably in all France there was not then a more unhappy woman than Josephine.

Jealousy of Napoleon.

The mystery of human love and jealousy no philosophy can explain. Secret wretchedness was gnawing at the heart of Napoleon. He loved Josephine with intensest passion, and all the pride of his nature was roused by the conviction that she had trifled with him. With these conflicting emotions rending his soul, he entered Paris and drove to his dwelling. Josephine was not there. Even Josephine had bitter enemies, as all who are in power ever must have. These enemies took advantage of her absence to fan the flames of that jealousy which Napoleon could not conceal. It was represented to him that Josephine had fled from her home, afraid to meet the anger of her injured husband. As he paced the floor in anguish, which led him to forget all his achievements in the past and all his hopes for the future, an enemy maliciously remarked,

"Josephine will soon appear before you with all her arts of fascination. She will explain matters, you will forgive all, and tranquillity will be restored."

Napoleon, striding nervously up and down the floor, replied with pallid cheek and trembling lip,

"Never! never! Were I not sure of my resolution, I would tear out this heart and cast it into the fire."

Eugene had returned with Napoleon. He loved his mother to adoration. Anxiously he sat at the window watching, hour after hour, for her arrival. At midnight on the 19th the rattle of her carriage-wheels was heard, as she entered the court-yard of their dwelling in the Rue Chantierine. Eugene rushed to his mother's arms. Napoleon had ever been the most courteous of husbands. Whenever Josephine returned, even from an ordinary morning drive, he would leave any engagements to greet her as she alighted from her carriage. But now, after an absence of eighteen months, he remained sternly in his chamber, the victim of almost unearthly misery.

The meeting in Paris.

The cruel repulse.

In a state of terrible agitation, with limbs tottering and heart throbbing, Josephine, assisted by Eugene and accompanied by Hortense, ascended the stairs to the parlor where she had so often received the caresses of her husband. She opened the door. Napoleon stood before her, pale, motionless as a marble statue. Without one kind word of greeting he said sternly, in words which pierced her heart,

"Madame, it is my wish that you retire immediately to Malmaison."

The meek and loving Josephine uttered not a word. She would have fallen senseless to the floor, had she not been caught in the arms of her son. It was midnight. For a week she had lived in her carriage almost without sleep. She was in a state of utter exhaustion, both of body and of mind. It was twelve miles to Malmaison. Napoleon had no idea that she would leave the house until the morning. Much to his surprise, he soon heard the carriage in the yard, and Josephine, accompanied by Eugene and Hortense, descending the stairs. The naturally kind heart of Napoleon could not assent to such cruelty. Immediately going down into the yard, though his pride would not permit him to speak to Josephine, he addressed Eugene, and requested them all to return for refreshment and repose.

In silent submission, Eugene and Hortense conducted their mother to her apartment, where she threw herself upon her couch in abject misery. In equally sleepless woe, Napoleon retired to his cabinet. Two days of wretchedness passed away. On the third, the love for Josephine, which still reigned in the heart of Napoleon, so far triumphed that he entered her apartment. Josephine was seated at a toilette-table, with her head bowed, and her eyes buried in her handkerchief. The table was covered with the letters which she had received from Napoleon, and which she had evidently been perusing. Hortense, the victim of grief and despair, was standing in the alcove of a window.

The reconciliation.

Apparently Josephine did not hear the approaching footsteps of her husband. He advanced softly to her chair, placed his hand upon it, and said, in tones almost of wonted kindness, "Josephine." She started at the sound of that well-known and dearly-loved voice, and turning towards him her swollen and flooded eyes, responded, "My dear." The words of tenderness, the loving voice, brought back with resistless rush the memory of the past. Napoleon was vanquished. He extended his hand to Josephine. She rose, threw her arms around his neck, rested her throbbing, aching head upon his bosom, and wept in convulsions of anguish. A long explanation ensued. Napoleon again pressed Josephine to his loving heart, satisfied, perfectly satisfied that he had deeply wronged her; that she had been the victim of base traducers. The reconciliation was perfect.

Napoleon First Consul.

