

Tucholsky Wagner Zola Scott
Turgenev Wallace Fonatne Sydon Freud Schlegel
Twain Walther von der Vogelweide Fouqué Friedrich II. von Preußen
Weber Freiligrath Frey
Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel
Engels Fielding Hölderlin Eichendorff Tacitus Dumas
Fehrs Faber Flaubert Eliasberg Eliot Zweig Ebner Eschenbach
Feuerbach Maximilian I. von Habsburg Fock Ewald Vergil
Goethe Elisabeth von Österreich London
Mendelssohn Balzac Shakespeare Rathenau Dostojewski Ganghofer
Trackl Stevenson Lichtenberg Doyle Gjellerup
Mommsen Thoma Tolstoi Lenz Hambruch Droste-Hülshoff
Dach Thoma von Arnim Hägele Hanrieder Hauptmann Humboldt
Karrillon Reuter Verne Rousseau Hagen Hauff Baudelaire Gautier
Garschin Defoe Hebbel Hegel Kussmaul Herder
Damaschke Descartes Schopenhauer George
Wolfram von Eschenbach Darwin Dickens Grimm Jerome Rilke Bebel Proust
Bronner Campe Horváth Aristoteles Voltaire Federer Herodot
Bismarck Vigny Gengenbach Barlach Heine Grillparzer Georgy
Storm Casanova Lessing Tersteegen Gilm Gryphius
Chamberlain Langbein Lafontaine Iffland Sokrates
Brentano Claudius Schiller Bellamy Schilling Kralik Raabe Gibbon Tschchow
Katharina II. von Rußland Gerstäcker Raabe Gleim Vulpius
Löns Hesse Hoffmann Gogol Morgenstern Goedicke
Luther Heym Hofmannsthal Klee Hölty Kleist
Roth Heyse Klopstock Puschkin Homer Mörike Musil
Luxemburg La Roche Horaz Kraus
Machiavelli Kierkegaard Kraft Kraus
Navarra Aurel Musset Lamprecht Kind Kirchhoff Hugo Moltke
Nestroy Marie de France
Nietzsche Nansen Laotse Ipsen Liebknecht
Marx Lassalle Gorki Klett Leibniz Ringelntz
von Ossietzky May vom Stein Lawrence Irving
Petalozzi Platon Pückler Michelangelo Knigge Kock Kafka
Sachs Poe Liebermann Kock Korolenko
de Sade Praetorius Mistral Zetkin



The publishing house **tredition** has created the series **TREDITION CLASSICS**. It contains classical literature works from over two thousand years. Most of these titles have been out of print and off the bookstore shelves for decades.

The book series is intended to preserve the cultural legacy and to promote the timeless works of classical literature. As a reader of a **TREDITION CLASSICS** book, the reader supports the mission to save many of the amazing works of world literature from oblivion.

The symbol of **TREDITION CLASSICS** is Johannes Gutenberg (1400 – 1468), the inventor of movable type printing.

With the series, **tredition** intends to make thousands of international literature classics available in printed format again – worldwide.

All books are available at book retailers worldwide in paperback and in hardcover. For more information please visit: www.tredition.com



tredition was established in 2006 by Sandra Latusseck and Soenke Schulz. Based in Hamburg, Germany, **tredition** offers publishing solutions to authors and publishing houses, combined with worldwide distribution of printed and digital book content. **tredition** is uniquely positioned to enable authors and publishing houses to create books on their own terms and without conventional manufacturing risks.

For more information please visit: www.tredition.com

Recollections of the Private Life of Napoleon –Volume 04

Louis Constant Wairy

Imprint

This book is part of the TREDITION CLASSICS series.

Author: Louis Constant Wairy
Cover design: toepferschumann, Berlin (Germany)

Publisher: tredition GmbH, Hamburg (Germany)
ISBN: 978-3-8491-6694-6

www.tredition.com
www.tredition.de

Copyright:
The content of this book is sourced from the public domain.

