THE PRINCESS MARITZA

By PERCY BREBNER.

CHAPTER VL

FRINA MAVROTINE GUEST. For some time Monsieur De Froi not provided for.

Where is she?" 'ne asked suddenly. "Alas, monsieur, I do not know, "She has powercuired about her, making the sign that has so long been used by her partisans to secure an answer. It ed Lord Cloverton. had no effect. I was told that I was mistaken, that no such lady as I had her in a gracious mood. described had enetered. Do you unhave been changed?"

De Froilette understood only too said gayly. well. At his very door were enemies, the more dangerous because they nad been partially admitted into his plans. He had himself given them reason for watching him, and the opportunity of doing so. That was past and beyend reparation, but this arch schemer was not the man to stand idly regretting a mistake. Even mistakes near Lord Cloverton," she said. might be used to advantage.

"I will dress, Francois," presently. "I had not intended to go to Court to-night, but this news compels me. De Frollette's face was suddenly

He did not speak, but Francois read the question in his eyes. "It is so, monsieur," he said, "The Princess Maritza is in Sturatzberg."
And now shall we find the Prin-

cess, monsteur?" others to do that. Matters will be

for our benefit in the end, Francois. Quickly I must dress." De Froilettte dined alone and dis as soon as possible. A portrait of

and he got up and placed it beside him, contemplating it thoughtfully as he sipped his wine. "If we succeed," he mused, "there

won. This Englishman may win it riage is ready waiting for me?" for me. In a revolution a King's sider the course of events in such a the slightest of recognitions the amcase—"who knows? My reward bassador, got into his carriage. might come the easier. There would be few shelters open to her. Only in cess or failure otherwise, what does habit of remembering favors." it matter? I shall win. The paths to the eyes of the portrait, finding an thing which might affect me, will you n them. This man of action tell me?" was a dreamer too.

reing a well-turned compliment to one flistrust one-Jules De Frollette." fair lady, or meeting another's pleas-

Presently Lord Cloverton times to greet acquaintances. He, too, was in excellent humor; but to the Western Gate." then 'ne seldom allowed people to

said to himself, going toward the am-

De Froilette. Ah, a private word is

"My lord, you have my greatest esteem, as you are aware. Lord Cloverton bowed

"If, as a loval Frenchman, I would see France predominant in the affairs

"Most natural indeed and monsiour I say frankly France is playing a wery worthy part.

I am convinced that British policy is

That would indeed be a

said De Frollette. "So my lord, any will prompt me We have all a veln

"I am honored by your confidence, and you will be welcome at the Em-

ered his voice as he leaned toward the ambassador: "The Princess

signed to keep her out of the way while the present unsetting feeling in Walfaria lasts; is it not so?

lady at present in Australia, or where ever she may be, is not the Prinbut a substitute. It needs very powerful friends to carry through such a deception as that:

Lord Cloverton turned sharply ward him, and, as Francois had done. De Freilette answered the unasked

Yes, my lord; Princess Maritaa is

doubtless take means to find out colored tresses. Presently the door Command me if I can help you in opened, and on elderly woman enter- has succeeded in drawing this English any way."
"I thank you for the information. you are not mistaken, the way-

child has been very ill advised. I guther, monsieur, that your busipetals on the carpet. as a rising in the Princess Mae favor to take place?"
ave I not said that there is "Just come." "Then bring him in, bring him in, and fragrance Why do you wait?" exclaimed the "Captain El

Lord Cloverton smiled, and together girl, half-rising from her reclining they crossed the vestibule.

Their snort colleguy had not been overheard, nor had their presence presence lette remained silent. The return of been particularly noticed there exthe Princess was a contingency he Mayrodin. She had reached the petulant moods of her mistress.

nead of the stairs as De Froilette had leaned confidentially forward to-ward the ambassador, and she hastily Francois answered. "She has power-ful friends in Sturatzberg, and they conceal her well. I saw her for one they talked. Se had good reason to moment in Konigsplats. She was be curious regarding such a confisione, and entered a shop there. I dence between two such men, and followed her, but she was gone. I while she laughed and talked she called myself her servant, and in- watched them. She did not move un-

Desmond Ellery met her and found "Have I quite pardoned you for derstand, monsieur, the sign must mistakling me for another woman that night in the Altstrasse?" she

"I hope so; indeed, I thought so." "I am sorry. I ought to have reerved some of my displeasure." "Why?"