Soon after this Napoleon overthrew the Directory, and established the Consulate. This was on the ninth of November, 1799, usually called 18th Brumaire. Napoleon was thirty years of age, and was now First Consul of France. After the wonderful achievements of this day of peril, during which Napoleon had not been able to send a single line to his wife, at four o'clock in the morning he alighted

from his carriage at the door of his dwelling at the Rue Chantierine. Josephine, in a state of great anxiety, was watching at the window for his approach. She sprang to meet him. Napoleon encircled her in his arms, and briefly recapitulated the memorable scenes of the day. He assured her that since he had taken the oath of office, he had not allowed himself to speak to a single individual, for he wished the beloved voice of his Josephine might be the first to congratulate him upon his virtual accession to the Empire of France. Throwing himself upon a couch for a few moments of repose, he exclaimed gayly, "Good-night, my Josephine. To-morrow we sleep in the palace of the Luxembourg."

The Luxembourg.

This renowned palace, with its vast saloons, its galleries of art, its garden, is one of the most attractive of residences. Napoleon was now virtually the monarch of France. Josephine was a queen, Eugene and Hortense prince and princess. Strange must have been the emotions of Josephine and her children as, encompassed with regal splendor, they took up their residence in the palace. But a few years before, Josephine, in poverty, friendlessness, and intensest anguish of heart, had led her children by the hand through those halls to visit her imprisoned husband. From one of those apartments the husband and father had been led to his trial, and to the scaffold, and now this mother enters this palace virtually a queen, and her children have opening before them the very highest positions of earthly wealth and honor.

Chapter III. Hortense and Duroc

1799-1804

Calumnies.

It is a very unamiable trait in human nature, that many persons are more eager to believe that which is bad in the character of others than that which is good. The same voice of calumny, which has so mercilessly assailed Josephine, has also traduced Hortense. It is painful to witness the readiness with which even now the vilest slanders, devoid of all evidence, can be heaped upon a noble and virtuous woman who is in her grave.

In the days of Napoleon's power, he himself, his mother, his wife, his sisters, and his stepdaughter, Hortense, were assailed with the most envenomed accusations malice could engender. These infamous assaults, which generally originated with the British Tory press, still have lingering echoes throughout the world. There are those who seem to consider it no crime to utter the most atrocious accusations, even without a shadow of proof, against those who are not living. Well do the "Berkeley men" say:

Testimony of the Berkeley men.

"The Bonapartes, especially the women of that family, have always been too proud and haughty to degrade themselves. Even had they lacked what is technically called moral character, their virtue has been intrenched behind their ancestry, and the achievements of their own family. Nor was there at any time an instant when any one of the Bonapartes could have overstepped, by a hair's-breadth, the line of decency, without being fatally exposed. None of them pursued the noiseless tenor of their way along the vale of obscurity. They were walking in the clear sunshine, on the topmost summits of the earth, and millions of enemies were watching every step they took. The highest genius of historians, the bitterest satire of dramatists, the meanest and most malignant pen of the journalists have assailed them for half a century. We have written these words because a Republican is the only man likely to speak well of the Bonaparte family. It was, and is, and will be the dynasty of the people, standing there from 1804, a fearful antagonism against the feudal age and its souvenirs of oppression and crime."

Remarks of Napoleon at St. Helena.

Napoleon at St. Helena said: "Of all the libels and pamphlets with which the English ministers have inundated Europe, there is not one which will reach posterity. When there shall not be a trace of those libels to be found, the great monuments of utility which I have reared, and the code of laws which I have formed, will descend to the remotest ages; and future historians will avenge the wrongs done me by my contemporaries. There was a time when all crimes seemed to belong to me of right. Thus I poisoned Hoche, strangled Pichegru in his cell, I caused Kleber to be assassinated in Egypt, I blew out Desaix's brains at Marengo, I cut the throats of persons who were confined in prison, I dragged the Pope by the hair of his head, and a hundred similar abominations. And yet I have not seen one of those libels which is worthy of an answer. These are so contemptible and so absurdly false, that they do not merit any other notice than to write *false, false*, on every page."

It is well known, by every one acquainted with the past history of our country, that George Washington was assailed in the severest possible language of vituperation. He was charged with military inability, administrative incapacity, mental weakness, and gross personal immorality. He

was denounced as a murderer, and a hoary-headed traitor. This is the doom of those in power. And thousands of men in those days believed those charges.