The intention of the TREDITION CLASSICS series is to make world literature in the public domain available in printed format. Literary enthusiasts and organizations worldwide have scanned and digitally edited the original texts. tredition has subsequently formatted and redesigned the content into a modern reading layout. Therefore, we cannot guarantee the exact reproduction of the original format of a particular historic edition. Please also note that no modifications have been made to the spelling, therefore it may differ from the orthography used today.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was the 2d of January, 1805, exactly a month after the coronation, that I formed with the eldest daughter of M. Charvet a union which has been, and will I trust ever be, the greatest happiness of my life. I promised the reader to say very little of myself; and, in fact, how could he be interested in any details of my own private life which did not throw additional light upon the character of the great man about whom I have undertaken to write? Nevertheless, I will ask permission to return for a little while to this, the most interesting of all periods to me, and which exerted such an influence upon my whole life. Surely he who recalls and relates his souvenirs is not forbidden to attach some importance to those which most nearly concern himself. Moreover, even in the most personal events of my life, there were instances in which their Majesties took a part, and which, from that fact, are of importance in enabling the reader to form a correct estimate of the characters of both the Emperor and the Empress.

My wife's mother had been presented to Madame Bonaparte during the first campaign in Italy, and she had been pleased with her; for Madame Bonaparte, who was so perfectly good, had, in her own experience, also endured trials, and knew how to sympathize with the sorrows of others.

She promised to interest the General in the fate of my father-in-law, who had just lost his place in the treasury. During this time Madame Charvet was in correspondence with a friend of her husband, who was, I think, the courier of General Bonaparte; and the latter having opened and read these letters addressed to his courier, inquired who was this young woman that wrote such interesting and intelligent letters, and Madame Charvet well deserved this double praise. My father-in-law's friend, while replying to the question of the General-in-chief, took occasion to relate the misfortunes of the family, and the General remarked that, on his return to Paris, he wished to meet M. and Madame Charvet; in consequence of

which they were presented to him, and Madame Bonaparte rejoiced to learn that her proteges had also become those of her husband. It had been decided that M. Charvet should follow the General to Egypt; but when my father-in-law arrived at Toulon, Madame Bonaparte requested that he should accompany her to the waters of Plombieres. I have previously related the accident which occurred at Plombieres, and that M. Charvet was sent to Saint-Germain to bring Mademoiselle Hortense from the boarding-school to her mother. On his return to Paris, M. Charvet searched through all the suburbs to find a country-seat, as the General had charged his wife to purchase one during his absence.

When Madame Bonaparte decided on Malmaison, M. Charvet, his wife, and their three children were installed in this charming residence.

My father-in-law was very faithful to the interests of these benefactors of his family, and Madame Charvet often acted as private secretary to Madame Bonaparte.

Mademoiselle Louise, who became my wife, and Mademoiselle Zoe, her younger sister, were favorites of Madame Bonaparte, especially the latter, who passed more time than Louise at Malmaison. The condescension of their noble protectress had rendered this child so familiar, that she said thou habitually to Madame Bonaparte. One day she said to her, "Thou art happy. Thou hast no mamma to scold thee when thou tearest thy dresses."

During one of the campaigns that I made while in the service of the Emperor, I wrote to my wife, inquiring about the life that her sister led at Malmaison. In her answer, among other things, she said (I copy a passage from one of her letters): "Sometimes we take part in performances such as I had never dreamed of. For instance, one evening the saloon was divided in half by a gauze curtain, behind which was a bed arranged in Greek style, on which a man lay asleep, clothed in long white drapery. Near the sleeper Madame Bonaparte and the other ladies beat in unison (not in perfect accord, however) on bronze vases, making, as you may imagine, a terrible kind of music. During this charivari, one of the gentlemen held me around the waist, and raised me from the ground, while I shook my arms and legs in time to the music. The concert of these ladies

awoke the sleeper, who stared wildly at me, frightened at my gestures, then sprang up and ran with all his might, followed by my brother, who crept on all fours, representing a dog, I think, which belonged to this strange person. As I was then a mere child, I have only a confused idea of all this; but the society of Madame Bonaparte seemed to be much occupied with similar amusements."