"So that I might demand a favor. You have but to demand, Coun-

"Then stay with me and keep m "What! Has he incurred your displeasure, too? "Must I, give reasons for my de

"Then you trust me?"

for a moment she seemed satisfied. and then she turned toward him. "Is there a meaning underneath that? Do you trust no woman?"

"I have learnt my lessons in a hard school, Countess, I trust few, eitner men or women, and I have more knowledge of men than women. They followed Lord Cloverton cross the rooms, and she noticed every one to whom he spoke. Present-

missed the man who waited upon him ly he stood to watch the dancing for a moment, but he seemed to avoid any Queen Elena stood on a side table, person who might detain him in conversation for any length of time. "I think the ambassador will leave early so-night," the Countess 'said.

May I beg another favor, Captain is high place and distinction to be Ellery? Will you see that my car-Ellery went to do her bidding, wonlife is as other men's, dependent on dering why she was watching the amthe hazard of a die. If I read her bassador so keenly. It took him some time to find her servants, and as he And if we fail?"-he paused to con- returned he met Lord Cloverton. With

"The Embassy, quickly," he said. Countess Mayordin came down t defeat through Princess Maritza's stairs as Lord Cloverton drove away.

"I thank you." she said "I have a "I shall remember that you have a few desperate men who are pledgald so." Ellery answered. "Indeed, 1 ed to his service." to mountain peaks are ever rugged, said so." Ellery answered. "Indeed, 1 but men reach the summits. Why can even now ask one. Only this should I fall? The road to power afternoon Lord Cloverton was pleased may be closed against me, but the to tell me that he looked upon me as And he gazed in- an enemy. Should you discover any- she asked.

> "He said you were an enemy; then ed the man, men, so perchance the warning is un-"Did her Majesty bid you give me

that message?" Ellery asked. came idea. I have ideas of my own somemineing up the steps, pausing half a times. I have one now. If you are to his lodging, too; it would be well

ly human. Strictly speaking, his Frollette duty was to remain, lest the Queen and when he had gone she turned to bassador as he reached the vestibule. the Countess into her carriage and home so early?" seated himself beside her. She rethe evening touched his mission. Why Sturatzberg."
"By whom" ly interested in the movements of should she warn him against De Froilette, who was also deep in her Majesty's conflednce? The problem was

Frina Mayrodin was a far more important person in Sturatzberg than each other as they do, agree, Ellery imagined. It was not only at time to prepare for the storm. answered. "I am but a looker-on, Court that she was popular; she was must remain an absolute prisoner with certain business interests which besides the Lady Bountiful to the here for a while." pour. She was immensely wealthy, and her beautiful home by the riv-I see more clearly than some, my er in the southwest of the city, 'nad Frina answered. "Within an hour, sent away empty. The general crit-icism of her was that she was a pret-safe so long as you rem "And if you will allow me, my lord, frivolous perhaps, and possessed of a reputation for much more heart than head. She ar I have. No doubt De security seemed to take delight in such criti- played a frump card in telling Lord about her Majesty, and of those who danced together. The slightest confidential whisper near him attracted the pleased to fully merit it. But there was an berg. The task of finding you will idential whisper near him attracted the confidential white near the confidential white ne fully merit it. But there was an- berg learn that I have received notification other side to her character which occupy the minister's atention for a his attention, and more than once try." that I am likely to be removed from few persons ever got even a glimpse little while, and if De Frollette is caused a blush to mount to a pretty into admiration. There were few celve it." clubs and societies in Stuartzberg. where discontent was fostered and Princess. not known to Frina Mayrodin. She the western gate."

