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THE COMPLETE WORKS  
OF WILLIAM HAZLITT IN  
TWENTY-ONE VOLUMES

*CENTENARY EDITION*

*Edited by*  
*P. P. HOWE*

VOLUME FOURTEEN

THIS EDITION IS LIMITED TO  
ONE THOUSAND SETS FOR  
SALE IN ENGLAND AND THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA





THE COMPLETE WORKS OF  
WILLIAM HAZLITT

EDITED BY P. P. HOWE  
AFTER THE EDITION OF  
A. R. WALLER AND ARNOLD GLOVER



VOLUME FOURTEEN

The Life of  
Napoleon  
Buonaparte  
Volume Two



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*The Emperor Napoleon, from the contemporary bronze by  
Antoine Denis Chaudet in the Louvre. (Photograph  
by Alinari.)*

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# THE LIFE OF NAPOLEON

## CHAPTER XVII

### EXPEDITION INTO EGYPT—BATTLE OF THE PYRAMIDS

BUONAPARTE set sail for Egypt from Toulon in the night of the 18th of May 1798. He arrived before Malta, and took possession of that place on the 10th of June, after doubling Cape Corso and Cape Bonara. Caffarelli, seeing the strength of the place when they entered, observed to the Commander-in-Chief, 'It was well we had friends here to let us in.' When the French squadron left Toulon, it was composed of thirteen sail of the line, six frigates, and a dozen brigs, sloops, and cutters. There was one ship (the *Orient*) of 120 guns and three of 80. A fleet of several hundred sail accompanied it. The French squadron, availing itself of the number of light vessels it possessed, obtained intelligence from a great distance, so that the convoy had nothing to fear, and in case of falling in with the enemy, could easily get out of the reach of the engagement. Every French man-of-war had 500 soldiers on board, with a company of land-artillery amongst them. Twice a day, during the month they had been out at sea, the troops had been exercised in manœuvring the guns. The French army in all amounted to about 28,000 men. During a great part of the voyage, the probability of falling in with the English was the general subject of conversation. Nelson, who had been joined by Lord St. Vincent's ten ships, and was appointed to the command of the squadron that was on the look-out for the French fleet, was cruising off Toulon on the 1st of June. He did not then know that the French Admiral had left that port, nor did he learn till he arrived at Naples on the 20th that the French had landed their troops at Malta, and that the expedition was intended for Egypt. This destination was the only one that had escaped the English Government, and had not been pointed out as probable in their instructions to the Admiral. On having the intelligence of the capture of Malta

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by the French confirmed to him at Messina, and also hearing that they were making for Candia, he immediately passed the Faro of Messina, and made sail for Alexandria, where he arrived on the 29th of June.

The French squadron received the first intimation of the presence of an English fleet in these seas off Cape Bonara, from a ship that fell in with it; and on the 25th of June, while reconnoitring the coast of Candia, it was joined by the frigate *La Justice*, which had been cruising off Naples, and which brought positive news to the same effect. Napoleon upon this gave orders that, instead of steering directly for Alexandria, the squadron should manœuvre so as to make Cape Aza in Africa, twenty-five leagues to the west of Alexandria, and should not appear before this last place till further intelligence could be procured of the English fleet. On the 29th of the same month, the coast of Africa and Cape Aza were descried. Nelson was just then arrived before Alexandria, where gaining no tidings of the French squadron, he steered for Alexandretta and from thence for Rhodes, scoured the Isles of the Archipelago, touched at Syracuse to take in water, and on the 28th of July anchored off Cape Coron at the extremity of the Morea, where he was first informed that the French army had landed in Egypt a month before.

When the French fleet arrived off Alexandria, a violent storm prevailed; but Buonaparte learning that the English had been there only a short time before, threw himself on shore at the risk of being wrecked. At the very moment when preparations were making for landing the troops, the signal was given that a ship of war was seen in the offing. 'Fortune,' exclaimed Napoleon, 'wilt thou forsake me now? Only grant me five days!' The alarm was a needless one; the vessel was one of their own frigates. Buonaparte, however, had the troops landed in the course of the day; marched all night; and at daybreak attacked Alexandria with only 3000 men, harassed with fatigue, destitute of cannon, and almost without a proper supply of cartridges. In five days he was master of Rosetta and Damanhour, that is to say, had already obtained a footing in Egypt. In those five days, if the instructions given by the General-in-Chief had been followed, the French squadron ought also to have been out of the reach of the English forces, however superior in numbers; but fate had ordered it otherwise. The difference indeed between Buonaparte and those who have been less the favourites of Fortune than he was, seems to have been, that as far as he could help it, he left nothing in her power; he seized her favours with a bold and nimble hand, and allowed not a moment's interval or the least opportunity for her caprice or neglect. He knew the inestimable value of time; and his

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sagacity in determining on the spot what was best to be done was equal to his rapidity in carrying it into effect.

Before the French General left Alexandria to advance against the Mamelukes, he repeated his orders to Admiral Brueys to enter the port, which could be done by lightening the largest ships (the small ones could enter easily); or if he should consider this impossible, then to proceed without loss of time to Corfu and thence back to Toulon. But the Admiral neglected to enter the harbour of Alexandria, where he would have been safe from the attacks of the English fleet, on some nautical scruples, and lingered on the coast in hopes of hearing of the arrival of the army at Cairo before he quitted it; thus by his oversolicitude for their safety running into danger himself, and taking away the only chance of the success of an expedition, at best hazardous, if not impracticable. Success in war or in every species of enterprise depends less on seeing what is fit to be done than on the spirit to do it, and on postponing our own particular fancies or feelings in affairs of importance; for the course of events is mechanical, and goes on without the least regard to what men hope or fear.

Napoleon, anxious to strike a decisive blow, and willing probably to feel his ground in this new field of action where every thing was strange and uncertain, had no sooner secured possession of Alexandria than he left it on the 7th of July, and set out on his way to Grand Cairo. The first place the army reached was Damanhour, having suffered greatly from the excessive heat and the want of water on its march. On the 10th they came to the borders of the Nile at Rahmanieh, and joined General Dugua's division, which had come by forced marches by way of Rosetta. General Desaix had been attacked by 700 or 800 Mamelukes, who after a brisk fire and the loss of some of their number retreated. In the mean time, the French General was informed that Murad-Bey, at the head of his army, composed of a great quantity of cavalry, with eight or ten gun-boats and several batteries on the Nile, was waiting to intercept their progress at the village of Shebreis. In the evening of the 12th the troops marched forward to meet him, and on the 13th at day-break, came in sight of this new enemy. The French had but 200 cavalry, many of which were disabled or worn out with fatigue: the Mamelukes presented a magnificent body of cavalry, covered with gold and silver, armed with the best London carbines and pistols and the best sabres of the East, and mounted on the finest horses in the world.

The French army was drawn up on this occasion, so that each division formed a square battalion, with the baggage in the centre, and the artillery placed in the intervals between each battalion. The five divisions of the army were placed in echelon, flanking each other



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and flanked by two villages which they occupied. Admiral Perré with three gun-boats, a xebeck, and a half-galley, was to attack the enemy's flotilla. The action was obstinately sustained on both sides. Perré was wounded by a cannon-ball, but succeeded in retaking the gun-boats and half-galley which the Mamelukes had at one time taken, and in setting fire to the Admiral's ship. What shews the singular nature of the expedition was that the two celebrated naturalists, Monge and Berthollet, were in the xebeck during the whole action, and though exposed to great danger, behaved with admirable coolness and presence of mind. While the conflict was thus maintained on the Nile, the cavalry of the Mamelukes inundated the whole plain, out-flanking the French wings, and seeking on every side for a weak point to enable them to break the line; but they found this everywhere equally formidable, and were received with a double fire from flank and front. They attempted several times to charge, but could not make up their minds to it. A few of the bravest came forward and skirmished; but were driven back by the fire of the carbineers, who were placed in advance of the intervals between the battalions. At length, after remaining great part of the day within half-cannon shot, they commenced their retreat and disappeared. Their loss was supposed to be about 300 killed and wounded.

After this, the French army marched for eight days without meeting any interruption, but often reduced to the greatest straits, and in one of the most scorching climates in the world. During the route they were much harassed by clouds of Arabs flocking from all parts of the Deserts, and hovering within a few hundred yards of the camp, with a view to intercept the communications and to rob and murder all they could lay hands on. Their practice was to lie in ambush behind the dykes on their excellent little horses, and woe to him who straggled a hundred paces from the main column! They killed a great number of soldiers and officers. Among others, General Muireur, in spite of the remonstrances of the Guard, would go alone to a mount about two hundred paces from the camp. Behind it were three Bedouins, who assassinated him. His death was much lamented by the army and by the General-in-Chief. In the evening after the first day's march, the troops bivouacked at a place called Shabur, under some fine old sycamores, where they found the fields full of *battechs*, a species of water-melon, furnishing a wholesome and refreshing food. They met with them continually, as far as Cairo; and the soldier, to shew how agreeable this fruit was to him, named it, like the ancient Egyptians, the *holy battech*. On the following day, the army began its march very late: some meat had been procured, which it was

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necessary to distribute with care as it was a great luxury. The flotilla still waited for the north-wind to ascend the Nile. The army slept at Kounscheric; and arrived the next day at Alkam, where General Zayonscheck received orders to land on the opposite bank, and advance to the point of the Delta. As there were no Arabs here, he could make what movements he pleased, and was of great assistance in procuring provisions.

On the 17th and 18th the army encamped at Abon-Neshabe and at Wardan, at which last place the bivouacks were formed in a large forest of palm-trees. The soldiers began by degrees to understand the customs of the country, and to dig up the lentils and other pulse which the peasants are accustomed to bury in the earth. The troops made short marches on account of the difficulty of obtaining provisions, and in order to be always in a condition to receive the enemy. They often took up a position by ten o'clock in the morning, and the first care of the soldier was to bathe in the Nile. From Wardan they went to lie at Omedinar, whence on the 19th they first perceived the Pyramids, which border the horizon of the valley on the left bank of the Nile. They look like enormous masses of rock, but for the regularity of the lines and angles. All the telescopes in the army, Napoleon observes, were instantly levelled at these the most ancient monuments in the world. But why at once wish to bring them close to the eye, to be familiar and in contact with them? Would it not be better to pause and linger on the gulph that separates us from this obscure dream and mighty wonder of the world before stripping it of its dim abstraction, and reducing it to a literal reality? One would think the mind would like to loiter and hang suspended for a time between its visionary feeling and its waking thoughts, and not break that mysterious spell at once. Wonder and fear should hold curiosity back, and gaze at a distance as at the giant phantom of the past. But no; the French think no object sacred from vulgar or scientific impertinence, and they have only two classes of ideas—words and sensible objects; the world of imagination is lost upon them! Buonaparte might have foreseen in this how they would one day turn round to look at him; pry into his foibles with their glasses, take his dimensions with a quadrant, and fortune having broken down the barrier between them, scan him with a critical eye, and wonder what it was they had ever found in him greater than themselves!

The army was approaching Cairo; and were informed by the country-people that the Mamelukes, combined with the troops of that city, and with a considerable number of Arabs, Janissaries, and Spahis, were waiting for them between the Nile and the Pyramids,

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covering Gizeh. They boasted that the French would there find the end of their journey. The latter halted a day at Omedinar. This pause was necessary to get the army in readiness, and to prepare for battle. Melancholy and sadness began to take possession of the troops, who constantly regretted the luxuries of Italy. In vain had they been assured that the country was the most fertile in the world, and even superior to Lombardy; how were they to be persuaded of this when they could get neither bread nor wine? They often encamped in immense fields of wheat; but there was neither mill nor oven to be found. It would be difficult indeed to find a more fertile land, or a people more miserable, ignorant, and brutalised. They preferred one of the soldier's buttons to a crown-piece; in the country-places they do not know the use of a pair of scissors. Their houses are built of mud, the whole furniture being a straw-mat and two or three earthen pots. All their magnificence is lavished on their horses and arms. They eat or consume in general very little. The little grain the natives convert into flour they bruise with stones, although in some large villages there are mills which are turned by oxen. The biscuit which the French had brought from Alexandria had been long exhausted; so that they lived chiefly on pulse or parched wheat, or the cattle which they caught, or sometimes by shooting pigeons. The apprehensions and murmuring of the soldiers increased daily; and rose to such a pitch that many of them said there was no great city at Cairo; and that the place bearing that name was merely like Damanhour, a large assemblage of miserable huts. To such a state of despondency had they reduced themselves by complaints and gloomy forebodings, that two dragoons threw themselves in a fit of despair into the Nile, where they were drowned. The officers even complained more loudly than the men, as the change was proportionably disadvantageous to them. The General-in-Chief, in order to set an example, used to bivouac in the midst of the army and in the most inconvenient spots. No one had either tent or provisions; the dinner of Napoleon and his staff often consisted of a dish of lentils. The soldiers, to while away the time, passed the evenings in political discussions, questions, and complaints. *For what purpose are we come here?* said some of them; *the Directory have transported us.* Caffarelli, said others, *is the instrument that has been made use of to deceive the General-in-Chief.* Many of them, taking notice that wherever there were any vestiges of antiquity they were carefully explored, vented their spleen in invectives against the *savans* or scientific men, who, they said, had started the idea of the expedition in order to make these idle researches. Jests were showered upon them, even in their presence. The men called an ass a *savant*; and



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said of Caffarelli Dufalga, alluding to his wooden leg, *He laughs at all these troubles ; he has one foot in France.* But Dufalga and the men of science not long after regained the esteem of the army.

They set forward from Omedinar on the 21st of July, at one in the morning. At dawn, for the first time since the action of Shebreis, a Mameluke vanguard of 1000 horse showed itself ; but it retreated in good order, without attempting any thing. At ten o'clock, Embaheh was descried with the enemy in line. Their right was supported on the Nile, where they had constructed a large intrenched camp, lined with forty pieces of cannon, and defended by 20,000 infantry, Janissaries, Spahis, and militia from Cairo. The Mameluke cavalry rested its right on this entrenched camp, and extended its left towards the Pyramids, crossing the road to Gizeh. There was about 9000 or 10,000 horse, as nearly as could be guessed, and every horseman was attended by one or two foot-soldiers. Two or three thousand Arabs kept aloof to the extreme left, and occupied the space between the Mamelukes and the Pyramids. These dispositions were formidable. The troops did not know what sort of stand the Janissaries and Spahis of Cairo would make ; but they knew and were impressed with a full sense of the skill and impetuous bravery of the Mamelukes. The French army was drawn up in the same order as at Shebreis, the left resting on the Nile, the right on a large village, where General Desaix commanded, and where it took him three hours to form his position and rest a little. The intrenched camp of the enemy was reconnoitred, and it was found that it was merely sketched out, having been begun only three days before, and might be of some service against a charge of cavalry, but not against an attack by infantry. It was also discovered by the help of good telescopes, that their cannon were not upon field-carriages, but were only great iron pieces, taken from the vessels and served by the crews of the flotilla. On this single observation (casual as it seems) the fortune of the day turned. An ordinary General would have taken it for granted that the artillery he saw was like any other artillery ; but it is the true characteristic and property of genius to take nothing for granted, but, being alive to every possible change of circumstances, to look at every thing as it is, and thus to be prepared to make continual new discoveries and combinations. No sooner had the General-in-Chief satisfied himself that the artillery was not moveable, than it was clear that neither it nor the infantry could quit the intrenched camp ; or if the latter should come out, it must be without artillery. The dispositions for the battle were made accordingly ; Buonaparte giving immediate orders to prolong the right and to follow the movement of that wing with the whole army, thus passing out of the range of the guns of the

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intrenched camp, and having only the Mamelukes and the cavalry to deal with.

Murad-Bey saw the columns put themselves in motion, and quickly guessed their purpose. Though not accustomed to this kind of warfare, nature had endowed him with a quick and discerning eye, and undaunted courage, which sharpens the sight of the mind by confronting it with the danger which it is not afraid to meet. The slight affairs in which the French had hitherto been engaged with the Mamelukes served him as experience, and he comprehended with a degree of skill that could hardly have been expected in the most consummate European General, that every thing depended on preventing his adversary from accomplishing the movement he had commenced. He advanced with two-thirds of his cavalry (6000 or 7000), leaving the rest to support the intrenched camp; and came up at the head of his troops with such rapidity that the French squares seemed falling into confusion. General Desaix, on his march at the head of his column, had entered a grove of palm-trees. However, the head of the corps of Mamelukes, which fell upon him, was not numerous, and as the mass did not arrive for some minutes, this delay proved sufficient. The squares were thus perfectly restored, and received the charge with coolness. Reynier supported their left. Napoleon, who was in Dugua's square, immediately marched on the main body of the Mamelukes, who were received with grape and a brisk fire of musquetry; thirty of the bravest died near General Desaix, having reined their horses back on the enemy to throw them into disorder; but the mass, by an instinct natural to the horse, turned round the squares, and by this means frustrated the attack. In the midst of the fire of grape and ball, of the dust, cries, and smoke, part of the Mamelukes regained the intrenched camp, according to the natural impulse of the soldier to retreat to the spot from whence he set out. Murad-Bey and the most expert directed their flight towards Gizeh; and thus this commander found himself separated from his army. The divisions of Bon and Menou, which had formed the left, then advanced on the intrenched camp; and General Rampon was detached with two battalions to occupy a kind of defile between Gizeh and the camp, to prevent Murad-Bey from returning to it, or the Egyptian soldiers from following him.

The greatest confusion prevailed at Embaheh. The cavalry had thrown itself upon the infantry, which, seeing the Mamelukes beaten, rushed into the jerns, kaiks, and other boats to repass the Nile. Many effected the passage by swimming, an exercise in which the Egyptians excel. The forty pieces of cannon which were to have defended the camp did not fire two hundred shot. The Mamelukes, quickly per-

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ceiving that their retreat was in the wrong direction, strove to regain the Gizeh road, but were driven back by Rampon's division, on the intrenched camp, where many of them fell, and many more were drowned in attempting to pass the Nile. Their floating bodies carried the news of the victory in a few days to Rosetta, Damietta, and all along the banks. Not more than 2000 horse escaped with Murad-Bey, who finding that he was not joined by the rest, turned back several times to open a passage for them, but it was too late. The loss of the enemy on this day was reckoned at 10,000, including Mamelukes, Janissaries, Spahis, and slaves belonging to the Mamelukes. The artillery, pontoons, and baggage, all fell into the power of the French, with a thousand prisoners, and eight or nine hundred camels and as many horses. It was at the beginning of this battle that Napoleon addressed to the soldiers that noble apostrophe which afterwards was so often cited—*'From the top of those Pyramids forty centuries look down upon you !'*

It was night when the three divisions of Desaix, Reynier, and Dugua returned to Gizeh. The General-in-Chief fixed his headquarters there, in Murad-Bey's country-house. The Mamelukes had sixty vessels on the Nile, containing all their riches. In consequence of the unexpected result of the battle, they lost all hopes of saving them, and set them on fire. During the whole night, through the volumes of smoke and flame, the French could perceive the forms of the minarets and buildings of Cairo and the City of the Dead. These columns of flame gave so much light that they could even see the Pyramids by it. The Arabs, according to their custom after a defeat, rallied far from the field of battle, in the Desert beyond the Pyramids. For several days the whole army was busily engaged in fishing for the bodies of the Mamelukes that had been drowned; their valuable arms, and the quantity of gold they were accustomed to carry about them, rendered the soldiers very zealous in this search. Three, four, or five hundred Louis-d'ors were often found upon them. The French flotilla had not been able to follow the movement of the army in time; but they had heard the cannon, notwithstanding the north-wind, which now blew with violence and carried the sound from them. As it grew calmer, the noise of the cannon became louder; so that at last it appeared to have come nearer them; and the seamen in the evening gave the battle up for lost, till the multitude of bodies which passed near their ships, and which were all Mamelukes, restored their confidence. The populace of Cairo, the vilest in the world, when they heard of the disasters of their own people, set fire to the houses of the Beys, and committed all sorts of excesses.

About nine in the evening Napoleon entered the country-house of

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Murad-Bey at Gizeh. It did not at all answer to the idea of a gentleman's country-seat in Europe. It was a point of some difficulty at first to make it serve for a lodging, or to understand the distribution of the apartments. But what chiefly struck the officers with surprise was the great quantity of cushions and divans covered with the finest damasks and Lyons silks, and ornamented with gold fringe. For the first time they found the luxury and arts of Europe in Egypt—the cradle of luxury and arts. Part of the night was spent in exploring this singular mansion in every direction. The gardens were full of magnificent trees, but without alleys, and not unlike the gardens in some of the nunneries in Italy. What most delighted the soldiers (for every one crowded to see the place) was the discovery of large arbours of vines loaded with the finest grapes in the world. The vintage was quickly over. The two divisions of Bon and Menou, that had remained behind in the intrenched camp, were equally well off. Amongst the baggage taken, had been found a great number of canteens full of preserves, pots of confectionary, and sweetmeats. Carpets, porcelain, vases of perfumes, and a multitude of little elegances used by the Mamelukes, every moment raised the curiosity or tempted the cupidity of the army, who now began to be reconciled to Egypt, and to believe at last that Cairo was not like Damanhour. It was only the country-places that were poor and oppressed; in proportion to the general poverty and oppression of the people, the towns and habitations of those who oppressed them and drained them of every necessary or comfort, were stored with every luxury and delicacy.

The next morning at day-break, Napoleon proceeded to the river, and seizing some boats, made General Vial pass over to the Isle of Rodah, which was taken after a few musquet-shots. There was nothing further to separate the army from Boulac and Old Cairo but a large canal. The flotilla was impatiently expected, as the wind was fair; but it had run aground, owing to the lowness of the water. This gave the General-in-Chief some uneasiness, as it was necessary to take Cairo in the first moment of the enemy's stupor and surprise. It was lucky that the Janissaries of Cairo, who had been engaged in the battle, had returned in the greatest consternation and represented the French in a light approaching to the marvellous. A dragoman was sent to the Pacha and Cadi-Scheik, with the proposals of the General-in-Chief and his printed declaration that he did not make war upon the Turks, but only on the Mamelukes. The Pacha had already left the place, but his secretary came and had a conference with the French General, who engaged him to persuade Ibrahim-Bey to retire and the people of Cairo to submit. The following morning a deputa-



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tion of the Scheiks of Cairo came to Gizeh, and brought word that Ibrahim-Bey had already left the city, and was gone to encamp at Birketel-hadji; that the Janissaries had wished to surrender; and that the Iman of the Grand Mosque of Jemilazar had been charged to treat for a surrender and to implore the clemency of the victor. The deputies remained several hours at Gizeh, where every thing was done to conciliate them. The next day General Dupuy went to Cairo and took possession of the citadel. The troops passed the canal and occupied Old Cairo and Boulac. The General-in-Chief made his entrance into Cairo on the 26th of July, at four o'clock in the afternoon. He went to lodge in the Square of El-Bekir, at the house of Elphi-Bey, whither he removed his head-quarters. This house was situated at one of the extremities of the town, and the garden communicated with the country.

Cairo is situated half a league from the Nile. Old Cairo and Boulac are its ports. A canal which crosses the city is usually dry, but fills during the inundation of the Nile, when the dyke is cut. Cairo is commanded by a citadel placed on a hill, which overlooks the whole city, and is separated from the Mokattam by a valley. An aqueduct, which is a remarkable work, supplies the citadel with water. The citadel also draws water from Joseph's Well, but it is not so good as that of the Nile. This fortress was neglected and falling to ruins, as well as the walls, which were built by the Arabs and surmounted by enormous towers. The Mamelukes never repaired any thing. Half the walls abut on the Desert, so that dry sands are met with on going out by the Suez gate or those which are towards Arabia. Cairo contains about 210,000 inhabitants. The streets are built very high and narrow, in order to obtain shelter from the sun. The Beys have very fine palaces in the Oriental style. The Okels are great square buildings for merchandise, with large inner courts, and with little shops of ten or twelve feet square on the outside or next the street, in which the merchant sits with samples of his goods. Cairo contains a number of mosques, intended chiefly for the accommodation of pilgrims, who sleep in them: amongst these is Jemilazar, said to be the largest mosque in the East. In one quarter are a few European families, and some convents for the Syrian Catholics. The town abounds in coffee-houses, in which the inhabitants meet to take coffee, sherbet, and opium, and confer on public affairs. Around the city, as well as near Alexandria, Rosetta, &c. are to be seen great mounds of earth and ruins, which have a disagreeable effect, and are daily increasing, because all the rubbish from the city is brought thither. The French wished to remove this nuisance: but difficulties arose, as experience had convinced the people that it was dangerous

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to throw this rubbish into the Nile, where it either stopped up the canals or was spread over the country by the flood. Close to the city of Cairo, towards the Desert, is the City of the Dead, which is larger than Cairo itself : it is here that every family has its place of burial. A multitude of mosques, tombs, minarets, and domes keep up the memory of distinguished persons who have been buried here, and who have had them built for this purpose. There are attendants to many of the tombs, who keep lamps burning in them and shew the interior to the curious. Somehow there is a cadaverous air that in general hovers over the East ; decay and desolation have piled up their stateliest monuments there ; Death lurks close by Life ; and they treat the living bodies of men as no better than lifeless carcases !

### CHAPTER XVIII

#### THE BATTLE OF THE NILE

THE celebrated battle of the Nile, or naval battle of Aboukir as the French call it, took place on the 1st and 2d of August 1798. This cut the nerves of the expedition, and from that time it halted and in the end fell to the ground. The English Government had been completely deceived as to the project of the expedition to Egypt. Nelson had not the smallest idea of the destination of the French fleet ; nor was it till he had been repeatedly thrown out in the pursuit, and had coursed up and down the Mediterranean several times, like a hound at fault, that he at last got scent of his prey.

After the action of Rahmanieh, the Arabs of Bahire intercepted all communication between Alexandria and the French army ; nor did they desist till the news of the battle of the Pyramids and the taking of Cairo made them apprehensive of the resentment of the French. It was not till the second day after his entrance into Cairo (July 27) that Napoleon received for the first time dispatches from Alexandria with Admiral Brueys's correspondence. By these he was extremely surprised to find that the squadron, notwithstanding his urgent and precise orders, was not yet in safety ; that it was neither in the port of Alexandria nor on its way to Corfu or Toulon, but in Aboukir roads, exposed to the attacks of an enemy of greater force. Instead of getting under weigh the instant he had landed the artillery and army stores, the Admiral wasted time (as if bound by a spell) in rectifying his line of moorings, supporting his left behind the little Isle of Aboukir, where thinking it unassailable, he placed his worst

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ships, the *Guerrier* and *Conquerant*, and having a battery of ten twelve-pounders constructed on it. Buonaparte, on learning these particulars, dispatched his aide-de-camp Julien from the army to the Admiral to inform him of his great disapprobation, and to warn him to set sail immediately, and either to get into Alexandria or make for Corfu. He reminded him that all naval ordinances forbade the receiving battle in an open road. The aide-de-camp set out on the 27th at seven in the evening, and could not have arrived before the 3d or 4th of August, that is, till after the battle had taken place; but he had only reached Teramia, when a party of Arabs surprised the jerm in which he was, and this spirited young man was massacred by them, while courageously defending the dispatches of which he was the bearer, and of which he knew the importance.

Admiral Brueys remained inactive in the bad position he had chosen. An English frigate, which had been detached twenty days before by Nelson, of whom she was now in search, presented herself before Alexandria and went to Aboukir to examine the whole line of moorings, which she accomplished with impunity: not a ship, frigate, or brig was under sail. Yet the Admiral had above thirty light ships with which he might have scoured the sea: they were all at anchor. At any rate he should have kept a few of these in readiness to prevent any light English vessels from watching his motions, and to obtain the earliest intelligence of their approach. On the 31st of July, Nelson sent forward two of his ships, which reconnoitred the French line of moorings without molestation. On the 1st of August, the English squadron came in sight towards three o'clock in the afternoon, with all sails set. A fresh gale of wind was blowing. Admiral Brueys was at dinner; part of the crews were on shore; the decks were not cleared in a single ship. The Admiral immediately gave orders to prepare for action, and dispatched an officer to Alexandria to demand the seamen of the convoy. Shortly after, he made a signal to get under sail; but the English squadron came up so rapidly, that there was hardly time to clear the decks, which was done with extreme negligence. Even on board the *Orient*, the Admiral's ship, some cabins which had been constructed on the poop for the accommodation of the officers of the army during the passage, were not removed, but were left full of mattresses and buckets of paint and tar. The *Guerrier* and the *Conquerant* each cleared only one tier of guns for action; the side that was towards the land was encumbered with all that had been cleared out from the opposite side; so that when the ships were turned, that side could not fire. The English could hardly believe this when they saw it and sent to examine the reason of it. They saw the French flag wave, though not a gun was fired.

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The men who had been spared from the different crews had scarcely time enough to return on board. The French Admiral, judging that the enemy would not be within gun-shot before six o'clock, supposed that he would not attack until the following day, more particularly as he only observed eleven seventy-four-gun ships; the two others had been sent forward to Alexandria, and did not rejoin Nelson till eight in the evening. Brueys did not believe the English Admiral would attack him the same day, and with only eleven ships. Besides it is imagined he thought at first of getting under weigh, but that he deferred giving the order till the sailors whom he was expecting from Aboukir should be embarked. All this was wrong; shewed either little stomach for the fight, by which he judged of others, or was waiting for an idle concurrence of favourable circumstances, instead of making the best use of those in his power. The cannonade now commenced; and an English ship having struck on the Isle, this accident gave Brueys fresh confidence. The sailors from Alexandria did not arrive till towards eight o'clock, and a great many took advantage of the confusion and darkness to remain on shore. The English Admiral's plan was to attack ship after ship, every English ship anchoring astern, and placing herself athwart the head of a French ship; but accident altered this original design. The Culloden, intending to attack the Guerrier, and endeavouring to pass between the left of that ship and the Isle, struck. Had the Isle been supplied with a few pieces of cannon, this ship might easily have been taken. The Goliah which followed her, manœuvring to anchor athwart the head of the Guerrier, was carried away by the wind and current, and did not anchor till she had passed and turned that ship. Perceiving then that the larboard tiers of the Conquerant did not fire, she placed herself alongside of that vessel, and soon disabled her. The Zealous, the second English ship, followed the movement of the Goliah, and anchoring alongside the Guerrier, which could not return her fire, speedily dismasted her. The Orion, the third English ship, executed the same manœuvre, but was retarded in her movement by the attack of a French frigate, and cast anchor between the Franklin and the Peuple Souverain. The Vanguard, the English Admiral's ship, cast anchor athwart the Spartiate, the third French ship. The Defiance, the Bellerophon, the Majestic, and the Minotaur followed the same movement, and engaged the centre of the French line as far as the Tonnant, the eighth ship. The French Admiral and his two seconds formed a line of three ships, having greatly the advantage in size and weight of metal of those of the English. The fire was terrible: the Bellerophon was disabled, dismasted, and compelled to strike. Several other English ships were obliged to sheer off; and if at that moment



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Admiral Villeneuve, who commanded the right of the French navy, had cut his cables and fallen on the English line with the five ships under his command, it must have been in the greatest danger of being destroyed. The Culloden had struck on the Bequieres bank, and the Leander was engaged in trying to bring her off. The Alexander and Swiftsure, two other English ships, seeing that the enemy's right did not stir, and that their own centre was hard-pressed, made towards it. The Alexander took the place of the Bellerophon, and the Swiftsure attacked the Franklin. The Leander, which till then had been engaged in righting the Culloden, perceiving the situation in which the centre stood, hastened to its relief. Victory was still far from being decided either way. The Guerrier and Conquerant no longer fired, but they were the worst ships the French had; and on the side of the English, the Culloden and Bellerophon were disabled. The centre of the French line had, by the great superiority of its guns, occasioned the ships opposed to it more damage than it had itself sustained. The English had only three seventy-fours against two eighty-fours and one hundred-and-twenty-gun ship. It was to be presumed then that the fire being thus kept up all night, Admiral Villeneuve would at last get under way in the morning, and a different turn to the affair must be expected by the French from the attack of five good ships, which as yet had neither fired nor received a single cannon-shot. But at eleven o'clock the Orient, belonging to the French Admiral, took fire and blew up. This event decided the victory. The dreadful explosion of this ship suspended the action for a quarter of an hour. At the end of that period, the firing commenced again, and continued without any abatement till three o'clock in the morning, when it slackened on both sides till between five and six. It then redoubled and became as terrible as ever. In a word, the battle was raging at noon, nor was it over before two o'clock. Villeneuve then seemed to awaken from his trance, and to perceive that the fleet had been fighting for twenty hours. He cut his cables and stood out to sea with two of his ships, the Guillaume Tell<sup>1</sup> and G n reux, and with two frigates; his other three ships ran aground without fighting. Such was the havoc made in this determined fight that, twenty-four hours after the battle, the French flag was still flying on board the Tonnant, and Nelson had no ship in a condition to attack her. Not only the William Tell and G n reux were not pursued by any of the English ships, but in the shattered state they were in, they were not sorry to see them make off. Admiral Brueys, though he had received several wounds, would not go down to the

<sup>1</sup> This and the Franklin are the names of French ships, and shew at least the side their country affected.

