

scattered maps of the French provinces lay before him, to which he ever and anon referred. He was alone, and so intently was his mind occupied, that De Lorinval had been several minutes in the room before he was observed.

"Ha!" exclaimed the Emperor, as he bent over his papers, "they thought that the sovereignty of such a spot as this would suffice. Fools! they should have removed every vestige of royalty—better for them had they not given me a foot of earth. Elba!" he repeated, with a scornful laugh, "why, yes! it is a right royal territory, at least for him who but a few months since held the *actual* dominion of Europe! But they shall find that the eagle submits not tamely to bondage. While he breathes the free air of heaven, and has still mountain heights before him, he cannot, will not, wear a chain—no, he will again wing his lofty flight even over the heads of these self-exulting schemers!" His soliloquy was here interrupted—his quick ear caught a motion of De Lorinval's, who was unwilling to continue unobserved, knowing how dangerous might be an undesired intrusion on the privacy of princes.

"What, De Lorinval! you here!" exclaimed Napoleon, somewhat angrily.

"Yes, sire, I have been here some time!" replied the colonel, judging that candor was his best course. "I was given to understand that your Majesty desired my attendance, but seeing you so deeply engaged, I was unwilling to disturb you!"

The momentary cloud passed away, and Napoleon was again calm.

"I sent for you, Colonel De Lorinval, as one of my most trustworthy adherents, to consult with you on a plan which has been revolving in my mind during some days."

He paused, and De Lorinval took the opportunity to express in a few words his grateful sense of the honor done him.

"Now, tell me candidly, Colonel," the Emperor resumed, "do you consider this island a meet sovereignty for Napoleon? Is it an area of sufficient extent for the exercise of that mind whose single power has shaken all Europe to its centre, until her princes and potentates have tottered on their thrones? Say, must the Emperor of the French people, the head of the French army, must he remain cooped up here, where mean, dastardly jealousy has placed him?"

Seldom, indeed, was it that Napoleon deigned to speak of himself with praise—his pride was too deeply seated, too lofty in its character to be displayed in words—and as for his ambitious designs, they were ever kept confined to his own

bosom, except, inasmuch as he required to explain them to the agents by whose assistance they were to be carried into effect. Now, however, the case was different—he was obliged to remind his dependents of the glory they had seen around him in times past, in order to excite their drooping courage. It was necessary, also, to awaken their wonted confidence in himself, and in the resources of his own mind, for even now that restless spirit was at work projecting a new enterprise.

De Lorinval was taken somewhat by surprise, by the novelty of Napoleon's address; quickly recovering his self-command, however, he replied:

"That every true Frenchman mourns your Majesty's *seclusion*"—he paused at the word, for he could not bring himself to say *confinement*—"in Elba, there is not, cannot be the slightest doubt—would that it could be put an end to!"

"And why not, De Lorinval?" interposed the Emperor. "What is there to prevent me from landing again on the shores of France—once there, and a few days will see me again at the head of Europe's first army?"

De Lorinval gave an involuntary exclamation of surprise.

"You seem surprised, De Lorinval! but your surprise will cease when I explain all."

Here he entered into a full explanation of his views, and the means by which he hoped to fulfil them. The case was certainly a desperate one. De Lorinval was far from being blind to the numerous obstacles which might impede their way, but Napoleon was again to lead—the object in view was to restore him to his throne, and all the enthusiasm of the soldier was again called forth.

"Yes!" he exclaimed, "the attempt must be made, whether defeat and death, or glorious victory be ours. Our leader will be still the victor of Lodi—him whom we have so often followed to victory. France, now drooping and depressed, will arise in her might; even as though animated by one soul, she will open her arms to welcome back her chosen chief, and the minions of the allied kings who have dared to usurp an authority over Frenchmen, shall be driven from our shores! Yes, sire, I am ready to follow where you lead!"

"Have you then forgotten the unexampled sufferings to which our army was exposed on the frozen soil of Muscovy, and all through my shortsightedness, as men say! Surely the remembrance of Leipsic has not already faded from your memory—you witnessed those defeats—*say* you not to see them renewed?"

Napoleon smiled—it was a stern smile—as he