When the First Consul went to live at Saint-Cloud, he expressed his high opinion of my father-in-law in the most flattering manner, and made him concierge of the chateau, which was a confidential position, the duties and responsibilities of which were considerable.

M. Charvet was charged with organizing the household; and, by orders of the First Consul, he selected from among the old servants of the queen those to whom he gave places as porters, scrubbers, and grooms of the chateau, and he gave pensions to those unable to work.

When the chateau took fire in 1802, as I have related previously, Madame Charvet, being several months pregnant, was terribly frightened; and as it was not thought best to bleed her, she became very ill, and died at the age of thirty years. Louise had been at a boarding-school for several years; but her father now brought her home to keep house for him, though she was then only twelve years old. One of her friends has kindly allowed me to see a letter which Louise addressed to her a short time after our marriage, and from which I have made the following extracts:

"On my return from boarding-school I went to see her Majesty the Empress (then Madame Bonaparte) at the Tuileries. I was in deep mourning. She took me on her knee, and tried to console me, saying that she would be a mother to me, and would find me a husband. I wept, and said that I did not wish to marry. Not at present,¹ replied her Majesty, I but that will come; be sure of it. I was, however, by no means persuaded that this would be the case. She caressed me a while longer, and I withdrew. When the First Consul was at Saint-Cloud, all the chiefs of the different departments of the household service assembled in the apartments of

my father, who was the most popular, as well as the eldest, member of the household. M. Constant, who had seen me as a child at Malmaison, found me sufficiently attractive at Saint-Cloud to ask me of my father, subject to the approval of their Majesties; and it was decided that we should be married after the coronation. I was fourteen years old fifteen days after our marriage.

"Both my sister and I are always received with extreme kindness by her Majesty the Empress; and whenever, for fear of annoying her, we let some time pass without going to see her, she complains of it to my father. She sometimes admits us to her morning toilet, which is conducted in our presence, and to which are admitted in her apartments only her women; and a few persons of her household, who, like us, count among their happiest moments those in which they can thus behold this adored princess. The conversations are almost always delightful, and her Majesty frequently relates anecdotes which a word from one or another of us recalls to her."

Her Majesty the Empress had promised Louise a dowry; but the money which she intended for that she spent otherwise, and consequently my wife had only a few jewels of little value and two or three pieces of stuff.

M. Charvet was too refined to recall this promise to her Majesty's recollection. However, that was the only way to get anything from her; for she knew no better how to economize than how to refuse. The Emperor asked me a short time after my marriage what the Empress had given my wife, and on my reply showed the greatest possible vexation; no doubt because the sum that had been demanded of him for Louise's dowry had been spent otherwise. His Majesty the Emperor had the goodness, while on this subject, to assure me that he himself would hereafter look after my interests, and that he was well satisfied with my services, and would prove it to me.

I have said above that my wife's younger sister was the favorite of her Majesty the Empress; and yet she received on her marriage no richer dowry than Louise, nevertheless, the Empress asked to have my sister-in-law's husband presented to her, and said to him in the most maternal tone, "Monsieur, I recommend my daughter to you, and I entreat you to make her happy. She deserves it, and I earnestly hope that you know how to appreciate her!" When my sister-in-law, fleeing from Compiègne, in 1814, went with her husband's mother to Evreux for her confinement, the Empress sent by her first valet de chambre every thing necessary for a young woman in that condition, and, even reproached her with not having come to Navarre.