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cockpit; he died on his quarter-deck, giving his orders, a little before the Orient blew up. After that event, Villeneuve became commander and was the judge of his own motions; what then becomes of the plea that he waited for orders? Admiral Villeneuve was understood to be a brave and good seaman; his remaining a quiet spectator of a battle which lasted for twenty hours can therefore only be accounted for in one of three ways; either from a sudden and invincible panic at the moment; or from that over-anxiety about what was proper to be done, which suspends all power of action; or from that turn of mind through which the slightest motives, a mere form or a point of etiquette, outweigh the most serious and important consequences.

It is quite certain that an English Admiral would not have remained neuter in this position, nor would the crews have let him, not from a difference of tactics in the two navies, but from a difference of common sense. The English understanding, so to speak, even from a certain slowness and hebetude, runs less into fine distinctions and is less liable to be led away by a variety of minor considerations, which it has not the art to magnify at pleasure into matters of importance; it sees and attends only to the principal point, the *one thing needful*, and therefore in cases of critical emergency and urgent necessity, possesses a sounder practical judgment than the French, which flutters about an object, and is distracted by a multiplicity of shifting and insignificant views of the same thing. For the same reason, the English are as inferior to the French in diplomacy as they are superior to them in downright action; because there the essential business is not to feel the real *home* truth, but to disguise it and draw off attention from it by fifty evasions and verbal excuses. The predominant feature of the English is a certain honesty or sincerity of feeling which makes them dupes—but accompanied with a steadiness of purpose and a proportion in their efforts to their sense of the importance of the occasion, which does not allow them to be willing ones. I have dwelt on this because I think it affords a clue to the superiority of the English naval tactics. The French are undoubtedly brave, but their bravery seems to be an affair of impulse; they do not stop to calculate consequences, but yield to their national ardour and impetuosity, and rush at once on danger and the foe. Had Villeneuve had to lead a battalion of cavalry to the field, I have little doubt he would have been withheld by no considerations of prudence or punctilio from obeying the instinct of personal courage; and charging at their head, have exposed himself in the thickest of the ranks with the greatest gallantry and boldness. But in the other case, he had to manœuvre four or five unwieldy ships, to guide a complicated mechanical operation, to

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prevent their running ashore, to come up to the point of action, and all this nautical calculation and process of abstraction threw a damp upon his natural ardour and held his judgment in suspense. Now the Englishman's head is essentially mechanical and his will acts upon the decision of the understanding :—when a Frenchman, on the contrary, has to act from foresight and combination, he forgets the end in the means, and is either rash and flighty or formal and pedantic. So much for the naval commander. Again, with respect to those under his command, the courage of the French is in attack, or in venturing upon danger ; the courage of the sailor is wholly or chiefly in defence, or in holding out against it. Except in the case of boarding a vessel, he cannot get at his enemy or intimidate him either by gallant bearing or by personal prowess ; he merely mans his own guns, and stands the fire of the enemy's battery with resolution and presence of mind, and certainly in this, which may be called the passive part of courage, the English sailor bears the bell alone. It is bred in his blood and in his bone. Stupid he may be, brutal he may be, low and vulgar ; but he endures pain and wounds without flinching, and he will be sooner cut in pieces than he will give in. A bullet whizzing by makes him recollect himself ; a splinter that stuns him brings him to his senses ; the smart of his wounds sharpens his courage, and all that damps and startles others, rivets him to his post. The British tar feels conscious of his existence in suffering and anguish, and woos danger as a bride. There is something in this Saxon breed of men, like the courage and resolution of the mastiff, that only comes out on such occasions. Coarse, dull, vicious, obstinate, bowed down by ignorance and benumbing want, there is something in his soul that struggles with his fate, and seeks to throw off the load that oppresses it, and stakes its all on one hour of heroic daring or unshaken fortitude ; and shut out from effeminate delights, takes a pride in the extremity of pain, stands by his country, the only thing on which he values himself, to his latest breath, and wipes out a life of shame and ignominy by a glorious end. The wooden walls of Old England are nothing but this hard, obdurate character, that melts and expands in the heat of battle as in a summer's-day, that welcomes a cannon-ball as an even match, feels the first flush of triumph with the last gush of life, and is quits with the world by the shout of victory and death ! The difference then of the French and English navy depends on the character of the two nations, and this will change when the bull-dog changes natures with the greyhound. It has been said that the great error of the French (in which they persist in spite of experience) is in firing at the rigging instead of the decks ; but this is only another example of what has been said

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before of being attached to a theory or a whim, instead of minding the *main chance*.<sup>1</sup>

Buonaparte labours hard, probably from jealousy of the English, probably from professional prejudice, to shew the inferiority of the naval to the land-service. His reasoning is acute, but seems like *ex-parte* evidence. Lord Nelson could probably have given reasons in favour of the navy with equal plausibility. Such reasonings are seldom satisfactory, when one can tell beforehand the side the arguer will take. Buonaparte however assigns three grounds of his determination on this point: 1st, the equality of the surface at sea, and that you always see your enemy; 2d, that much more depends on the captains of the different ships and the courage of the individual crews; 3d, the difficulty of provisioning a large army by land, whereas the naval commander carries his own stores, camp, and citadel with him. The two last may be true; but with respect to the first, the greater inequality and accidents of the ground by land, is not that balanced by the uncertainty of the winds and waves at sea and the necessity of managing these? Out of the three great actions which Lord Nelson fought, two were fought close on land, and he had to provide for risks of running ashore, for passing over the bar of the harbour, and a number of other collateral circumstances. Buonaparte says the naval commander requires but one science, that of navigation, which is certainly a thing of experience and routine; and brings as proof of the little genius that this species of warfare exacts, that Alexander and Condé could not have fought battles at sea as they did by land, when they were only two-and-twenty. But this only seems to infer that naval tactics require more knowledge and science, not that they give less scope for genius and tact. People may be supposed to have a natural turn for war by land, because it is natural to live on land and not at sea; so that these are the first observations we make, the first language we learn. That another science besides that of navigation is necessary to the naval commander is evident from the conduct of the French Admiral in this engagement, namely, common sense.

The crews of the three French ships which grounded at the end of

<sup>1</sup> As I was crossing the Channel not long ago, there was a cry of *A man overboard*. The vessel was stopped in an instant. The boat which had been just lashed to the rigging, was only half disentangled, when three of the sailors hung in it like swallows. It was no sooner let down than a fourth jumped into it; and they set off with the rapidity of lightning in pursuit of the drowning man, eagerly seizing every hint and sign from the ship as to the direction they were to take. They got up with him just in time and brought him safe on board. Ten minutes after they were at their ordinary work, looking as dull, awkward, and indifferent as possible, nor could you tell from their demeanour that any thing extraordinary had happened. It is this lying by for action that is the *forte* of the English character.



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the engagement, and those of the two frigates, landed on the beach at Aboukir. A hundred men escaped from the Orient, and a great number of men from the other ships took refuge on shore, availing themselves of the confusion and distress. The army thus obtained 3500 recruits, out of which a nautical legion was formed. The French had still several frigates and lighter vessels in the port of Alexandria. A few days after the battle, Nelson set sail and quitted the shores of Alexandria, leaving two ships of war to blockade the port. He was received in triumph and with every mark of honour at Naples. The loss of the battle of Aboukir in the end proved fatal to the expedition into Egypt: first, by depriving the army of their battering train, the want of which stopped them at St. Jean d'Acre, and secondly, by giving the Divan courage to declare war against France. The French General-in-Chief was before this event sanguine with respect to success, and sometimes talked jocularly of returning home by way of Constantinople.—Buonaparte considers a fleet of thirty sail of the line as equal to an army of 120,000 men, taking one thing with another; and he conceives that France might maintain an establishment of three such fleets as well as three armies of 120,000 men each.

Two letters written by him on this occasion deserve to be inserted here, the one as shewing his humanity, the other his national spirit, and both his indefatigable activity of mind.

### *Buonaparte's Letter to the Widow of Admiral Brueys.*

'Cairo, 19th of August, 1798.

'Your husband has been killed by a cannon-shot, while fighting on his deck. He died without pain, and by the best death, and that which is thought by soldiers most enviable.

'I am keenly sensible to your grief. The moment which severs us from the object we love is terrible: it insulates us from all the earth; it inflicts on the body the agonies of death; the faculties of the soul are annihilated, and its relation with the universe subsists only through the medium of a horrible dream which distorts every thing. Mankind appear colder and more selfish than they really are. In this situation we feel that if nothing obliged us to live, it would be much best to die: but when after this first thought we press our children to our hearts, tears and tender emotions revive the sentiments of our nature, and we live for our children. Yes, madam, see in this very moment how they open your heart to melancholy; you will weep with them, you will bring them up from infancy—you will talk to them of their father, of your sorrow, of the loss which you and the Republic have sustained. After having once more attached your

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mind to the world by the ties of filial and maternal love, set some value on the friendship and lively regard I shall always feel for the wife of my friend. Believe that there are those who deserve to be the hope of the afflicted, because they understand the poignancy of mental sufferings.'

*From General Buonaparte to General Kleber.*

'Cairo, 10th of September, 1798.

'A ship like the Franklin, General, which had the Admiral on board, the Orient having blown up, ought not to have surrendered at eleven o'clock. I think, moreover, that the officer who surrendered this ship is extremely culpable, because it is proved by his own *procès-verbal* that he took no measures to wreck his ship and render it impossible to bring it to : this will be an eternal disgrace to the French navy. It is not necessary to know much of manœuvres or to possess extraordinary talents, to cut a cable and run a ship aground ; besides, these measures are especially prescribed in the instructions and ordinances given to captains in the navy. As for the conduct of Rear-Admiral Duchaila, it would have become him to have died on his quarter-deck, like Du Petit-Thouars.

'But what deprives him of every chance of restoration to my esteem, is his base conduct among the English since he has been a prisoner. There are men who have no blood in their veins. He will hear the English, then, drink to the disgrace of the French navy, while they intoxicate themselves with punch. He is willing to be landed at Naples, then, as a trophy for the Lazzaroni to gaze at ; it would have been much better for him to have remained at Alexandria, or on board-ship, as a prisoner of war, without ever wishing or asking for any favour. When O'Hara, who nevertheless was a very common character, was made prisoner at Toulon, and was asked by me on the part of General Dugommier, what he wished for, he answered, "*To be alone, and not to be indebted to pity.*" Attentions and courtesy are honourable only to the victor ; they do no credit to the vanquished, whom reserve and haughtiness best become.'

Buonaparte also at the same time addressed a short and affecting letter to the father of Vice-Admiral Thevenard, who was killed in the battle.

# SITUATION OF EGYPT

## CHAPTER XIX

### SITUATION OF EGYPT

A FEW days after his entrance into Cairo, Buonaparte ordered Reynier's division to proceed to Elkhankah, where General Leclerc's cavalry were fighting with a multitude of Arabs and peasants of the country, whom Ibrahim-Bey had prevailed upon to revolt. About fifty peasants and some Arabs were killed in these skirmishes. The General-in-Chief followed with the divisions of General Lannes and Dugua, and the troops proceeded by long marches on Syria, constantly driving Ibrahim-Bey and all the forces he commanded before them.

On the road to Belbeis, they delivered part of the caravan of Mecca, which the Arabs had carried off and were conveying into the Desert, into which they had already advanced two leagues. It was conducted to Cairo under a good escort. At Koureyn they found another part of the caravan, composed of merchants, who had been first stopped by Ibrahim-Bey, and after being released by him were plundered by the Arabs. The booty seized by them must have been considerable; one merchant alone having lost goods to the amount of 200,000 crowns. This merchant had all his women with him, according to the custom of the country. The General-in-Chief ordered a supper for them, and procured them camels for their journey to Cairo. Several of the females appeared to possess handsome figures; but their faces were covered, a custom to which the soldiers were not easily reconciled. Salahieh is the last inhabited place in Egypt where good water is to be found. The Desert dividing Syria from Egypt begins there. Ibrahim-Bey, with his army, treasure, and women, had just set out from this place as the French entered it. Buonaparte pursued him with the little cavalry he had. A party of 150 Arabs who had been with the Bey, offered to charge with the French and share the booty. Night was coming on; the horses were excessively fatigued, the infantry at a good distance behind; under all these disadvantages, however, the attack was made, which the Mamelukes sustained with the greatest courage. The chief of squadron D'Estrée was mortally wounded. Almost every staff-officer and every hussar was engaged in single combat. Colonel Lasalle dropped his sabre in the midst of the charge; he was expert and fortunate enough to recover it, and remount in time to defend himself against one of the most intrepid of the Mamelukes. Murat, Duroc, Leturcq, Colbert, and Arrighi were all engaged in the thickest of the battle, and were hurried by their impetuosity into imminent danger. The French took two pieces of cannon and fifty camels, loaded with tents and other booty. Ibrahim-Bey, who

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was wounded in the action, pursued his way across the Desert. Buonaparte left General Reynier's division and the engineer officers at Salahieh to construct a fort; and set out on his return to Cairo. He had not gone above two leagues from Salahieh, when he was met by General Kleber's aide-de-camp bringing intelligence of the loss of the battle in Aboukir roads. The messenger had been eleven days on his journey; and this was the first news Buonaparte received of that event, which gave a severe blow to his hopes of success. However he repaired to Cairo, where he remained for a considerable time, endeavouring to make the most of the means that were left to him. His activity appears to have been always the same, neither relaxed by good fortune nor discouraged by failure; and indeed he seems to have had no sort of objection to attempt the reconciling of contradictions and tampering with hopeless materials, their very impracticability irritating his self-will and giving scope to his ingenuity and a number of expedients. To contrive and to will were the first necessities of his soul; to succeed, unless by extraordinary and arduous means, was only the second.

A great deal of what he did (though probably all that he could do in the actual circumstances) may be accounted for on this principle of wilfulness and contradiction. There is no end of the art and energy employed, and the only fault to be found is that they are thrown away upon objects on which they can produce no corresponding effect, or resemble the ingenious manœuvres of a masterly chess-player to win a game that is irrecoverably lost. He goes over the ground again, long after the event, with the same precaution and pertinacity as ever, shewing that in spite of appearances the whole might have succeeded in the end, if some new disaster had not happened; though where so many *ifs* concur to the execution of a measure, they necessarily put a decided negative upon its ultimate success. Thus he seems to have written those studied letters to Achmet Pacha to persuade him he did not come into his country as an enemy, for no other reason than that these fine assurances would not be believed. He proportioned his own subtlety and craftiness of address to the duplicity and hollowness of those with whom he had to deal, encountering the wily Arab, the selfish Turk at their own weapons, and sure of being foiled. He sent a flag of truce to summon the governor of a fort, and because his head was struck off, he sent another, who was treated in the same barbarous manner. He did wisely in attacking the Mamelukes, who were the military power, and in paying court to the Scheiks, who were the civil power: but whatever might be the differences or jealousies between the latter and the former, would they not join together on the first opportunity to expel and revenge



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themselves on their Christian and European invaders, whom they regarded as dogs in both these capacities? What faith could he have in the Arabs as auxiliaries, whose very aspect is a dusky lie, and who would make use of their temporary submission only to take a long and lasting revenge? It would be no more possible to have any hold on their fierce cunning than to tame the wind—to expect to reap thanks or fidelity for favours conferred would be sowing benefits in the sand. No advantages held out to them or made good could ever counter-balance the difference of colour, dress, manners, religion, nature, and origin. To conquer them would require either immense multitudes or a great length of time; to subdue them by art would require a new system of laws, of manners, of religion, appealing still more strongly to their passions and the infirmities of their nature than the old one, for nothing is a match for long-established prejudice but fanaticism. Novelty alone propagates opinions, as antiquity confirms them. Nothing old can ever be revived; for if it had not been unsuited to the circumstances of the people, it would have been still in existence. The Jewish religion rose and sustained itself by an effort and in opposition to all its neighbours. The Christian religion had been tried and was supplanted by Mahometanism. Its mild genius did not accord with the fierceness of the East. The end and aim of the Christian dispensation is good, that of the Oriental despotisms is power. The spirit of Christianity is sympathy; that of the East exclusive selfishness. The answer to the question ‘Who is thy neighbour?’ in the Gospel, is he whom you can serve—in other codes, it is he who can be of service to you. When Buonaparte was enraged at a troop of Arabs who had attacked a village in the neighbourhood of Cairo and murdered one of the fellahs or peasants, a Scheik asked him with a smile, ‘Was this fellah thy cousin, that his death should so affect thee?’ The good or evil, the right or wrong, the claims, the feelings or wishes of others are laid out of the question, and nothing is considered as valid, but the power to inflict mischief or its being in some way brought home to yourself. The heart has no place in such a system, where the only object or understood principle is to acquire power and property over others, and to treat them according to your will or caprice (as mere property) without considering their welfare or sufferings, their life or death, as of the smallest moment, and where you are regarded in the same light by others, from the lowest to the highest link in the chain of authority. Hence slavery prevails all over the East; but Christianity or humanity alike repudiates this idea, which is that of a fellow-creature who is placed on the level of a beast of burthen or of an inanimate machine. Hence polygamy, which is making a property of the affections and rejecting an equal right in

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them. Hence a difference in another particular, namely, that love with us implies not only an object, but one that can return the attachment, and where the pleasure is equal and mutual; there it seems to imply an object, an appetite merely, but to exclude the idea of reciprocity, or treat it with indifference. To this perversity also the condition of slavery palpably contributes; for where a despotic power is claimed, where nothing is left to the choice or inclination, the gratification of another becomes a secondary consideration; and the conquest of the heart not being at all taken into the account, the will creates itself a difficulty and an incentive by a triumph over nature. Buonaparte, in alluding to the speedy decay and degeneracy of the Mameluke races in Egypt, attributes it to a depravity of manners; and on reasoning upon this subject, does not reason well. He speaks as if all the women in Egypt were old and fat, and the French women alone were light, captivating, and graceful. This is complimenting the French women at the expence of the sex. Besides, if Lady Wortley Montague speaks truth, the women at Constantinople are as handsome as those of Paris; and Buonaparte himself gives an account of the wife of Murad-Bey, a woman of fifty, as having all the grace, the bewitching tones, and the sweetness and elegance of manners of the most accomplished women in Europe. Nor is external beauty alone, according to our ideas, the proper object of love. A statue of a beautiful woman is an object of admiration, but not of love, because though the pleasure of the eye may be the same, it is itself devoid of feeling.—The reasoning on polygamy is also ingenious, but far-fetched. Buonaparte tries to account for the prevalence of polygamy in the East from the difference of colour in the inhabitants and the desire to overcome the antipathy arising from this circumstance by amalgamating them all in the same family. But there is no natural diversity of colour in Asia more than in Europe or Africa. In Asia women are tawny, as in Europe they are white, and in Africa jet-black. If these colours meet more commonly in Asia than in Europe, it is from the practice of sending women from other countries thither as to a mart; which custom itself arises from the practice of polygamy or the purchase and sale of beauty like any other commodity, and is not the cause of it. Polygamy is common in Africa, where there is no mixture of colours. It is the attendant not of a mixture of colours, but of slavery. It is the fault of Buonaparte's reasoning, that he attributes too much in human affairs to political and final causes, and hardly enough to natural and moral ones.

These violent differences of character and customs, and, as it might seem, even of nature, were sufficient to prevent the French from making a very strong moral impression on the inhabitants of Egypt;

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and as to physical force, they had not enough to keep the population down with a strong hand. To retain possession of Egypt, considered merely as a factory or fort on the sea-coast, it would be necessary to command the sea; considered as a kingdom rich in independent resources, it has the back-ground of the Desert, in whose pathless extent and arid sands an army would be lost in attempting to baffle and scatter the barbarians of a thousand cities, of a thousand wilds. The people were too much inured to a different and uniform way of life, either to have occasion for or to set much store by our refinements and comforts, which were neither adapted to their situation nor habits. When Napoleon one day asked the Scheik El-Mondi what was the most useful thing he had taught him in the six months he had been among them—‘The most useful thing you have taught me,’ replied the Scheik, half in jest and half in earnest, ‘is to drink at my meals!’ The Arabs had too little knowledge to be either curious about objects of science or to take any interest in mechanical improvements. They looked upon the scientific men meeting in parties or working in their laboratories, at first as priests and afterwards as alchymists; nor could they understand the interest the French appeared to take in the Pyramids, except by supposing that these Europeans had some tradition of their having been built by their remote ancestors. The only valuable result of the expedition is the famous work on Egypt got up by these learned men, and published at an immense expence during the first fifteen years of this century. The benefits of science are too remote, too evanescent and too refined to strike a rude and savage people who have most need of them. Again, the deference paid by the General-in-Chief to the manners and customs of the people, his joining in celebrating their feasts, and the respect he expressed for their Prophet, were all well-judged, and excellently adapted to conciliate the good-will of the natives, and prevent their unavoidable repugnance from breaking out into open hostility; but they were only temporary expedients and palliatives, which required other resources and stronger measures in reserve. To have overcome so many obstacles and given a popular impulse in his favour, it was necessary to depart from the common course of things and strike the ignorant with wonder and delight—he should have opened the canal of Suez (as was talked of), or by a new mode of irrigation, have doubled the fertility of the Nile and the population of Egypt, or preached a new religion, or rebuilt Palmyra, or allowed the use of wine, or worked miracles, or seemed to work them; but all this would have required time, another age, and faith and fortune led captive to accomplish it. The English and Portuguese occupied only ports on the sea-coast in India; and having the seas to

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themselves, had only the natives to contend with, their power eating gradually into the interior like a cancer. After the Portuguese found out the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, the Venetians lost the commerce of the East, which they had carried on by way of Egypt. Even supposing the French to have established themselves in Egypt, does not this fact shew that the great traffic would still have been carried on by the old road of the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean, or remained in the hands of the great maritime powers?

Egypt borders on the Nile, and occupies an extent of a hundred and fifty leagues in length, from Elephantino to Cairo, and five in breadth, after which the Nile divides into two branches, and forms the Delta. The valley of the Nile is about equal in surface to a sixth part of ancient France, but it is far more fertile, and is like one continued garden, there being neither rock, mountain, nor waste in it. It never rains in Egypt; the fertility of the country depends entirely on the overflowing of the Nile, which brings a kind of rich loam or slime with it from the mountains of Abyssinia, where it takes its rise, and the year is more or less abundant in proportion as it rises higher or lower. By means of a canal to draw the waters of the Nile into the Great Oasis, a vast kingdom was acquired. The country is remarkably healthy; the nights are cool; a burning sun never tempered by clouds, scorches up the vapours arising from the low grounds and marshes, and renders them innoxious. The population of Egypt formerly, in the time of Sesostriis and the Ptolemies, and afterwards at the period when it was conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century, was supposed to amount to fifteen or twenty millions. At present, it amounts to between two and three millions; and in half a century will not amount, in all probability, to more than a million and a half, if the present system of administration continues so long. Yet it is said by some persons that the earth is always as full as it can hold, and that government can have no influence in this respect! Egypt was anciently the great mart and thoroughfare of the commerce of the East. This was carried on by way of the Red Sea, and the goods of India were thence transported to Thebes on the banks of the Nile, by the canal of Suez, or conveyed on the backs of camels eighty leagues across the Desert. Alexandria, built by Alexander the Great, was the chief seat and emporium of all this wealth flowing in from both worlds. It was the second city in the Roman empire. It is the only convenient or safe harbour on a coast of fifteen hundred miles, reaching from Tunis, the ancient Carthage, to Alexandretta in Syria. It is situated on one of the ancient mouths of the Nile; but at present the dilapidation and neglect of the canals of the Nile prevent its waters from reaching Alexandria, except at the height of the



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inundation, when they are collected and preserved in large cisterns, which have a striking appearance. The walls of Alexandria were formerly twelve miles round; it contained 4000 palaces, 4000 baths, 400 theatres, 12,000 shops, and above 50,000 Jews. The Arabs lost 28,000 men in taking it (in the first year of the Hegira). Here is the tomb of Alexander, in searching which the French antiquaries found an elegant little statue in *terra-cotta*, ten or twelve inches in height, dressed after the Greek fashion: near the city were Pompey's Pillar and Cleopatra's famous Needles. The architecture of the Egyptian cities resembles the Asiatic more than the European; and their gardens are full of trees and fountains, but not laid out in any order.

Egypt produces abundance of wheat, rice, and pulse. It was the granary of old Rome, as it is at present that of Constantinople. It also produces sugar, indigo, senna, cassia, nitre, flax and hemp; but it has neither wood, coal, nor oil. It procures tobacco from Syria, and coffee from Arabia. It feeds numerous flocks, independently of those of the Desert, and a multitude of poultry. The chickens are hatched in ovens, which is an immemorial custom. This country serves as an intermediate link or resting-place between Africa and Asia. The caravans arrive at Cairo like ships on a coast, at the moment when they are least expected, and from the most remote quarters. Signals of their arrival are made at Gizeh, and they approach by the Pyramids. At that spot they are informed at what place they are to cross the Nile, and where they are to encamp near Cairo. The caravans thus announced are those of pilgrims or traders from Morocco, Fez, Tunis, Algiers, or Tripoli, going to Mecca and bringing goods to barter at Cairo. They are usually composed of several hundred camels, sometimes even of thousands, and escorted by troops of armed men. Caravans also come from Abyssinia, from the interior of Africa, from Tagoast, and from places in direct communication with the Cape of Good Hope and Senegal. They bring slaves, gum, gold-dust, elephants' teeth, beautiful negresses from Darfour, and in general all the produce of those countries, which they exchange for the merchandise of Europe and of the Levant. The French, English, or any other nation established in Egypt, would soon have to supply the wants of the inhabitants of the Deserts of Africa, Abyssinia, Arabia, and a great part of Syria, and in return might obtain from Egypt wheat, rice, sugar, nitre, and all the productions of Africa and Asia.

There is neither coach nor cart in Egypt. The facility of water-carriage supersedes the use of them; and the camel is used to cross the Desert and as the ordinary beast of burden. The horses are the finest in the world. Buonaparte's coachman, Cæsar, astonished the

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natives by his dexterity in driving his carriage with six fine horses through the narrow streets of Cairo and Boulac. He himself speaks of this circumstance with no small complacency. Even the greatest minds are not unwilling to derive admiration from accident and at a little expence of exertion. Lord Byron endeavoured to make the Italians stare by galloping through the streets of Venice on the only *live* horse ever seen there.

A spring of water, a patch of verdure, a tent, his camels, his horse, and a herd of cattle, are all that the Arab possesses. Water is the first of necessities in the Desert, and indeed throughout the East; and the Prophet has in a manner placed this element under the peculiar protection of religion. To dig a canal or a well, or to erect a fountain, are considered as works not only of great merit, but as acts of piety. Let us not run away with an idea that all is wrong, because it is barbarous or unlike ourselves. There is a limit which neither good nor evil can pass; the excess of every thing produces its contrary. Slavery in the East, by being absolute and universal, has its necessary, practical alleviations; otherwise it could not be borne. Slaves are admitted as a part of the family, marry their masters, or rise to the highest offices in the State; for where all are slaves, all are equal. Cruelty and distress naturally produce humanity and compassion, as hospitality is the child of the Desert. Charity and alms are recommended in every part of the Koran, as the means of being most acceptable to God and the Prophet. Charity is so far the offspring of the parsimony of nature and the ravages of power. At the appointed hour the Mussulmans say their prayers, wherever they may happen to be, or whatever business they are engaged in; the slaves spread the carpets before them, and they kneel with their faces towards the East. At the feast of Ramadan (says Voltaire) the Mahomedans sing and pray five times a day, and then fall to cutting each other's throats with the greatest good-will imaginable. Nor let this be imputed as a slur upon religion, but as a redeeming trait in human nature, of which it stands in need. Instead of shewing the fallacy and nullity of the *ideal* principle, it shews its universality and indestructible character. Man can no more divest himself entirely of the ethereal particle, the *divinæ particula auræ*, than of the grossness of his nature, however one or the other may predominate. The Moor or wild Arab who laughs at human ties, who is the slave of headstrong passions or of sordid interest, is still tamed by certain talismanic words written in his sacred books; eyes the golden chain let down from Paradise to him with wonder and delight; is dangled in this film, this cobweb of his brain like a puppet; and his savage and mere animal nature is cowed and subjected by his higher imaginative and abstracted nature,

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just as he himself curbs and bends the camel or the wild ass of the Desert to his purposes !

The General-in-Chief went to celebrate the feast of the Prophet at the house of the Scheik El-Bekir. The ceremony was begun by the recital of a kind of litany, containing the life of Mahomet from his birth to his death. About a hundred Scheiks sitting in a circle, on carpets, with their legs crossed, recited all the verses, swinging their bodies violently backwards and forwards, and all together. A magnificent dinner was afterwards served up, at which the guests sat on carpets with their legs across. There were twenty tables, and five or six people at each table. That of the General-in-Chief and the Scheik El-Bekir was in the middle : a little slab of a precious kind of wood, ornamented with mosaic work, was raised eighteen inches above the floor, and covered with a great number of dishes in succession. There were pilaws of rice, a particular kind of roasted meat, *entrées*, and pastry, all very highly spiced. The Scheiks<sup>1</sup> picked every thing with their fingers ; accordingly, water was brought to wash their hands three times during dinner. Gooseberry-water, lemonade, and other sorts of sherbet were served to drink, and abundance of conserves and confectionary with the desert. The dinner was not disagreeable to the French guests ; it was only the manner of eating it that seemed strange to them. In the evening, the whole city of Cairo was illuminated. After dinner the party went into the square of El-Bekir ; the illumination of which, in coloured glass, was exceedingly beautiful. An immense concourse of people were present. They were all placed in order, in ranks of from twenty to a hundred persons, who, standing close together, recited the prayers and litany of the Prophet, with movements which kept increasing until at length they became quite convulsive, and some of the most zealous fainted away. In the course of the year, the General-in-Chief often accepted invitations to dinner with the Scheik Sadda, the Scheik Fayon, and others of the principal Scheiks. The days chosen were different festivals. The same magnificence prevailed at all their entertainments, which were conducted in nearly a similar manner.

Buonaparte did not ever (as has been idly asserted) pretend to be a convert to the Mahometan religion ; he merely avowed what he probably felt, a high opinion of its founder, and treated its ceremonies with respect and decorum. There seems however, at one time, to have been a sort of tampering on the subject, as if he had a desire to become a *catechumen* ; and the points of abstinence from wine and circumcision were stated as difficulties in the way of such an arrangement, which the Scheiks however thought might be dispensed with,

<sup>1</sup> The Doctors of Law, descended from the Arabs and the Prophet.