nies. A delicate attention to an hon- and who was content to be guided in suite of rooms in Frina Mayrodin's power Do not be impatient." house, and this evening she reclined one end of the room expectantly. Her night; do we advance?" hand was stretched out to a bowl of which she crushed and let fall. Some-tring of the girl's character seemed berg? Yet you are here. to be in the action. She was not even a suspicion that Jules De Froiweary, not worn out with the day's lette had been working in his own have been, but was waiting anxiously, and not in yours?" irritably even, for news, or for some- "True, Frina, we have advanced. in Sturatzsberg."

One's coming. Her hair had loosened Heaven help De Froilette when I by contact with the cushions, and fell touch power. Who knows what injustrat I do not know. You will about her shoulders in luxuriant copd-an English woman, plain in fea- Captain into his schemes."

ture and resolute in manners "You have been spoiling your flowers," she said, seeing the scattered pisn, Maritan."

fools about me in such times as

"You haven't," the woman answer-"I was one when I came out of Devon to a neathen place like this; but that time is past," And she went to the door and beckoned to a man to come in. As he entered she went out, closing the door behind him.

When she had gone the man dropped swiftly on one-knee by the couch. "Well, Dumitru?"

"He returned to-day," said the man, ising and standing erect. "He went straight to the lodging of this English "And then?"

To Court, Princess." "And 'nis mission, Dumitru-was it n my interests think you?" The man made a fierce clicking sound with his togue.

"Ah, no, no, no; and again a hundred times no. He is for the Queen little, and for himself very much. Have you still a doubt, even now? A sudden death should be his re-

"Patience, Dumitru." "The English Captain had another visitor to-day—the British minis-

"This English Captain is in great requisition, it would seem," she said. "Aye, he is a man, I grant you that—strong, resolute and rides as though horse and rider were in one

"And honest Dumitur. I have looked into his face and thought him

the --- "Besides, honest or not, he "Our enemies must be swept aside," she said imperiously, as though not were hers.

"Thus, Princess," and the man's the keen, thin blade of a dagger which he carried in his cloak.
"Not without my command, Dumiru," she said hastily.

in her as was in him.

for our ends," she went on. "I have a way and you shall nelp me, Dumitur, some new pressure is to be brought of affairs to exploit his own plans, to bear upon him. We shall see how and Lord Cloverton tok the precauhe stands in this, whether firm or not, and may learn how to act ourselves." "He is ready to act when the token is given him," said Dumitur. "He has

"You are sure of this?" "Quite sure."

"Who will follow for love of him?" "They are of the kind who fol-

low more readily for money," answer-When he entered the palace that evening, De Froilette inquired whether Lord Clovering had arrived, and er Lord Covered in the pagalize rethoughts running in a new channel,

and while she mused Frina Mavro-Dumitur bowed low before her.

"Captain Ellery has returned early pen to-night, but should any messen-She was pretty, and Ellery was on- ger seek him we must know at once." "Go. Dumitur," said the Princess, should send for him; but he helped her companion: "What has brought broadcast.

"You, Maritza. I wondered whethfused to be serious as they drove er you had remained safely here, or other embassies, and there was some of the Altstrasse." through the city, and when Ellery whether you had again jeopardized consolation in tals. entered his lodging he was left to your cause by going so openly into the wonder at what point the incidents of streets. It is known that you are in

Lord Cloverton? and since she was Frollette's saw you, as you know. closely attached to the Queen, why You thought he woul believe himself, mistaken but I knew better. His master returned to-day and to-night found Monsieur De Froilette and Lord Cloverton in confidential conversation. When two men who hate each other as they do, agree, it is You

"You will not have to wait long," been called the beggars' paradise, for I warrant you, there wil be spies out those who asked charity were seldom in every quarter of the city to try ty woman, very adorable, a little What an advantage it is to have such

"It may be sent to him," said the

was conversant with their secret "The moment the token is given I from her would have sent many a am longing to put them into action. man to prison who walked the We are too cautious. Frina."

