

"I didn't ask to be introduced," I observed, a little annoyed.

"Well, I offered to bring you to her; but she said, 'Another time.' Never mind, old fellow, perhaps there'll be a smash, and you'll have a chance of rescuing her and cutting out the Duke of Strelsau!"

No smash, however, happened, either to me or to Mme. de Mauban. I can speak for her as confidently as for myself; for when, after a night's rest in Dresden, I continued my journey she got into the same train. Understanding that she wished to be let alone, I avoided her carefully, but I saw that she went the same way as I did to the very end of my journey, and I took opportunities of having a good look at her, when I could do so unobserved.

As soon as we reached the Ruritanian frontier (where the old officer who presided over the customhouse favored me with such a stare that I felt surer than before of my Elphberg physiognomy) I bought the papers, and found in them news which affected my movements. For some reason, which was not clearly explained and seemed to be some-