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as not essential parts of the religion. This was not good policy; instead of deceiving these subtle and sagacious casuists, it would give them a bad opinion of the sincerity of the French Commander in other respects. To turn renegado was more than was requisite to be admitted into the country on a friendly or mercantile footing; to conquer it, it was not enough. If their religion was so excellent as to call for this mark of acquiescence, it was probable that their laws and government were not so bad as to require remodelling by the hands of strangers; and before you can pretend to overturn an empire, it is absolutely necessary to prove that you are either stronger or wiser than the conquered. Half-measures will not do for extreme cases; and where there is a total antipathy of sentiment and maxims, one party or the other must be masters. Buonaparte's soldiers, though superior to any opposed to them, were a mere handful compared to the field over which they had to act, and must in the end have bit the dust; and their chief does not appear to have possessed any spell or talismanic power in his breast to kindle a flame through the East or tame its raging fires. His breath had not the force to stir up the sun-burnt population of Asia like a cloud of dust, and send it before him like a whirlwind; and without this, it must be 'blown stifling back upon himself!' So far from propagating new principles of civilisation in the East, it was his object to crush and neutralise them at home; and instead of commencing and giving full scope to a new era in society, to patch up and lengthen out the old one, which had fallen in pieces from its own imperfections and infirmity. Bacchus scattered god-like gifts and civilisation in the East, and returned from the conquest of India, drawn by panthers, and followed by troops of wild men and women. Alexander overturned barbaric thrones by martial discipline, and fell a martyr to the intoxication of his own pride and passions. Buonaparte was stopped by a dismantled fort and an English cruiser; and turned back to found an empire in the West, which fell upon the founder's head because it was neither new nor old!

While the General-in-Chief merely conformed to the established worship in outward appearance and from policy, General Menou became a convert in good earnest, turned Mahometan, and married a lady of Rosetta, whom he treated after the French modes of gallantry. He gave her his hand to enter the dining-room, the best place at table, the choicest dishes; or if she dropt her handkerchief, he ran to pick it up. She related these circumstances in the bath at Rosetta, where all the women meet; and the rest, in hopes of a change in the national manners, signed a petition to Sultan Kabir, or the Fire-king (so they called Buonaparte), that their husbands should be obliged



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to treat them in the same manner. A Revolution of the Harem might not have been the least feasible project thought of. The women in the East always wear a veil or a piece of cloth to hide their faces. If taken by surprise, they will make use of any other part of their dress sooner than let their faces be exposed. Marriage in general takes place without either party having seen the other; or at least without the husband having seen the wife. The dress of the Oriental people is both becoming, easy, and magnificent. Their necks and limbs are not confined by bandages or garters; a native of the East may remain a month in his clothes without feeling fatigued by them. The little hats of the French, their tight breeches, close coats, and the stocks which strangled them, were, as they well might be, objects of laughter and aversion to them. The freedom and looseness of the female dress makes a greater contrast in this respect in Europe; and the use of the beard in remote climes or periods may be supposed to date the distinction of manhood more pointedly from its growth.

The plague appears first on the coast of Egypt, and occurs always in winter. When it broke out, the army adopted the precautions used at Marseilles; which were wholly unknown to the natives, but of the utility of which they became at length sensible. Egypt is in general extremely healthy, and the soldiers were chiefly incommoded by diseases of the eyes. This disorder is attributed to two causes, first the sand and dust, and secondly to the checking of the perspiration, produced by very cold nights succeeding very hot days. It is evidently owing in some way to the climate. St. Louis, on his return from the Holy Land in 1250, brought back a multitude of blind; and it was this circumstance that gave rise to the establishment of the hospital of the *Quinze Vingts* at Paris.

Egypt is divided from Syria to the east by the Great Desert, which is seventy-five leagues, or seven days' journey across.

## CHAPTER XX

### THE BATTLES IN 1799 IN SYRIA

BUONAPARTE remained during the rest of the year 1798 at Cairo, ripening his plans, and watching the progress of events. Soon after the battle of the Nile, the Porte, no longer kept in awe by the French fleet or else alarmed for its possessions in the East, declared war against France. In the beginning of 1799 the Turkish armies assembled, one at Rhodes, the other in Syria, in order to attack the French in Egypt.

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They were to act in concert in the month of May, the first by landing at Aboukir, the second by crossing the Desert which divides Syria from Egypt. In the beginning of January news arrived that Gezzar Pacha had been appointed Seraskier of the army of Syria; that his vanguard, under the command of Abdallah, had already arrived at El-Arisch, and was occupied in repairing the fort, which may be considered as the key of Egypt on the Syrian side. A train of artillery of forty guns, served by 1200 cannoneers in the European manner, had been landed at Jaffa; considerable magazines were conveyed to that town, by means of vessels from Constantinople; and at Gaza stores of skins to hold water had been collected, sufficient, it was said, to enable a large army to cross the Desert.

Had the French remained stationary, they would have been attacked by both armies at once; and it was also to be apprehended that the Turks would shortly be joined by a body of European troops. Thus hemmed in, the French would have no retreat open to them by sea, as they had no fleet; and by land, the Desert of seventy-five leagues, which separates Syria from Egypt, was not passable by an European army in the height of the hot season. It was therefore the business of the French General to anticipate his enemies, to cross the Great Desert during the winter, to possess himself by a *coup-de-main* of the magazines which had been formed on the coast of Syria, and to attack, and if possible to destroy the different troops in succession as fast as they collected. In consequence of this plan, the divisions of the army of Rhodes were obliged to hasten to the relief of Syria; and Egypt not being threatened on that side remained quiet, which allowed the French to march the greater part of their troops into Syria. Had the attack on Acre succeeded, Buonaparte had it in contemplation (at least as no impossible event) to have menaced Constantinople with an army of 25,000 French, and 100,000 auxiliaries, Arabs, Copts, the Druses of Mount Lebanon, the Christians of Syria; and after establishing an amicable understanding with the Porte, to march on the Indus and effect the conquest of India. The object of the expedition would thus have been completely fulfilled by driving the English out of their Eastern possessions; but this splendid structure was built on the sand. Buonaparte had already tried to open a communication with Tippoo Saib, by a letter dated the 25th of January in this year; but of course the negociation never came to any thing. On the 9th of February, a little before he left Cairo, it appears by a letter to the Executive Directory, that he had celebrated the commencement of the Ramadan with the greatest pomp, and performed the same functions as were performed by the Pacha on that occasion. General Desaix was at this period in Upper Egypt fighting with Murad-Bey, 160 leagues from

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Cairo, near the Cataracts, where he had explored the ruins of Thebes; General Bon was at Suez. Buonaparte, in all his letters to the Directory, manifests great uneasiness at not hearing news from France, respecting which he seems to have been kept, either by design or accident, very much in the dark. A Ragusan ship which arrived at Alexandria, having on board one Citizen Hamelin with some broken files of Italian journals, gave him a new light on the subject. '*If*,' he writes to the Executive Directory, '*in the course of March, Citizen Hamelin's report should be confirmed to me, and France should be at war with the Kings, I shall return to Europe.*' He at the same time urges the necessity of reinforcements, and complains of the number of enemies he has to contend with—Deserts, inhabitants of the country, Arabs, Mamelukes, Russians, Turks, and English.

Buonaparte had addressed two letters to Gezzar Pacha in the latter end of the preceding year: the only answer he gave was in the first instance to use the messenger ill, and in the second to cut his head off. The French at Acre were seized and treated in a barbarous manner. The Pacha also issued a number of proclamations, in which he called on the people of Egypt to revolt, and announced his speedy approach. Some months after his vanguard took up a position at El-Arisch, a fort situated on the borders of the Desert, six leagues within the Egyptian territory. The French General no longer hesitated, but determined to carry the war into the enemy's country without delay. On the 4th of February General Reynier joined the vanguard under General Lagrange, stationed at Catieh, three days' journey in the Desert, where Buonaparte had ordered considerable magazines to be collected, and where General Kleber soon after arrived from Damietta. Two days after, the army set out from Catieh on its march across the Desert to El-Arisch, during which for several days no water was to be found. The difficulties which arose on every side were borne with great patience; and the enemy was attacked and driven from the village of El-Arisch, and the whole of his vanguard shut up in the fort. In the mean time, Gezzar Pacha's cavalry, with a body of infantry, having got into the rear of the army, and taken up a position about a league off, Kleber directed General Reynier to make a sudden movement, and at midnight the enemy's camp was surrounded, attacked, and taken, with a quantity of baggage and several prisoners. It was necessary to open regular trenches before the fort; a heavy cannonade was commenced against it. On the 18th at noon, a practicable breach was made, and the Commandant was summoned to surrender, which he did. Three hundred horses, much biscuit and rice were found at El-Arisch, together with 500 Albanians, 500 Maugrabins, and 200 men from Adonia and Caramania: the Maugrabins entered into the

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French service, and Buonaparte made an auxiliary corps of them. On leaving El-Arisch, the vanguard lost its way in the Desert, and suffered much for want of water. The provisions failing, the troops were obliged to eat horses, mules, and camels. On the 24th they came to the pillars placed to mark the boundaries of Africa and Asia, and lay that night in Asia. The following day the army marched on Gaza; and at 10 in the morning saw 3000 or 4000 cavalry advancing towards them. Murat's cavalry having passed a number of torrents in sight of the enemy, Kleber's division and Lannes's light infantry, which supported the movement of the cavalry, charged the enemy near the height which overlooks Hebron, and where Samson carried off the gates of Gaza. The Mussulmans did not await the charge, but fell back, having some men killed, among others the Pacha's Kiaya. The 22d light infantry behaved extremely well, and followed the cavalry running, though many days had elapsed since they had made a good meal, or drank their fill of water. Gaza contained powder, military stores, shells, implements, vast supplies of biscuit, and six pieces of cannon.

The weather now became dreadful, with thunder and rain, the first the army had encountered since its leaving Europe. February 28, they slept at Eswod, the ancient Azot, and on the 29th at Rameh, which the enemy had evacuated precipitately, leaving behind him 100,000 rations of biscuit, a still greater quantity of barley, and 1500 water-skins, which Gezzar had prepared in order to pass the Desert.

Kleber's division was the first that invested Jaffa; Bon and Lannes came up afterwards. The town was defended by about forty pieces of cannon, which were unmasked from all points and kept up a well-sustained fire. On the 6th of March, the French having fixed their batteries and mortars, the garrison made a *sortie*; a crowd of men, in various costumes and of all colours, were then seen marching out, Maugrabins, Albanians, Kurds, Natolians, Caramanians, Damascenes, natives of Aleppo, and blacks from Tekrou. They were, however, briskly repulsed, and returned with more expedition than they came. Duroc, at that time aide-de-camp to the General-in-Chief, particularly distinguished himself in this adventure. At break of day Buonaparte caused the Governor to be summoned, who had his messenger's head struck off and sent no answer. At seven o'clock the firing commenced, and in an hour Buonaparte judged the breach practicable. General Lannes made the dispositions for the assault. The Adjutant-General's assistant, Neterwood, and ten carbineers first mounted the breach, followed by three companies of grenadiers, under General Rambaud. At five the assailants were masters of the town, which was for twenty-four hours given up to pillage and all the horrors of war. Four



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thousand of Gezzar's soldiers were put to the sword, and a number of the inhabitants were massacred.

In the course of a few days several ships arrived from St. Jean d'Acre with military stores and provisions; they were seized in the port. Abd-Oullah, Gezzar's General, had the address to conceal himself among the people from Egypt, and to go and throw himself at Buonaparte's feet. The latter sent to Damascus and Aleppo more than 500 persons belonging to those two cities, as well as between 400 and 500 persons into Egypt. He pardoned the Mamelukes and Kiaschefs whom he took at El-Arisch; he pardoned also Omar-Mackram, Scheik of Cairo; he was merciful towards the Egyptians as well as towards the people of Jaffa, but severe towards the garrison which suffered itself to be taken with arms in its hands. The French found at Jaffa fifty pieces of cannon, thirty of which were of European make, besides immense stores of provisions. The siege was conducted by Caffarelli, who afterwards fell at Acre: Colonel Lejeune, who was killed in mounting the breach, was deeply regretted by his corps and by the army.

It was from Jaffa that Buonaparte dated two of his most famous letters, the one addressed to the inhabitants of Palestine, the other to Gezzar Pacha; which deserve insertion here, as specimens of his manner of adopting the energetic and imposing style of Eastern composition. They are as follows:—

*' General Buonaparte to the Scheiks, Ulemas, and other Inhabitants of the Provinces of Gaza, Ramleh, and Jaffa.*

*' Jaffa, 19th Ventose, year VII.  
March 9, 1799.*

*' God is forgiving and merciful !*

*' I write the present letter to inform you that I am come into Palestine to drive out the Mamelukes and the army of Gezzar Pacha.*

*' By what right has Gezzar extended his inroads into the provinces of Jaffa, Ramleh, and Gaza, which are no part of his Pachaship? Or by what right did he send his troops to El-Arisch? He has provoked me to war; I have brought it to him: but it is not on you, inhabitants, that I intend to inflict its horrors.*

*' Remain quiet in your homes; let those who have quitted them through fear return to them; I will grant to every one the property he possesses.*

*' It is my intention that the Cadis shall continue their functions as usual, and dispense justice: that religion, in particular, shall be protected and revered; and that the mosques shall be frequented by all good Mussulmans; it is from God that all good things come; it is he who gives the victory.*

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‘It is proper that you should know that all human efforts are useless against me; for all that I undertake is destined to succeed. Those who declare themselves my friends, prosper; those who declare themselves my enemies, perish. The example of what has just occurred at Jaffa and Gaza, ought to teach you that if I am terrible to my enemies, I am kind to my friends, and, above all, benevolent and merciful to the poor.

(Signed)

‘BUONAPARTE.’

The letter to Gezzar Pacha bears the same date, and runs thus :—

‘Since my entrance into Egypt I have several times informed you that it was not my intention to make war upon you, but that my only object was to drive out the Mamelukes; you have not answered any of the proposals I have made to you.

‘I apprised you that I wished you to remove Ibrahim-Bey from the frontiers of Egypt; but far from doing so, you have sent troops to Gaza, collected great magazines, published on all sides that you were about to enter Egypt; and at length carried this invasion into effect by sending 2000 of your men to the fort of El-Arisch, six leagues within the territory of Egypt. It then became incumbent on me to set out from Cairo, and bring home to you the war which you seem to provoke.

‘The provinces of Gaza, Ramleh, and Jaffa are in my power. I have treated those of your troops who placed themselves at my mercy with generosity: I have treated those who had violated the laws of war with severity. I shall march in a few days on St. Jean d’Acre. But why should I deprive an old man whom I do not know of a few years of life? What signify a few leagues more by the side of the countries I have conquered? And since God gives me the victory, I will, like him, be forgiving and merciful, not only towards the people, but towards the great also.

‘You have no real reason to be my enemy, for you were the foe of the Mamelukes. Your Pachaship is separated from Egypt by the provinces of Gaza and Ramleh, and by immense deserts. Become my friend once more, be the enemy of the Mamelukes and English, and I will do you as much good as I have done and can do you harm. Send me your answer by a man furnished with full powers and acquainted with your intentions. Let him present himself to my vanguard with a white flag: I give an order to my staff to send you a safe conduct, which you will find annexed.

‘On the 24th of this month I shall march against St. Jean d’Acre; I must therefore have your answer before that day.

(Signed)

‘BUONAPARTE.’

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With the name of Jaffa are connected two of the ugliest charges ever brought against Buonaparte, those of massacring the Turkish prisoners and poisoning his own troops in the hospital there ; which were for a long time repeated with no less confidence than success, and which have since been proved, and indeed acknowledged by the persons chiefly concerned in propagating them, to be as groundless as they were odious. The truth with respect to each of them appears to have been this, which cannot be given better than in his own words :

‘ I asked the Emperor then if he had ever read Miot’s History of the Expedition to Egypt ? “ What, the Commissary ? ” he replied ; “ I believe Las Cases gave me a copy ; moreover, it was published in my time.” He then desired me to bring the one which I had, that he might compare them. He observed, “ Miot was a *polisson*, whom, together with his brother, I raised from the dirt.” He says that I threatened him for writing the book, which is a falsehood. I said to his brother once that he might as well not have published untruths. He was a man who had always fear before his eyes. What does he say about the poisoning affair and the shooting at Jaffa ? ” I replied, that as to the poisoning, Miot declared he could say no more than that such had been the current report ; but that he positively asserted that he (Napoleon) had caused between three and four thousand Turks to be shot some days after the capture of Jaffa. Napoleon answered, “ It is not true that there were so many. I ordered about a thousand or twelve hundred to be shot, which was done. The reason was, that amongst the garrison of Jaffa a number of Turkish troops were discovered whom I had taken a short time before at El-Arisch, and sent to Bagdat upon their parole not to serve again or to be found in arms against me for a year. I had caused them to be escorted twelve leagues on their way to Bagdat by a division of my army. But those Turks, instead of proceeding to Bagdat, threw themselves into Jaffa, defended it to the last, and cost me a number of brave men to take it, whose lives would have been spared, if the others had not reinforced the garrison of Jaffa. Moreover, before I attacked the town, I sent them a flag of truce. Immediately afterwards we saw the head of the bearer elevated on a pole over the wall. Now if I had spared them again, and sent them away upon their parole, they would directly have gone to St. Jean d’Acre, where they would have played me over again the same trick that they had done at Jaffa. In justice to the lives of my soldiers, as every general ought to consider himself as their father and them as his children, I could not allow this. To leave as a guard a portion of my army, already small and reduced in number in consequence of the breach of faith of those wretches was impossible. Indeed, to have acted otherwise than I did, would probably have caused the



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destruction of my whole army. I therefore, availing myself of the rights of war, which authorise putting to death prisoners taken under such circumstances, independent of the right given to me by having taken the city by assault, and that of retaliation on the Turks for having slaughtered my messenger, ordered that the prisoners taken at El-Arisch, who in defiance of their capitulation had been found bearing arms against me, should be singled out and shot. The rest, amounting to a considerable number, were spared. I would," continued he, "do the same thing again to-morrow, and so would any General commanding an army under similar circumstances."

"Previous to leaving Jaffa," continued Napoleon, "and after the greatest number of the sick and wounded had been embarked, it was reported to me that there were some men in the hospital so dangerously ill as not to allow of their being removed. I immediately ordered the chiefs of the medical staff to consult together on what was best to be done, and to deliver their opinion on the subject. Accordingly they met, and found that there were seven or eight men so dangerously ill, that they conceived it impossible for them to recover; and also that they could not exist twenty-four or thirty-six hours longer; that moreover, being afflicted with the plague, they would spread that disease amongst all those who approached them. Some of them, who were sensible, perceiving that they were about to be abandoned, demanded with earnest intreaties to be put to death. Larrey was of opinion that recovery was impossible, and that these poor fellows could not exist many hours; but as they might linger long enough to be alive when the Turks entered, and be subjected to the dreadful tortures which they were accustomed to inflict upon their prisoners, he thought it would be an act of charity to comply with their desires and accelerate their end by a few hours. Desgenettes did not approve of this, and replied that his profession was to cure the sick and not to dispatch them. Larrey came to me immediately afterwards, informed me of the circumstances and of what Desgenettes had said, adding that perhaps Desgenettes was right. But, proceeded Larrey, those men cannot live for more than a few hours, twenty-four or thirty-six at most, and if you will leave a rearguard of cavalry to stay and protect them from advanced parties, that will be sufficient. Accordingly I ordered four or five hundred cavalry to remain behind, and not to quit the place until all were dead. They did remain, and informed me that all had expired before they left the town; but I have heard since, that Sidney Smith found one or two alive when he entered it. This is the truth of the business. Wilson himself, I dare say, knows now that he was mistaken. Sir Sidney Smith never asserted any thing of the kind. I have no doubt that this story of the poisoning

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originated in something said by Desgenettes, who was a *bavard*, which was afterwards misconceived or incorrectly repeated. Desgenettes was, however, a good man, and notwithstanding his having given rise to this story, I was not offended, and had him near my person in different campaigns afterwards. Not that I think it would have been a crime, had opium been administered; on the contrary I think it would have been a virtue. To leave a few unfortunate beings who could not recover, in order that they might be massacred by the Turks with the most dreadful torments, as was their custom, would, I think, have been cruelty. A General ought to act with his soldiers as he would wish should be done to himself. Now, would not any man under similar circumstances, who retained his senses, have preferred dying easily a few hours sooner, rather than expire under the tortures of those barbarians? You have been amongst the Turks and know what they are; I ask you now to place yourself in the situation of one of those sick men, and that you were asked which you would prefer; to be left to suffer the tortures of those miscreants or to have opium administered to you? I replied, most undoubtedly I should prefer the latter. "Certainly, so would any man," answered Napoleon; "if my own son (and I believe I love my son as well as any father does his child) were in a similar situation with those men, I would advise it to be done; and if so situated myself, I would insist upon it, if I had sense enough and strength enough left to demand it. But, however, affairs were not so pressing as to prevent my leaving a party to take care of them, which was done. If I had thought such a measure as that of giving opium unavoidable, I should have called a council of war, have stated the necessity of it, and have published it in the order of the day. It should have been no secret. Do you think that if I had been capable of secretly poisoning my soldiers (as doing a necessary action secretly would give it the appearance of a crime), or of such barbarities as driving my carriage over the dead or the still bleeding bodies of the wounded, that my troops would have fought for me with an enthusiasm and an affection without a parallel? No, no. I never should have done so a second time. They would have shot me in passing. Even some of the wounded, who had sufficient strength left to pull a trigger, would have dispatched me." "

Such is the account given by O'Meara of Buonaparte's conversation with him on this subject, which, independently of other proof, carries its own evidence with it. Yet it was one of those charges which, insisted upon for a number of years with every circumstance of aggravation, gangrened the public mind and swelled the war-whoop against him, whenever a plea was wanted. In proportion to the odiousness of the imputation was the natural horror it excited, and the firm con-

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viction entertained of the truth of this phantom of a heated imagination. The English are too ready to give ear to charges against their enemies; and from this weakness in their character, every adventurer who can bring an idle tale against a formidable opponent or with the aid of half-a-dozen venal scribblers stigmatize him with an opprobrious nickname, can inflame the national hostility and prejudices to a state bordering on madness, and wield the power of ten or twelve millions of people to any purpose, either of right or wrong, that the Government pleases. This is a dangerous engine; and the handle that has been made of it in this instance among others should shame us out of the use of it. Napoleon attributes to the great Lord Chatham a saying on this subject, that 'if the Government were to deal fairly or justly with France, England would not exist for four-and-twenty hours.' It looks as if this sentiment were not peculiar to him; but it has been acted upon with tenfold virulence and still more pernicious effect in our time.

His real behaviour to the sick at Jaffa, and the imminent peril to which he exposed himself to calm the fears of the army at the infection which broke out among them, form a striking contrast to the foregoing calumny. The soldiers in the pillage of the place having plundered the houses of a number of articles of Turkish dress which were infected, this produced the plague among them. The following day the General-in-Chief gave orders that every soldier should bring his booty into the square, when all the articles of wearing apparel were burnt. But the disease had been already communicated. He caused the sick to be immediately conveyed to the hospitals, where those infected with the plague were carefully separated from the rest. For a short time he succeeded in persuading the troops that it was only a fever with swellings, and not the plague; and in order to convince them of it, he went publicly to the bed-side of a soldier who was infected, and touched him. This had a great effect in encouraging the men; and even some of the surgeons, who had abandoned them, became ashamed and returned to their duties.

## CHAPTER XXI

### ST. JEAN D'ACRE AND ALEXANDRIA

JAFFA is situated between Gaza and St. Jean d'Acre, the road to which runs nearly along the sea-shore, close by Mount Carmel, on the top of which there is a convent and fountain, and a rock with the print of a

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man's foot, which tradition gives out to have been left by Elijah when he ascended to heaven. The heights of Richard Cœur-de-Lion are about half a mile from it.

The siege of St. Jean d'Acre began on the 20th of March; and from this period till the 1st of April the battering-train consisted of one thirty-two-pounder carronade, which Major Lambert had taken at Caiffa by seizing the long-boat of the Tyger by main force; but it was not possible to make use of it with the carriage belonging to the boat, and besides, there were no cannon balls. These difficulties speedily vanished. In twenty-four hours the park of artillery constructed a carriage. As for balls, Sir Sidney Smith took upon himself to provide them. A few horsemen or waggons made their appearance from time to time; upon which the English Commodore<sup>1</sup> approached and poured in an alternate fire from all his tiers; and the soldiers, to whom the director of the park paid five *sous* for every ball, immediately ran to pick them up. They were so much accustomed to this manœuvre that they would go and fetch them in the midst of the cannonade and of the shouts of laughter it occasioned. Sometimes the construction of a battery was pretended to be begun. Thus the besiegers obtained twelve and thirty-two pounder balls. They had powder, which had been brought from Cairo, and more had been found at Jaffa and Gaza. The total of their means in the way of artillery amounted only to four twelve-pounders, provided with two hundred rounds each, eight howitzers, a thirty-two-pounder carronade, and thirty four-pounders. The engineer, General Samson, being ordered to reconnoitre the town, reported incorrectly that there was neither counterscarp nor ditch, from having in the night reached a wall, which he had mistaken for the rampart. A breach was made in this wall, and fifteen sappers and twenty-five grenadiers, with Adjutant-General Laugier at their head, were ordered to clear it, but on coming out on the other side, were stopped short by a counterscarp of fifteen feet and a ditch several yards in width. Five or six of the assailants were wounded, and the rest, pursued by a dreadful fire of musquetry, regained the trench precipitately. A miner was immediately set to work to blow up the counterscarp. In three days the mine was got ready, under the fire of the ramparts and of a great quantity of mortars, directed by excellent gunners furnished by the English ships, which scattered shells in all directions. The eight-inch mortars and five pieces which the English had taken at Aboukir, now strengthened the defence of the place. On the 28th the mine was sprung, but only overthrew half of the counterscarp. The staff-officer Mailly was, however,

<sup>1</sup> Sir Sidney Smith was cruising off Acre with the English fleet, and often entered the town.



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sent forward with twenty-five grenadiers and six sappers, and Laugier with two battalions hastened to support the attack; but the latter, on reaching the counterscarp, met the grenadiers returning with the news that the trench was too high by some feet, and that Mailly, with several of their comrades, had been killed. When the Turks first saw this young officer fastening the ladder, they were seized with terror and fled to the fort. But the death of Mailly frustrated the whole operation; Laugier was also killed and considerable loss incurred without any benefit, though the town ought to have been taken at this time, as reinforcements arrived in the garrison by sea daily. Soon afterwards, the counterscarp was blown up by a new mine sunk for that purpose, and continued under the ditch in order to blow up the whole tower, as there was no hope of getting in at the breach, which had been filled up with all sorts of combustibles. The English and Turks stood on the inside, and knocked the few stragglers on the head one by one as they entered. About this time the garrison made a sortie, led on by two hundred English, but they were repulsed and a captain of marines was killed.

It was during the progress of the siege, or in the month of April, that the actions of Canaan, Nazareth, Saffet, and Mount Tabor were fought. The last was that which Kleber admired so much. He had foretold its ill-success to Buonaparte, and done all he could to dissuade him from it, but had promised to come up in time to assist him. Buonaparte sat up all night in his tent with the officers sleeping round him. He sat at a table examining maps and measuring distances with a pair of compasses. Every now and then he rose up, went to the opening of the tent, either to breathe the fresh air, or as if to see how the night waned. With the first streak of light he woke the officers, and by ten o'clock he had beaten the Turks, when Kleber arrived just in time to compliment him on his victory.

In the middle of April, Rear-Admiral Perré had arrived at Jaffa with three frigates from Alexandria; he had landed two mortars and six eighteen-pounders at Tintura. Two were fixed to play upon the little isle that flanked the breach, and the four others were directed against the ramparts and curtains by the side of the tower. On the 25th the mine was sprung, but a chamber under the tower (which had been filled with sand) disappointed the besiegers, and only the part on the outside was blown up. The effect produced was the burying two or three hundred Turks and a few pieces of cannon in the ruins, for they had embattled and occupied every story of the tower. In order to take advantage of the first moment of surprise, thirty men attempted to make a lodgment in the tower, but were unable to proceed beyond the lower stories. On the 26th General Devaux was wounded,

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and on the 27th Caffarelli died. It was now resolved to evacuate the place, and by directing the batteries against this tottering tower, to destroy it altogether. From this period the besieged perceived that if they remained longer on the defensive, they were lost. The imagination of the Turks was struck with terror, and they fancied every spot to be undermined. A reinforcement of 3000 men entered the place, and Phelippeaux, a French emigrant officer, formed lines of counter-attack; they began at Gezzar's palace and the right of the front of attack. In the space between the two, the most furious contests took place daily; sorties were made with various success, the besieged sometimes carrying every thing before them, and then being driven back again with great loss and disorder. Dismay and death were scattered around. From the narrowness of the space and the numbers engaged, they had hardly room to do all the mischief they would. Sometimes the combatants in the trench, either from the putrid smell or some other cause, being seized with the plague, went mad, did desperate deeds, and fell dead as they fought. On the 1st of May, possession was obtained at peep of dawn of the most salient point of the counter-attack by twenty French volunteers; and at the same moment the English and Turks made a sortie, which was briskly repulsed in its turn, and several hundreds killed. A mine had been already carried across to the rampart under the ditch, when on the 6th the garrison debouched by a sap covered by the fossé, surprised the mask of the mine, and filled up the well. On the 7th the town received a reinforcement of fresh troops.<sup>1</sup> As soon as their approach was made known by signals, it was calculated that according to the state of the wind they could not land for six hours. In consequence of this a twenty-four pounder which had been sent by Rear-Admiral Perré was immediately brought into play, which battered down a piece of the wall to the right of the tower. At night the French troops fought their way through the breach, and had gained a footing in the place, when the troops which had landed appeared in formidable numbers to renew the battle. Rambaud was killed, and a great many fell with him; Lannes was wounded. The besieged then sallied forth by every gate and took the breach in rear; but they were attacked in turn and cut off. The prisoners taken were armed with European bayonets and came from Constantinople. Every thing appeared so favourable, that on the 10th, at two in the morning, Napoleon ordered a new assault. General Dubois was killed in this last skirmish; and on advancing, Gezzar's house and all the avenues were found to be so

<sup>1</sup> Sir Sidney Smith's account is, that these frequent reinforcements were in part imaginary, but that he kept up a continual report of them to alarm and discourage the enemy.



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thronged with defenders, that the soldiers could not pass beyond the breach.