My sister-in-law had been reared in the same boarding-school as Mademoiselle Josephine Tallien, god-daughter of the Empress, who has since married M. Pelet de la Lozère, and another daughter of Madame Tallien, Mademoiselle Clémence Cabarus. The school was conducted by Madame Vigogne, widow of the colonel of that name, and an old friend of the Empress, who had advised her to take a boarding-school, and promised to procure for her as many pupils as she could. This institution prospered under the direction of this lady, who was distinguished for her intelligence and culture; and she frequently brought to the Empress these proteges, with other young persons who by good conduct had earned this reward; and this was made a powerful means of exciting the emulation of these children, whom her Majesty overwhelmed with caresses, and presented with little gifts.

One morning just as Madame Vigogne was about to visit the Empress, and was descending the staircase to enter her carriage, she heard piercing cries in one of the schoolrooms, and, hastening to the spot, saw a young girl with her clothing on fire. With a presence of mind worthy of a mother, Madame Vigogne wrapped her pupil in the long train of her dress, and thus extinguished the flames, not, however, until the hands of the courageous instructress had been most painfully burned. She made the visit to her Majesty in this condition, and related to her the sad accident which had occurred; while her Majesty, who was easily moved by everything noble and generous, overwhelmed her with praises for her courage, and was so deeply touched that she wept with admiration, and ordered, her

private physician to give his best services to Madame Vigogne and her young pupil.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Empress Josephine was of medium height, with an exquisite figure; and in all her movements there was an airiness and grace which gave to her walk something ethereal, without detracting from the majesty of the sovereign. Her expressive countenance portrayed all the emotions of her soul, while retaining the charming sweetness which was its ruling expression. In pleasure, as in grief, she was beautiful, and even against your will you would smile when she smiled; if she was sad, you would be also. Never did a woman justify better than she the expression that the eyes are the mirror of the soul. Hers were of a deep blue, and nearly always half closed by her long lids, which were slightly arched, and fringed with the most beautiful lashes in the world; in regarding her you felt yourself drawn to her by an irresistible power. It must have been difficult for the Empress to give severity to that seductive look; but she could do this, and well knew how to render it imposing when necessary. Her hair was very beautiful, long and silken, its nut-brown tint contrasting exquisitely with the dazzling whiteness of her fine fresh complexion. At the commencement of her supreme power, the Empress still liked to adorn her head in the morning with a red madras handkerchief, which gave her a most piquant Creole air, and rendered her still more charming.

But what more than all else constituted the inexpressible charm of the Empress's presence were the ravishing tones of her voice. How many times have I, like many others, stopped suddenly on hearing that voice; simply to enjoy the pleasure of listening to it. It cannot perhaps be said that the Empress was a strictly beautiful woman; but her lovely countenance, expressing sweetness and good nature, and the angelic grace diffused around her person, made her the most attractive of women.

During her stay at Saint-Cloud, the Empress rose habitually at nine o'clock, and made her first toilet, which lasted till ten; then she passed into a saloon, where she found assembled those persons who had solicited and obtained the favor of an audience; and some-

times also at this hour, and in the same saloon, her Majesty received her tradespeople; and at eleven o'clock, when the Emperor was absent, she breakfasted with her first lady of honor and a few others. Madame de la Rochefoucauld, first lady of honor to the Empress, was a hunchback, and so small that it was necessary, when she was to have a place at the table, to heighten the seat of her chair by another very thick cushion made of violet satin. Madame de la Rochefoucauld knew well how to efface, by means of her bright and sparkling, though somewhat caustic wit, her striking elegance, and her exquisite court manners, any unpleasant impression which might be made by her physical deformity.

Before breakfast the Empress had a game of billiards; or, when the weather was good, she walked in the gardens or in the inclosed park, which recreation lasted only a short while, and her Majesty soon returned to her apartments, and occupied herself with embroidery, while talking with her ladies, like herself, occupied with some kind of needlework. When it happened that they were not interrupted by visits, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon the Empress took a drive in an open barouche; and on her return from this the grand toilet took place, at which the Emperor was sometimes present.