The voice of slander.

It is seldom possible to prove a negative. But no evidence has ever been brought forward to substantiate the rumors brought against Hortense. These vile slanderers have even gone so far as to accuse Napoleon of crimes, in reference to the daughter of Josephine and the wife of his brother, which, if true, should consign him to eternal infamy. The "Berkeley men," after making the most thorough historic investigations in writing the life both of Louis Bonaparte and Hortense, say:

"Louis was a little over twenty-three years of age at the time of his marriage. Hortense was nineteen. In his memoirs Louis treats with scorn and contempt the absurd libels respecting his domestic affairs, involving the purity of his wife's character and the legitimacy of his children. Napoleon, also, in his conversations at St. Helena, thought proper to allude to the subject, and indignantly to repel the charges which had been made against Hortense, at the same time showing the entire improbability of the stories about her and her offspring. *We have found nothing, in our investigations on this subject to justify even a suspicion against the morals or integrity of Louis or Hortense; and we here dismiss the subject with the remark that, there is more cause for sympathy with the parties to this unhappy union than of censure for their conduct.*"

Testimony of the Duchess of Abrantes.

Portrait of Hortense.

The Duchess of Abrantes, who was intimately acquainted with Hortense from her childhood and with the whole Bonaparte family, in her interesting memoirs writes: "Hortense de Beauharnais was fresh as a rose; and though her fair complexion was not relieved by much color, she had enough to produce that freshness and bloom which was her chief beauty. A profusion of light hair played in silky locks round her soft and penetrating blue eyes. The delicate roundness of her slender figure was set off by the elegant carriage of her head. Her feet were small and pretty, her hands very white, with pink, well-rounded nails. But what formed the chief attraction of Hortense was the grace and suavity of her manners. She was gay, gentle, amiable. She had wit which, without the smallest ill-temper, had just malice enough to be amusing. A polished education had improved her natural talents. She drew excellently, sang harmoniously, and performed admirably in comedy. In 1800 she was a charming young girl. She afterwards became one of the most amiable princesses in Europe. I have seen many, both in their own courts and in Paris, but I have never known one who had any pretensions to equal talents. Her brother loved her tenderly. The First Consul looked upon her as his child. And it is only in that country so fertile in the inventions of scandal, that so foolish an accusation could have been imagined, as that any feeling less pure than paternal affection actuated his conduct towards her. The vile calumny met the contempt it merited."

The testimony of Bourrienne upon this point is decisive. Bourrienne had been the private secretary of Napoleon, had become his enemy, and had joined the Bourbons. Upon the downfall of the Emperor he wrote a very hostile life of Napoleon, being then in the employment of the Bourbons. In those envenomed pages, Bourrienne says that he has written severely enough against Napoleon, to have his word believed when he makes any admission in his favor. He then writes:

Testimony of Bourrienne.

"Napoleon never cherished for Hortense any feeling but a real paternal tenderness. He loved her, after his marriage with her mother, as he would have loved his own child. For three years at least I was witness to all their most private actions. I declare that I never saw any thing which could furnish the least ground for suspicion or the slightest trace of culpable intimacy. This calumny must be classed with those which malice delights to take with the character of men who become celebrated; calumnies which are adopted lightly and without reflection.

"I freely declare that, did I retain the slightest doubt with regard to this odious charge, I would avow it. But it is not true. Napoleon is no more. Let his memory be accompanied only by that, be it good or bad, which really took place. Let not this complaint be made against him by the impartial historian. I must say, in conclusion, on this delicate subject, that Napoleon's principles were rigid in the extreme; and that any fault of the nature charged neither entered his mind, nor was in accordance with his morals or taste."

Notwithstanding this abundant testimony, and notwithstanding the fact that no contradictory testimony can be adduced, which any historian could be pardoned for treating with respect, there are still men to be found who will repeat those foul slanders, which ought long since to have died away.

Napoleon at the Tuileries.