Under these circumstances, what was to be done? There seemed no hope of carrying the place by a *coup-de-main*; new succours were said to be leaving Rhodes; the French, remote as they were from France and Egypt, could not afford fresh losses: they had already 1200 wounded, and the plague was in the hospitals. Accordingly, on the 20th the siege was raised. The resistance made by the place was no doubt owing to a spirit foreign to itself. The attack was obstinate and well-directed, and there was a proportionable activity, courage, and readiness of expedient opposed to it. A spirit like Ariel flamed on every part of the walls, and a master-hand was discernible in all the operations. Sir Sidney Smith is a person whose only fault seems to be a constitutional excess of activity and contrivance; but the excess of these qualities is repressed in the presence of the enemy or when life or honour is at stake, and the original impulse remains a useful spur to overcome all obstacles. Buonaparte speaks well of his courage and character, but considers him very eccentric. He attributes the failure of the attack on Acre to his taking the French battering-train, which was on board some small vessels in the harbour. He blames him for making sorties, by which he lost the lives of some hundreds of brave men. He dispersed proclamations among the troops which had the effect of shaking some of them, and Napoleon in consequence published an order, stating that he was *mad*, and forbidding all communication with him. Soon after he sent a lieutenant or a midshipman with a letter containing a challenge to meet him at some place he pointed out in order to fight a duel. Buonaparte laughed at this, and sent him word back that when he brought Marlborough to fight him, he would think of it. Sir Sidney displayed considerable ability in the treaty for the evacuation of Egypt, and took advantage of the discontent which prevailed amongst the French troops at being so long absent from France, and other circumstances. He also manifested great honour in sending immediately to Kleber to apprise him of Lord Keith's refusal to ratify the treaty, which saved the French army; had he kept it a secret seven or eight days longer, Cairo would have been given up to the Turks, and the French army necessarily obliged to surrender to the English. He also evinced equal humanity and honour in his behaviour to the French who fell into his hands. He had landed at Havre in consequence of some foolish bet he made that he would go to the theatre without being discovered. He was arrested and confined in the Temple as a spy, and at one time it was intended to try and execute him, as a paltry revenge for the mischief he had done at Toulon. Captain Wright was in a room immediately

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over his head, and they conversed together by means of signs. Shortly after Buonaparte's return from Italy, he wrote to him from prison, to request that he would intercede for him; but in the circumstances in which he was taken, nothing could be done for him. Buonaparte sums up the character of his fortunate antagonist in these words: 'He is active, intelligent, intriguing, and indefatigable; but I believe him to be *mezzo pazzo*.' <sup>1</sup>

During some part of the siege of Acre, a shell thrown from the garrison fell at Napoleon's feet. Two soldiers who were standing near, seized and closely embraced him, making a rampart of their bodies for him against the effects of the shell, which exploded and covered them with sand. They all three sank into the hole formed by its bursting: one of the soldiers was wounded. He made them both officers. One of them lost his leg at Moscow, and commanded at Vincennes when the Allies entered Paris. When summoned by the Russians to surrender, he replied that 'as soon as they sent him back the leg he had lost at Moscow, he would give up the fortress.' This man came from Perigueux in the Dordogne, and survived his master, whose life he perhaps saved. Many times in his life Buonaparte had been saved by the soldiers and officers throwing themselves before him when he was in the most imminent danger. At Arcole, when he was at the head of a desperate charge, his aide-de-camp, Colonel Muiron, threw himself before his General, covered him with his body, and received the blow which was aimed at him. 'He fell at my feet,' says Napoleon, 'and his blood spouted up in my face. Never yet, I believe, has there been such devotion shewn by soldiers, as mine have manifested for me. In all my misfortunes never has the soldier, even when expiring, been wanting to me—never has man been served more faithfully by his troops. With the last drop of blood gushing out of their veins, they exclaimed *Vive l'Empereur!*' <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Half-mad.

<sup>2</sup> At the battle of Hanau, General Le Tor, who fell afterwards at the battle of Ligny, and to whose daughter Buonaparte left a legacy, cut his way through a troop of Austrian cavalry to extricate Napoleon, who had been surrounded by them. He received a number of sabre-wounds, and his face was dreadfully scarified. Buonaparte told him, laughing, that if his wife (a handsome English woman) admired him for his beauty he ought to be afraid of meeting her again. The name of this lady was Newton, and the Emperor used to compliment her by saying that she did as much honour to her country by her grace and beauty as her illustrious namesake had done by his science. Buonaparte entered a wretched hovel in one of his campaigns, and finding some potatoes roasting in the ashes, greedily seized on one; and the other officers (of whom General Le Tor was one) drawing back, he said, 'Why don't you help yourselves? Do you think I am to burn my fingers for you?' This cordial familiarity of manners, contrasted with the elevation of power, would naturally account for the extreme devotion of his troops.

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During the expedition into Syria, the inhabitants of Egypt had conducted themselves in an orderly manner. Desaix in Upper Egypt continued to repulse the attacks of the Arabs, and to secure the country from the attempts of Murad-Bey, who made incursions from the Desert of Nubia into different parts of the valley. Sir Sidney Smith had caused a great number of circulars and libels to be printed, which he sent to the generals and commandants who had been left behind in Egypt, proposing to them to return to France, and guaranteeing their passage, if they chose to do so, whilst the Commander-in-Chief was in Syria. These proposals appeared so extravagant that it became the common opinion of the army that the Commodore was not in his right senses. General Dugua, who had the command in Lower Egypt, prohibited all intercourse with him, and indignantly rejected his overtures.

The French forces in Lower Egypt were daily increased by the arrival of men from the hospitals. The fortifications of Alexandria, Rosetta, Rahmanieh, Damietta, Salahieh, Belbeis, and the different points of the Nile which it had been judged proper to occupy with towers, went on constantly during the winter-months. General Dugua had only to repress the incursions of the Arabs and some partial tumults; the mass of the inhabitants, influenced by the Scheiks and Ulemas, remained satisfied and quiet. The first event which interrupted the general tranquillity was the revolt of Emir-Hadji, or the Prince of the Caravan of Mecca. The General-in-Chief had authorised Emir-Hadji to establish himself in Sharkieh to complete the organization of his household. He had already 300 armed men, but he wanted 800 or 900 to form a sufficient escort for the caravan of the pilgrims on their way to Mecca. He remained faithful to Sultan Kabir (the name always given to Buonaparte in the East) until the battle of Mount Tabor; but then Gezzar having succeeded in communicating with him by the coast, and having informed him that the armies of Damascus and the Naplousains were surrounding the French at the camp of Acre, and that the latter, weakened by the siege, were irremediably lost, he began to doubt of the success of the French, and to listen to Gezzar, wishing to make his peace by rendering him some service. On the 15th of April, having received more false intelligence from an emissary employed by Gezzar, he announced his revolt by a proclamation published throughout Sharkieh. In this he asserted that Sultan Kabir had been killed before Acre, and the whole of the French army made prisoners. The greater part of the population took no notice of these idle rumours. Five or six villages only displayed the standard of revolt, and the Emir's forces were only increased by 400 horse, belonging to a tribe of Arabs. General Lanusse with his moveable

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column left the Delta, passed the Nile, and marched against Emir-Hadji, whom he succeeded in surrounding, put to death those who resisted, dispersed the Arabs, and burnt one of the villages as an example. The Emir-Hadji himself escaped with four other persons through the Desert, and reached Jerusalem.

During these occurrences in Sharkieh, others of greater importance were passing in Bahireh. A man of the Desert of Derne, possessed of a great reputation for sanctity amongst the Arabs of his tribe, took it into his head to pretend that he was the angel Elmody whom the prophet promises in the Koran to send to the aid of the elect in the most critical emergencies. This man had all the qualities calculated to excite the fanaticism of the multitude. He succeeded in persuading them that he lived without food, and by the especial grace of the Prophet. Every day, at the hour of prayer, and before all the faithful, a bowl of milk was brought to him in which he dipped his fingers, and passed them over his lips; this being, as he said, the only nourishment he took. He had collected a body of 120 followers, inflamed with zeal, with whom he repaired to the Great Oasis, and was there joined by a caravan of pilgrims, consisting of 400 Maugrabins from Fez. He thus found himself at the head of between 500 and 600 men, well-armed and supplied with camels; and marching on Damanhour, surprised and killed sixty men belonging to the nautical legion. This success increased the number of his partisans. He visited all the mosques of Damanhour and the neighbouring villages, and from the pulpit declared his divine mission, declaring himself incombustible and ball-proof, and giving out that his followers would in like manner have nothing to fear from the musquets and cannon of the French. He enlisted 3000 or 4000 converts in Bahireh, most of whom he armed with pikes and shovels, and exercised them in throwing dust against the enemy, declaring that this blessed dust would frustrate all the efforts of the French against them. Colonel Lefebvre, who commanded at Rahmanieh, left fifty men in the fort, and set out with 200 to retake Damanhour. The action commenced, and when the fire was briskest, some columns of fellahs outflanked the French and passed their rear, with their shovels raising clouds of dust. Colonel Lefebvre could do nothing, though a number of the enemy were killed in the skirmish. The wounded and the relatives of those who were slain loudly reproached their leader, who had told them that they were safe from the balls of the French. He silenced these murmurs by quoting the Koran, and by maintaining that none of those who had rushed forward full of confidence in his predictions had been hurt; but that those who had shrunk back had been punished by the Prophet, because they had not faith in their hearts. This excuse, which ought to have



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opened their eyes, confirmed their belief. He reigned absolute in Damanhour, and there was reason to apprehend the defection would extend to the whole of Bahireh and the neighbouring provinces. General Lanusse speedily crossed the Delta, reached Damanhour, and defeated the troops of the pretended angel Elmody. Those who were unarmed dispersed and fled to their villages. Lanusse fell on the rest of these fanatics without mercy, and shot 1500 of them, amongst whom was their ringleader. He took Damanhour, and Bahireh became pacified.

As soon as it was known that the French army had repassed the Desert, and was returning into Egypt, a general consternation prevailed amongst all those who had sided with the French. The Druses, the Mutualis, the Christians of Syria, and the partisans of Ayer had to make their peace with the Pacha by large pecuniary sacrifices. Gezzar was become less cruel than formerly; most of his military household had been killed at St. Jean d'Acre, and this old man survived all those whom he had brought up. The plague, which was making great ravages in the town, also increased his troubles, so that he did not go beyond his Pachaship. The Pacha of Jerusalem resumed possession of Jaffa. Ibrahim-Bey with 400 Mamelukes that he still had left, took up a position at Gaza, and had some skirmishes with the garrison of El-Arisch.

Elphi-Bey and Osman-Bey, with 300 Mamelukes, 1000 Arabs, and 1000 camels, carrying their wives and their riches, went down through the Desert between the right bank of the Nile and the Red Sea, and reached the Oasis of Sebaïar in the beginning of July. They waited for Ibrahim-Bey, who was to join them at Gaza; and thus united, they wished to induce all Sharkieh to revolt, to penetrate into the Delta, and advance on Aboukir. Brigadier-General Lagrange left Cairo with one brigade and half the dromedary regiment. He came up with the enemy in the night of the 9th of July, and surrounded the camp of Osman-Bey and Elphi-Bey, took their thousand camels and their families, and killed Osman-Bey, five or six Kiaschefs, and 100 Mamelukes. The rest dispersed in the Desert, and Elphi-Bey returned to Nubia. Ibrahim-Bey being informed of this event in time, did not quit Gaza. Murad-Bey with the rest of the Mamelukes, amounting to between 400 and 500 men, arrived in the Fayoum, and thence proceeded by the Desert to Lake Natron, where he expected to be joined by 2000 or 3000 Arabs of Bahireh and of the Desert of Derne, and to march on Aboukir, the place appointed for the landing of the great Turkish army. General Murat set out from Cairo, reached Lake Natron, attacked Murad-Bey, and took a Kiaschef and fifty Mamelukes. Murad-Bey briskly pursued, and having, moreover, no news of the

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army which was to have landed at Aboukir, but was delayed by the winds, turned back and sought safety in the Desert. In the course of the 13th he reached the Pyramids; it is said that he ascended the highest of them, and remained there part of the day, gazing with his telescope on the houses of Cairo and his fine country-seat at Gizeh. Of all the power of the Mamelukes, he now retained only a few hundred men, disheartened, fugitive, and miserable. As soon as the General-in-Chief heard of his being there, he instantly set out for the Pyramids; but Murad-Bey plunged into the Desert, making for the great Oasis. A few camels and some men were taken from him.

On the 14th of July, the General-in-Chief heard (at Cairo) that Sir Sidney Smith, with two English ships of the line, several frigates and Turkish men-of-war, and a hundred and twenty sail of transports, had anchored in Aboukir roads on the evening of the 12th. The fort of Aboukir was armed, victualled, and in good condition, with a garrison of 400 men and a commandant that might be depended on. Marmont undertook to defend this fort till the army had time to come up. But this General had committed a great error in not following the directions of the General-in-Chief, who had ordered him to raze the village of Aboukir, and extend the fortifications; instead of which he had taken upon himself to preserve the village, as convenient for cantonments, and had a redoubt constructed on the isthmus, which he thought a sufficient security. On the 14th, the English and Turkish gun-boats entered Lake Maadieh, and cannonaded the redoubt; and when it was thought sufficiently battered, the Turks, sword in hand, mounted to the assault, carried the work, and took or killed the 300 French stationed there. The 100 men that remained in the fort, intimidated by the immense force that surrounded them, surrendered.

In the mean time, as soon as Napoleon was informed of the landing of the Turks, he proceeded to Gizeh and dispatched orders to all parts of Egypt. On the 15th he slept at Wardan, on the 17th at Alham, on the 18th at Shabur, and on the 19th at Rahmanieh, thus performing a journey of forty leagues in four days. The divisions of Murat, Lannes, and Bon marched from Cairo; Kleber came from Damietta; General Reynier, who was in Sharkieh, had orders to leave 600 men to garrison the forts, and to march on Rahmanieh. General Desaix likewise received orders to evacuate Upper Egypt, to leave the guarding of the country to the inhabitants, and to come to Cairo with all possible speed; so that if it should be necessary, the whole army, amounting to 25,000 men, might be in motion to join before Aboukir, where there was every reason to expect not only a Turkish, but an English army, and in the uncertainty of the event, the General-in-Chief took the worst for granted. It was his object to attack and defeat the army



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which was landing at Aboukir, before that of Syria (supposing such an army to have been collected and to be on its way) could reach Cairo. On arriving at Rahmanieh on the 20th, Napoleon learnt the news of the landing of the troops under Mustapha-Pacha, and of the capture of the redoubt; but that they had not stirred since, either because they were waiting for the junction of the English, or for that of Murad-Bey. The fortifications, in constructing which the enemy occupied themselves on the Isthmus of Aboukir, seemed to indicate that they wished to make this point the centre of operations, and to march thence either on Alexandria or Rosetta, according to circumstances. The General-in-Chief in consequence sent General Murat to Birketh, a village at the head of Lake Maadieh, from whence he could fall on the right flank of the Turks if they should make for Rosetta, or on their left flank if they should march on Alexandria.

While the columns were effecting a junction at Rahmanieh, Napoleon visited Alexandria, and found every thing in the fortifications in excellent order, for which he gave due praise to the talents and activity of Colonel Cretin. As there was a probability of the English coming up, it was important to attack the Turks separately; but there was a difficulty in this, as it would take several days for the whole army to arrive from such distant points, and as the troops actually assembled and ready to engage did not amount to above 5000 or 6000. Napoleon set out from Alexandria on the 24th, and proceeded to Puits, half-way across the isthmus, where he encamped and was joined by all the troops that were at Birketh. The Turks, who were without cavalry, could not watch his movements, and some hopes were entertained of surprising the enemy's camp; but this design was frustrated by an accident. A company of sappers escorting a convoy of tools, having left Alexandria late on the 24th, passed the fires of the French army, and fell in with the outposts of the Turks at ten o'clock in the evening. As soon as they perceived their mistake they fled, but ten were taken, from whom the Turks ascertained that the General, with the army, was opposite to them, and the next morning they were prepared for the assault. General Lannes with 1800 men made his dispositions to attack the enemy's left. Destaing with a like number of troops prepared to attack the right; Murat, with all his cavalry and a light battery, was in reserve. The skirmishers of Lannes and Destaing soon engaged with those of the enemy, and the Turks maintained the battle with success, till Murat, having penetrated through their centre, suddenly cut off the communication between their first and second lines. The Turkish troops then lost all confidence, and rushed tumultuously towards their rear. This corps consisted of between 9000 and 10,000 men. The Turkish infantry are brave, but preserve

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no order, and their musquets are without bayonets ; they are moreover deeply impressed with an opinion of their inferiority to cavalry on level ground. Encountered in the midst of the plain by the French cavalry, they could not rejoin their second line ; their right was driven towards the sea, and their left towards Lake Maadieh. An unprecedented spectacle now presented itself. The columns of Lannes and Destaing, which had advanced to the heights lately quitted by their adversaries, descended thence at the charge ; and these 10,000 men, to escape the pursuit of the infantry and cavalry, threw themselves into the water, and whilst the artillery poured grape-shot upon them, were almost all drowned. It was said that not more than a score succeeded in swimming to the ships. This extraordinary advantage, obtained with so little loss, gave the General-in-Chief hopes of forcing the second line. Colonel Cretin was sent forward to reconnoitre. The left was found to be the weakest part. Lannes had orders to draw up his troops in columns, and under the protection of the artillery to proceed along the lake, turn the entrenchments, and throw himself into the village. Murat was to follow with his cavalry as before, prepared to execute the same movement ; Colonel Cretin, who knew every step of the ground, was to direct their march, and Destaing was instructed to make false movements, to occupy the attention of the enemy's right.

All these dispositions succeeded. Lannes had forced the entrenchments and made a lodgment in the village ; but Mustapha-Pacha, who was in the redoubt behind it, at this moment made a sortie with 4000 or 5000 men, and thereby helped to separate the French right from their left, at the same time placing himself in the rear of their right. This movement would have stopped Lannes short ; but the General-in-Chief, who was in the centre, marched with the 60th, checked Mustapha's attack, made him give ground, and thereby restored the confidence of General Lannes's troops, who continued their movement, and the cavalry advancing got in the rear of the redoubt. The enemy, finding themselves cut off, fell into the utmost disorder. General Destaing charged on the right, and those who tried to regain the fort falling in with the cavalry, not one Turk would have escaped, had it not been for the village, which a considerable number had time to reach and to entrench themselves in it. A great multitude were driven into the sea. Mustapha with all his staff, and a body of from 1200 to 1500 men, were surrounded and made prisoners. It was four in the afternoon when the battle was over. Mustapha-Pacha did not surrender till after making a valiant resistance ; he had been wounded in the hand. The French cavalry had the chief share in the fortune of the day. Murat was wounded in the head by a tromblon

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shot ; Duvivier was killed by a thrust from a kangiar. Cretin was shot dead by a musquet-ball, while conducting the cavalry, and Guibert, aide-de-camp to the General-in-Chief, was struck by a ball in the breast and died shortly after the battle. The French loss was 300 men. Sir Sidney Smith, who had chosen the position occupied by the Turkish army, narrowly escaped being taken prisoner, and with some difficulty got on board his sloop. The 60th had behaved ill in an assault at St. Jean d'Acre, and the General-in-Chief had it inserted in the order of the day that they should march across the Desert with their arms reversed, and escorting the sick : by their spirited conduct at the battle of Aboukir they regained their former reputation.

Buonaparte left Egypt for France, which he thought required his presence more, on the morning of the 6th of Fructidor (23d of August) 1799, and landed at Frejus on the 9th of October. He gave the command of the army, amounting to 28,000 men, to Kleber, who at first doubting of Buonaparte's safe arrival, and anxious to quit Egypt, sent over the most disheartening accounts and gave ear to every idle rumour. He had formerly served under the Austrians against the Turks, and had conceived the most exaggerated ideas of their prowess and ability in war. Turkish armies and English fleets hovered for a long time in the horizon of his imagination, till Colonel Lautour-Maubourg, who left France at the end of January 1800, arrived at Cairo, on the 4th of May, with the news of Buonaparte's landing in France and the events of the 18th of Brumaire, ten days previous to the term fixed for the surrender of that capital to the Grand Vizier. Kleber took heart at this, and he had only to march against the enemy. That rabble which called itself the Grand Vizier's army, was chased across the Desert without making any resistance. The French had not above a hundred men killed or wounded, while the enemy lost an immense number of troops, and their tents, baggage, and artillery. An entire change now took place in Kleber's conduct ; he set seriously to work to improve the state of the army and of the country ; but on the 14th of June, 1800, he fell by the hand of a fanatic. Menou succeeded to the command, who was totally unfit for it. An English army of 18,000 men, under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, landed at Aboukir the year following. The event of that battle is well known : Sir Ralph Abercrombie was killed, but the French army were obliged to lay down their arms and evacuate Egypt, which they did a short time after, thus losing the whole object of the expedition. Admiral Gantheaume had sailed from Brest the 25th of January, with 5000 men to reinforce the army of Alexandria, and might have arrived in time, had he followed his orders ; but he put back with every rumour of an English vessel, and shifted his course oftener than the wind, as if

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determined to evade his instructions and defeat the object of his voyage. The French character seems never to have been fixed, or directed steadily and effectually to a given purpose, except under the strong pressure and immediate control of Buonaparte's iron will.<sup>1</sup>

The scheme in which he embarked on this occasion was left imperfect, and finally failed. But an incident which happened long after, may serve to show the impression he made on all about him, and on fierce, barbaric minds. Twenty years after the date of the events here related, Antommarchi going to visit Napoleon, then a captive and dying at St. Helena, arrived off Cape Palm. They kept near to the shore, and saw a number of canoes leave the isle and make towards them. They watched the progress of these skiffs with an anxious eye. They were light, swift, narrow, and low, managed by men squatted down in them, who struck the sea with their hands and glided over its surface; a wave, a breath made them upset; but nimble as the fishes, they instantly turned their boats round again, and pursued their course. The vessel had taken in sail; they were soon up with it; they were strong, active, well-made. They brought provisions, which were received with every mark of thankfulness. 'Where are you going?' asked one of them. 'To St. Helena,' was the answer. This name struck him, he remained motionless. 'To St. Helena?' he replied, in a tone of dejection—'Is it true that he is there?' 'Who?' demanded the captain. 'The African cast a look of disdain at him,' says Antommarchi, 'came to us and repeated the question. We replied that he was there. He looked at us, shook his head, and at length let the word *impossible* escape him. We gazed at one another; we could not tell who this savage could be, who spoke English, French, and who had so high an idea of Napoleon. "You know him then?"—"Long ago." "You have seen him?"—"In all his glory." "And often?"—"In Cairo, the well-defended city, in the Desert, in the field of battle." "You do not believe in his misfortunes?"—"His arm is strong, his tongue sweet as honey, nothing can resist him."—"He has for a long time withstood the efforts of all Europe."—"Neither Europe nor the world can overcome such a man. The Mamelukes, the Pachas were eclipsed before him; he is the God of Battles." "Where then did you know him?"—"I have told you, in Egypt." "You have served with him?"—"In the 21st; I was at Bir-am-bar, at Samanhout, at Cosseir, at Cophtos, wherever this valiant brigade was to be found. What is become of General Belliard?" "He still lives: he has rendered his name illustrious by twenty feats of arms.

<sup>1</sup> The expedition into Egypt was originally suggested to the French Government under M. Calonne, and afterwards to the Directory by a man of the name of Magallon, who had been for several years French Consul-General in the East.



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You know him too ? ”—“ He commanded the 21st ; he scoured the Desert like an Arab ; no obstacle stopped him.” “ Do you remember General Desaix ? ”—“ None of those who went on the expedition to High Egypt will ever forget him. He was brave, ardent, generous, he plunged into ruins or battles alike ; I served him a long time.” “ As a soldier ? ”—“ No, I was not that at first ; I was a slave, belonging to one of the sons of the King of Darfour. I was brought into Egypt, ill-treated, sold. I fell into the hands of an aide-de-camp of the Just.<sup>1</sup> I was habited like a European, and charged with some domestic offices, of which I acquitted myself well ; the Sultan was satisfied with my zeal, and attached me to his person. Soldier, grenadier, I would have shed my blood for him : but Napoleon cannot be at St. Helena ! ” “ His misfortunes are but too certain. Lassitude, disaffection, plots ” —“ All vanished at his sight ; a single word repaid us for all our fatigues ; our wishes were satisfied, we feared nothing from the moment that we saw him.” “ Have you fought under him ! ”—“ I had been wounded at Cophtos, and was sent back into Lower Egypt ; I was at Cairo when Mustapha appeared on the coast. The army had to march, I followed its movement, and was present at Aboukir. What precision, what an eye, what brilliant charges ! It is impossible that Napoleon has been conquered, that he is at St. Helena ! ” We did not insist ; the African was obstinate, his illusion was dear to him, and we did not wish to dispel it. We gave him some tobacco, powder, some clothes, all the trifles, in short, which were prized by his tribe. He went back well satisfied, speaking always of the 21st, of his chiefs, his General, and of the impossibility that so great a man as Napoleon should be at St. Helena.’<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE EIGHTEENTH OF BRUMAIRE

ON the 9th of October 1799 (16th of Vendemiaire, year VIII.) the frigates *La Muiron* and *La Carrere* and the xebecs *La Revanche* and *La Fortune*, with which Buonaparte had sailed from Rosetta, cast anchor at break of day in the gulf of Frejus.

No sooner were the French frigates descried than it was conjectured they came from Egypt. The people ran in crowds to the shore, eager for news from the army. It was soon understood that Napoleon was

<sup>1</sup> The name by which Desaix was known in Egypt.

<sup>2</sup> Last Moments of Napoleon, by F. Antommarchi, vol. i. p. 51.



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on board, and such was the enthusiasm among the people, that even the wounded soldiers got out of the hospitals in spite of the guards, and went to the shore. The spectators wept for joy. In a moment the sea was covered with boats. The officers belonging to the fortifications and the customs, the crews of the ships that were anchored in the road, in short, every body thronged round the frigates. General Pereymont, who commanded on the coast, was the first to go on board. Thus they were allowed to enter without waiting for the officers of quarantine, for the communication with the ships had been general. Italy had just been lost : war was about to be recommenced on the Var, from whence Napoleon had driven it three years before ; and Frejus dreaded an invasion as soon as hostilities should begin. The necessity of having a leader at the head of affairs was too urgent, and the public mind was too much agitated by the sudden appearance of Napoleon at this juncture for ordinary considerations to have any weight. The quarantine officers declared that there was no occasion for subjecting these vessels to it, and grounded their report on the circumstance that they had touched at Ajaccio. This argument rather proved, that Corsica ought to have been put under the same regulations. It is true, that during fifty days which had elapsed since the vessels left Egypt, there had been no appearance of sickness, and indeed the plague had ceased three days before their departure. At six o'clock that evening Napoleon, accompanied by Berthier, set off for Paris. The fatigue of the passage and the effect of the transition from a dry to a moist climate compelled Napoleon to stop some hours at Aix. The inhabitants of the city and of the neighbouring villages came in crowds to offer their congratulations at seeing him again. Those who lived too far from the road to present themselves there in time, rang the bells, and hoisted flags upon the steeples, which at night blazed with illuminations. It was not like the return of a citizen to his country, or of a general at the head of a victorious army, but seemed to imply something more than this. The enthusiasm of Avignon, Montelimart, Valence, and Vienne was only surpassed by that of Lyons. That city, in which Napoleon rested for twelve hours, was in a state of general delirium. The Lyonnese had always testified a strong attachment to him, perhaps from feeling a peculiar interest (on account of their situation) in all that related to Italy. They had also just received the accounts of the battle of Aboukir, which formed a striking contrast to the defeat of the French armies of Germany and Italy. 'We are numerous, we are brave,' the people seemed every where to say, 'and yet we are conquered. We want a leader to direct us—we now behold him, and our glory will once more shine forth.' In the mean time, the news of Napoleon's return had

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reached Paris. It was announced at the theatres, and caused an universal sensation, of which even the Directory partook. Some of the *Société du Manège* trembled on the occasion, but they dissembled their real feelings so as to seem to share the common sentiment. Baudin, the deputy from the Ardennes, who had been much grieved at the disastrous turn the affairs of the Republic had taken, died of joy when he heard of Napoleon's return.

Napoleon had already quitted Lyons, before his landing was announced in Paris. With a precaution hardly necessary in these circumstances, he took a different road from the one he had mentioned to his couriers; so that his wife, his family, and particular friends went in a wrong direction to meet him, and some days elapsed in consequence before he saw them. Having thus arrived in Paris quite unexpectedly, he had alighted at his own house in the Rue Chanteraine before any one knew of his being in the capital. Two hours afterwards, he presented himself to the Directory; and being recognized by the soldiers on guard, was welcomed with shouts of gladness. Happy still was this period when every spark of enthusiasm was not dead, and there was at least one man in the world who could excite the least emotion in the public breast! The intoxicating draughts of liberty and of glory that mankind have swallowed in the last forty years seem to have exhausted the vital principle of the human mind, and have brought on premature old age and decay! Buonaparte had every reason to congratulate himself on the reception he met with on all sides. The nature of past events sufficiently instructed him as to the situation of France; and the information he had procured on his journey had made him acquainted with all that was going on. His resolution was taken. What he had been unwilling to attempt on his return from Italy, he was now determined to do at once. He had the greatest contempt for the government of the Directory and for the leaders in the two Councils. Resolved to possess himself of authority and to restore France to her late glory by giving a powerful impulse to public affairs, he had left Egypt to execute this project; and all that he had seen in passing through France had confirmed his sentiments and strengthened his design.

It is necessary to take a retrospective glance at what had happened in his absence. The elections of Floreal, year VI. (May 1798), which immediately followed his departure, were not favourable to the Directory, though they took place in a totally opposite spirit to those of the year V. After the 18th of Fructidor, the defeat of the counter-revolutionists had thrown all the influence into the hands of the extreme republican party, who had re-established the clubs under the title of *Constitutional Circles*. This party ruled in the electoral assemblies,

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which had to nominate 437 new deputies to the legislative body. As the elections drew near, the Directory inveighed loudly against those whom it termed *anarchists* ; but not being able to influence the choice of the members, it determined to annul the greater part of them in virtue of a law, by which, in the preceding year, the Councils had entrusted it with the power of revising the proceedings of the electoral assemblies. For this purpose a commission of five members was appointed out of the legislative body, by means of which the party of the Directory struck from the list all the violent Republicans, as nine months before they had excluded the Royalists. Soon after, Merlin of Douay and Treilhard, who succeeded Carnot and Barthelemy, went out of office by rotation ; Rewbell remained the chief manager in all affairs which required boldness and promptitude ; Reveillère was too much taken up with the sect of the Theophilanthropists for a statesman ; Barras led the same dissolute life as ever, and his house was the resort of gamesters, women of intrigue, and adventurers of every description. To the difficulties arising out of want of union in the government or from the conflict of parties were soon added those of a war with all Europe.

While the plenipotentiaries of the Republic were still negotiating the conditions of peace at Rastadt, the second Coalition took the field. The treaty of Campo-Formio had only been considered by Austria as a suspension of arms to gain time. England found no difficulty in engaging her to take part in the new confederation, to which, with the exception of Prussia and Spain, all the other European powers lent their aid. The subsidies of Great Britain and a crusade in the South prevailed with Russia : the Porte and the Barbary States acceded to it in consequence of the invasion of Egypt ; the Empire to recover the left bank of the Rhine, and the petty princes of Italy in the hope of overturning the new Republics which had been established there. The Congress at Rastadt was gravely occupied in discussing the articles of the treaty relative to the cession of the left bank of the Rhine, the navigation of this river, and the demolition of certain fortresses on the right bank, when the Russians advanced into Germany and the Austrian army was immediately put in motion. The French plenipotentiaries taken unawares, received orders to depart in twenty-four hours ; they obeyed on the instant, and set forward on their journey after having obtained safe-conducts from the enemy's generals. At a short distance from Rastadt they were way-laid by some Austrian hussars, who having ascertained their names and titles, assassinated them on the spot ; Bonnier and Roberjot were slain, Jean de Bry was left for dead. Such was the insult and outrage deliberately and openly offered to the rights of nations in the persons of the French envoys, because no terms

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were to be kept with those who had set up the rights of nature in opposition to the sacred right of kings ! Such was the meek patience, the long-suffering, the mild perseverance, with which the Allied Powers shewed their desire of peace by massacring the ambassadors that had been appointed to conclude it with them ! Such was their 'unbought grace of life,' their 'cheap defence of nations !' Yet these are the people, they who authorised, who repeated, and who applauded outrages like this, who were the professed supporters of religion, morality, and social order, who if a hair of their heads was but touched, cried out for help as if the dissolution of the world was at hand, and who laid it down that every violation of the nicest punctilio with regard to them was a crime of the deepest dye, in proportion as they were entitled and had *carte blanche* (according to every notion of legitimacy) to practise all sorts of atrocity with impunity and with impudence. Yet these are the men who complained of the unprovoked aggressions and insatiable ambition of France, and of the impossibility of making peace with her. Yet it is to this government who thus broke off a hollow truce, and seizing the sword, threw away the scabbard, that Madame de Stael afterwards addressed the pathetic appeal—*Allemagne ! tu es une nation, et tu pleures !* On the first intelligence of this breach of faith and of every principle of civilized society, the legislative body declared war against Austria, and in terms of becoming indignation at the outrage which had provoked it.