Now and then, also, his Majesty surprised the Empress in her saloon; and we were sure to find him, on those occasions, amusing, amiable, and in fine spirits.

At six o'clock dinner was served; this the Emperor frequently forgot, and delayed it indefinitely, in consequence of which dinner was more than once eaten at nine or ten o'clock in the evening. Their Majesties dined together alone, or in the company of a few invited guests, princes of the imperial family, or ministers, after which there was a concert, reception, or the theater; and at midnight every one retired except the Empress, who greatly enjoyed sitting up late, and then played backgammon with one of the chamberlains. The Count de Beaumont was thus honored most frequently.

On the days of the chase the Empress and her ladies followed in the coach. They had a special costume for this occasion, consisting of a kind of green riding-habit, and a hat ornamented with white

plumes. All the ladies who followed the chase dined with their Majesties.

When the Empress spent the night in the Emperor's apartment, I entered in the morning, as usual, between seven and eight o'clock, and nearly always found the august spouses awake. The Emperor usually ordered tea, or an infusion of orange flowers, and rose immediately, the Empress saying to him, with a laugh, "What, rising already? Rest a little longer."—"Well, you are not asleep, then?" replied his Majesty, rolling her over in the covering, giving her little slaps on her cheeks and shoulders, laughing, and kissing her.

At the end of a few moments the Empress rose also, put on a wrapper, and read the journals, or descended by the little communicating stairway to her own apartment, never leaving the Emperor without a few words expressing the most touching affection and good-will.

Elegant and simple in her dress, the Empress submitted with regret to the necessity of toilets of state. Jewels, however, were much to her taste; and, as she had always been fond of them; the Emperor presented her with them often and in great quantities; and she greatly enjoyed adorning herself with them, and still more exhibiting them to the admiration of others.

One morning, when my wife was present at her toilet, her Majesty related that, being newly married to M. de Beauharnais, and much delighted with the ornaments he had given her, she was in the habit of carrying them around in her reticule (reticules were then an essential part of a woman's dress), and showing them to her young friends.

As the Empress spoke of her reticule, she ordered one of her ladies to hunt for one to show my wife. The lady whom the Empress addressed could scarcely repress a laugh at this singular request, and assured her Majesty that there was nothing similar to that now in her wardrobe; to which the Empress replied, with an air of regret, that she would have really liked to see again one of her old reticules, and that the years had brought great changes. The jewels of the Empress Josephine could hardly have been contained in the reticule of Madame de Beauharnais, however long or deep it might have been; for the jewel case which had belonged to Queen Marie

Antoinette, and which had never been quite full, was too small for the Empress. One day, when she wished to exhibit all her ornaments to several ladies who expressed a desire to see them, it was necessary to prepare a large table on which to place the caskets; and, as this table was not sufficient, several other pieces of furniture were also covered with them.

Good to excess, as everyone knows, sympathetic beyond all expression, generous even to prodigality, the Empress made the happiness of all who surrounded her; loving her husband with a devotion which nothing ever changed, and which was as deep in her last moments as at the period when Madame Beauharnais and General Bonaparte made to each other a mutual avowal of their love. Josephine was long the only woman loved by the Emperor, as she well deserved to have ever been; and for several years the harmony of this imperial household was most touching. Attentive, loving, and entirely devoted to Josephine, the Emperor took pleasure in embracing her neck, her figure, giving her taps, and calling her 'ma grosse bete'; all of which did not prevent, it is true, his being guilty of some infidelities, but without failing otherwise in his conjugal duties. On her side the Empress adored him, sought by every means to please him, to divine his wishes, and to forestall his least desires.

At first she gave her husband cause for jealousy. Having been strongly prejudiced against her by indiscreet reports, during the campaign of Egypt, the Emperor on his return had explanations with her, which did not always end without lamentations and violent scenes; but peace was soon restored, and was thereafter very rarely broken, for the Emperor could not fail to feel the influence of so many attractions and such loveliness.