Napoleon remained but two months in the palace of the Luxembourg. In the mean time the palace of the Tuileries, which had been sacked by revolutionary mobs, was re-furnished with much splendor. In February the Court of the Consuls was transferred to the Tuileries. Napoleon had so entirely eclipsed his colleagues that he alone was thought of by the Parisian populace. The royal apartments were prepared for Napoleon. The more humble apartments, in the Pavilion of Flora, were assigned to the two other consuls. The transfer from the Luxembourg was made with great pomp, in one of those brilliant parades which ever delight the eyes of the Parisians. Six thousand picked soldiers, with a gorgeous train of officers, formed his escort. Twenty thousand troops with all the concomitants of military parade, lined the streets. A throng, from city and country, which could not be numbered, gazed upon the scene. Napoleon took his seat in a magnificent carriage drawn by six beautiful white horses. The suite of rooms assigned to Josephine consisted of two large parlors furnished with regal splendor, and several adjoining private rooms. Here Hortense, a beautiful girl of about eighteen, found herself at home in the apartments of the ancient kings of France.

Beauty of Josephine.

In the evening a brilliant assembly was gathered in the saloons of Josephine. As she entered, with queenly grace, leaning upon the arm of Talleyrand, a murmur of admiration rose from the whole multitude. She wore a robe of white muslin. Her hair fell in ringlets upon her neck and shoulders, through which gleamed a necklace of priceless pearls. The festivities were protracted until a late hour in the morning. It was said that Josephine gained a social victory that evening, corresponding with that which Napoleon had gained in the pageant of the day. In these scenes Hortense shone with great brilliance. She was young, beautiful, graceful, amiable, witty, and very highly accomplished. In addition to this, she was the stepdaughter of the First Consul, who was ascending in a career of grandeur which was to terminate no one could tell where.

Malmaison.

During Napoleon's absence in Egypt Josephine had purchased the beautiful estate of Malmaison. This was their favorite home. The chateau was a very convenient, attractive, but not very spacious rural edifice, surrounded with extensive grounds, ornamented with lawns, shrubbery, and forest-trees. With the Tuileries for her city residence, Malmaison for her rural retreat, Napoleon for her father, Josephine for her mother, Eugene for her brother; with the richest endowments of person, mind, and heart, with glowing health, and surrounded by admirers, Hortense seemed now to be placed upon the very highest pinnacle of earthly happiness.

Josephine and Hortense resided at Malmaison when Napoleon made his ten months' campaign into Italy, which was terminated by the victory of Marengo. They both busily employed their time in making those improvements on the place which would create a pleasant surprise for Napoleon on his return. Here they opened a new path through the forest; here they spanned a stream with a beautiful rustic bridge; upon a gentle eminence a pavilion rose; and new parterres of flowers gladdened the eye. Every charm was thrown around the place which the genius and taste of Josephine and Hortense

could suggest. At midnight, on the second of July, Napoleon returned to Paris, and immediately hastened to the arms of his wife and daughter at Malmaison. He was so pleased with its retirement and rural beauty that, forgetting the splendors of Fontainebleau and Saint Cloud, he ever after made it his favorite residence. Fortunate is the tourist who can obtain permission to saunter through those lovely walks, where the father, the wife, and the daughter, for a few brief months, walked almost daily, arm in arm, in the enjoyment of nearly all the happiness which they were destined on earth to share. The Emperor, at the close of his career, said upon his dying bed at St. Helena,

Remarkable testimony of Napoleon.

"I am indebted for all the little happiness I have enjoyed on earth to the love of Josephine."

Hortense and her mother frequently rode on horseback, both being very graceful riders, and very fond of that recreation. At moments when Napoleon could unbend from the cares of state, the family amused themselves, with such guests as were present, in the game of "prisoners" on the lawn. For several years this continued to be the favorite pastime at Malmaison. Kings and queens were often seen among the pursuers and the pursued on the green sward.

It was observed that Napoleon was always solicitous to have Josephine on his side. And whenever, in the progress of the game, she was taken prisoner, he was nervously anxious until she was rescued. Napoleon, who had almost lived upon horseback, was a poor runner, and would often, in his eagerness, fall, rolling head-long over the grass, raising shouts of laughter. Josephine and Hortense were as agile as they were graceful.