Hostilities commenced in Italy and on the Rhine. The military conscription which had been sanctioned by a law placed 200,000 recruits at the disposal of the Republic. The powers who were the most impatient and formed the advanced guard of the Coalition had already entered the lists. The King of Naples marched against Rome, and the King of Sardinia had levied troops and menaced the Ligurian Republic. As they had not a force sufficient to stand the shock of the French armies, they were easily overthrown and defeated. General Championnet entered Naples, after a sanguinary victory. The Lazzaroni defended the interior of the city during the space of three days, but they were at length compelled to submit, and the *Parthenopean Republic* was proclaimed. Joubert occupied Turin, and all Italy was in the hands of the French, when the campaign opened upon a wider scale.

The Coalition had the advantage of the Republic in numerical forces, and in the forwardness of its preparations : it commenced the attack by the three grand openings of Italy, Switzerland, and Holland. A numerous Austrian army entered the Mantuan territory, and twice beat Sherer on the Adige ; where it was soon after joined by the eccentric and hitherto victorious Suwarrow. Moreau took the place



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of Sherer, and was beaten like him. He retreated by way of Genoa, in order to maintain the barrier of the Apennines and to effect his junction with the army of Naples, commanded by Macdonald, which had been almost crushed to pieces at Trebbia. The Confederates then directed their principal forces towards Switzerland. Some Russian troops joined the Archduke Charles, who had defeated Jourdan on the Upper Rhine, and who prepared to pass the Swiss frontier. At the same time the Duke of York landed in Holland with 40,000 English and Russians. The little Republics that formed a circle round France were invaded; and after a few more victories, the Allies might hope to penetrate to the very centre of the capital.

It was in the midst of these military disasters, and of the discontents that followed, that the new elections for the year VII. (May 1799) took place. They turned out favourably for the Republican party, but fatally for the members of the Directory, who were not strong enough to make a stand against the public calamities and their personal enemies. Sieyès replaced Rewbell, who went out by rote, and was the only one among them who had much energy or spirit to head a party. Treilhard was also deprived of his situation on account of an informality in his election to office, the year required by the Constitution not having expired since he had belonged to the Legislative Body; his place was supplied by Gohier, Ex-Minister of Justice. Merlin of Douay and Reveillère-Lepaux being thus left in a minority and violently attacked by the most powerful speakers in the Councils, resigned with some reluctance, and were succeeded by General Moulins and Roger-Ducos. Sieyès, thus invested with power which he had hitherto declined, began to cast about how he should effect the ruin of the old Republican Constitution of the year III. and set up one of those in its stead, the plan of which he always carried about with him in his pocket. He had either feared or had a dislike to Rewbell, and as long as he was in office, refused to act with him. In the Directory he at present reckoned on the support of Ducos; in the Legislature, on the majority of the Council of Ancients; among the people on those who wishing to keep what they have, only require stability and order: he was at a loss for a military leader, and for this purpose had fixed on Joubert whom he had placed at the head of the Army of the Alps, that by means of victory and the liberation of Italy, he might gain a great political ascendant. The new Directors, Gohier and Moulins, still wished to maintain the Constitution of the year III.; they had the Council of Five Hundred on their side, and were strengthened by the Club of the Manège, the remnant of that of Salms, of the Pantheon, and of the Jacobins. Barras remained neuter amidst these factions, or rather had a new game of his own to play, as he had lately connected himself with



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the royalist party. This amidst so many agitations had not been idle, and taking advantage of the successes of the Coalition, of the embarrassments occasioned by the forced loan, and of the unpopularity of the law of hostages, which required the families of emigrants to give personal security to government, had begun to raise disturbances in the South and West, and to re-appear in armed bands. Of all the factions that disturbed France for so long a time, this is the only one that remained true to itself : that waited patiently, watched its opportunity, and seized upon it whenever it occurred. Power never slumbers, and fear and self-interest wait upon it as its shadow !

Fortunately for the Republic, the war took a turn about this time on the two principal frontiers of the Upper and Lower Rhine. The Allies, having gained possession of Italy, wanted to penetrate into France by Switzerland and Holland ; but Massena and Brune put a stop to their hitherto triumphant march. Massena advanced against Korsakof and Suwarrow. During twelve days of well-contrived manœuvres and successive victories, passing to and fro from Constance to Zurich, he repelled the efforts of the Russians, forced them to retreat, and broke up the Coalition. Brune likewise defeated the Duke of York in Holland, obliged him to re-embark on board his vessels, and give up the attempt at invasion. The Army of Italy alone had been less successful ; and its General, Joubert, had been killed at the battle of Novi, as he was charging the Austro-Russian army at the head of his troops. But this frontier was of less consequence on account of its remoteness, and was also ably defended by Championnet. The change in the face of the war made, however, no change in the state of parties. Things went on as before. Sieyès pursued his projects against the Republicans. Lucien Buonaparte gave a flaming description in the Council of Five Hundred of the reign of terror, which he said was about to be renewed. Bernadotte was deprived of his command, and Fouché, who had lately been appointed to the head of the police, shut up the *Société du Manège*. The death of Joubert had once more embarrassed Sieyès in the choice of a military leader. Hoche had been dead more than a year ; Moreau was suspected on account of his conduct with regard to Pichegru ; Massena was no politician ; Bernadotte and Jourdan were of the opposite party. Things were in this state when Buonaparte returned, nineteen days after the victory of Bergen, obtained by Brune over the Duke of York, and fourteen after that of Zurich, obtained by Massena over Suwarrow. He was just the man that Sieyès wanted ; but as Buonaparte did not stand in the same need of him, the fine web of policy he had woven was taken out of his hands the moment it was realised, and the great political machine he had been at so much pains and had taken

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so much time to construct, turned and crushed the inventor as soon as it was put in motion.

Of the members that composed the Directory when Buonaparte quitted France a year and a half before, Barras alone remained. The other members were Ducos, Gohier, Moulins, men of moderate talents but of good intentions, and Sieyès. The latter had been long known to Napoleon. He was a native of Frejus in Provence, and his reputation had commenced with the Revolution. He had been called to the Constituent Assembly by the electors of the *Third Estate* at Paris, after having been repulsed by the Assembly of the Clergy at Chartres. He was the author of the pamphlet entitled, '*Qu'est-ce-que le Tiers-Etat ?*' which made so much noise. He was not a man of business; all his studies having been devoted to metaphysics, he had the common fault of metaphysicians, that of too often despising positive notions; but he was, notwithstanding, capable of giving good and useful advice on matters of importance, or at any urgent crisis. To him France is indebted for its division into Departments, which destroyed a number of local prejudices; and though he was never distinguished as an orator, he greatly contributed to the success of the Revolution by his advice in the Committees. He was nominated to the Directory at its first establishment; but he declined the distinction at that time from his dislike to Rewbell; and Reveillère-Lepaux was appointed in his stead. He was afterwards sent ambassador to Berlin, where he imbibed a great mistrust of the politics of Prussia. He had taken a seat in the Directory not long before the 18th of Brumaire; but he had already made great exertions to check the progress of the *Société du Manège*, which he conceived to be ready to seize the helm of the State. At the period of the 13th of Vendemiaire, a trifling circumstance had given Napoleon a favourable opinion of him. At the most alarming moment of that day, when the Committee of the Forty seemed quite at a loss, Sieyès came to Napoleon and drew him into the recess of a window, while the Committee was deliberating upon the answer to be given to the summons of the Sections. 'You hear them, General,' said he; 'they talk while they should be acting. Bodies of men are wholly unfit to direct armies, for they know not the value of time or occasion. You have nothing to do here; go, General, consult your genius and the situation of the country; the hopes of the Republic rest on you alone.'

Napoleon accepted an invitation to a private dinner with each of the Directors; and a grand entertainment was given to him by the Directory. The Legislative Body desired to follow the example; but an objection arose on account of Moreau, whom they did not wish to invite or to shew him any marks of respect, his behaviour having

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excited a very general disapprobation. To avoid this difficulty, recourse was had to a subscription, and the entertainment was given in the church of St. Sulpice, where covers were laid for seven hundred persons. Napoleon remained at table but a short time. He also dined with the Minister of Justice (Cambacères), where he requested that the principal lawyers of the Republic might be invited. He appeared very cheerful at this dinner, conversed at large on the civil and criminal codes, to the great astonishment of Tronchet, Treilhard, Merlin, and Target, and expressed a wish that the persons and property of the Republic should be subjected to a simple code, adapted to the enlightened state of the age. This wish he afterwards carried into effect in the *Code Napoléon*. He entered but little into public entertainments of any kind, and pursued nearly the same line of conduct that he had followed on his first return from Italy. He went frequently to the Institute, but seldom to the theatres, and then always went into the private boxes. Meanwhile, the arrival of Napoleon in France made a strong impression on the rest of Europe. The English were particularly enraged at Sir Sidney Smith and Nelson for letting him escape. A number of caricatures on the subject were exhibited in the streets of London, in one of which Nelson was represented amusing himself with dressing Lady Hamilton, while the frigate *La Muiron* was passing between his legs.

Talleyrand did not expect to be well received by Buonaparte, as he had not seconded the expedition to Egypt by opening negotiations with the Porte or going himself in person, as had been stipulated. But he had been dismissed from the situation he held through the influence of the Clubs. His address was also insinuating, his talents important; a reconciliation accordingly took place between the General and the Minister, for each wanted the other. Fouché, in whom Buonaparte had no faith, was not, though Minister of Police, admitted into the secret of the 18th of Brumaire. Réal, a zealous revolutionist, but a man full of energy and character, possessed most of his confidence. All classes were impatient to see what Napoleon would do, and all parties courted him. The *Société du Manège* even offered to acknowledge him as chief, and to entrust the fortunes of the Republic to him, if he would second their principles in other respects. Sieyès, who had the vote of Roger Ducos in the Directory, who swayed the majority of the Ancients and influenced a minority in the Council of Five Hundred, proposed to place him at the head of the Government, changing the Constitution of the year III. which he deemed defective, and substituting one of his own, which he had by him in manuscript. A numerous party in the Council of Five Hundred, with Lucien Buonaparte at their head, were also strongly in his favour.

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Barras, Moulins, and Gohier hinted the eligibility of his resuming his old command of the Army of Italy. Moulins and Gohier were sincere in the plan they recommended, and trusted that all would go well from the moment that Napoleon should once more lead the armies to victory. Barras knew better; he was aware that every thing went wrong, that the Republic was sinking; and it is broadly asserted that a plan to restore the Bourbons through his means had miscarried by the merest accident, only a few weeks before. Even Louis XVIII. turned his eyes on Buonaparte as a second General Monk, and wrote him a confidential letter, exhorting him to put his intentions in his favour into effect, not long after the overthrow of the Directory.

In these circumstances Napoleon had the choice of several measures : 1st, To strengthen the existing Constitution and support the Directory, by becoming himself one of them. But the Directory and the existing Constitution had fallen into contempt, partly from external reverses, partly from wounds inflicted on itself; and besides, he conceived that a magistracy in several hands wanted the energy necessary in the circumstances of the times, to say nothing of his own personal views. 2nd, He might change the actual government, and seize on power by the aid of the *Société du Manège* and the violent Republican party. In that way his triumph would be secure and easy. But he reasoned that these men attached themselves to no leader, and would brook no control, that they would by incessant jealousy and cabal throw all into chaos and confusion again, and that either the same scenes of violence and extravagance would be acted over again, of which there had already been a satiety, or that he should be obliged to get rid of, and put down by the strong hand of power, the very persons who had raised him to it, and who had expected to share it with him. There was a treachery and want of decorum in this, to which he felt a repugnance; or rather he had no inclination to enter into any compromise or compact with this party, but to wash his hands of them from the first as a preliminary and indispensable step. 3d, He might secure the support of Barras and his friends, but they were men of profligate character, and openly accused of embezzling the public treasure. Without strict integrity, it would have been impossible to restore the finances or give energy to the measures of government. 4th, Sieyès had a considerable party at his disposal, men of character and friends of liberty on principle, but possessed of little energy, intimidated by the *Manège*, and averse to popular violence. Such persons might be made useful after the victory, and Sieyès could be considered in no sense as a dangerous rival. But to side with this party was to make enemies of Barras and the Jacobins, who abhorred Sieyès.

On the 8th of Brumaire (October 30th) Napoleon dined with Barras



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and a few other persons. 'The Republic is falling,' said the Director; 'things can go no farther; a change must take place, and Hedouville must be named President of the Republic. As to you, General, you intend to join the army; and for my part, ill as I am, unpopular, and worn out, I am fit only to return to private life.' Napoleon looked stedfastly at him, without replying a word. General Hedouville was a man of the most ordinary character. This conversation decided Napoleon; and immediately after, he called on Sieyès to give him to understand that he had made up his mind to act with him, and it was settled that the blow should be struck between the 15th and 20th of Brumaire. On returning to his own house, he found Talleyrand, Fouché, Rœderer, and Réal there. He related to them, without any comment or without any expression of countenance which could betray his own opinion, what Barras had just said to him. Réal and Fouché, who both had a regard for the Director, went to him to tax him with his ill-timed dissimulation. The following morning at eight o'clock Barras came to Napoleon, who had not risen; insisted on seeing him, said how imperfectly he had explained himself the preceding evening, declared that he alone could save the Republic, and entreated him, if he had any project in agitation, to rely entirely on his cordial concurrence. But Napoleon, who had already taken his measures, replied that he had nothing in view, that he was indisposed from fatigue and the change of climate, and put an end to the interview. Gohier and Moulins came daily to Napoleon to consult him on military and civil business: with respect to the first, he offered his opinions frankly, but he declined interfering with the latter.

The officers of the garrison of Paris, headed by Moreau, the adjutants of the National Guard, most of whom had been appointed by him when he was General of the Army of the Interior, wished to be presented to Napoleon: the 8th and 9th regiments of dragoons, who were old regiments of the Army of Italy, the 21st light-horse, who had taken a distinguished part on the 13th of Vendemiaire against the Sections, wished him to appoint a day to review them: but the better to conceal his designs, he either declined all these overtures or gave evasive answers to them. The citizens of Paris also complained of the General's keeping so close; they went to the theatres and reviews in the hope of seeing him, but he was not there. Nobody could account for this shyness. 'It is now,' they said, 'a fortnight since his arrival' (an age to the levity and short-sightedness of these people) 'and as yet he has done nothing. Does he mean to behave as he did on his return from Italy, and leave the Republic to be still torn in pieces by contending factions?' But the decisive hour approached.

On the 15th Sieyès and Buonaparte had an interview, at which they



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resolved on the measures for the 18th. It was agreed that the Council of Ancients, availing itself of the 102d article of the Constitution, should decree the removal of the Legislative Body to St. Cloud, and should appoint Napoleon Commander-in-Chief of the guard belonging to it, of the troops of the military division of Paris, and of the National Guard. This decree was to be passed on the 18th, at seven o'clock in the morning; at eight, Napoleon was to go to the *Thuilleries*, where the troops were to be assembled, and there to assume the command of the capital. On the 17th he sent word to the officers of the garrison that he would receive them the next day, at six in the morning. As that hour might appear unseasonable, he feigned being about to set off on a journey; he gave the same invitation to the forty adjutants of the National Guard; and he informed the three cavalry regiments that he would review them in the *Champs Elysées*, on the same day (the 18th) at seven in the morning. He also intimated to the Generals who had returned from Egypt with him, and to all those on whose sentiments he could rely, that he should be glad to see them at that hour. Each thought that the invitation was addressed to himself alone, and supposed that Napoleon had some particular orders to give him; as it was known that Dubois-Crancé, the Minister-at-War, had laid the reports of the state of the army before him, and had adopted his advice on all that was to be done, as well on the frontiers of the Rhine as in Italy.

Moreau, who had been at the dinner given by the Legislative Body, where Napoleon had for the first time become acquainted with him, having learnt from public report that a change was in agitation, assured the latter that he placed himself at his disposal, that he had no wish to be admitted into any secrets, and that he required but an hour's notice. Macdonald, who happened to be at Paris, had made the same tender of his services. At two o'clock in the morning, Napoleon let them know that he wished to see them at his house at seven o'clock, and on horseback. He did not apply to Augereau or Bernadotte, whom he knew to be hostile to his designs; but Joseph Buonaparte brought the latter, who however slipped away from the cavalcade as it was on its way to the Council of Ancients, and went to join the discontented members of the *Manège*. General Lefebvre, who commanded the military division, was known to be wholly devoted to the Directory; Napoleon dispatched an aide-de-camp to him at midnight, desiring he would come to him at six o'clock.

Everything took place as it had been planned. About seven in the morning the Council of Ancients assembled under the presidency of Lemercier. Cornudet, Lebrun, and Fargues depicted in lively colours the distresses of the country and the dangers to which it was exposed

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from internal and external enemies. Regnier, deputy from La Meurthe, then proposed the removal of the sittings of the Legislative Body to St. Cloud, and that Buonaparte should be invested with the command of the troops; 'under the shelter of whose protecting arm,' added the orator, 'the Councils may proceed to discuss the changes which the public interest renders necessary.' As soon as it was known that this step had been taken in concert with Buonaparte, the decree passed, but not without strong opposition. The decree was passed at eight o'clock; and at half-past eight the state-messenger who was the bearer of it arrived at Napoleon's house.<sup>1</sup> The avenues were filled with the officers of the garrison, the adjutants of the National Guard, a number of generals, and the three regiments of cavalry. Napoleon had the folding-doors thrown open; and his house being too small to contain such a concourse of persons, he came forward on the steps in front of it, received the congratulations of the officers, harangued them, and repeated that he relied upon them for the salvation of France. At the same time he gave them to understand that the Council of Ancients, under the authority of the Constitution, had just conferred on him the command of all the troops; that important measures were in agitation, designed to rescue the country from its embarrassed situation; that he trusted to their support and good-will, and that he was at that moment ready to mount horse to proceed to the Thuilleries. This address was received with the greatest enthusiasm; the officers drew their swords, and vowed their service and fidelity. Napoleon then turned towards Lefebvre, demanding whether he chose to remain with him or return to the Directory; but the latter, overcome by this appeal, did not hesitate a moment. Napoleon then mounted on horseback, and placed himself at the head of the Generals and officers and of fifteen hundred horse, who had halted for him on the Boulevard at the corner of the *Rue Mont-Blanc*. He directed the Adjutants of the National Guard to return to their quarters, and beat the drums; to make known the decree which they had just heard, and to announce that no orders were to be obeyed but such as should emanate from him.

Napoleon presented himself at the bar of the Council of Ancients, attended by this imposing escort. He addressed the Assembly. 'You are the wisdom of the nation,' he said; 'at this crisis it belongs to you to point out the measures which may save the country. I come, surrounded by all the Generals, to promise you their support. I appoint General Lefebvre my lieutenant. I will faithfully fulfil the task with which you have entrusted me. Let us not look into the

<sup>1</sup> This house was well chosen. It is up a long narrow avenue (in the *Rue Chantemaine*) with walls on both sides, where Buonaparte, if need had been, could have held out for a long time with a few hundred men against all Paris.

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past for examples of what is now going on. Nothing in history resembles the end of the eighteenth century : nothing in the eighteenth century resembles the present moment.' The troops were mustered at the Thuilleries; Napoleon reviewed them amidst the unanimous acclamations of both citizens and soldiers. He gave the command of the troops which were to guard the Legislative Body to General Lannes; and to Murat the command of those sent forward to St. Cloud. He deputed Moreau to guard the Luxembourg with 500 soldiers of the 86th regiment, whom he placed under his orders; but at the moment of setting off the men refused to march from their want of confidence in Moreau, and Buonaparte was obliged to harangue them before they would obey. The news that Napoleon was at the Thuilleries, and that he was invested with the supreme command, flew like lightning through the capital. The people flocked in crowds to see him or to offer him their services. The decree of the Council of Ancients and an address from Buonaparte to the citizens and to the soldiers were everywhere posted up on the walls of Paris. He called on the former to rally round the Legislative Body as the only means of ensuring union and confidence, and he assured the latter that 'liberty, victory, and peace would soon reinstate the Republic, which had been ill-governed for two years, in the rank which she held in Europe, and from which imbecility and treachery were alone capable of degrading her.' The greatest agitation and uncertainty prevailed in Paris. The friends of liberty expressed their apprehension of the ultimate designs of Buonaparte, in whom they saw a future Cæsar or Cromwell; but were answered by his partisans in the words of the General himself, who designated the parts they had played as '*bad parts, parts worn out, unworthy of a man of sense, even if they were not so of a man of honour. It would be nothing less than a sacrilegious ambition that would attempt any such enterprise as that of overturning a representative government in the age of light and liberty. He must be a madman who should, in mere wantonness of heart, lose the wager of the Republic against royalty, after having maintained it with some glory and at some risk.*' These words might be supposed to convict the person to whom they are attributed of the rankest hypocrisy, if the heart were not deceitful above all things, or if it were not true that men often dare not avow their intentions to themselves till they are ripe for execution, or scarcely know what they are till they have been crowned with success. The reproaches he addressed to Bellot, Barras's Secretary, were more in character, more consonant with his past services and future designs : 'What have you done with that France which I left you so splendid? I left you peace, and I find you at war : I left you victory, and I find defeats : I left you the spoils of Italy, and I find everywhere oppression

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and misery. What have you done with a hundred thousand Frenchmen whom I knew, all of them my companions in glory? They are dead. This state of things cannot last; in three years it would lead us to destruction. According to some, we shall all be shortly enemies to the Republic—we who have preserved it by our efforts and our courage. We have no occasion for better patriots than the brave men who have shed their blood in its defence!’ Napoleon now sent an aide-de-camp to the Guards of the Directory, for the purpose of communicating the decree to them, and enjoining them to receive no orders but from him. The Guards sounded to horse; the commanding officer consulted the soldiers, who answered with shouts of joy. At this very moment an order from the Directory arrived, contrary to that of Napoleon; but the soldiers, obeying no orders but his, marched to join him. Sieyès and Roger Ducos had been ever since the morning at the Thuilleries. It is said that Barras, on seeing Sieyès mount his horse, was much amused at the awkwardness of the unpractised equestrian, little suspecting the event of this day’s proceedings. Being shortly after apprised of the decree, Barras consulted with Gohier and Moulins, the latter of whom proposed to send a battalion to surround Buonaparte’s house; but finding no means of executing their threats, as their own Guards had deserted them, both Gohier and Moulins went to the Thuilleries and gave in their resignation, as Sieyès and Roger Ducos had already done. Talleyrand hastened to inform Barras of what had just taken place, and having done the same, he was removed under a guard of honour to his estate at Gros-Bois. The Directory was thus dissolved, and Napoleon remained master of the field.

Cambacérès, Fouché, and the other ministers repaired to the Thuilleries, prepared to act under the new authority. Fouché had given directions for closing the barriers and preventing the departure of couriers and stage-coaches. Buonaparte disapproved of this. ‘Wherefore,’ he asked, ‘all these precautions? We go with the opinion of the nation, and by its strength alone. Let no citizen be interrupted, and let every publicity be given to what is done!’ The majority of the Five Hundred, the minority of the Ancients, and the leaders of the Manège spent the night of the 18th in consultation. At a meeting at the Thuilleries, Sieyès proposed that the forty principal leaders of the opposition should be arrested. This recommendation savoured too much of caution or of fear to be relished by Napoleon, though he afterwards had reason to think Sieyès was right. It was at this meeting that the appointment of three Provisional Consuls was agreed upon, as well as the adjournment of the Councils for three months. Their several parts were also assigned to the leaders in the Two Councils for the next day.



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On the 19th the Deputies met at St. Cloud. Sieyès and Ducos accompanied Buonaparte to this new field of battle, to assist him with their encouragement or advice; and Sieyès remained during the whole day in his carriage at the gate of St. Cloud, prepared to act as circumstances should require. The Orangery was allotted to the council of Five Hundred, and the Gallery of Mars to that of the Ancients; the apartments since known by the name of the Saloon of the Princes and the Empress's Cabinet were prepared for Napoleon and his staff. Though the workmen had been busily employed the whole of the preceding day, it was two o'clock before the place assigned to the Council of Five Hundred could be got ready. This delay produced some murmuring and inconveniences. The Deputies who had been on the spot since noon, formed groups in the garden, grew warm and animated, and encouraged one another in their opposition to the new measures. The General-in-Chief traversed the courts and the apartments, and giving way to the ill-disguised impatience of his character, was heard to declare, 'I will have no more factions, all that must cease absolutely!' more in the authoritative tone of the master than of the servant of the state.

As soon as the sittings opened, which they did to the sound of music playing the Marseillois, Emile Gaudin, one of the Five Hundred, ascended the tribune, painted in alarming colours the dangers of the country, and proposed thanks to the Council of Ancients for the measures of public safety which it had taken, at the same time inviting them by message to explain themselves more fully on the means of saving the Republic. This motion became the signal for the most violent tumult; from all sides of the hall loud cries of disapprobation were directed against Gaudin: the speaker in the confusion was hurled violently to the bottom of the tribune. The ferment was excessive. The republican party surrounded the tribune and the chair where Lucien Buonaparte presided. Cabanis, Boulay de la Meurthe, Chazal, Gaudin, Chenier, and others who were chiefly concerned in the success of the day, grew pale and uneasy in their seats. After a long and violent uproar, during which no one could make himself heard, silence was restored for a moment, and Delbred proposed to renew the oath to the Constitution of the year III. The Chamber from this proceeded to the *Appel Nominal*, each member by turns answering to his name and giving his vote at the same time. During the *Appel Nominal*, reports of what was passing reached the capital. The leaders of the *Société du Manège*, the *tricoteuses* were all in motion. Jourdan and Augereau, who had hitherto kept out of the way, believing Napoleon lost, hastened to St. Cloud. Augereau, drawing him aside, said, 'Well, here you are in a fine situation!'



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‘Remember Arcole,’ replied Napoleon; ‘matters then appeared much worse. Take my advice, and remain quiet for half an hour, and you will see things take a different turn.’

The Assembly appeared to declare itself with so much unanimity, that no Deputy durst refuse to swear fidelity to the Constitution, which would have been capital in the circumstances: even Lucien was compelled to take the oath. Shouts and cries of approbation were heard throughout the Chamber. Many members in taking the oath, added observations which might have a dangerous influence on the troops. No time was to be lost. Napoleon crossed the Saloon of Mars, entered the Council of Ancients, and placed himself at the bar, opposite to the President. Every thing would be to be dreaded, should the latter Assembly which was favourably inclined to him, catch by infection the tone of the Council of Five Hundred. ‘Representatives of the People,’ he said, ‘you are here in no ordinary circumstances; you stand on a volcano. Yesterday I was living in privacy, when you sent for me to notify to me the decree of the removal of the Councils, and to charge me to see it executed. I instantly collected around me my companions in arms; we have flown to your succour. But to-day I am loaded with calumnies: they talk of Cæsar, of Cromwell, of a military despotism. If I had wished to oppress the liberties of my country, I should not have listened to the orders which you have given me: nor should I have needed to receive this authority at your hands. More than once (and under the most favourable circumstances) have I been called upon to assume the sovereign power. After our triumphs in Italy, I was invited to it by the voice of my comrades, of those brave men who have been so ill-used since. But I declined doing so, because I did not think my interference required by the situation of the country. I swear to you, Representatives of the People, the country has no more zealous defender than myself; but it is to you that it must look for safety. Danger presses, and disasters come thick upon us. The Minister of Police has just informed me that several fortified places have fallen into the hands of the Chouans. There is no longer a Government; four of the Directors have tendered their resignation; the fifth (Barras) is under *surveillance*. The Council of Five Hundred is divided, and influenced by agitators and turbulent men, who would bring back the time of revolutionary tribunals, and who are now sending out emissaries to instigate Paris to revolt. Fear not, Representatives, these criminal projects; surrounded by my brethren in arms, I shall find means to protect you from their violence. I desire nothing for myself, but that you would save the Republic; and as you cannot make the Constitution, abused as it has been, respected, that you would at

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least preserve the foundation on which it rests, liberty and equality. You have only to speak the word, and your orders shall be obeyed. And you, brave grenadiers, whose caps I observe at the doors of this hall, whom I have so often led to victory against the satellites of kings, I who am now accused of being hostile to liberty, say, did I ever break my word to you, when in the camp, in the midst of privations, I promised you victory and plenty, and when at your head I led you from conquest to conquest? Now say, was it for my own aggrandisement, or for the interest of the Republic? And let those who talk of outlawing me, beware how they draw that condemnation on themselves. Should some orator in foreign pay propose such a measure, I should appeal to you, my friends, and to my own good fortune.'

The General-in-Chief in thus appealing to his men, spoke with evident emotion; and the grenadiers, waving their caps and brandishing their arms in the air, with one accord testified their assent. Upon this Linglet, one of the most resolute members, rose and said: 'General, we applaud what you say; swear then with us obedience to the Constitution of the year III. which can alone save the Republic.' This proposition took the Council by surprise, and Buonaparte was for a moment disconcerted by it; but he recovered himself presently, and said: 'The Constitution of the year III. ? you have it no longer. You violated it on the 18th of Fructidor; you violated it on the 20th of Floreal; you violated it on the 30th of Prairial. The Constitution is a mockery involved by all parties, and infringed by them all in turn. It cannot be effectively appealed to, since it has the respect of no person. The Constitution once violated, it is necessary to have recourse to a new compact, to other guarantees.' The Council applauded the reproaches which Buonaparte thus threw out against it, and rose in sigh of approbation. Cornudet and Regnier spoke warmly to the same effect. A member of the opposition party denounced the General as the only conspirator against public liberty. Napoleon interrupted the orator, by declaring that he was in the secret of every party, and that all despised the Constitution of the year III. alike, the only difference being that some desired to have a moderate Republic, in which all the national interests and all property should be respected, while others wanted a revolutionary government, with a renewal of all the disorders they had gone through. At this moment Napoleon was informed that the *Nominal Appeal* was terminated in the Council of Five Hundred, and that they were endeavouring to force the President Lucien to put the outlawry of his brother to the vote. Napoleon immediately hastened to the Five Hundred, entered the Chamber with his hat off, and ordered the officers and

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soldiers who accompanied him to wait at the door : he was desirous to present himself at the bar, to rally his party, which was numerous, but which had lost all unity and resolution. When Napoleon had advanced alone across one-third of the Orangery, two or three hundred members suddenly rose, crying, 'Death to the tyrant ! Down with the Dictator !' Several members advanced to meet him, and Bigonet, seizing him by the arm, said, 'What are you thinking of, rash man ? Withdraw ; you profane the sanctuary of the laws.' Buonaparte stopped, and turned round ; and the grenadiers, seeing what was passing, rushed forward and forced him out of the chamber. In the confusion one of them, named Thomé, was slightly wounded by the thrust of a dagger.