The Empress had a remarkable memory, of which the Emperor often availed himself; she was also an excellent musician, played well on the harp, and sang with taste. She had perfect tact, an exquisite perception of what was suitable, the soundest, most infallible judgment imaginable, and, with a disposition always lovely, always the same, indulgent to her enemies as to her friends, she restored peace wherever there was quarrel or discord. When the Emperor was vexed with his brothers or other persons, which often happened, the Empress spoke a few words, and everything was

settled. If she demanded a pardon, it was very rare that the Emperor did not grant it, however grave the crime committed; and I could cite a thousand examples of pardons thus solicited and obtained. One occurrence which is almost personal to me will sufficiently prove how all-powerful was the intercession of this good Empress.

Her Majesty's head valet being one day a little affected by the wine he had taken at a breakfast with some friends, was obliged, from the nature of his duties, to be present at the time of their Majesties' dinner, and to stand behind the Empress in order to take and hand her the plates. Excited by the fumes of the champagne, he had the misfortune to utter some improper words, which, though pronounced in a low tone, the Emperor unfortunately overheard. His Majesty cast lightning glances at M. Frere, who thus perceived the gravity of his fault; and, when dinner was over, gave orders to discharge the impudent valet, in a tone which left no hope and permitted no reply.

Monsieur Frere was an excellent servant, a gentle, good, and honest man; it was the first fault of this kind of which he could be accused, and consequently he deserved indulgence. Application was made to the grand marshal, who refused to intercede, well knowing the inflexibility of the Emperor; and many other persons whom the poor man begged to intercede for him having replied as the grand marshal had done, M. Frere came in despair to bid us adieu. I dared to take his cause in hand, with the hope that by seizing a favorable moment I might succeed in appeasing his Majesty. The order of discharge required M. Frere to leave the palace in twenty-four hours; but I advised him not to obey it, but to keep himself, however, constantly concealed in his room, which he did. That evening on retiring, his Majesty spoke to me of what had passed, showing much anger, so I judged that silence was the best course to take; and therefore waited; but the next day the Empress had the kindness to tell me that she would be present at her husband's toilet, and that, if I thought proper to open the matter, she would sustain me with all her influence. Consequently, finding the Emperor in a good humor, I spoke of M. Frere; and depicting to his Majesty the despair of this poor man, I pointed out to him the reasons which might excuse the impropriety of his conduct. "Sire," said I, "he is a good man, who has no fortune, and supports a numerous family; and if he has to

quit the service of her Majesty the Empress, it will not be believed that it was on account of a fault for which the wine was more to be blamed than he, and he will be utterly ruined." To these words, as well as to many other suggestions, the Emperor only replied by interruptions, made with every appearance of a decided opposition to the pardon which I had requested. Fortunately the Empress was good enough to come to my assistance, and said to her husband in her own gentle tones, always so touching and full of expression, "Mon ami, if you are willing to pardon him, you will be doing me a favor." Emboldened by this powerful patronage, I renewed my solicitations; to which the Emperor at last replied abruptly, addressing himself to both the Empress and myself, "In short, you wish it; well, let him stay then."

Monsieur Frere thanked me with his whole heart, and could hardly believe the good news which I brought him; and as for the Empress, she was made happy by the joy of this faithful servant, who gave her during the remainder of his life every proof of his entire devotion. I have been assured that, in 1814, on the departure of the Emperor for the Island of Elba, Monsieur Frere was by no means the last to blame my conduct, the motive of which he could not possibly know; but I am not willing to believe this, for it seems to me that in his place, if I thought I could not defend an absent friend, I should at least have kept silence.