Your want of caution in going op-

"I have many friends in the city This person, at present, occupied a is the enemies who happen to be in

"So fast that we shall have run

work or pleasure, whichever it might interests for these two years past, ne's coming. Her hair had loosened Heaven help De Froilette when I

"Captain Ellery does not like De

"Never mind them. Has Dumitru fully from the bowl and held it to bome, Hannah?" sorbed for a moment in its beauty

Frins laughed, such a joy in he ugh the Princess looked at her "Yes, he came willingly, most will-

"He is a man. I am a woman;

fast. Tell me your plan." "It is strange," said the Princ you, once I met Captain Ellerey. I told him who I was, and promised him work for his sword should he ever come to Wallaria."

"I am a woman, and he is a man, the Princess answered.

For a moment the two women looked into each other's eyes. Then Frina looked down and straightened a fold of her dress, while Maritza bent to inhale the perfume of the flowers in the vase. The Princess did not tell her plan, and Frina Mavrodin forgot to question her.

> CHAPTER VII. THE TIME ARRIVES.

Within a short time of Lord Clo-

verton's return to the Embassy, spies and secret-service agents were abroad in the city endeavoring to discover the whereabouts of Princess Maritza. The ambassador at once tlegraphed to the foreign office in London and received the answer that the report of that she was certainly on her way to

Australia. This confident answer, how-ever, did not satisfy Lord Cloverton, in spite of the fact that no news of the Princess was forthc. That she could have returned to Sturatzberg without his knowledge. more, without the knowledge of any her out of the country, seemed impos-sible; but then in diplomacy it was "Can one judge so easily?" asked not all the impossible things which happened. He was too astute a man to undertake the undoubted ability of De Froilette. There were few men who probed more accurately the only the will, but the power to do so likely trend of future events, or who were quicker to recognize opportuni-ties and seize them than the Frenchdark eyes gleamed as he just showed man, and Lord Cloverton argued that he was far too clever a man to tell such an unlikely story merely to serve his own ends. He would know The man bowed low, disappointed tale would have the effect of draw-

that the very improbability of the perhaps that the same spirit was not ing attention to himself and his actions. So, whether the report were "We may use this English Captain true or not De Frollette believed it, and evidently saw danger to himself in the presence of Princess Maritza. when the time comes. That Lord At the same time he might perceive Cloverton has visited him shows that a favorable opportunity in the state

> tion to have the Frenchman under careful observation. The unexpected information had also caused the ambassador to reconsider Captain Ellery's position in Sturatzberg. It was quite possible that he knew more about the Princess than any one else. He was the kind of man who would have nerve and determination enough to attempt a desperate venture, and having little to lose and all to win, might go far toward success. He and De Froilette apparently held little communication with each other; the characteristics of the two men weree antagonistic; and the Englishman might

be quite capable of playing a deep It was a sleepless night for the ambassador. This was just such a color came into her own. cuse which might serve to snap dipclouds of war from the Ural range though your own lips spoke it. thing seemed certain, De Froilette man." had not repeated his information No intimation reached Lord Cloverton that the report had Ellery, with a smile. "I am barely even been whispered in any of the forgiven yet for the mysterious lady

day. Wherever the Princess was, her secret was well kept, probably because only a few persons had been admitted That lynx-eyed servant of De into it, and it seemed evident that no special movement had taken place in her favor, or had been arranged for. Some bold coup d'etat might be in contemplation, and although the many and diverse interests in the you admired her." country were probably sufficient to yet such an attempt might be the minutes, perhaps. She wa one thing needed to fan the smoul- girl, and playing truant.