The infernal machine.

On the 24th of December, 1800, Napoleon, Josephine, and Hortense were going to the opera, to hear Haydn's Oratorio of the Creation. It was then to be performed for the first time. Napoleon, busily engaged in business, went reluctantly at the earnest solicitation of Josephine. Three gentlemen rode with Napoleon in his carriage. Josephine, with Hortense and other friends, followed in her private carriage. As the carriages were passing through the narrow street of St. Nicaire, a tremendous explosion took place, which was heard all over Paris. An infernal machine, of immense power, had been conveyed to the spot, concealed beneath a cart, which was intended, at whatever sacrifice of the lives of others, to render the assassination of the First Consul certain. Eight persons were instantly killed; more than sixty were wounded. Several buildings were nearly demolished. The windows of both carriages were dashed in, and the shattered vehicles were tossed to and fro like ships in a storm. Napoleon almost miraculously escaped unharmed. Hortense was slightly wounded by the broken glass. Still they all heroically went on to the opera, where, in view of their providential escape, they were received with thunders of applause.

The royalist conspiracy.

It was at first supposed that the Jacobins were the authors of this infamous plot. It was afterwards proved to be a conspiracy of the Royalists. Josephine, whose husband had bled beneath the slide of the guillotine, and who had narrowly escaped the axe herself, with characteristic humanity forgot the peril to which she and her friends had been exposed, in sympathy for those who were to suffer for the crime. The criminals were numerous. They were the nobles with whom Josephine had formerly lived in terms of closest intimacy. She wrote to Fouché, the Minister of Police, in behalf of these families about to be plunged into woe by the merited punishment of the conspirators. This letter reflects such light upon the character of Josephine, which character she transmitted to Hortense, that it claims insertion here.

Letter from Josephine.

"Citizen Minister,—While I yet tremble at the frightful event which has just occurred, I am disquieted and distressed through fear of the punishment necessarily to be inflicted on the guilty, who

belong, it is said, to families with whom I once lived in habits of intercourse. I shall be solicited by mothers, sisters, and disconsolate wives, and my heart will be broken through my inability to obtain all the mercy for which I would plead.

"I know that the clemency of the First Consul is great; his attachment to me extreme. But the crime is too dreadful that a terrible example should not be necessary. The chief of the Government has not been alone exposed. It is that which will render him severe, inflexible. I conjure you, therefore, to do all in your power to prevent inquiries being pushed too far. Do not detect all those persons who may have been accomplices in these odious transactions. Let not France, so long overwhelmed in consternation by public executions, groan anew beneath such inflictions. It is even better to endeavor to soothe the public mind than to exasperate men by fresh terrors. In short, when the ringleaders of this nefarious attempt shall have been secured, let severity give place to pity for inferior agents, seduced, as they may have been, by dangerous falsehoods or exaggerated opinions.

"When just invested with supreme power, the First Consul, as seems to me, ought rather to gain hearts, than to be exhibited as ruling slaves. Soften by your counsels whatever may be too violent in his just resentment. Punish—alas! that you must certainly do—but pardon still more. Be also the support of those unfortunate men who, by frank avowal or repentance, shall expiate a portion of their crime.

"Having myself narrowly escaped perishing in the Revolution, you must regard as quite natural my interference on behalf of those who can be saved without involving in new danger the life of my husband, precious to me and to France. On this account do, I entreat you, make a wide distinction between the authors of the crime and those who, through weakness or fear, have consented to take part therein. As a woman, a wife, a mother, I must feel the heart-rendings of those who will apply to me. Act, citizen minister, in such a manner that the number of these may be lessened. This will spare me much grief. Never will I turn away from the supplications of misfortune. But in the present instance you can do infinitely more than I, and you will, on this account, excuse my importunity. Rely on my gratitude and esteem."

Michel Duroc.

