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I journeyed through Calais and Dunkirk. I saw troops defiling before me everywhere; and with regret and fear I left this magnificent army, thinking that they might perhaps in a few days be exposed to the greatest dangers.

"At St. Amand we were every day expecting to hear of the passage of our fleet to England, when we suddenly saw the troops arriving in our neighborhood and passing on in forced marches toward the Rhine. Austria had broken the peace. We hastened at once to Paris, to see the emperor once more before his departure for Germany[72]."

[Footnote 72: La Reine Hortense en Italie, France, etc., p. 278.]

CHAPTER XII.

THE PILGRIM.

On the following morning the duchess left Boulogne with her son, in order to wander on with him through the land of her youth and of her memories.

It was a sad and yet heart-stirring pilgrimage; for, although banished and nameless, she was nevertheless in her own country—she still stood on French soil. For sixteen years she had been living in a foreign land, in a land whose language was unknown to her, and whose people she could therefore not understand. Now, on this journey through France, she rejoiced once more in being able to understand the conversation of the people in the streets, and of the peasants in the fields. It was a sensation of mingled bitterness and sweetness to feel that she was not a stranger among this people, and it therefore now afforded her the greatest delight to chat with those she met, and to