As I have said, the Empress was extremely generous, and bestowed much in alms, and was most ingenious in finding occasions for their bestowal. Many emigres lived solely on her benefactions; she also kept up a very active correspondence with the Sisters of Charity who nursed the sick, and sent them a multitude of things. Her valets were ordered to go in every direction, carrying to the needy the assistance of her inexhaustible benevolence, while numerous other persons also received each day similar commissions; and all these alms, all these multiplied gifts which were so widely diffused, received an inestimable value from the grace with which they were offered, and the good judgment with which they were distributed. I could cite a thousand instances of this delicate generosity.

Monsieur de Beauharnais had at the time of his marriage to Josephine a natural daughter named Adele. The Empress reared her as if she had been her own daughter, had her carefully educated, gave her a generous dowry, and married her to a prefect of the Empire.

If the Empress showed so much tenderness for a daughter who was not her own, it is impossible to give an idea of her love and devotion to Queen Hortense and Prince Eugene, which devotion her children fully returned; and there was never a better or happier mother. She was very proud of her children, and spoke of them always with an enthusiasm which seemed very natural to all who knew the Queen of Holland and the Vice-King of Italy. I have related how, having been left an orphan at a very early age by the Revolutionary scaffold, young Beauharnais had gained the heart of General Bonaparte by an interview in which he requested of him his father's sword, and that this action inspired in the General a wish to become acquainted with Josephine, and the result of that interview, all of which events are matters of history. When Madame de Beauharnais had become the wife of General Bonaparte, Eugene entered on a military career, and attached himself immediately to the fortunes of his step-father, whom he accompanied to Italy in the capacity of aide-de-camp. He was chief of squadron in the chasseurs of the Consular Guard, and at the immortal battle of Marengo shared all the dangers of the one who took so much pleasure in calling him his son. A few years later the chief of squadron had become Vice-King of Italy, the presumptive heir of the imperial crown (a title which, in truth, he did not long preserve), and husband of the daughter of a king.

The vice-queen (Augusta Amelia of Bavaria) was handsome and good as an angel. I happened to be at Malmaison on the day the Empress received the portrait of her daughter-in-law, surrounded by three or four children, one upon her shoulder, another at her feet, and a third in her arms, all of whom had most lovely faces. The Empress, seeing me, deigned to call me to admire with her this collection of charming heads; and I perceived that, while speaking, her eyes were full of tears. The portraits were well painted, and I had occasion later to find that they were perfect likenesses. From this time the only question was playthings and rare articles of all sorts to be bought for these dear children, the Empress going in person to

select the presents she desired for them, and having them packed under her own eyes.

The prince's valet has assured me that, at the time of the divorce, Prince Eugene wrote his wife a very desponding letter, and perhaps expressed in it some regret at not being an adopted son of the Emperor, to which the Princess replied most tenderly, saying, among other things, "It is not the heir of the Emperor whom I married and whom I love, but it is Eugene de Beauharnais." The Prince read this sentence and some others in the presence of the person from whom I have these facts, and who was touched even to tears. Such a woman deserved more than a throne.

After that event, so grievous to the heart of the Empress, and for which she never found consolation, she left Malmaison no more, except to make a few visits to Navarre.

Each time that I returned to Paris with the Emperor, I had no sooner arrived than my first duty was to go to Malmaison, though I was rarely the bearer of a letter from the Emperor, as he wrote to Josephine only on extraordinary occasions. "Tell the Empress I am well, and that I wish her to be happy," were almost invariably the parting words of the Emperor as I set out. The moment I arrived the Empress quitted everything to speak to me; and I frequently remained an hour and often two hours with her; during which time there was no question of anything save the Emperor. I must tell her all that he had suffered on the journey, if he had been sad or gay, sick or well; while she wept over the details as I repeated them, and gave me a thousand directions regarding his health, and the cares with which she desired I should surround him. After this she deigned to question me about myself, my prospects, the health of my wife, her former protegee; and at last dismissed me, with a letter for his Majesty, begging me to say to the Emperor how happy she would be if he would come to see her.

