occasionally attract its causal knowledge

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her, and had not yet noticed her. Lightly throwing
her arm around his neck, and letting herself sink upon his breast, and
then stroking his pale cheeks and glossy brown hair, with an expression
of unutterable love and tenderness, she said:

"I implore you, Bonaparte, do not mount the throne. Your wicked brother
Lucien will urge you to it, but do not listen to him."

Bonaparte laughed. "You are a little goose, poor Josephine," he said.
"It's the old dowagers of the Faubourg St. Germain, and your La
Rochefoucauld, more than all the rest, who tell you these wonderful
stories; but you worry me to death with them. Come, now, don't bother me
about them any more!"

Bonaparte had put off Josephine with a laugh and a jesting word, but he
nevertheless conversed earnestly and seriously with his most intimate
personal friends on the subject of his assuming the crown. In the course
of one of these interviews, Bourrienne said to him:

"As first consul, you are the leading and most famous man in all Europe;
whereas, if you place the crown upon your head, you will be only the
youngest in date of all the kings, and will have to yield precedence
to them."

Bonaparte's eyes blazed up with fiercer fire, and, with that daring and
imposing look which was peculiar to him in great and decisive moments,
he responded:

"The youngest of the kings! Well, then, I will drive _all_ the kings
from their thrones, and found a new dynasty: then, they will have to
recognize me as the oldest prince of all."

CHAPTER IV.

THE CALUMNY.

The union of Hortense with Bonaparte's brother had not been followed by

such good results for her as Josephine had anticipated. She had made a most unfortunate selection, for Louis Bonaparte was, of all the first consul's brothers, the one who concerned himself the least about politics, and was the least likely to engage in any intrigue. Besides, this alliance had mater

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