The absence of the General did not restore quiet. All the members spoke at once, every one proposed some measure of public safety and defence. They loaded Lucien Buonaparte with reproaches : the latter justified his brother, but with hesitation. He at length succeeded in mounting the tribune, and appealed to the Council to judge his brother with less rigour. He assured them that he entertained no designs contrary to liberty—he recalled his services. But several voices cried out, 'He has forfeited all his claims : ' the tumult became more violent than ever, and they demanded the outlawry of General Buonaparte. 'What !' exclaimed Lucien, 'do you wish me to pronounce the sentence of outlawry against my brother, the saviour of his country ! of him whose very name makes kings tremble ? '—'Yes, yes, it is the reward of tyrants.' It was then proposed and put to the vote in the midst of all this disorder, that the Council should be declared permanent, and should repair instantly to its place of meeting in Paris ; that the troops assembled at St. Cloud should be considered as forming part of the guard of the Legislative Body, and the command given to General Buonaparte. Lucien, confounded by so many propositions, and by the vote of outlawry which he thought was adopted among the rest, quitted the chair, mounted the tribune, and called out in a state of the greatest agitation, 'Since I can no longer obtain a hearing in this assembly, I lay aside with the deep feeling of insulted dignity the symbols of the popular magistracy.' Saying this, he stripped himself of his cloak and his President's scarf.

Meanwhile, Buonaparte had some difficulty, on coming out of the Council of Five Hundred, in recovering from his embarrassment. Little accustomed to scenes of popular violence, he had been a good deal staggered. This is easily understood, for no man has more than one kind of courage, namely, in those things in which he is accustomed to feel his power and see his way clearly. Even our habitual confidence and success in other things operate as a drawback rather than other-

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wise, for we are the more struck with the contrast and the want of our usual resources, and exaggerate every trifling impediment into a serious objection. His officers formed a circle round him; and Sieyès, more seasoned to revolutionary storms, sent to advise the instant employment of force. General Lefebvre directly received orders to bring off Lucien from the Council. A detachment of soldiers entered the hall, advanced towards the chair, of which Lucien had again taken possession, enclosed him in their ranks, and saying, 'It is your brother's orders' (for he was at first surprised at their appearance) returned with him in triumph into the midst of the troops. As soon as Lucien was at liberty, he got on horseback by the side of his brother, and though stripped of his legal title, still harangued the troops as President. He declared that the majority of the Five Hundred were intimidated and prevented from coming to any regular deliberation by a handful of assassins. Raising his powerful voice, he exclaimed, 'General, and you soldiers, and all you who are citizens, you will recognize as legislators of France only those who are willing to follow me. As to those who shall remain in the Orangery, let them be expelled by force. Those banditti, armed with poniards, are no longer the Representatives of the people!' After this furious philippic, Buonaparte took up the discourse: 'Soldiers,' he said, 'I have led you to victory; may I rely upon you?'—'Yes, yes; long live our General!' 'Soldiers, there was reason to believe that the Council of Five Hundred would save the country; on the contrary, it is given up to dissensions within itself; turbulent and designing men are trying to direct all its rage against me. Soldiers, can I rely on you?'—'Yes, yes!' 'Well, then, I am about to bring them to reason:' and so saying, he gave orders to some superior officers about him to clear the Hall of the Five Hundred.

The Council, after the departure of Lucien, was given up to the most cruel anxiety and most lamentable indecision. Some members proposed to return to Paris in a body, and throw themselves on the protection of the people; others were for waiting the issue and setting at defiance the violence with which they were threatened. While these discussions were going on, a troop of grenadiers entered the hall, proceeded slowly up it, and the officers commanding it notified to the Council the order to disperse itself. The deputy Prudhon reminded the officer and the soldiers of the respect due to the Representatives of the People; General Jourdan also pointed out the enormity of their present proceeding. The troops hesitated a little, but a reinforcement entered in close column with General Leclerc at its head, who said aloud, 'In the name of General Buonaparte, the legislative corps is dissolved; let all good citizens retire. Grenadiers,



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forward !' Cries of indignation rose from all parts of the hall, but they were stifled by the sound of the drums. The grenadiers advanced, occupying the whole width of the Orangery, slowly and presenting bayonets. They thus drove the Legislative Body before them, who withdrew amidst cries of *Long live the Republic!* At half-past five o'clock, 19th of Brumaire (10th of November), there was no longer any representation of the people.

About one hundred deputies of the Council of Five Hundred rallied and joined the Council of Ancients, who had witnessed the foregoing scene of military violence with some uneasiness, but were soon satisfied with the explanations that were given. At eleven at night the two Councils re-assembled ; and two Committees were appointed to report upon the state of the Republic. On the motion of Berenger, thanks to Napoleon and the troops were carried. Boulay de la Meurthe in the Five Hundred, and Villetard in the Ancients, stated the situation of the country and the measures necessary to be taken. The law of the 19th of Brumaire was passed, which adjourned the Councils to the 1st of Ventôse following ; and authorised two Committees of twenty-five members each to represent the Councils *ad interim*. These Committees were also instructed to prepare a civil code. A Provisional Consular Commission, consisting of Siéyes, Roger Ducos, and Napoleon, was charged with the executive power. The Provisional Consuls repaired on the 20th at two in the morning to the Chamber of the Orangery, where the Councils were then sitting. Lucien, as President, addressed them in these words : ' Citizen Consuls, *the greatest people on earth* entrusts its fate to you. Three months hence, your measures must pass the ordeal of public opinion. The welfare of thirty millions of men, internal quiet, the wants of the armies, peace—such are to be the objects of your cares. Doubtless, courage and devotion to your duties are requisite in taking upon you functions so important ; but the confidence of our people and warriors is with you, and the Legislative Body is convinced that your hearts are wholly with the country. Citizen Consuls, we have previously to adjourning taken the oath, which you will repeat in the midst of us ; the sacred oath of fidelity to the sovereignty of the people, to the French Republic one and indivisible, to liberty, to equality, and to the representative system.' The Assembly separated, and the Consuls returned to Paris to the Palace of the Luxembourg. Thus was the Revolution of the 18th of Brumaire effected without blood, but not without violence or falsehood.

At nine o'clock in the evening of the 19th, the news had spread from St. Cloud throughout Paris ; and the following proclamation, signed by Buonaparte, was read by torchlight.



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‘Citizens ! On my return to Paris I found discord pervading every department of Government, and only this single truth unanimously agreed on—that the Constitution was half-destroyed, and no longer capable of maintaining our liberties. Every party by turns applied to me, entrusted me with its designs, disclosed its secrets, and solicited my support. I refused to become the head of any faction. The Council of Ancients called on me. I answered the appeal. A plan for a general reform had been devised by men in whom the nation is accustomed to behold the defenders of liberty, of justice, and of property : this plan demanded calm, free, and impartial examination, unfettered by influence or fear. The Council of Ancients therefore determined upon the removal of the Legislative Body to St. Cloud. It entrusted me with the disposal of the force *necessary for the maintenance of its independence*. I deemed it due from me to my fellow-citizens, to the soldiers who are laying down their lives in our ranks, to the glory purchased by their blood, to accept the command. The Councils met at St. Cloud, the troops of the Republic guaranteed safety without ; but assassins spread terror within. The plans which were to have been brought forward were withheld ; the majority of the Assembly was disorganized ; the most intrepid speakers were disconcerted ; and the inutility of any sober proposition became but too evident. Indignant and grieved, I hastened to the Council of Ancients ; I entreated it to allow me to carry its designs for the public good into execution. I urged the misfortunes of the country which had suggested them. The Council seconded my views by new testimonies of unabated confidence. I then offered myself to the Chamber of Five Hundred—alone, unarmed, my head uncovered, as I had been received by the Ancients with so much approbation. Instantly the daggers which had menaced the deputies were raised against their defender. Twenty assassins rushed upon me, aiming at my breast. The grenadiers of the Legislative Body, whom I had left at the door of the Chamber, hastily interposed between these murderers and myself. One of these brave fellows (Thomé) received a thrust with a dagger, which pierced through his clothes. They carried me off ; and at the instant they were doing so, cries were heard, demanding the outlawry of him who was at that very time the defender of the law. They crowded round the President, threatening him with arms in their hands, and requiring him to pronounce the outlawry. Apprised of this, I gave directions for rescuing him from their fury, and ten grenadiers of the Legislative Body charged into the Chamber and cleared it. The factious parties, intimidated, dispersed and fled. The majority, relieved from their violence, returned freely and peaceably into the Chamber, listened to the proposals made to them ; and on due deliberation, framed the

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wholesome resolutions which are about to become the new and provisional law of the Republic. Frenchmen ! you will doubtless recognise in my conduct the zeal of a soldier of liberty, of a citizen devoted to the republic. The principles on which security, liberty, and property depend, are restored to their due preponderance by the dispersion of those factious men who tyrannised over the Councils, and who, though they have been prevented from becoming the most hateful of men, are nevertheless the most wretched.'

This proclamation is one of those things in which Buonaparte appears in the most unfavourable light, and which have afforded the greatest handle to his enemies. It is a tissue of glaring misrepresentations or paltry and ill-disguised subterfuges. It betrays either a panic-fear unworthy of a brave man, or a gratuitous and barefaced hypocrisy, unworthy of an honest one. If his conduct was called for by strong necessity, let it be justified on that ground ; if it had only ambition to plead, let it be justified by its success ; and not in either case by a multiplication of air-drawn daggers and womanish apprehensions, which are beneath the dignity of public affairs, and seem more like a parody on Falstaff's 'ten men in buckram,' than a part of serious history. There is nothing that posterity forgive so unwillingly as a lie. *That* is peculiarly their affair. The actual evil may have passed away, but the insult to the understanding remains, and the attempt to take from us the means of coming to a right judgment causes a fresh resentment every time it is thought of. Buonaparte appears to have been haunted by a preposterous and feverish dread of the Jacobins ; and this dread shewed itself not merely in descriptions and denunciations, but in a very unwarrantable behaviour towards them soon after, in the business of the Infernal Machine. Why take such pains or make so great a merit of preventing this party from declaring *the country in danger* a little before this period ? Whatever use they might have made of such a declaration, they were so far at least right in thinking some strong measures and a change of system necessary ; for Buonaparte himself resorted to the strongest of all measures, the overthrow of the Government, on the plea of the dangers and distresses of the country. How then could he consistently blame their reasonings or their object, though he might disapprove of the mode of carrying that object into effect, or of the extent to which they might push it ? They were in fact the only men of active and energetic character opposed to him in the career of power and popularity ; and besides, he might be disgusted with the excesses they had already committed and which might be renewed, and which appeared to have so little tendency to strengthen their cause. He preferred *his* weapons to theirs, not less from taste than policy. A battle gained was a new

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pillar or trophy added to the Temple of Liberty : a civil massacre only turned it into a shambles slippery with blood, where it was unsafe to stand and disagreeable to enter. There was certainly something repulsive and sickening in the disproportion between the violence of the means and the stability of the end produced by these men. Theirs was only an extreme remedy, which was to be avoided as long as possible. Another reign of terror, followed by another *reaction* (its natural consequence), could hardly have failed to lead, by a revolting gradation, to the return of the ancient *régime*. Buonaparte had no such ground of objection to Sieyès's party, who were neither men of active habits nor of strong passions, and whose fine-spun theories could be easily made to give way to circumstances, and their paper constitutions pierced by the sword. They were the *ideal* party, who in all cases are more intent upon forming speculations than on realising them, and who, though they may be troublesome associates, are seldom formidable rivals. There was a third party which Buonaparte had to keep at bay, that of the royalists and foreign princes ; and it was his triumph over this, and his fitness and determination to contend against it, redoubling blows on blows, and victories on victories, that secured him the co-operation and good wishes of the great body of the state and of the most constant lovers of liberty. If the Revolution had been firmly and securely established without him, and he had erased or undermined the stately fabric, to raise his own power upon the ruins, then he would have been entitled to the execration of the friends of freedom, and would have received the thanks of its hereditary enemies : but the building had already been endangered and nodded to its fall, had been defaced and broken in pieces by internal discord and by foreign war ; and the arch of power and ambition that he reared stood on ground forfeited over and over again to humanity ; the laurels that he won, and the wreathed diadem he wore, were for having during fifteen years avenged the cause of liberty by triumphing over its insolent and unrelenting foes, and thus shielding its sacred name from insult. It was not till after his fall that liberty became a bye-word, and that the warning voice was once more addressed to mankind—‘ *Discite justitiam moniti, et non temnere reges !* ’

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### PROVISIONAL CONSULS

ON the morning of the 11th of November 1799 the new Consuls held their first sittings. Buonaparte took the chair and Maret was appointed Secretary, in the room of Legarde, who had held that situation under the Directory. Maret, a native of Dijon, who afterwards figured as Duke of Bassano and was greatly attached to Napoleon, was a man of mild manners and of considerable ability. He was attached to the early principles of the Revolution, but had fled during the reign of Robespierre, and was arrested by the Austrians with Semonville as he crossed Lombardy on his way to Venice. After the 9th of Thermidor (which put an end to the power of Robespierre) he was exchanged for Madame, the daughter of Louis XVI., then a prisoner in the Temple.

The first sitting of the Consuls lasted several hours. Sieyès had not been without hopes that Napoleon would interfere only with military matters, and would leave the regulation of civil affairs to him; and he was much surprised when he found that Napoleon had formed settled opinions on policy, finance, and jurisprudence, and in short on all the branches of administration; that he supported his arguments with clearness, and was not easily turned from his purpose. In the evening, on returning home, he said aloud in the presence of Chazal, Talleyrand, Boulay, Rœderer, Cabanis, and others, ‘Gentlemen, you have a master: Napoleon *will* do all, and *can* do all without your assistance. In our situation, it is better to submit than to encourage dissensions which must end in certain ruin.’

The first act of Government was the new-modelling of the Ministry. Dubois de Crancé was Minister-at-War, but was so little fitted for or attentive to his office, that he could not furnish the Consuls with a single report on the state of the Army. Berthier was appointed in his stead, who was a month before he could collect materials for drawing up a proper report. When Dubois de Crancé was asked, ‘You pay the army; you can surely give us a return of the pay?’ the answer was, ‘We don’t pay it.’ ‘You victual the army; let us have the returns of the victualling-office?’—‘We don’t victual it.’ ‘You clothe the army; let us see the statement of the clothing?’—‘We don’t clothe it.’ The army at home was paid by robbing the treasury; abroad, it was subsisted and clothed by means of requisitions, and the War-office exercised no kind of control. The army in Holland, which had just repulsed the English, was in good condition, as the Dutch, according to treaty, had to supply all its wants. But those of



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the Rhine, of Switzerland, and Italy were in a state of lamentable privation and of the greatest insubordination. As soon as the reform of the War-Department was effected, discipline was easily restored. The post of Minister of Finance was held by Robert Lindet, who had been a member of the Committee of Public Safety under Robespierre, an honest man, and accounted an able financier at a time when the true Minister of Finance was the printer of the assignats. Lindet was succeeded by Gaudin, afterwards Duke of Gaeta, who had been long employed in that department. The treasury was empty; there was not wherewithal to dispatch a courier in it. Nothing came into it but cheques, bills, notes, schedules, and paper of all kinds, on which the receipts of the army had been consumed by anticipation. The contractors being paid in drafts themselves, drew directly on the receivers, as fast as any thing came into their hands; and yet they did no service. The rate of interest was at six per cent. Every source of supply was dried up; credit was in a great measure annihilated; all was disorder, waste, and destruction. The new minister, Gaudin, adopted measures which put a stop to these abuses and restored confidence. He suppressed the compulsory loan, which had produced as bad an effect on property as that which the law of hostages had produced on the liberty and safety of the people; raised twenty-four millions of livres on the sale of the domains of the House of Orange, which France had reserved to itself by the treaty of the Hague; made a saving of two millions yearly in the collection of the direct imposts; created a redemption-fund, in which the receivers of taxes were obliged to deposit a twentieth part of their receipts; and put the forest-lands under the best regulation, from which, when properly managed, the Republic was entitled to receive forty millions of livres a year. Such was the patriotic zeal and conscientious integrity of the new minister, that he would not go to bed or sleep a single night, after he had received the portfolio of finance, till he had devised a scheme for abolishing some of the most glaring abuses in his department. All that he did or proposed at this early period, he strengthened and perfected during fifteen years of an able administration. He never had occasion to withdraw any of his measures, because his knowledge was practical, the fruit of long and attentive experience.

Cambacérès retained the administration of Justice, and Reinhard that of Foreign Affairs. Talleyrand was still unpopular, particularly on account of his conduct in regard to America; and besides, till the Government was established and put into an imposing attitude, it was not the time for him to come forward as a negociator, or to play his cards to advantage. Bourdon resigned the Admiralty to Forfait, a native of Normandy, with a great reputation as a naval architect,



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but who turned out a mere projector. The Consuls also found they had been mistaken in appointing Laplace to succeed Quinette as Minister of the Interior. This great geometrician proved totally inadequate to the post that was assigned him : he sought for subtleties in the most common things, looked at every question in a problematical point of view, and carried the doctrine of the infinite divisibility of matter into the business of the state. Hitherto the official appointments made by the Consuls had been unanimous ; their first difference of opinion arose with respect to the Minister of Police. Fouché had the character of being sanguinary, venal, insincere. Sieyès detested him, and considered the Government as insecure while he presided over the Police. Napoleon wished to retain him, and remarked that with all his faults, he had been serviceable to the Republic. ' We are creating a new era,' he said ; ' in the past we must remember only the good, and forget the evil. Time, habits of business, and reflection have formed many able men and modified many indifferent characters.' This is not a just view of human nature in general, which never changes ; nor did the present instance turn out an exception to the common rule. Buonaparte was fond of playing with edged tools, thinking he could turn their good qualities to account, and by dexterous management prevent their hurting him. He could not well part with Fouché ; the ability was an indispensable requisite, the want of principle was not so absolute an objection as perhaps it ought to have been. The Department of the Posts was given to Lafôret, who had been Consul-General in America. The Polytechnic School was then only in its infancy. The charge of it was given to Monge, under whose direction it became one of the most celebrated in the world, and rendered the most important services to the country in every department, whether of peace or war.

The new Government, in spite of its activity and attention to the public interest, had still many enemies to contend with. When we do not acknowledge the right to power, the abuse of it is the only thing that can reconcile us to it. Wise or salutary measures in that case irritate our dislike and opposition, by rendering it hopeless. Insurrections broke out in La Vendée, Languedoc, and the Netherlands. The royalist party, which for many months had been gaining strength, was severely mortified at a change that threatened to crush all their expectations. The anarchists and defeated members of the Manège kept Sieyès in continual alarm, who once came in the greatest agitation and awoke Napoleon at three in the morning, to tell him of some plot of which the Police had just informed him. ' Let them come,' replied the latter ; ' in war as well as in love we must come to close quarters to make an end of it. It may as well be settled one day as

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another.' The law of the 19th of Brumaire had enjoined the Government to provide measures for restoring the public tranquillity. Fifty-five members had been expelled from the Legislative Body; and as they did not desist from their machinations and refused to quit Paris, they with some other party-leaders were sentenced to banishment, thirty-seven to Guiana, and twenty-two to the island of Oleron. This decree, which was thought too violent at the time, had the effect of dispersing the disaffected, but was merely held *in terrorem* over them for a while, and was never carried into execution. By degrees the people felt assured; addresses came pouring in from every quarter; and the Government, confident of its increasing strength, did all in its power to mitigate the rage of parties and close up old wounds. The *law of hostages*, which had been passed in July 1799, and by means of which great numbers of individuals had been thrown into prison, as the relations of emigrants and persons bearing arms against the Republic, was repealed. During the ascendancy of the Theophilanthropists (such was the power of intolerance and the narrowness of party-spirit) little attention was paid to the distinction between refractory priests and those who had submitted to the oaths; some had been sent to the Isle of Rhé, some to Guiana, some into foreign countries, and others languished in prison. It was agreed upon as a principle by the Provisional Government, that conscience was not amenable to the law, and that the right of the sovereign extended no farther than to the exaction of obedience and fidelity. Napoleon, who had had occasion to see and reflect much on religious questions and on the subject of toleration both in Italy and Egypt, lost no time in putting a stop to this species of persecution, no longer called for by the circumstances of the times. It was decreed that every priest banished or imprisoned, who would take an oath of fidelity to the established Government, should immediately be restored to his liberty. Within a short time after the passing of the law, more than twenty thousand persons of this class returned to their families. Only a few of the most bigotted or ignorant persisted in their obstinacy and remained in exile. At this period also, the law of the *décades* was repealed, the churches were again opened to public worship, and pensions were granted to persons of both sexes under religious vows, who took the oath of fidelity to the Government. Nothing is more difficult than to draw the line in such cases, or to know where to stop in the nice interval between true liberality and officious interference. Thus the allowing persons of both sexes to devote themselves to monastic vows, if their conscience pricks them, and they so choose it, is a dictate of the true principles of toleration, it is their affair, and no business of the Government; but that it is no business of the Government to encourage this sort of

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indolent seclusion by positive rewards, and to grant pensions to those who may incline to it, seems equally certain, and a consequence of the same doctrine of absolute neutrality in questions of a theological nature. Pope Pius VI. had died not long before at Valence, at the age of eighty-two. In passing through, Napoleon had learnt that no funeral honours had been paid to him, and his corpse was laid in the sacristy of the cathedral. A decree of the Consuls ordered that the customary honours should be rendered to his remains, and a marble monument raised over his tomb. It was an homage paid by the First Consul and the majority of the French nation to an unfortunate sovereign and the head of the Church. So far all was well; but persons and principles are closely connected together in the human mind, and respect is seldom shewn to one without an intention of favouring the other. It is from the rare union of moderation and firmness, that liberality is so apt to be suspected of something insidious, and that favours or lenity shewn to an adversary are considered as treachery to your own party. It was on this account that the erasure of the members of the Constituent Assembly, who had formally acknowledged the sovereignty of the people, from the list of emigrants, occasioned great uneasiness. 'The emigrants,' it was said, 'will return in crowds; the royalist party will raise its head, as it did in Fructidor; the republicans will be massacred.' In virtue of this law, the excellent and blameless La Fayette, Latour-Maubourg, and Bureau de Puzy returned to France and to the peaceful enjoyment of their property, which had not been alienated. It was at least worth while to excite some alarm, and even to run some risk for the purpose of restoring a man like La Fayette to his country, who, in the dungeons of Olmutz, only longed to know the success of the cause of liberty, which was kept concealed from him; and whose only thought since seems to be whether any good can be done for the cause of mankind.

It had happened some years before, that a vessel which had left England for La Vendée, having on board nine persons belonging to some of the oldest families of France—Talmonts, Montmorencies, and Choiseuls, had been wrecked on the coast of Calais. These passengers were emigrants: they were arrested, and from that time had been dragged from prison to prison, from tribunal to tribunal, without having their fate decided. Their arrival in France was not a voluntary act; but they were seized on account of their supposed place of destination. They affirmed indeed that they were on their way to India, but the vessel and its stores proved that they were going to La Vendée. Without entering into that point, Napoleon conceived that the condition of these unfortunate people rendered them inviolable, and that they were under the laws of hospitality. He had in fact already decided a similar question in the year 1794, when as general of

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artillery he was engaged in fortifying the coasts of the Mediterranean. Some members of the Chabillant family, on their passage from Spain to Italy, had been taken by a corsair and brought into Toulon: they were immediately thrown into prison, and the populace, believing they were emigrants, rose and would have massacred them. Napoleon availing himself of his popularity and of his influence over the cannoneers and workmen of the arsenal, who were foremost in the disturbance, saved this unhappy family. Dreading however another insurrection of the people, he concealed them in empty ammunition-waggons which he was sending to the Isles of Hyères, and by this means they escaped. These two cases appear to be distinct: in the latter there is not a shadow of doubt, and one ceases to wonder that a people who had so little sense of reason or humanity as to treat those unhappy persons as criminals, should have shewn themselves so little worthy of liberty. In the case of the passengers going to La Vendée, there is a doubt whether the Government was not authorised to treat them like any other declared enemies—as if they had been English troops, for instance, thrown upon the coast—that is, to detain them prisoners. But there is a scale of morality above the letter of the law: Buonaparte was right in both cases; for whenever there is but an excuse and an opening for an act of magnanimity, it is right to take advantage of it. The generosity of the behaviour cannot be doubted, however the correctness of the reasoning may; and noble and disinterested sentiments are the best safeguard of justice and liberty, by striking at the root of all that is mean and sordid.

Buonaparte in speaking of this event justly contrasts it with the conduct of the British Government towards Napper Tandy and Blackwell, who after having been shipwrecked on the coast of Norway, were seized in crossing the neutral territory of Hamburgh at the instigation of the British minister, and delivered up to execution as Irish rebels. The British envoy compelled the Senate of Hamburgh to make this unmanly surrender: ‘and who would believe it,’ exclaims Napoleon, ‘all Europe rose up to second the demand!’ Who would *not* believe it at a time when all Europe was drunk with the rage of social order, and deaf to all but the siren sounds of legitimacy? Napper Tandy was not at Hamburgh by choice but necessity; he was not there taking advantage of a neutral territory to hatch plots against the government or to take away the life of the king of England. In the last case, I should not have a word to say against this arrest, though contrary to forms, and though the same Europe would have rung with the justice of his seizure and the aggravated enormity of his guilt. The Senate of Hamburgh had yielded on its part to the importunity of legitimate Europe before the 18th of Brumaire: shortly after that



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event, they sent a long letter of apology to the head of the Government, who did not admit of the validity of their excuses. They afterwards sent a deputation to the Thuilleries to implore oblivion, and to urge their weakness: 'You had at least the resource of weak states,' said Napoleon, 'that of letting your prisoners escape.'

Hitherto the French Government had supported French prisoners in England, while the latter country supported English prisoners in France. The Consular Government succeeded in altering this arrangement which was detrimental to France; as there were more French prisoners than English, and as provisions were dearer in England than in France. Each nation became from this time responsible for the support of the prisoners it detained.

The oath of hatred to royalty was suppressed as useless and contrary to the majesty of the Republic, which, acknowledged as it was on all sides, stood in no need of such support. There was also another reason; that it was as well to get rid of this oath of hatred to royalty before it swore allegiance to a new monarch, an event which there is every ground to suppose Buonaparte considered as at this period very possible. It was also resolved, that the anniversary of the 21st of January should no longer be observed as a festival. Of this subject I have spoken already, nor do I see occasion to change what I have said: on the contrary, Buonaparte's anxiety to wash out the memory of that event only made it more necessary that he should be reminded of it; for in proportion as he forgot it, the more he forgot himself and his real and only durable pretensions. The ostensible object of the Provisional Government however was to rally and unite all parties, and to efface whatever could excite irritation or animosity. Offices were studiously bestowed on men of all parties and of moderate opinions. The effect of this proceeding was visible and instantaneous: men of all parties were disposed to rally round the standard of what bid so fair to be a national government: he who just before was ready to throw himself into the arms of the emissaries of the Bourbons hesitated, and once more sided with the country. The foreign faction was for a moment disconcerted, but soon conceived hopes of making use of Napoleon as an instrument to bring back the Bourbons; for bigotry and prejudice, unlike reason and philosophy, never despair; and there is no chance, however absurd, that in their pertinacity and the servile subjection of their imagination to their habitual convictions, they do not catch at. Buonaparte had an interview with two of the chief agents of this party, Hyde de Neuville and Dandigné, the one a young man of talent, the other a wild fanatic. They laboured to persuade him that his wisest course would be to restore the old dynasty, and consolidate his own power by the help of theirs: he



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strove to make use of them as instruments to gain over the Vendean chiefs. Each finding the other inflexible, they parted without any wish to renew the intercourse.

The troubles in Toulouse, in the South, and in Belgium were gradually appeased, as the principles and intentions of the new government developed themselves. Nevertheless, the Vendéans and Chouans still disturbed eighteen departments of the Republic. Chatillon, their chief, had taken Nantes; and they replied to all the proclamations of the Directory by counter-proclamations, boldly asserting their resolution to restore the throne and the altar. But about this time a change took place in their feelings: worn out with endless struggles, alarmed at the force which Napoleon sent against them, but still more dazzled by his reputation, they listened to terms of accommodation. Soldiers of fortune themselves, daring and adventurous leaders, for the first time there was a sympathy between them and the head of the government; and their dislike of the cause for a time gave way to the admiration of the man. Chatillon, Suzannet, D'Antichamp, and the Abbé Bernier, the leaders of the insurrection on the left of the Loire, submitted and signed a treaty with General Hedouville at Montluçon, on the 17th of January 1800. Bernier was rector of St. Lo, and exercised great influence over his flock. He came to Paris, and attached himself to the First Consul, by whom he was employed to negotiate the Concordat, and was afterwards made Bishop of Orleans. Georges and La Prevelay were at the head of the bands in Brittany, on the right of the Loire; Bourmont commanded those of the Maine, Frotté those of Normandy. La Prevelay and Bourmont submitted, and came to Paris. Georges and Fotté chose to keep on the war. It gave them an opportunity under colour of political motives to indulge in every species of licentiousness and pillage; to lay the rich under contribution on pretence that they were the purchasers of national domains; to rob the public coaches because they carried the dispatches of the state; to break open the banking-houses, because they corresponded with the Treasury. They kept up an intelligence with the vilest people in the capital, the keepers of gaming-houses and brothels, where they brought their plunder, and there learnt how to lay their snares and ambuscades for travellers on the road. Generals Chambarlhac and Gardanne entered the department of the Orne at the head of two moveable columns to secure Frotté. This young chief, who was active and full of stratagems, was surprised at the house of Guidal, commandant at Alençon, who betrayed him. He was tried and shot. Georges maintained himself in Morbihan with the assistance of the money and arms which he had received from England. Attacked, beaten, and hemmed in at Grand-

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Champ by General Brune, he capitulated, and promised to live a good and peaceable subject. He solicited permission to be presented to Napoleon, who endeavoured to make the same impression on him as on some other Vendean chiefs, but in vain. The war in the West being thus brought to a conclusion, many good regiments were disposable for foreign service.

The Provisional Government interfered but little with continental politics. Some uneasiness had been excited by an army which Prussia was raising at the time of the Duke of York's landing in Holland. Duroc, Napoleon's aide-de-camp, was dispatched to Berlin with a letter for the King. He had every reason to be satisfied with his reception, and with the apparent disposition of the Cabinet. The Prussian Court was filled with the military, who delighted to listen to the accounts of the wars in Italy and Egypt (the truth here having almost the air of a romance) and who were also gratified that the soldiers in France had taken the reins of the Government out of the hands of the lawyers. Paul I. also, the autocrat of all the Russias, the most arbitrary and self-willed of mortals, had always entertained a great antipathy to the Revolution and the Republic; but piqued by the opposition of the English or struck with some touches of his own humour in Napoleon, he suddenly turned round and conceived a vast admiration and predilection for the character of the First Consul. Buonaparte was probably allured by these first and imperfect successes to hope for the establishment of a thorough fellow-feeling and an entire amalgamation of policy and interests with the other continental Courts.