There was a young officer about twenty-nine years of age, by the name of Michel Duroc, who was then a frequent visitor at the Tuileries and Malmaison. He was a great favorite of Napoleon, and was distinguished alike for beauty of person and gallantry upon the field of battle. Born of an ancient family, young Duroc, having received a thorough military education, attached himself, with enthusiastic devotion, to the fortunes of Napoleon. He attracted the attention of General Bonaparte during his first Italian campaign, where he was appointed one of his aides. Following Napoleon to Egypt, he gained renown in many battles, and was speedily promoted to the rank of chief of battalion, and then to general of brigade. At Jaffa he performed a deed of gallantry, which was rewarded by the applauding shouts of nearly the whole army. At Jean d'Acre he led one of the most bloody and obstinate assaults recorded in the military annals of France, where he was severely wounded by the bursting of a howitzer. At the battle of Aboukir he won great applause. Napoleon's attachment to this young officer was such, that he took him to Paris on his return from Egypt. In the eventful day of the 18th Brumaire, Duroc stood by the side of Napoleon, and rendered him eminent service. The subsequent career of this very noble young man brilliantly reflects his worth and character. Rapidly rising, he became grand marshal of the palace and Duke of Friuli.

General Duroc at Bautzen.

The memorable career of General Duroc was terminated at the battle of Bautzen, in Germany, on the 23d of May, 1813. He was struck by the last ball thrown from the batteries of the enemy. The affecting scene of his death was as follows:

Death of Duroc.

"In the early dawn of the morning of the 23d of May, Napoleon was on horseback directing the movements of his troops against the routed foe. He soon overtook the rear-guard of the enemy, which had strongly posted its batteries on an eminence to protect the retreat of the discomfited army. A brief but fierce conflict ensued, and one of Napoleon's aides was struck dead at his feet. Duroc was riding by the side of the Emperor. Napoleon turned to him and said, 'Duroc, fortune is determined to have one of us to-day.' Hour after hour the incessant battle raged, as the advance-guard of the Emperor drove before it the rear-guard of the Allies. In the afternoon, as the Emperor, with a portion of the Imperial Guard, four abreast, was passing through a ravine, enveloped in a blinding cloud of dust and smoke, a cannon-ball, glancing from a tree, killed one officer, and mortally wounded Duroc, tearing out his entrails. The tumult and obscurity were such that Napoleon did not witness the casualty. When informed of it, he seemed for a moment overwhelmed with grief, and then exclaimed, in faltering accents,

"Duroc! gracious Heaven, my presentiments never deceive me. This is a sad day, a fatal day."

Grief of Napoleon.

Immediately alighting from his horse, he walked to and fro for a short time absorbed in painful thoughts, while the thunders of the battle resounded unheeded around him. Then turning to Caulaincourt, he said,

"Alas! when will fate relent? When will there be an end of this? My eagles will yet triumph, but the happiness which accompanies them is fled. Whither has he been conveyed? I must see him. Poor, poor Duroc!"

Affecting scene.

The Emperor found the dying marshal in a cottage, still stretched upon the camp litter by which he had been conveyed from the field. Pallid as marble from the loss of blood, and with features distorted with agony, he was scarcely recognizable. The Emperor approached the litter, threw his arms around the neck of the friend he so tenderly loved, and exclaimed, in tones of deepest grief, "Alas! then is there no hope?"

"None whatever," the physicians replied.

The dying man took the hand of Napoleon, and gazing upon him affectionately, said, "Sire, my whole life has been devoted to your service, and now my only regret is that I can no longer be useful to you." Napoleon, in a voice almost inarticulate with emotion, said,

"Duroc, there is another life. There you will await me."

"Yes, sire," the marshal faintly replied, "but that will be thirty years hence. You will then have triumphed over your enemies, and realized the hopes of our country. I have lived an honest man. I have nothing to reproach myself with. I have a daughter, to whom your Majesty will be a father."

Napoleon was so deeply affected that he remained for some time in silence, incapable of uttering a word, but still affectionately holding the hand of his dying friend.

Duroc was the first to break the silence. "Sire," he said, "this sight pains you. Leave me."

The Emperor pressed his hand to his lips, embraced him affectionately, and saying sadly, "Adieu, my friend," hurried out of the room.

Supported by Marshal Soult and Caulaincourt, Napoleon, overwhelmed with grief, retired to his tent, which had been immediately pitched in the vicinity of the cottage. "This is horrible," he exclaimed. "My excellent, my dear Duroc! Oh, what a loss is this!"

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