die out-they are always smouldering. seen her since." loverton closely when he went to you came to Wallaria?" the palace that night, would have been struck by his particular alert- thinks!" exclaimed Ellerey. "Now 1 ness. He was observant of the com- understand his attitude more clearly. position of the different groups in the rooms, of those who were chiefly she said. of Her profound knowledge of cur- ready, he wil seize the opportunity to woman's cheeks by suddenly surprisrent politics would have startled strike his blow. That is why I of ing a murmured love passage meant wondered. He was not one of those Lord Cloverton, and her capacity fered to drive Captain Ellery to his for no other ears, but her own. To who believe that they have the pow-for intrigue and scheming would have lodging. If the token is to be given those to whom he spoke he succeedastonished even Monsteur De Frollette to-night he will not be there to re- ed in giving the impression that he companion's sudden question and athimself free, but he managed to sugsecret plans discussed, which were "That is why Dumitur watches by gest that it was not business, but but they were not spoken. Instead some pleasure he anticipated.

was conversant with their secret "The moment the token is given I He glanced round all the rooms in signs, their aims, and their means, must know," said Maritas. "I have a search of Captain Ellerey, who eithand knew by sight most of their in- plan. I have had plenty of lonely er had not yet arrived, or 'nad al- cy after ten minutes' conversation! fluential members A single word hours in which to mature plans, I ready retired into some quiet corner, Oh, you jest and laugh at me." pobably with the Countess Mayrodin. Heve."

Streets freely. Pechaps in all Sturatz"Exactly," said the Frenchman. berg, there was only one person who enly into the city has nearly ruined which commanded the entrance of the accove.

"Making a tour of the English cologave her credit for such knowledge, us, Maritza."

"I have been seeking you. sador presently saw Frina Mavrodin Ellerey," he said. "True, and many enemies; and it on the arm of an attache of the Aus- commands your attention. trian embassy, an offshost of a prince-ly house who, rumor said, had al-"Over-caution may be as fatal as ready been twice refused by the fair at full length among the cushions of impatience." Maritza answered. "We lady, and was only awaiting an opa low couch, and watched a door at should advance a step each day, each portuity to adventure his case for a quarreling with you for laughing at said in a low tone: third time. He was evidently per- me. Shall I take you back to the suading her to dance with him, and ball-room?" flowers in a table by her side, and quickly to keep abreast of affairs she was laughingly protesting, pershe plucked a petal at intervals shortly. A few weeks ago had you haps promising to do so later in the evening. She was, however, not Ellerey left her. averse to his company, for she palpably kept 'nim by her side, and they gether, the mon extremely happy, the woman watchful and rather pre-

For half an hour or more she remained there, evidentlusing the Austrian's presence to keep herself free from other companions. Several spoke to her, but since the attache did not move away, the new arrivals Cloverton noticed faat the expression of her face suddenly changed She looked at him, or rather beyond him, and turning to discover the Princess seemed to have treasured commands."

the memory of that meeting: Ellerey "You have been sent or ing the room toward her. He also be-admitted that it was the cause of his came aware that Baron Peirsscu was coming to Sturatzberg. Frink Mayrotain brigand Vasilier from

me credit for greater age than does the feeling of youth which is still in me. I am young enough, even now, to recognize love, and to take an interest in it—in others, or course." Baron Petrescu snrugged shoulders rather contemptuously.

"The moth floats to the candle. and usually gets burnt" he said. "Would not the todestone be the more apposite simile?" asked Lord Sturatsberg?"
Cloverton. "In that case the attrac"None that ion brings no hurt, Baron."

"Time will show which is the best simile," was the answer, "He in- rare a circumstance that you must seems," replied the ambassador. "Indeed, Captain Ellerey interests many she answered.

"I trust his courage is equal to his ambifion," said the baron with smile. "There are others striving for the same prize, my lord, who do not easily accept defeat, and are content to pin their honor to the sword's

"Jealous," said Lord Cloverton to himself as the Baron turned away, still with a smile upon his face, but with a movement of his shoulders which suggested an angry bird rufher return to Wallaria was absurd, fling its feathers. "He means mischief. Ellerey may find his hands fuller than he expects, if the Baron's weapon is as ready as his tongue. Sentiment compels me to wish my countryman victory, but politically-ah! a cunning thrust which would lay him aside for a few weeks would be very convenient to me, and pernaps of those who were so eager to keep not the worst thing which could happen for him." And Lord Cloverton went toward the ball-room.