While the state of public affairs thus continued to improve, the labour of remodelling the Constitution drew towards an end: the Consuls and the two Committees were incessantly employed on it. According to law, the two Councils were to meet on the 19th of February, 1800: the only method of preventing them was to promulgate the new constitution, and offer it to the acceptance of the people before that epoch. The three Consuls and the two intermediate Committees resolved themselves into a Committee for that purpose during the month of December in Napoleon's apartment, from nine in the evening till three in the morning. Daunou acted as secretary. The confidence of the Assembly chiefly rested upon the reputation and experience of Sieyès. The Constitution that he had by him in his portfolio had been much extolled. He had thrown out some hints concerning it, which were eagerly caught up by his numerous admirers, and which through them found their way to the public, seeming to justify the eulogium which Mirabeau passed upon him, when he said, 'the silence of Sieyès is a national calamity.' He had indeed made himself known by several pamphlets which evinced

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thought and acuteness. He it was also who originally suggested to the Third Estate the idea of declaring itself a National Assembly; he likewise proposed the oath of the *Jeu de paume*, not to separate till they had drawn up a Constitution; and France was indebted to him (as has been already observed) for its division into Departments. He professed to have composed a theory respecting representative government and the sovereignty of the people, full of useful ideas, which were laid down as fundamental principles. The Committee expected to have this long-meditated scheme laid before them, and that they should have nothing to do but to deliberate upon and ratify it. At the first sitting, however, Sieyès said nothing: he acknowledged that he had a great accumulation of materials by him, but they were neither classed nor digested. At the following sitting he read a report on lists of notables. He afterwards detailed bit by bit, and letting out the grand secret by degrees, and with a great deal of pomp and preparation, the theory of his Constitutional Jury, and at last came to the Government. *Mons parturiens—mus nascitur*. How different is all this from the simplicity and ardour of a great mind in the enunciation of a great discovery, respecting which the author, entertaining no doubt himself, makes no mystery of it to others, and seeing it all under one point of view and by a sort of intuition, is impatient only lest they should not seize it with the same force, and is eager to communicate the whole of it by a single breath! The Abbé Sieyès's plans were not of this condensed or convincing description: they were neither practical nor theoretical, neither deductions from abstract reason, nor dictates of common sense, but a strange tissue of vague assumptions and frivolous excuses, of general doctrines spun to the most attenuated thread or suddenly snapped asunder at the author's pleasure or convenience, and then pieced together again by some idle verbiage or technical nomenclature. They shew in as striking a degree as almost any other abortions of the kind the power of the mind to make plausible arrangements of words without meaning, and to satisfy itself with its own pedantic trifling. This first essay, from its unsatisfactory issue, and from the great reputation of the man, must have tended to inspire Buonaparte with a very indifferent opinion of the constitution-mongers and ideologists of France, and have made him indignant at having his will and power thwarted by such shadows and mockeries of reasoning. According to the Abbé Sieyès's alternate plan of nominal abstractions and voluntary expedients to suspend them, all power, all sovereignty, all right originated from and was to be acknowledged in the people; but although it emanated from them, it was not to reside there a moment; for this title of their's to choose their own government having been recognised

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as an undoubted and indefeasible right (*pro formâ*) it was for fear of any abuse or inconvenience that might result from it, without rhyme or reason, to be instantly taken from them, and made over to a number of persons who were to appoint another set who were to choose their representatives and officers of government for them. Now all this seems going out of one's way to lay down a plausible theoretical principle merely to overturn it in practice, or to perplex the common practice and routine of society by an idle theoretical principle. If the choice of the government or of the legislature by this intricate and artificial process is ultimately to be very different from what the majority by popular election would have come to ; why tantalize them with the mockery of choosing their own governors ? If it is substantially the same, why not allow them to exercise their natural and inherent right without a proxy, and without a refinement in policy which is either an impertinence or an injustice ? If the people are to be kept in leading-strings, why compliment them with rights which they are unfit to exercise, and why not give to their betters the real management of the state both in appearance and reality ? By this lame, contradictory scheme the people would not gain their real friends and favourites as their guardians and attorneys in the government ; while the government would be deprived of some of its tried and ablest servants, who might not happen to be included in the lists of *notability*. The whole is a system of evasion and cross-purposes ; or it is giving up the essence and vital principle of popular government under a pretence of adhering to the name and forms. In like manner, the Legislative Body, when they met, were not to discuss or debate upon the laws they were to pass, but were to vote and determine by ballot upon them after hearing the different arguments and objections brought forward by a hundred Tribunes, who were not to originate the laws themselves, but to receive them from a Council of State named by the government. That is to say, those who were to decide upon the different questions and ought to be supposed the wisest and the best judges, were not to give their reasons at all or to influence one another's opinions, but were to be at the mercy of a number of noisy and professed disputants, who were to discuss in their hearing and for their benefit measures, not which they had thought of, and which, having had their source in their own bosoms and reflections, they might be conceived to understand, but which were proposed to them by the government, and which they were to take up as a lawyer does his brief ; so that in fact the government, which is always looked upon with suspicion in the representative system, would have the initiative in all laws and enactments, would make the tribunate in a manner its organ ; and the legislative or deliberating Council of the nation could



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only oppose to this lively and formidable battery of eloquence and power the *vis inertia* of gravity and silence.

Again, the government was to be a government and no government. A supreme power was to be vested in the hands of a Grand Elector, who was to be chosen by the Senate, not accountable to it, and yet removable by it at pleasure; he was to do nothing himself, but to choose others to do every thing for him; he was to have a consul for peace and a consul for war, and each was to be perfectly independent of him and of the other. That is, in every department of the state there was to be power, but then it could do nothing; there was to be liberty, but then the exercise of it was vested in some other person; there was to be independence, but an impossibility of mutual co-operation and concert. A thing was no sooner granted than it was clogged with some impracticable condition; a form was no sooner established than all power of life and motion was taken from it, either from fear of its abuse, or in the sheer spirit of contradiction. Sieyès came last to the last point, the Executive Government, probably expecting there to see an end of his shuffling and nugatory system. This was the capital, the most prominent part of so beautiful a piece of architecture, which he approached with considerable tenderness, by laying prodigious stress upon it. He proposed in this view a Grand Elector for life, to be chosen by the Conservative Senate; to possess a revenue of six millions of livres, with a guard of 3000 men, and to reside in the palace of Versailles; foreign ambassadors were to be accredited to him and he was to furnish credentials to the French ambassadors and ministers at foreign courts. All acts of government, all laws, and all judicial proceedings were to be in his name. He was to be the sole representative of the national glory, power, and dignity; he was to nominate two consuls, one for peace, and the other for war; but to these points his influence was to be confined. It is true he was to have the power of removing the consuls and of replacing them by others; but at the same time the Senate was to be entitled, when it should deem such an exercise of power arbitrary or opposed to the national interest, to *merge the Grand Elector*. The effect of this merger was to be equivalent to a removal; the post became vacant; but by way of compensation, the Grand Elector was to have a seat in the Senate for the rest of his life.

Napoleon had said but little in the preceding sittings, as he had no experience in such matters. He could only refer on this subject to Sieyès, who had participated in the formation of the Constitutions of 1791, 1793, and 1795; to Daunou, who was accounted one of the principal framers of the latter; and to about twenty or thirty members of the Committees, who had all distinguished themselves in legislating,



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and who took the greater interest in the creation of those bodies which were to make the laws, inasmuch as they were to be themselves component parts of them. But the government concerned himself; he therefore rose to oppose this part of the plan. 'The Grand Elector,' he said, 'if he confine himself strictly to the functions you assign him, will be the shadow, but the mere fleshless shadow of a *Roi fainéant*. And how do you think it possible that any man, either of the smallest talent or honour, would submit to the situation of a fatted hog in a sty with some millions a year at his disposal? If he should choose to abuse his prerogative, you give him absolute power. If, for example, I became Grand Elector, when I appointed the consul for war and the consul for peace, I would say to them, If you nominate a single minister, if you sign a single act without my previous approbation, I will remove you. But you reply, the Senate in its turn will merge the Grand Elector. This is worst of all; nobody at this rate has any guarantee. In another point of view, what will be the situation of these two prime ministers? One will have the ministers of justice, of the interior, of police, of finance, and of the treasury under his control; the other those of the marine, of war, of external relations. The first will be surrounded only by judges, administrators, financiers, men of the long robe; the other only by epaulettes and military men—the one will be wanting money and recruits for his armies, the other will not furnish any. Such a government would be a monstrous chimera, composed of heterogeneous parts, and presenting nothing rational. It is a great mistake to suppose that the shadow of a thing can be of the same use as the thing itself.'

Sieyès answered these objections unsatisfactorily. His plan of a Grand Elector (an office which he himself had probably some design of filling) fell to the ground; and he himself was soon after merged in his own theories, with the estate of Crosne voted to him as a national recompence for his many previous services. Having strengthened the Government by taking it into his own hands as Consul, with Cambacérès and Lebrun for his coadjutors, Buonaparte left the representative part of the system to shift for itself, and this was made up of the wreck of Sieyès's Senate, Tribune, and Legislative Body, which, however, were chosen by the Consuls without waiting for the lists of notability; thus verifying Mr. Burke's sarcasm on the Abbé's Constitutions—'some where the electors choose the representatives, and others where the representatives choose the electors,' &c. The Constitution of the year VIII. was published and submitted to the people on the 13th of December, and sanctioned by three millions eleven thousand and seven votes. The new Government was established on the 24th of the same month. Buonaparte thus gained his great object, which

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was to give unity and vigour to the Government ; and which, whether we consider the demands of his own ambition or the necessities of the state, was perhaps the principal thing. The enemies of the Revolution had prevented it from having a happy and tranquil termination ; and all that remained was to take care that they did not exult in their iniquity, and profit by their own wrong. The Consular Government, however arbitrary in its form, or in many of its decisions, was essentially popular in its principles and objects ; for it had no other strength to appeal to than the final approbation of the people or of a large part of it. It was founded in no prejudice by which it could brave the opinions and feelings of the whole community ; and it must be some time before the head of the Consular or Imperial Government could take upon him to ruin the country like a *Roi fainéant* or as a state-privilege !

During the month of December Buonaparte's health was much shaken. These nightly sittings and long discussions, in which he was forced to listen to so much nonsense, wasted time that was precious to him, yet were nevertheless in a certain degree interesting to him. He remarked that many men who wrote well and were not without eloquence, were yet entirely devoid of solidity of judgment, and argued most miserably. He inferred from hence that there are persons who are gifted by nature with the faculty of writing and expressing their thoughts well, as others are with a genius for music, painting, or sculpture. Public affairs, on the contrary, require deep thought, correct discrimination, and a power of forming conclusions answering to the results of things in reality. Cambacérès, who was chosen Second Consul, was of a noble family in Languedoc, and an able lawyer : Lebrun, the Third Consul, was from Normandy, had formerly been employed by the Chancellor Maupeou in drawing up his decrees, was distinguished for the purity and elegance of his style, and sincerely attached to the Revolution ; to which he himself owed all his advantages, his family being originally of the class of peasants.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE CONSULATE

THE Consuls on leaving St. Cloud, November 10th, 1799, had taken up their residence at the Luxembourg, in the same apartments which had been lately occupied by the Directory. But the new Constitution had raised the Consular power above the other authorities of the state,

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and it felt itself not sufficiently at ease there to represent the majesty of the French people. The Government, on the 19th of February 1800, after the adoption of the Constitution of the year VIII., proceeded to instal itself at the palace of the Thuilleries; and the First Consul from that time took up his abode there.

The procession left the Luxembourg in carriages, in full costume, with music and a guard. It was not a brilliant display; there were only a few private carriages, the rest were hackney-coaches, having the numbers on them covered over with paper. No sooner had the First Consul arrived at the Thuilleries, than he mounted on horseback and gave a review. Afterwards each of the ministers presented to him the different persons employed in his department of the state. Thus then we behold the First Magistrate of the Republic installed in the palace where every thing still breathed the recollection of its ancient kings. It was just at this moment that the news of the death of Washington was received. He had died on the 14th of the preceding December, at the age of sixty-eight years, at a private country-house in Virginia, having secured the independence of his country as a general, its liberty as a legislator, and its prosperity as a magistrate. What, it may be asked, hindered Buonaparte from imitating his example? Had the Allied troops been removed three thousand miles off on the other side of the Atlantic, had the French been a colony of English settlers, and in France there had been no palace of her ancient kings, there was nothing to prevent it!

The First Consul did not neglect this opportunity of shewing his respect to the character of the hero of American liberty; his death was announced to the Consular Guard and to all the troops of the Republic, in the following order of the day:—‘Washington is dead. This great man fought against tyranny; he established the liberty of his country. His memory must always be dear to the French people, as well as to all the free of both worlds, and especially to the French soldiers, who like him and his American troops fight in defence of liberty and equality. In consequence, the First Consul has ordered, that for the space of ten days black crape shall be hung on all the colours and standards of the Republic.’

The first presentation of the diplomatic body took place on the 2d of March. Benezech, counsellor of state, who was charged with the interior regulation of the palace, introduced the foreign ministers into the apartment of the Consuls, where were the several ministers, the counsellors of state, the secretary of state, and the secretary of the Consuls. The Minister of the Interior received them at the entrance of the apartment; the Minister of Foreign Affairs presented them to the First Consul. The diplomatic body at that time consisted of the

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ambassadors of Spain and of Rome, the ministers of Prussia, of Denmark, of Sweden, of Baden and Hesse-Cassel, and of the ambassadors from the Cisalpine, Batavian, Helvetian, and Ligurian Republics. People had then so high an idea of the dignity of civil employments, and they still regarded the service of the court as so little honourable, that the counsellors of state were somewhat scandalized to see the veteran Minister of the Interior, one of their colleagues, with the usher's rod in his hand, acting the part of master of the ceremonies, and even of *maître-d'hôtel* to the First Consul. Benezech was supple and obliging, but a thoroughly good and honest man, and much more adapted to business than the attendance of the ante-chamber. There were as yet no titled officers called chamberlains; the aides-de-camp of the First Consul performed the duty; but that savoured too strongly of the General to be of long duration. The ministers and the council of state surrounded the Consuls on public occasions: they formed the whole Government united. But it seemed clear to penetrating observers that the Thuilleries would soon have a regular court and established etiquette, as a temple is nothing without altars and a priesthood.

The order of the receptions was regulated as follows: On the 2d and 17th of each month, the ambassadors; on the 3d day of the *décade*, the senators and generals; on the 4th, the members of the Legislative Body; on the 6th, the tribunes and the tribunal of cassation were admitted. Every fifth day (of the *décade*) at noon there was a grand parade. It was a thing quite new to the greater part both of the actors and spectators, this commencement of a court. Each of the Directors had had his own circle of society, in which the simple and unaffected tone of common life prevailed: they were not much frequented. Barras alone had kept up a sort of public drawing-room; but only a fifth part of the power or consequence belonged to him, while the First Consul had the whole to himself. He was severe in the choice of the society of Madame Buonaparte; it was composed, since the 18th of Brumaire, of the wives of the different public functionaries, civil and military; and they formed the first *nucleus* of the court. For them as well as for their husbands the transition had been a little abrupt. The graceful ease and goodness of disposition of Madame Buonaparte reconciled those who were startled at the imposing etiquette of the palace, and above all, by the rank and glory of the First Consul. The Court was then what it ought to be, not numerous but decent. The title of *Madame* was generally given to women at the First Consul's drawing-rooms and in the cards of invitation which were issued—a return to the ancient custom which shortly spread through the rest of the community.



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The First Consul being once established at the Thuilleries, it was but natural that he should have a palace in the country corresponding to the one he had in the capital. It was thought that Malmaison, the modest retreat of General Buonaparte, could no longer suit the chief of a great Republic. Among the ancient royal residences in the vicinity of the metropolis, St. Cloud was most conveniently situated. The inhabitants of the place presented an address to the Tribune to offer the choice of the *château* to the First Consul. He on this occasion declared to the commission appointed to make the proposal, 'that he would accept of nothing from the people during the term of his magistracy, nor for a year after its functions had ceased; and that if at a later period they should think fit to apply to him the article of the Constitution which decreed rewards to the warriors who had rendered signal services to the Republic, then he would accept with gratitude the offerings of the people; and that his intention was in the meantime to propose it to the Legislative Body to award recompences to the warriors who had distinguished themselves by their high deeds and their disinterestedness, as the surest way to stifle all the seeds of corruption and to reform the public morals.' The petition was therefore simply referred to the Government.

The costumes and the *insignia* of authority underwent an alteration. The Greek and Roman dresses disappeared, and were replaced by military fashions. The First Consul had more the appearance of a general than of a statesman; but along with the boots and sword he wore a coat of the French make, and it was clearly to be seen that everything tended to the *civil side*. At the head of the acts of Government a vignette had hitherto represented the Republic in the form of a woman seated, dressed after the antique, holding a helm in one hand, and in the other a garland, with the inscription: *French Republic, Sovereignty of the People, Liberty, Equality, Buonaparte First Consul*. Instead of which these words were substituted: *In the name of the French People, the French Government*. The Sovereignty of the People, Liberty, and Equality were no longer retained.

The first act of Buonaparte on arriving at the Thuilleries had been a review; the court of the palace became the place of rendezvous for the troops. They were not idle parades. Now on foot, now on horseback, the First Consul traversed all the ranks, in order to become acquainted with the officers and men, and to make himself known to them. He entered into the most minute details respecting the equipment, the arming, the exercising, in a word, respecting all the wants of the men and those of the service. As General and Chief Magistrate, he dispensed, in the name of the nation, praise and blame, distinctions and rewards. He thus made the army pass constantly under the



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observation of the people of the capital, and of the inhabitants of the departments and strangers who happened to be at Paris. This sight excited a strong spirit of emulation among the soldiers of the different corps, and enhanced their dignity and their value in their own eyes. In these imposing displays the nation took a pride in its troops; strangers learned to know and fear them; all the world were struck with admiration of them. The First Consul was here seen to great advantage and in his proper element. He took a real pleasure in remaining for hours in the midst of all this military pomp, round which an immense multitude crowded and made their acclamations resound, while his ante-chambers and saloons were thronged with courtiers and with distinguished public characters, who waited patiently for the favour of a word, a smile, or even a look. These reviews afforded the First Consul a brilliant opportunity to display before the eyes of the people and the army his indefatigable activity, his superiority in all that related to the military art, the source, the very essence of his glory, and to exercise over all bosoms the irresistible ascendant of power, of energy, of genius, and fortune united in a single individual. Was the day rainy or the sky covered with clouds? Often, as soon as the First Consul appeared, the rain ceased, the clouds were dispersed, the sun shone out: the multitude, always eager for the marvellous, and the courtiers, prodigal of flattery, cried out that he commanded even the elements, or was peculiarly favoured of heaven.

In less than a year a striking change had taken place. Before the 18th of Brumaire, every thing had seemed to announce a speedy dissolution; at present, everything bore the stamp of public spirit and vigour. On all sides was discernible a lofty emulation in whatever was good, admirable, and great. There was a real desire to establish the new order of things; as at the commencement of the Revolution there had been to overturn the old one. An approach to the object in view was no longer made by tumult and disorder; a steady hand guided the movement, traced the route, and prevented deviations. When Buonaparte became Consul for life, the Court was put, like his power, upon a regal footing. This was not, however, the affair of a moment. They compiled new codes of etiquette, and consulted the old courtiers and antiquated valets as to any trifling particular; 'How ought that to be? how was that managed formerly?' were the questions always asked in the interior of the palace, and a reference was constantly made to the use and practice of the good old times. An anecdote is told as characteristic of the tone that prevailed at this period, that on some occasion the Count of Narbonne having to present a letter to Buonaparte, instead of taking it in his hand, placed it on his hat and advanced with it obsequiously in that position. Buona-

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parte at first suspected some insult, and asked the meaning of this piece of effeminacy; but being told that 'it was always the way in which the Count presented a letter to Louis XVI.,' he afterwards always cited the Count of Narbonne as the model of courtesy and politeness. There is nothing incredible in this story; for the greatest strength is not incompatible with the greatest weakness in the same person. Those who wished for the restoration of the old system, which was only a very small number, or those who were taken with shew and outward appearance, which is always the greater part of mankind, were delighted with this return to frivolity and with the importance attached to trifles.

The change was not effected without a sense of ridicule and awkwardness at first. Those who had been accustomed to the forms, the manners, the conventional phraseology and studied politeness of the old court, were greatly amused with the attempts of the new one to mimic them. It was not long, however, before this defect was remedied by practice, and the Court of the First Consul might pretend in all respects to vie with the most brilliant periods of the monarchy. Here was found united whatever was most distinguished in the different classes of society, in the arts, in the sciences, in commerce, and in the liberal professions. There too were to be met with a crowd of warriors, resplendent in fields of renown, the firm and invincible defenders of the Republic, and some of the most sounding names of the old nobility, who had veiled to the glory with which others had covered it. Youth, grace, beauty lent their charm; and if virtue did not follow in the train, at least there was a greater attention shewn to decorum and propriety of manners than had ever been paid to them under the ancient *régime*. One secret grief and latent cause of unpopularity and complaint against Buonaparte, was his determination to suppress the licentiousness of manners that prevailed both before and after the Revolution. He was severe, and even rude to women who endeavoured to attract notice by freedom of dress or behaviour. It was expected that men and their wives should appear in society together—a thing unprecedented, and contrary to all ideas of *bon ton* in the good old times of religion and loyalty. It is true, the Court had formerly taken the lead in vice and profligacy of every kind; and the example which it had set had, as usual, been greedily followed by the other classes of society. Buonaparte thought, by adopting and countenancing a different system, to stem the tide and to bring back a greater severity and sobriety of manners. But perhaps there was too much a tone of authority and arbitrary will in his manner of doing it. Vice is a plant that either grows wild or is easily reared in the hot-bed of fashion; virtue, which is of slower and more difficult growth, can

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only be engrafted on principle and conviction. Yet notwithstanding this rigid, marble exterior, and public homage to virtue, Buonaparte was constantly assailed by showers of lampoons, of which the writers and readers gratified in the most wanton manner either their political hatred or the pruriency of a depraved imagination. It was in allusion to one of these that Buonaparte said in the Council of State, where it had been canvassed as a subject for legal prosecution, 'It contains nothing but absurdities. It appears by what is said of me, that the author does even know my physical constitution: he here supposes scenes of gallantry and intrigue, similar to those in the time of Louis XV. I am to be sure very much like those people; is it not so? I am also made to spend enormous sums in my excursions to Malmaison: every body knows how I throw money out of the windows. A violent scene is described between me and Barbé-Marbois (the treasurer), from whom I had demanded fifteen millions for my journey to Lyons, which he refused to give me, whereas it really cost me only fifty thousand francs.' The author of this libel, a man of the name of Fouilloux, was arrested, and the list of his subscribers and patrons was seized, among whom were the Citizen Serbelloni, Ambassador from the Italian Republic, the Marquis Luchesini, Ambassador from Prussia, Count Marcaff, the Russian Ambassador, and others, who, having invented and paid for these stories, probably believed them themselves, when they thought the world would receive them for undoubted truths. A crowd of foreigners, who were then at Paris, spread these sort of reports everywhere, and the English and German newspapers were thus supplied with an inexhaustible fund of calumny and abuse.

It was the Marquis Luchesini, mentioned above, who was sent as Ambassador from Prussia in 1802, and on that occasion harangued the First Consul in Italian, which was thought a very *mal-adroit* piece of flattery for so consummate a courtier. He had been sent previously by the King his master, in the month of October 1800, to compliment Buonaparte on the establishment of the Consular Government. When Monsieur de Luchesini arrived, the First Consul was at Malmaison, and from a balcony surveyed with attention the rich liveries of the lacqueys, and appeared struck with the brilliancy of the orders with which the envoy was decorated. This was remarked by those about him, and he was heard to say, 'That has an imposing effect; such things are necessary for the people.' That might be true; but in the present case, the head of the people, who envied such finery, was more the dupe of it and more a child than they.

The majority yielded to the stream; there were notwithstanding a few who opposed it, or inwardly repined to see the flower of the talents and spirit of the nation fashioned to a new servitude of idle

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forms and ceremonies, and the old and ridiculous Court etiquette resumed with more alacrity than it had been laid aside. When this small band of true and sterling patriots and friends of mankind (there might also be a mixture of spleen and jealousy in their motives) compared the First Consul of the year XI. with the First Consul of the year VIII., with the General of the Army of Egypt, with Buonaparte, the scourge of royalty at Toulon, on the 13th of Vendemiaire, on the 18th of Fructidor, with the same Buonaparte, rousing the people of Italy from their long slavery by the sound of his victories and with the accents of liberty, and planting other Republics by the side and in aid of that of France, they could not help crying out with some bitterness: 'Behold then the end of so many fine discourses, of so many lofty sentiments, of so many glorious exploits! Was it then for this, only to retrace its steps, that the nation launched into a new career, which it bathed with its purest blood? What has become of so many promises, oaths, vows, and hopes? Are we then, after all, no better than revolted slaves, who are doomed to forge again with their own hands the chains which they had broken?'—Well was it when liberty had a voice like the turtle, and could afford to regret the past, and compare its sanguine hopes with their painful disappointment; when all had not been lost, even the right to complain; when the performance might be confronted with the principle, for the principle was not rooted from the earth; when the excesses of liberty, when the abuse of the power it had called forth were the burthen of the song, not its utter extinction, defeat, and ignominy; when, if freedom was lost for a time, its strength and sinews were left, independence, glory, revenge, scorn, and defiance heaped on its foes, and when itself had not become a reproach and a scoff among the nations! What would they have said (not the flies who flutter about every new glare or are scattered by every blast, but men of principle and firmness to look back to the past and forward to the future) could they have then foreseen the final issue of all their hopes? They could have said nothing, for men complain only of remediable griefs, and are silent when the right to every good, to think, to feel, to be, is wrested from them!

The First Consul found his residence at the Thuilleries dull, and at the same time without convenience or liberty. He passed the fine weather at Malmaison. Great in himself, in this unpretending retreat he appeared still greater. There, and long after, at St. Cloud, of which he took possession of his own accord, a year after he had capriciously refused it as a free gift from the people, his conversation formed the delight of those who knew him. The evenings passed there were evenings worthy of the Gods. The scene resembled the famed



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Gardens of Alcinous or some of the enchantments of Ariosto's pen, and is still remembered by those who were admitted to it, as a dream, a gorgeous shadow that has passed from the earth. Buonaparte took the lead in conversation, and it will appear in the course of this work that he had a right to do so. The man laid aside the ruler, and lost nothing by it. There was that striking union of personal desert and exalted station which is so rarely to be met with ; and is as enviable as it is rare. The subjects touched upon were of the most imposing kind ; and what a tone they must have received from the speakers ! Buonaparte had lost by degrees all the taciturnity and reserve of his youth ; his manner had become frank, communicative, unreserved and free in the highest degree. When he had a part to act in public, he did so ; but in private, he delighted to throw off all disguise and pretension, and was perfectly natural and simple. His discourse, though generally serious and earnest, had a great attraction, for it was original, profound, characteristic, and full. It was never obscure, feeble, or vague, though often carried to excess ; but then it was from the strength of will and conscious power of the speaker. The greatest interest was excited wherever he came. The audience listened to and caught up with avidity his slightest words ; and no wonder, when they had an echo through Europe and were almost a law to the world. Though not stiff or pedantic, he gave a preference to the society of men of science, both from the importance of their pursuits, and as they afforded a relief to political topics and feelings. On this account Laplace, Monge, Berthollet, Lacedepede, Chaptal, were often admitted to long conversations with him, nor did a distinction so well merited excite any jealousy. Sometimes he relaxed so far as to join in the country-dances in the little balls which were given on Sundays at Malmaison. He acquitted himself but indifferently, embroiled the figure, and always called for the *Monaco*, as the easiest, and the one which he danced the least badly.

The Chief Consul shewed most grace and personal dignity in exercising the troops. He looked well in uniform, and was perfectly at home on these occasions ; still in giving his common audiences, there was something imposing about him. He understood the art of making a man six feet high, who was not otherwise disposed to do so, stoop to him, or could assume a lofty port which left the tallest persons no advantage over him. Duroc had given notice that in future the Thuilleries would be open only on the 15th of every month, and the First Consul would give audience at St. Cloud every Sunday after hearing mass. These audiences were very numerous, and lasted several hours. They were composed of cardinals, bishops, senators, counsellors of state, deputies, tribunes, generals, ambassadors, magistrates, private gentlemen and distinguished foreigners, royalists and republicans,



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nobles and plebeians, whatever there was most conspicuous either among the French or other nations, all confounded together and on a footing of equality. The First Consul addressed almost every one. Some times occasion was taken to introduce private affairs; those shewed most wisdom who confined themselves to merely paying their court.

From the audiences of the First Consul, it was the custom to go to that of Madame Buonaparte. She had the foreign ladies of distinction presented to her. Already the names of Zamoiska, Potowski, Castel-Forte, Dorset, Gordon, Newcastle, Cholmondeley, Dolgorouki, Galitzin were seen on the list; for persons of the highest rank in Europe were proud to do homage to the First Consul and his wife. Three days in the week a dinner was given to twelve or fifteen persons; and on these days Madame Buonaparte saw company in the evening. The circle, at first small, grew more numerous by degrees. There were a few card-tables set out for form's sake; and the First Consul, who generally made his appearance, sometimes sat down at one of them. There was less restraint at Malmaison than at St. Cloud; the etiquette became the stricter with the enlargement of the place. The First Consul did not merely make choice of St. Cloud in preference to Malmaison, as a summer residence; he remained there in the autumn and part of the winter, till the bad weather drove him into Paris. His object was in part by secluding himself here to be less in view, more difficult of access, and to surround himself with the mysteriousness of greatness. Every thing around him hastened fast to become a copy of Versailles and of all other courts, with a reserve however of certain essential differences.

One thing that formed a strong objection to the morning audiences at St. Cloud, was the mass that preceded them. Many of those who had to attend the First Consul hated the priests; most were indifferent to the worship itself; no one approved this kind of mockery of it. For nothing could be more artificial or theatrical—the actresses of the Opera being regularly hired to sing the praises of God. Neither was there room for three-fourths of the visitors, who formed groups and loitered about in the galleries. The First Consul, mortified at this luke-warmness, had the service performed an hour sooner than usual, saying that ‘it was to excuse those who had no inclination to attend it.’

By degrees, the dresses of the court changed almost entirely. The sword and silk-stockings succeeded to the sabre and military boots. The First Consul, who never appeared but in uniform, had on the celebration of the 14th of July 1801, worn a dress of red Lyons silk, embroidered, but without ruffles and with a black stock. This dress

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seemed oddly chosen ; nevertheless he was complimented upon it, all but the stock. He laughed and said, ‘ There should be always something that has a military look ; there is no harm in that.’—Gaudin, Minister of Finance, was one of the first who came to the audience at St. Cloud with his hair in a bag, and with lace. They followed this example by little and little to please the First Consul ; but the attempt to return to the old fashion was for some time a real masquerade. One wore a cravat with a full-dress coat, another a stock with a plain coat, a third a bag, a fourth a cue ; some had their hair powdered, the greater number were without powder ; there were only no wigs. All these trifles were become important affairs. The old-fashioned hair-dressers were at war with the new. Every morning they looked at the head of the First Consul : if he had been once seen with powder, it would have been all over with one of the most healthy and convenient fashions introduced by the Revolution ; hair in its natural state would have been exploded. This grave matter was agitated in the discussions of the ushers in waiting ; but the First Consul could not make up his mind to this *reaction*, and every one was left at liberty to wear his hair as he liked. It was understood, however, to be more decent and more agreeable to the First Consul to wear powder and the hair tied. He had no objection to making others into puppets and pieces of costume, though he did not choose to become so himself. So amidst all the frippery of outward forms, he retained the same stern simplicity of character and self-possession. Foreigners in general, and particularly the English, who had their hair cropped and went abroad without powder, when they appeared at court powdered their heads and fastened a bag to the collar of their coats.

The women who inclined to the ancient *régime* out of vanity and love of change, were notwithstanding the declared enemies of powder : they had their reasons. They trembled that the reform of dress should reach them, and that they might finish with large hoop-petticoats, after beginning with hind-curles and *toupets*. They were not unfounded in these conjectures, for the dowagers of the court of Louis XVI. maintained that no one could have the court-air with the Greek and Roman dresses, and that the corruption of manners was to be dated from heads *à-la-Titus*, and drapery displaying the shape. Madame Buonaparte was at the head of the opposition on this occasion : it belonged to the most graceful and elegant woman of the court to defend taste and good sense against the inroads of prescriptive barbarism. She hated every kind of restraint and ostentation. She often repeated her favourite saying : ‘ How all this fatigues and annoys me ! I have not a moment to myself. I was meant to be the wife of a labourer !’ This simplicity of character and feeling was not

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confined to dress : she manifested the same unaffected modesty and good sense in resisting the encroachments of pomp and power ; and in parting with her, Buonaparte lost his better genius. In this, it has been said, she had her own private ends to answer ; but if her conduct had not also arisen from her natural character and from a regard to others, she would have been dazzled by the immediate grandeur, and would have overlooked remote and possible consequences. The heart gives better counsel than the head ; for true friendship quickens our sense of the real interests of those we love.