Before his departure for Russia, the Empress, distressed at this war, of which she entirely disapproved, again redoubled her recommendations concerning the Emperor, and made me a present of her portrait, saying to me, "My good Constant, I rely on you; if the Emperor were sick, you would inform me of it, would you not? Conceal nothing from me, I love him so much."

Certainly the Empress had innumerable means of hearing news of his Majesty; but I am persuaded that, had she received each day one hundred letters from those near the Emperor, she would have read and reread them with the same avidity.

When I had returned from Saint-Cloud to the Tuileries, the Emperor asked me how Josephine was, and if I found her in good spirits; he received with pleasure the letters I brought, and hastened to open them. All the time I was traveling, or on the campaign in the suite of his Majesty, in writing to my wife, I spoke of the Emperor, and the good princess was delighted that she showed my letters to her. In fact, everything having the least connection with her husband interested the Empress to a degree which proved well the singular devotion that she still felt for him after, as before, their separation. Too generous, and unable to keep her expenses within her income, it often happened that the Empress was obliged to send away her furnishers unpaid the very day she had herself fixed for the settlement of their bills; and as this reached the ears of the Emperor on one occasion, there ensued a very unpleasant scene between the Empress and himself, ending in a decision, that in future no merchant or furnisher should come to the chateau without a letter from the lady of attire or secretary of orders; and this plan, once decided upon, was followed very closely until the divorce. During this explanation the Empress wept freely, and promised to be more economical, upon which the Emperor pardoned and embraced her, and peace was made, this being, I think, the last quarrel of this nature which disturbed the imperial household.

I have heard that after the divorce, the allowance of the Empress having been exceeded, the Emperor reproached the superintendent of Malmaison with this fact, who in turn informed Josephine. His kind-hearted mistress, much distressed at the annoyance which her steward had experienced, and not knowing how to establish a better order of things, assembled a council of her household, over which she presided in a linen dress without ornament; this dress had been made in great haste, and was used only this once. The Empress, whom the necessity for a refusal always reduced to despair, was continually besieged by merchants, who assured her that they had made such or such a thing expressly for her own use, begging her not to return it because they would not be able to dispose of it; in

consequence of which the Empress kept everything they brought, though they afterwards had to be paid for.

The Empress was always extremely polite in her intercourse with the ladies of her household; and a reproach never came from those lips which seemed formed to say only pleasant things; and if any of her ladies gave her cause of dissatisfaction, the only punishment she inflicted was an absolute silence on her part, which lasted one, two, three, or even eight days, the time being longer or shorter according to the gravity of the fault. And indeed this penalty, apparently so mild, was really very cruel to many, so well did the Empress know how to make herself adored by those around her.

In the time of the Consulate, Madame Bonaparte often received from cities which had been conquered by her husband, or from those persons who desired to obtain her intercession with the First Consul, quantities of valuable furniture, curiosities of all kinds, pictures, stuffs, etc. At first these presents delighted Madame Bonaparte greatly; and she took a childish pleasure in having the cases opened to find what was inside, personally assisting in unpacking them, and rummaging through all these pretty things. But soon these consignments became so considerable, and were so often repeated, that it was found necessary to place them in an apartment, of which my father-in-law kept the key, and where the boxes remained untouched until it pleased Madame Bonaparte to have them opened.

When the First Consul decided that he would take up his residence at Saint-Cloud, my father-in-law was obliged to leave Malmaison, and install himself in the new palace, as the master wished him to take charge there.

Before leaving Malmaison, my father-in-law rendered an account to Madame Bonaparte of everything committed to his care, and all the cases which were piled up from floor to ceiling in two rooms were opened in her presence. Madame Bonaparte was astonished at such marvelous riches, comprising marbles, bronzes, and magnificent pictures, of which Eugene, Hortense, and the sisters of the First Consul received a large part, and the remainder was used in decorating the apartments of Malmaison.