The Countess and her Cavalier had disappeared.
"Are you still watching the ambas-sador?" Ellerey had asked, as she placed her hand upon his arm.

"Then let us get out of the crowd. Few people seem to know of the alcove off the ball-room."

"And why such a desires for solitude, Captain Ellerey?" she said, seating herself in a corner and making room for him beside her. "Not solitude, Countess, but restful companionship. I am not desirus of

said, I imagine he watches me pretty understand his action, Countess; it closely. "And is as closery watched, replied.

that affects me?" Ellerey asked after She hesitated. "Not directly."

"Indirectly, then?" "Perhaps, a little. It is a small is all-powerful." matter, but it interested me. It has nothing to do with Sturatzberg, but with England."

Ellerey was silent. Cloverton have repeated his story? "May I know the nature of thecrime is it?-which is imputed to "It is no crime, Captain Ellerey-

rather a romance, I should have repudlated the idea of a crime in connection with you "Countess, that is the kindest thing you have ever said to me."

She looked into his face, and the nations of Europe in strife, an ex- is it not the elemental part of friend "Are we not friends," she sa leaving the palace, I wil drive you to watch. I do not think it will hap-

"Unknown women are a dan subject between us, Countess,

but a very famous one-none than Princess Maritza of Wallaria "I have not only heard of her,

seen her and spoken to her.' "And admired her?" she asked. "Yes, her beauty and her indomitable courage."

"That is what I have heard, render any attempt abortive in itself, to hear. I only saw her once, for ten dering ashes into flame, starting a upon the downs one breezy morning, conflagration which would burn a hat blown away by the wind serv- tive land." throughout Europe. Such fires never ed for introduction, and I have never

"Ah! is that what Lord Cloverton

"Her story of the state of affin Wallaria certainly gave me

Ellerey looked at her quickly and titude startled him. More than one answer sprang to his lips ready to trip lightly and pleasantly to her ears,

he laughted gayly and said: "A Princess and a poor Captain of orse, Countess? Such a flight of fan-There was a further question

her glance and attitude, but it was position not asked, for a man appeared at "I have been seeking you, Captain Ellerey," he said. "Her Majesty come with me?"

> "You wil pardon me, Countess. must make another opportunity of room, his guide suddenly pased and "No thank you. I am tired

The fact that he had been sent for

Ellerey rose at once

and the probable meaning of that inremained talking and laughing to- terview, did not take first place in Frina Mayrodin's thoughts for a time. to her question, trying to understand room, his guide left him there it when viewed in the light of the he went to inform the Queen Princess's declaration. Maritaa could deavored to surprise truth from Cap-tain Ellerey. Had she succeeded in table at which she had been writing. learning anything? Surely in such a Ellerey approacher her and bent over casual meeting no masting impression could have been formed, and yet love works in sudden and inex-plicable fashion sometimes. The Princess seemed to have treasured

now that she had sought the truto from Ellerey himself, she was still left in doubt, in a half-waking un-certainly, which had a sense of pain

It was some time thought that Ellerey was with the Queen came uppermost in her mind, a urging her to be on the alert. She I was in the act of rising when a shadow fell upon her, and Lord Clo-

"None that I ame aware of, my "And yet you are alone. It is so

pardon my astonishment." "Even such a frivolous person as m welcome solltude sometimes, "I would not allow my deare friend to malign you, Countess," said the ambassador, seating himself be-side her, "I expected to find Captain

Ellerey with you." "You wish to speak with him?" "Yes, but it can wait," answered Lord Cloverton carelessly. is the result of skillfully seizing opportunity, and in finding you alone an opportunity comes to me. Will you spare me a moment?

She bowed a smfling asquiesence as though the question were unnec-

"Like me, Countess, I am sure you take little interest in uninteresting people, therefore you must have found this Captain Ellerey interesting. So have I-so interesting, indeed, that I have wondered why he came to Wallaria."

