

**IVAN DE BIRON OR, THE  
RUSSIAN COURT IN THE  
MIDDLE OF LAST CENTURY.  
IN THREE VOLUMES. VOL. II**

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Ivan de Biron or, The Russian court in the middle of last century. In three volumes. Vol. II by Arthur Helps

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**ARTHUR HELPS**

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IN THREE VOLUMES. VOL. II**



# IVAN DE BIRON

*OR, THE RUSSIAN COURT IN THE MIDDLE  
OF LAST CENTURY*

BY THE  
AUTHOR OF "FRIENDS IN COUNCIL," ETC.

*IN THREE VOLUMES*

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## BOOK III.



### CHAPTER X.

OUTBREAK OF THE REVOLUTION—IVAN'S PART IN IT—  
AZRA'S CARE FOR IVAN.

IF the Princess Elizabeth had devoted friends, the Duchess Regent was not friendless. Before Lestocq had quitted the Princess's Palace, Ivan de Biron was endeavouring to make his way into the Duchess Regent's Palace, to warn Her Highness of the coming danger. And he succeeded in doing so.

It would have been no easy matter for a young man in Ivan's position to obtain an audience with this great lady; but revolutions, however

severely carried out, generally leave some servants who, from the length of their service, their fitness for it, and their merely official character, still retain their offices.

Ivan lingered about the gates of the palace, watching his opportunity, until at last he saw an aged groom of the chambers whom he had known in his palmy days. The man was, at first, by no means inclined to renew the acquaintance; but when Ivan told him that he had been recalled from exile by the orders of the Duchess Regent, and that he wished to have an opportunity of expressing his gratitude, this groom of the chambers thought it as well to be on good terms with a person who had been so favoured, and he consented to take the message with which Ivan sought to entrust him.

This request for an audience was, after some delay, brought to the Grand Duchess. So few had been the instances of recall from exile, that her Highness instantly remembered the fact that Ivan had been so recalled, and at whose intercession this great favour had been granted.

Her favourite, Juliana de Mengden, was with her at this moment: indeed they were seldom apart.

“We will not see him ourselves,” said the Duchess Regent: “it pains us to hear about these poor exiles, few of whom our Ministers will yet allow us to recall. Biron himself is not so bad as he has been painted; and, perhaps, if we had been wiser, Juliana, we might have kept him as a friend. God knows that there are difficulties enough in governing this people for the wisest and the strongest to master; and the Duke was both a wise and a strong man. You shall see the youth, Juliana, and hear what he has to say.”

The favourite obeyed her mistress; and Ivan was ushered into her presence in an adjoining apartment.

Ivan, after briefly expressing his feelings of gratitude to the Duchess Regent, and his consequent devotion to her service, related to Juliana every circumstance which he had learnt regarding the projected conspiracy. The favourite