

serve it or not—we do not find the saints any happier than the sinners for that matter—but with all her sin, we must pity this woman; we must see her in all the enforced humiliation of a state ball, where half the company looked at her with averted eyes, while the other half followed the loving eyes of the Czar, who always ordered her to dance in the set next to the royal cotillon, and who distinguished her on these occasions by speaking to her twice; while at her feet sat the royal Chamberlain, obedient to her slightest wish. We must see her in that summer palace, with finally the husband of her heart wholly at her feet with her two beautiful children playing about her. We must follow that lofty intellect and that courageous devotion to the Czar through the enormous labor that she imposed upon herself in his service. All his private correspondence, all her own, much of it done by Italians who knew no Russian, much of it with the head of a Nihilist organization who little suspected who was his correspondent—but who betrayed to her even the fatal plot by which the Emperor lost his life, or so far warned her that she was wretched.

It was in vain that she hung about Alexander's neck on that fatal Sunday morning, and begged of him not to go out. The hour of destiny had arrived and the Czar was obstinate. She had saved his life who knows how many times by her sleepless vigilance and she could save it no longer.

The woman who loved him best was warned, and sat trembling until the dreadful news was brought to her. His dying eyes were once more permitted to

see her, as he was brought, mangled and bleeding, to the Winter Palace. She stood at his bedside until the new Czar arrived; he, with one strong pitiless hand, pushed her into an adjoining room. The first act of his reign was to banish her from Russia.

We know not what kind friend took the insensible woman in charge, but we do know that in fifty-eight hours she was in Vienna. We do know that of all the millions who saw the dead Emperor lying in state, the woman whom he loved the best, his wife, whoever her faults may have been, was the only one not permitted to kiss his dead hand.

In this piece of cruelty the Emperor Alexander III. will probably be praised by severe moralists, but there will be here and there a tender heart, hating the sin but not the sinner, who will think differently.

At any rate, looking, as we must, upon all the defections from moral law, with the eyes of the sinner himself, we may well believe that the Princess Dolgorouki considers her love for the Czar the virtue of her life. She may have been very much mistaken—we are all apt to make mistakes—but she was true to her lights, as a Russian and a loving woman. She has expiated her virtue or her crime, as the case may be, with the most horrible sufferings that the human heart can know. She has lost that smile that so dazzled her in her school days, she has lost the father of her beautiful children, she has lost her place in the world, she is an exile and a broken-hearted wife, so we can afford, poor woman, to pity her.

CHAPTER XII.

CAPTURING A PRINCE'S HEART.

The French capital is, as everybody knows, the birth-place and chosen home of opera bouffe, which expresses certain phases of life in that city; its mockery, its gaiety, its sarcasm, its wild recklessness, its license, as no other kind of performance does or can. The witty and wicked, the indecorous and defiant spirit of unconventional women and rapid men, who consider Paris the Paradise in which their natures can revel unrestrained, find a delight in the music of Offenbach and Lecocq. It harmonizes with the sinful part of man's nature, soothe the bruised spots and exhilarates the parts which have not yet been numbed into insensibility by debauchery.

It is natural to expect that the interpreter of opera bouffe should be in sympathy and spirit with the feelings which this class of music portray. Further-

more, they must have experience to portray the various phases of life which enter into composition of opera bouffe. Since its introduction to the world it has been very fortunate in having women thoroughly imbued with its spirit, to stand sponsors for it. One of the first of these was Hortense Schneider. She began life as a flower girl, and managed to pick up an experience which served her excellent well in her subsequent career as a bouffist. She gained her fame in this line in 1867, the year of the Exhibition, when thousands flocked to see her "Grand Duchess." During that time she had princes and dukes at her feet, and was as reckless a heart-breaker as ever lived in Paris, which is saying a good deal. She was born at Bordeaux, her parents were laborers of German descent, and very early