"He has not given so much of his confidence as you appear to imagine, "e has not told you! Ah, then.

will, confidence, Countess in confidence. "I understand, and I shall respect it," she answered eager to learn what explanation the ambassador would

"He had enemies in England who made certain pharges asginst him which were absolutely without foundation but so skillfully had they been manipulated that Captain Ellerey was unable to prove them false. His nature is an impatient one, and in ancompanionship. I am not desirus of ger he turned his back upon England living perpetually under the eye of and came to Sturatzberg. In Walla-Cloverton, and, after what he ria there were possibilities. I can was a natural one in a man of his independent character, but it was which had been circulated. Now. Countess, influential friends have taken up his case, and he ought to go back to England.

"But why tell this to me, my lord?" "A woman's persuasion, Countess,

She looked at him quickly. "But you have told me this in confidence. How can I approach the subject and yet keep confidence?" "You flatter me most delicately by asking my advice on such a matter. is it not true that women can frame estions so that a man is compelled to answer?"

"Exactly," he answered. "When the questions are asked by one particular woman." she said.

actly, Countess." "But as it happens, Lord Cloverton, I am not the one particular woman.

countenance toward her. "My dear lady, you do yourself gross injustice." The look he expected to find in her face he did not see there. He had believed himself possessed of one secret. He suddenly perceived that he had possibly discovered another -one that might be even more cer-

"If I am mistaken," he said slowly. every woman is a pleasant plaything a whispered word to his companion —one whose honor is for barter to he moved hastily among the people met the highest bidder. Such men may be advised to return to their na-

woman so am I not a plaything, my Any person who had watched Lord "It was for her sake, then, that lord. Has your philosophy no position which a woman may occupy between the two?"

"In this case I think not." "Such a small position as friendship, for instance," she said, rising. 'Captain Ellerey and I are fast friends."
"I hardly know whether I can

congratulate you," said Lord Cloverton, rising, too, and snowing no sign "Yu will pardon me, but I fear I

may have been missed," and then as the stairs?" they passed into the ball-room hewent on, "I will respect your confidence, but may I suggest that your fairs may be useful to him? not advise him yourself? At present he is with the Queen; when I see him again I will tell him that you wish to speak with him." "I have already given him my advice, Countess. I thought to do aim a service by sending him a more poweradvocate." And the ambassador left her and went quickly toward the vestibule. As she turned, Monsieur

too was hastening toward the vesti-When Desmond Ellerey had followed the messenger across the ball-

De Freilette bowed low to her; he

"Her Majesty is in her private apartment, and I am instructed to take you there.

me this way? He turned from the ball-room and led Ellerey along a corridor and through a door, which he looked after him. They passed up one corridor and down another for a little distance She was considering Ellery's answer and then ushering film into an ante he went to inform the Queen of his arrival. In a few moments he re-turned, and, holding open a door, bid

"The time has come,

him enter.

lorey," she said. "You are ready?"
"I am only waiting your Majesty's
commands."
"You have been sent once or twice,

claim that we in Sturathberg are ready by carrying a token to Vasilici, which I will give you, and which you must guard with your life, Captain Ellerey shadow fell upon her, and Lord Cloverton stood in the entrance.

"Alone, Countess!" he exclaimed, is rife in the country, and spies high in every corner of it. Even now there may be some setting out upon the read to bar your way to Vasilici. But for the trusted bearer of this token await high honors had great reward."

"This is the land of our adop-tion, and by this service are you not proving yourself a worthy son?" "Your Majesty commands. I a content to trust to your Majesty for my reward; but one thing troubles

"What is that?" "The revolution—for such it must be—wil heat men's blood against the foreigner. May I ask consideration for Lord Cloverton and his staff at the

British embassy?" "You have our word that no harm shall come to them. We are not fight-ing embassies, but the riff-raff which has come into our land-the adventurers who bear themselves as though they were our masters, been under an iron fall from the palace to the hovel. It is against this subjection that we rebel. You are prepared to fight and win with us." "I am waiting for the token, your Majesty.'

"I love a man of few words," she said; "and as surely as success will come, I pledge my word that the ribbon of the Golden Lion of Sturatzberb shal be yours, Captain Ellerey, and with it revenue sufficient to bear it fittingly. This is the token," she went on, baring her arms, on which, just above the elbow, was a brace-let of iron, a chain joining together four medallions. "It is an ancient treasure of Wallaria worn, it is said, by savage kings in this country before ever the Romans had trampled it with their all-conquering legions. I will seal it in this box, which you must guard with your lie and bear to Vasilici. Seeing it, he will welcome you as he would ourself. With him return triumphantly to Sturatzberg, and if a rabble of rebellious soldiery, led away by traitors who are among us, stand in your way, I can trust foolish. It gave credence to the tales path through it. Will you unclasp the bracelet for me? the fastening is difficult."

As sheeheld out her arm the door opened, and the servant who had fetched Ellerey entered.

"Monsieur De Froilette, your Maisty, has just informed me that his Malesty is on his way here." For one moment the Queen stood undecided.

"Do not unfasten it, Captain Ellerey," she said, laying a detaining hand upon his. "To-morrow, some hand upon his. time before midnight, it shall be sent to you. Not to your lodging that might be dangerus. Wait for it at "Some men, perhaps."
"Captain Ellerey, I think," said the repute in the Bergenstrasse, which same messenger who came to you tonight shall bring it, sealed as I have said. Then make all speed to Vasilici, who lies in the neighborhood of Drekner Pass. Now go. Quickly. He

will show you the way. It was by a different way they re-"The Toison d'Or about midnight," The ambassador turned a smiling said his guide as he stood to open a door, "and monsieur would do well to leave his lodging by the western gate as soon as he has prepared for

the journey. This passage monsieur to the vestibule." As he went toward the staircase, determined to leave the palace at appeared to follow the Baron like leaning against the marble balustrade tainly used to his own advantage, and talking to one of his companions. he made haste to turn it to account. There were certain men at Court who appeared to follow the BBaron like "Captain Ellerey sinks in my estima- his shadow. He was watching all tion as a stone in water. If I am those who left the palace as carewrong your displeasure should urge fully as on a former occasion he had his return to England, for he is no scrutinized all those who entered it, fit cataller for Countess Mayrodin, He and again Ellery's annearance seemed to release him from his labors. With

> who were crossing to the stairs, and contriving to justle Ellerey, came to I am waiting, monsteur," he said. "For what?" "Your apology."

"You jest with me. I have none to make. "Monsieur is slow to appreciate." said the Baron, with a curl of his lip. "He forgets that he has stared most insufferably at me on many occasions, and that now he attempts to bar my progress."

quarreling. Will monsieur oblige by standing out of my way, or must I be at the trouble of throwing him down The answer came quickly and was to the point. With a sudden sweep

"I appreciate that you wish to quarel with me." Ellerey answered

bluntly, "but I am in no mood for

of his arm Baron Petrescu struck Eilerey sharply across the face with his glove. Perhaps there was something in Elerey's expression which made the Baron's companion step hastily to his Experience may have taught him that Englishmen have a strange habit of punishing such insults on the spot with a total disreaged of all fore malities. Perhaps it was his action which prevented Ellerey carrying out his intention. He drew himself up to his full height, the air whistling through his clenched teeth as he caust is breath, and then he bowed slightly to the Baron, who turned

friend, so that we may arrange to this affair to-morrow. "Way not to-night? I never sleep

upon my quarrels. "Is not the choice with me?"

"Certainly, but—"
"Then I say to-night," Ellerey "There was a moon when I entered the palace."

The man shrugged his shoulders disgusted at the utter barbarity

these Englishmen. "The name of your friend, then could think of no one to whom he was desirous of intrusting an affair of this kind. Before he could reply,

"Can I be of service? The speaker was an Englishman and a stranger to him.