Buonaparte seldom entered into long conversations with women ; nor did the severity of his character easily descend to gallantry. There were some to whom he took an aversion, occasionally with reason, and often with no other reason than that they had displeased him. He sometimes paid them awkward compliments on their dress or their adventures ; it was one way of censuring their manners. There was now and then a talk of his attachment to some women of the court ; but these were caprices of the moment, and those to whom he showed most partiality had no influence over him, at least in state-affairs. He was really fond of no one but Josephine, notwithstanding the disproportion of years between them. Towards her he was now jealous and severe, now tender and confiding. She answered with her whole heart to the fondness of her husband ; she supported his humours patiently, but could never reconcile herself to his infidelities. On the whole, they lived very happily together. He was persuaded that he owed his happiness to her, and she felt in the same manner towards him. She had gone to drink the waters of Plombieres in Messidor, in the year X. : he grew weary of her absence, and wrote her the most affectionate letters. When she returned, he went part of the way to meet her, loaded her with caresses, and brought her back in triumph to Malmaison.

In courts governed by women, the prevailing tone is to be intriguing, light, and vain. Something worse than all this was to be found in the history of the past. The greater part of those who formed the court of the First Consul, not having been early fashioned in a frivolous school of manners, discovered their natural disposition, which was moral and good. Buonaparte wished for a certain decorum and gravity tempered with elegance, politeness, and grace : Madame Buonaparte set an example of all this. It was no longer the custom for men to boast of their excesses or to hold up their vices to admiration as models of courtly refinement and of the *savoir vivre*. The Revolution had undoubtedly tended to improve the morals : but should the prejudiced or ill-informed be disposed to dispute this, they cannot deny that at least it had produced a greater deference to public opinion

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and attention to appearances. The First Consul more than once carried his solicitude on this point to severity. He had no children of his own, but shewed every mark of attention and kindness to those of his wife by her former marriage. They justified his regard by their excellent qualities and their attachment. Eugene Beauharnais was full of honour, faithful, and brave; Hortense was mild, amiable, and affectionate. By uniting her in marriage to his brother Louis, the First Consul thought to reconcile his political views with the happiness of his step-daughter. In the midst of the reveries which floated in his mind respecting the stability and foundation of his dynasty, he had little hope of heirs direct, and this marriage promised to supply them collaterally. Neither Lucien nor Joseph Buonaparte at all relished the match. Hortense became the mother of a boy. Rumours without any foundation, and quite absurd to those who knew any thing of the persons, were spread abroad on this occasion. This child was pointed out by public opinion as the presumptive heir to the Consular Power; but he died a few years after, to the great mortification and chagrin of Buonaparte, who wished to adopt him as his successor. In the course of these pages will be seen his opinions and arguments on the subject of the law proposed respecting adoption; and the extravagance and almost frenzy to which he worked himself up in endeavouring by a mere *fiat* of the will to place the child of adoption in the same degree of proximity as the child *of the same blood and bone*, will prove to a demonstration to all those who have the least insight into character or human nature, that he was not, as had been grossly pretended, the father of the child by a spurious connexion.

The First Consul could not set up pretensions to be a perfect equestrian, though on horseback he was daring to imprudence. Nor could it be said of him, according to the poet, that he 'excelled in guiding a chariot to the goal.'<sup>1</sup> One day he was resolved to display his skill in the park of St. Cloud, by driving a calash four-in-hand, in which were Madame Buonaparte, her daughter, Madame Duroc, Joseph Buonaparte, and the Consul Cambacérès. At the gate which separates the garden from the park, he struck against a post, lost his balance, and was thrown off to a considerable distance. He strove to rise, fell down again, and lost his recollection. The horses in the mean time, which had run away with the carriage, were stopped, and the ladies were lifted out almost ready to faint. With some difficulty the First Consul came to himself, and continued the ride, but inside the carriage. He had received a slight contusion on the chin, and the right wrist had been a little hurt. On returning home, he said, 'I believe every one ought to keep to his own profession.' He had Laplace, Monge, and

<sup>1</sup> 'Il excelle à conduire un char dans la carrière.'



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Berthollet to dine with him. He conversed with them the whole evening, as if nothing had happened. Nevertheless, he owned that he never thought himself so near death as at this moment. Madame Buonaparte continued extremely ill, and said in the course of the evening, 'At the instant of his fall, Buonaparte had his eyes turned inward, and I thought he was dead. He has promised never to run the same risk again. He has often been blamed for his extreme carelessness on horseback; he frightens every one who accompanies him. Corvisart has been called in; he did not think it necessary to let blood. The First Consul wishes that this accident should not be talked of.'

A like accident is related to have happened to Oliver Cromwell. He had received as a present from a German prince, a set of six horses, remarkable for their beauty and swiftness. Having gone with his secretary, Thurloe, to take a ride in Hyde Park, in a light carriage drawn by these horses, he took it into his head to drive them himself, not thinking it would be more difficult to manage half a dozen horses than to govern three kingdoms. But the horses, spirited and untractable under the hand of their new driver, grew restive and ran away with the carriage, which was soon overturned. In his fall, a pistol which Cromwell had about him went off, without wounding him. The Protector was taken up, stunned and bruised with his fall, but less hurt than Thurloe.—If this is any thing more than a mere casual coincidence, it might seem as if usurpers, or those who have seized the reins of government into their own hands, have an ambition to be charioteers, where there is a sense of power, and of a difficulty and dexterity in directing it. Legitimate rulers, from Nimrod downwards, have been remarked to have a passion for hunting, where they are carried along by a violent borrowed impulse and seem like the natural lords of the creation.

## CHAPTER XXV

### DIFFERENT POLITICAL PROJECTS AGITATED IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE

WE have hitherto chiefly seen Buonaparte either at the head of armies, or acting in public with the *éclat*, the authority, and sense of responsibility, which his situation implied. A work of great authenticity, candour, and ability, lately published, enables us at present to view him in an intellectual undress, without disguise or parade, with his



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thoughts rising to his lips as they rose in his mind, with his projects half formed and growing to maturity, and contending with his confidential friends and counsellors in the most perfect freedom and in downright earnest, about the reasons and propriety of their adoption or rejection. Few persons in history, who have acted a conspicuous part in the world, would bear this mental exposure and comparison so well. There is no loss, but rather an increase of the idea of sterling sense and talent; nor is there much abatement of striking effect. It is like a fine portrait after a number of vile caricatures. There is a masterly display of inexhaustible activity, vigour, and subtlety, joined with great singularity, simplicity, and even *naïveté*. There are some touches so dramatic as to lay open the whole secret of his conduct, and to shew that his greatness or his weaknesses, his good or evil fortune, were not in his own power, but a consequence of the inbred and invincible bias of his character. He formed in this respect a species by himself, utterly distinct from modern effeminacy or European civilization. There is an adust fibre, a heat of blood evidently borrowed from the East. He was a Tamerlane or Gengis Khan, dropped not only in the vortex of the Revolution, which was not amiss, but in the centre of Paris, the most unfortunate situation into which a great man could fall.

I shall throw together in this chapter and the following, his opinions and arguments on the Lists of Notability, the Legion of Honour, the *Concordat*, Schools, the Colonies, and the Law of Divorce, which will a little anticipate the order of time; but will, I hope, decide the reader's judgment of the real dimensions and structure of his mind, and serve to explain and open out his political views and principles. I shall also take this opportunity to make some remarks and enter a protest of my own on these subjects.

The First Consul showed little partiality to the Lists of Notability, which were brought forward in the Council of State (14th Pluviose, year IX.) and which were designed to point out by popular vote 5000 or 6000 individuals, from whom all public officers were to be chosen, and the Tribunate and Legislative Body were to be regularly recruited by the Senate. This was one of the complicated and artificial provisions of Sieyès's patch-work Constitution. Emmery, one of the members of the Council, said that the lists were condemned by public opinion, because they deprived the greater number of citizens of that which was the most flattering result of the French Revolution, their immediate eligibility to all public offices and honours. The First Consul declared that the Institution was altogether bad; it was an absurd and spurious product of *ideology*. 'Fifty men, met together in a desperate crisis, have no right to annul the rights of the people.

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Nevertheless, detestable as the Institution is, it is a part of the Constitution ; it is our business to execute it, in that we do our duty and shew our good-will.' Buonaparte was friendly to liberty, except when his own person was concerned. Still he listened to the arguments in favour of this measure, which was finally carried. Rœderer, who brought the measure forward, saw in the Lists of Notability a step towards his favourite projects of hereditary succession and aristocracy. The new nobility was to proceed from the same egg. Mathieu Dumas was against the Lists, because he did not want a nobility of the Revolution, but was wholly devoted to the ancient *noblesse*.

THE LEGION OF HONOUR.—At the sitting of the Council of State of the 14th of Floreal, year X., the First Consul desired Rœderer to read aloud the project for the establishment of the Legion of Honour ; and after the reading, he explained the motives for it.

'The actual system of military rewards,' he observed, 'is not well regulated. The 87th article of the Constitution provides, indeed, national recompences for military men, but without specifying the way. A decree has been passed to authorise the distribution of arms of honour, which implies double pay, and occasions a considerable expence. There are arms of honour with an augmentation, others without any remuneration. It is a system of confusion, one does not know what it is. Besides, it is necessary to give a direction to the spirit of the army, and above all, to sustain it. What actually supports it is the notion among the military that they fill the place of the former nobles. The project in question gives a greater degree of consistency to the system of rewards, it forms a whole ; it is a commencement of the organization of the nation.' Mathieu Dumas read a memoir in support of the proposed Institution. He objected to the plan, inasmuch as it admitted mere citizens into the Legion of Honour. He wished it to be composed entirely of the military, in order to maintain this spirit in the nation and in the army. Honour and martial glory has been regularly on the decline since the abolition of the feudal system, which had given the precedency to the soldier. Such was the idea he developed. He concluded by insisting that no citizen should be admitted into the Legion of Honour, without at least being able to prove that he had complied with the laws on the Conscription.

*The First Consul.*—'These notions might have held good in the time of the feudal system and of chivalry, or when the Gauls were conquered by the Franks. The nation was enslaved : the conquerors alone were free ; they were every thing, they were so as being soldiers. Then the first quality of a general or of a chief was bodily strength. So Clovis, Charlemagne were the strongest and most active men in their armies : they alone were equal singly to a number of soldiers, to a

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battalion; that was what ensured them obedience and respect. It was a consequence of the mode of warfare practised at the time. The knights fought hand to hand; force and address decided the victory. But when the military system changed, when disciplined troops, the Macedonian phalanx, large masses succeeded to the fashion of single combat between the knights, it was quite another thing; it was no longer individual strength which determined the fate of battles, but science, masterly *coup-d'œil*, and so on. One may see the proofs of this in what took place at the battles of Agincourt, Cressy and Poitiers. King John and his knights gave way before the Gascon phalanxes, as the troops of Darius had done before the Macedonian. This is the reason why no other power could stop the victorious march of the Roman legions.

‘The alteration then in the military system, and not the abolition of the feudal system, would unavoidably modify the qualifications required in a general. Not to say that the feudal system was abolished by the kings themselves, to shake off the yoke of a sullen and turbulent nobility. They enfranchised the commons and had battalions raised from among the people. The martial spirit, instead of being confined to some thousands of Franks, extended to all the Gauls. It was not weakened by this circumstance; on the contrary, it acquired greater strength. It was no longer exclusive, founded solely on individual force and violence, but on social qualities. The discovery of gunpowder had also a prodigious influence on the changes in the military system, and on all the consequences it drew after it. Since that period, what is it that constitutes the superiority of a general? His mental qualities, his *coup-d'œil*, calculation, quickness, his administrative resources, eloquence, not that of the advocate, but that which suits the head of an army, and finally the knowledge of mankind: all this belongs to the civil order. It is not at present a man six feet three inches high who will do the greatest things. If it sufficed in order to be a general to have strength and courage, every soldier might pretend to the command. The general who succeeds in the greatest undertakings is the one who combines the greatest number of the above qualities. It is from his being thought to possess more understanding that the soldiers obey and respect him. It is necessary to hear them talk in the bivouacs: they esteem a leader who knows how to form a right judgment much more than one who merely shews the greatest bravery; not that the common soldier does not value bravery, for he would despise a general who was without it. Murad-Bey was the strongest and most expert of all the Mamelukes; without that he would not have been Bey. When he saw me, he had no conception how I could command my troops; nor did he comprehend it till he under-

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stood our system of warfare. The Mamelukes fought like the knights of old, body opposed to body and without any order, which was the reason that we beat them. If we had destroyed the Mamelukes, freed Egypt, and formed battalions of the inhabitants, the martial spirit would not have been annihilated; its force would on the contrary have been rendered more considerable. In all places, brute force yields to moral qualities. The bayonet bows down before the priest who speaks in the name of heaven, or before the man who can make good a superiority in knowledge. I have told military men, who had their doubts on this subject, that a military government would never do in France unless the nation had been first brutalized by fifty years of ignorance. All such attempts will fail, and their authors will fall victims to them. It is not as General that I govern, but because the people think that I have some civil qualifications proper to government: if they were not of this opinion, the Government could not stand. I knew well what I did when, at the head of the army, I took the title of a member of the Institute: I felt sure of not being mistaken even by the lowest drummer in the army.

‘It is wrong to argue from the barbarous ages to the present times. We amount to thirty millions of men connected together by knowledge, interest, commerce, and language. Three or four hundred thousand military are nothing compared with this mass. Besides that the general commands only by his civil qualities, from the time that he is no longer on duty, he returns into the civil order. The soldiers themselves are the sons of citizens. The army is a part of the nation. If we consider the military abstractedly from all these relations, we shall soon be convinced that they know no other law but force; that they refer every thing to it, that they see only that. The citizen, on the other hand, recognises only the general good. The characteristic of the soldier is to will all despotically; that of the citizen is to submit every thing to discussion, to truth, to reason. These have their different prisms and are often mixed up with error, but still discussion produces light. I have no hesitation then in thinking, that as to the question of precedence, it belongs incontestably to the civil character. If we were to distinguish however into military and civil, this would be to establish two orders in the state, while there is but one nation. If honours were conferred only on the military, this preference would be still worse, for the nation would be no longer anything.’

These sentiments, sustained by a force of eloquence and reasoning not at all common, were shared by the great majority of the Council composed of civilians, and had an immense weight in the mouth of the chief of the Government, of the first General of the army. Dumas felt no temptation to reply. No one took up the question. It seemed



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as if there was an apprehension of weakening the impression made by this discourse; and the First Consul broke up the sitting in order to leave the impression entire. Nothing had so far been said on the most delicate part of the question, the utility or disadvantages of the Institution itself. The subject was renewed in the sitting of the 18th. The opponents of the project did not set their faces against every kind of reward and distinction. The Legislative Assemblies had at different times decreed them; but the present institution was regarded as *an order*, and this was held to be contrary to the spirit of equality, the most essential characteristic of the French Republic. An allusion to the Greeks and Romans also escaped some of the speakers.

Berlier said: 'The proposed order leads to aristocracy; crosses and ribbons are the child's playthings of monarchy. I shall not appeal to the example of the Romans; there existed among them patricians and plebeians. This had nothing to do with a system of honorary rewards. It was a political institution, a division of classes which might have its advantages as well as inconveniences. The citizens were classed according to their birth, and not with reference to their services. Honours and national recompences were transient distinctions, made no change in the rank of the individual, and did not form a separate class of those who had entitled themselves to them. For the rest, we have abolished ranks and have no wish to restore them. The magistracies and public employments ought in a Republic to be the highest rewards of services, of talents, and of virtue.' Berlier then refuted the opinion of Dumas.

The First Consul, in reply to Berlier, and more particularly to those who had cited the ancients as models, said:—

'They are always talking to us of the Romans; it is not a little strange that, in order to set aside social distinctions, we should be referred to the example of a people among whom they existed in the most marked manner. Is this shewing an acquaintance with history? The Romans had patricians, knights, citizens, and slaves. They had moreover for each class divers costumes, and different manners. They decreed as recompences all sort of distinctions; names which recalled the particular service, mural crowns, public triumphs. They employed even the sanction of superstition. Take away the religion of Rome, and you leave nothing standing. When this noble band of patricians lost its influence, Rome was torn in pieces; the people were the vilest rabble. You then saw the fury of Marius, the proscriptions of Sylla, and afterwards the Emperors. In like manner, they always cite Brutus as the enemy of tyrants. Be it so; but in fact Brutus was no better than an aristocrat: he killed Cæsar for no other reason than because Cæsar wanted to diminish the authority of the Senate, in

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order to increase that of the people. Such is the manner in which ignorance or party-spirit quotes history.

‘I defy any one to point out a republic, ancient or modern, in which there is no distinction of ranks.<sup>1</sup> They call all that *child’s rattles*: be it so! it is with children’s rattles that men are led. I would not say that to a tribune; but in a council of wise men and statesmen one ought to speak out. I do not believe that the French people love *liberty* and *equality*. The French character has not been changed by ten years of revolution; they are still what their ancestors the Gauls were, vain and light. They are susceptible but of one sentiment, *honour*; it is right then to afford nourishment to this sentiment, and to allow of distinctions. Observe how the people bow before the decorations of foreigners; the latter have been surprised themselves at the effect, and take care never to appear without them.

‘Voltaire calls the common soldiers so many *Alexanders at five sous a day*. He was right; it is just so. Do you imagine you can make men fight by reasoning? Never. It is only fit for the student in his closet. You must bribe the soldier with glory, distinction, rewards. The armies of the Republic have done wonders because they were composed of the sons of peasants and of substantial farmers, and not of the mere rabble; because the officers had taken the situations of those of the ancient *régime*, but also through a sentiment of honour. It was on the same principle that the armies of Louis XIV. performed such great things.<sup>2</sup> People may, if they please, call the project *an order*; names do not alter the nature of things.’ - [Yet what is the thing itself but a *name*?] ‘But to come to the point; during ten years there has been a talk of institutions: what has been done? Nothing. The time was not arrived. It was thought a happy expedient to assemble the people in the churches, there to shiver with cold in hearing the laws recited, in perusing and studying their contents. It is not a very amusing employment even for those whose business it is to execute them; how then could the people be expected to take an interest in such an occupation? I know well enough that if we place ourselves in the skull-cap that encloses the ten years of the Revolution, we shall in that point of view find that the plan is good for nothing; but if we place ourselves after the Revolution, and admit the actual necessity we are under of organising the nation, we shall think differently. All has been overturned; we want at present to build

<sup>1</sup> Is not America an instance? Was not France?

<sup>2</sup> What a desire there seems to be here and everywhere to neutralise the supposed influence of the Revolution, and to separate liberty from glory as its natural offspring! In the addresses to the army of Italy, he said, ‘None but the Republican soldiers can do all this!’

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up again. There is a Government, with certain powers ; as to all the rest of the nation what is it but grains of sand ? We have in the midst of us <sup>1</sup> the remains of the old privileged classes, connected by principles and interests, and knowing well what it is they want. I can count our enemies. But as to ourselves, we are scattered, without system, without union, without contact. As long as I remain, I can answer for the Republic ; but we must provide for the future. Do you suppose that the Republic is definitively established ? It would be a gross mistake. We have it in our power to achieve this object, but we have not yet done it, nor shall we ever succeed in it, if we do not, as a foundation, cast some blocks of granite on the soil of France. Do you suppose we can reckon upon the people ? They cry indifferently, *Vive le Roi, vive la Ligue !* It is then necessary to give them a direction, and to have instruments for that purpose. In the war of La Vendée, I have seen forty men govern a department ; it is of this system that we ought to avail ourselves. In fine, it is agreed that we have need of some kind of institutions : if this is not approved of, let some other be proposed. I do not pretend that it alone will save the State, but it will do its part.'

The Second Consul (Cambacérès) defended the project, and applied himself principally to shew that the Constitution did not disallow of honorary distinctions. Portalis followed on the same side, and developed the principles laid down by J. J. Rousseau on the influence and the importance of signs. The plan was discussed in another sitting of the Council, at which the First Consul was not present. He presided over that of the 24th of the month. He led the discussion towards the drawing up and matters of detail, as if the basis had been adopted ; he did not put it to the vote, and all at once proposed the question whether it would be proper to send it to the Legislative Body, considering the short time the session had to last.

*Thibaudeau.* 'It is a law of great importance and a system diametrically opposed to the principles professed during the Revolution. The abolition of the distinctions of rank did not take place in those disastrous times which reflect so much discredit even on the best things. The decree was passed by the Constituent Assembly, at one of the epochs the most honourable to the Revolution. The nation, it is true, is profoundly imbued with the sentiment of *honour* ; but it is this very sentiment that renders the idea of *equality* above all things dear to it. It was these two motives, combined with the love of liberty, of independence, and of country, that led the first armies of the Republic to victory. I am not convinced that with the Legion of Honour they would have performed greater things. Considered

<sup>1</sup> Was it not owing to the First Consul that it was so ?

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as a guarantee for the Revolution, the plan appears to me to militate against its object; and as an intermediate body, to flow from a principle inapplicable to representative government. I am afraid lest the fondness for ribbons should weaken the sentiments of duty and even of honour, instead of expanding and strengthening them. I respect the reasons which have been developed in the course of the discussion in favour of the project; they are imposing; but I own I still entertain some doubts. It is desirable that so important an institution should not be established without the assent, well pronounced and understood, of the principal bodies of the State and of the nation. The session of the Legislative Body will end in two or three days: is it right then to refer to it just now the project of a law which requires the most serious reflections? I think not. I foresee that it will meet with a lively opposition. It seems to me advisable to adjourn the question.'

Portalis, Dumas, Rœderer opposed the adjournment: the First Consul then put it to the vote; it was lost by fourteen voices against ten. Lacuée, Emmercy, Berlier, Berenger, Thibaudeau, Jolivet, Defermon, Cretet, and Réal voted for the adjournment because they were against the project. It was carried up, on the 25th, to the Legislative Body. Rœderer prefaced it with a brief recapitulation of the objects. He said, 'It is an institution intended in aid of all the laws of the Republic, and which should serve to consolidate the Revolution. It confers on military as well as civil services the reward of patriotism which they have so well merited. It blends them in the same glory, as the nation does not distinguish them in its gratitude. By a common distinction it unites men already united by honourable recollections; it opens a friendly intercourse between those who are already disposed to esteem one another. It places under the shelter of their responsibility and their oaths the laws in favour of equality, liberty, and property. It effaces aristocratic distinctions which placed hereditary glory before that which was acquired, and the descendants of great men before the great men themselves. It is a moral distinction which adds force and activity to that lever of honour which so powerfully impels the French nation. It is a politic institution which establishes in the community intermediate bodies, through which the acts of power are laid before public opinion with fidelity and candour, and through which public opinion can reascend to instruct power. It is a military institution which will allure into the army that portion of the youth of the country, which otherwise it would perhaps be difficult to rouse from the indolence which is the companion of prosperous circumstances. Finally, it is the creation of a new species of money of a very different value from that which issues from the public mint;



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a money of which the standard is unimpeachable and the mine inexhaustible, since it has its source in the national honour; a money which can alone become the equivalent of actions regarded as superior to all other recompence.'

Lucien Buonaparte, as reporter to the commission of the Tribunal, proposed the adoption of the new law. Savoye-Rollin combated it in a discourse full of sound principles and facts, and which produced a strong sensation. Chauvelin followed up the system of attack by a declaration equally well reasoned. These were the principal objections: That the Legion of Honour contains in itself all the elements on which hereditary nobility has been founded in all ages; that it implies exclusive qualifications, powers, honours, titles, and fixed revenue; that nobility has rarely commenced with so many advantages; that it is not safe to rely on the progress of knowledge and the difference of the times, the human heart being always the same; that the same opportunities make men fall into the same errors and indulge in the same propensities; that the Legion of Honour will forthwith revive prejudices but half extinguished, and received in all the rest of Europe, and that these prejudices will serve to fortify the influence of the military and aristocratical ideas which have always emanated from it, and will introduce a spirit of classes instead of the spirit of the public good; that under pretence of effacing the old nobility, the Legion of Honour will originate a new one and strongly reinforce the old; that as an intermediate corps, it is at best a superfluity, intermediate bodies being of some benefit in despotic states, but that under a representative government and among people sufficiently happy to enjoy a public discussion of its laws and measures, the true and only intermediate bodies between the people and the government are the constituted authorities; in a word that the proposed institution is contrary to the spirit and principles of the Republic, and to the letter of the Constitution.

Freville defended the project, and Lucien Buonaparte replied to his antagonists with a great deal of youthful presumption. Confident in the ties which attached him to the First Consul, he attributed criminal intentions to those who differed with him, charged them with designs against the Government, spoke of the indignation which he felt, and discharged a part of his spleen on the nation itself, which he attempted to degrade by the epithet *pitiable*. The indiscretion of the speaker raised up a great number of enemies to the project. It was carried only by a majority of 56 voices against 38.

The subject was brought forward in the Legislative Body; but there it met with no opposition. The three Government orators, and the three orators of the Tribune, charged solely to defend the

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project, accumulated every possible argument and excuse in its favour. The discussion was terminated by an allusion made by Dumas to a passage of the Roman History relative to Marcus Claudius Marcellus, who was called the *Sword of Rome*. 'Well then,' exclaimed the orator, 'our Marcellus, our Consul, on whom the people are at this moment about to confer the magistracy for life, he who protected the arts and sciences in the midst of the horrors of war, who under the wings of victory made them rear their heads in Egypt, in their first cradle, whence the Greeks and Archimedes borrowed them, in fine, our Sword of France proposes it to you, the high-priests of the law, to erect a double temple to honour and to virtue.' The said pontiffs voted on the question; and in spite of all that eloquence could suggest to gain their suffrages, the Legion of Honour was sanctioned only by 166 voices against 110. A triumph so sharply contested and hardly extorted from two bodies which had just undergone a purification, did not greatly flatter the First Consul. No measure of the Consulate met with a warmer opposition. One of the Council said to him, 'You see that those among the Counsellors of State who voted for the adjournment had some reason. So strong an opposition is always a thing to be avoided.' He replied, 'True; it would have been better to have waited. Sufficient time was not given. The matter was not so urgent. Besides, the orators who defended the measure did not give good reason for it.'

The grand objection that might be made to the institution of the Legion of Honour, considered not as a mere pretext and stepping-stone to the re-establishment of hereditary nobility, which merges 'acquired glory in that which is borrowed,' and all talent and virtue in birth and rank, but as a kind of rival to this and an order of personal merit, is that there can be no order of personal merit. 1. Titles and external marks of distinction should be confined to represent external advantages only: there they have an appropriate meaning and effect (whether good or bad, is another question). A coronet on a coach speaks a plain and intelligible language; for every one knows by this that the ancestors of the person who owns it were persons of rank and distinction as much as the carriage itself shews that he is rich. But there can be no outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace; for the question of real desert is one which is always left reserved in the human breast, and a bit of red ribbon in the button-hole does not alter our opinion in this respect. We may bow down to the advantages actually possessed by others, as we may wish that we ourselves had them; but no one willingly acknowledges a superiority in personal worth over himself or would give up his personal identity, however gladly he might change places with another. Again, a man

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may wear a medal to imply that he was in a certain battle, or a particular dress to shew he belongs to a certain society or profession—*that* is specific and positive; but no man can wear a badge which says, ‘I am a better man than you who do not wear it;’ for this is a thing that does not properly admit of proof, and that no one grants as a voluntary concession. As a mere assumption on the part of the individual, it is an impertinence; as a licence from government, it implies a degree of servility and a sense of inferiority in others which is contrary to the principles of equality and reason. Instead of thinking more of the individuals who thus court distinction without any thing to warrant it (unlike outward expence and magnificence, which carry their credentials along with them and impose on the imagination, if not on the understanding) you think less of them; and virtue and merit are in the end reduced to a piece of red ribbon, which is made their inadequate symbol. If a man of merit looks meanly in the street, you cannot say to the passengers, ‘Respect this man;’ they will rather learn to despise personal merit which is not corroborated by personal appearance. It is a translation from one language to another; and all things suffer by translation. 2. It is true, the language of signs, according to Rousseau, is a powerful one; but it has more or less influence according to times and circumstances, and the insisting upon it in preference is a recurrence to the ages of barbarism. The natural tendency of the human mind is (as already observed) from the concrete to the abstract. Who would now resort to the Egyptian hieroglyphics, though these might have had their advantages? The streets of Paris and London were at one time stuffed with signs over every shop-door, which are now taken down by common consent. They were useful and even necessary when scarcely any one could read, and must have afforded great delight and amusement to the imagination, before the progress of the fine arts had improved and directed the public taste. So a higher and more abstracted standard of morals and of personal merit, connected with the progress of knowledge and inquiry, supersedes the use and value of personal badges, and of a more gross and material language. A nobleman or gentleman was right in wearing a sword and an embroidered dress when from the coarseness of manners he was liable to be jostled or knocked down without it; but the police has removed the danger of this, and he now aims at distinction by other means than the mere admiration which his own finery or the rich livery of his footmen might excite. As a change has taken place in the art of war, by which skill and science have prevailed over brute force, and the mind over the body, so a proportionable change has taken place in the intercourse of peace, by which conversation and behaviour are more sought after than dress and equipage. To revert

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to the old-fashioned tinsel and Gothic forms is to tread back our steps instead of advancing with the spirit of the age. There is no occasion to affect distinction by slovenliness and indecency as in the times of *sans-culottism*; but neither will external frippery and an appeal to the senses ever regain their influence in the eyes of others, unless they were as formerly the sole proofs of intelligence or power, and were seconded as formerly by the fear and ignorance of the multitude. 3. It is drawing a line where none can properly be drawn. Buonaparte was blamed for giving the cross of the Legion of Honour to Crescentini the singer. But was the exclusion to extend to musical composers as well as singers, to poets as well as players? There could be no rule laid down in the case. What depends on opinion must be left to opinion, the only scale fine enough to weigh the fluctuating and evanescent pretensions to public favour. It is true, the theatrical profession labours under an unjust stigma in France, having of old incurred the *odium theologicum*; and Buonaparte wished to remove this stigma, and to give it a place in public estimation corresponding to that which it holds in public admiration. There was an evident and ill-natured discordancy which he wished to do away with. But he could not do it. The Legion of Honour would only have got laughed at if he had persisted in the attempt: there is no forcing opinion. Honour can only be the echo of opinion; or the utmost that it can do is to lend its stamp to fugitive esteem, to the dictates of prejudice or the accidents of fortune, which instead of being confirmed and sanctioned by authority, ought to be corrected and effaced by time and reason.—The whole is false mathematics, an attempt to square the circle. Buonaparte wished however to model this institution on as broad and liberal a scale as possible; and what he says on the subject in another place shows equal sense and feeling.

‘No comedian ever received the decoration of the Legion of Honour. Are Gretry, Paesiello, Mehul, and Le Sueur, our most celebrated composers, to be compared to singers? Must the proscription be extended to David, Gros, Vernet, Renaud, and Robert Lefebvre, our most eminent painters; and even to Lagrange, La Place, Berthollet, Monge, Vauquelin, Chaptal, Guyton de Morveau, Jouy, Baour Lormian, Fontanes, Sismondi, and Guinguené? The French soldier must entertain sentiments highly unworthy of him, before a decoration worn by such men can on that account lose any part of its value in his eyes. If the Legion of Honour were not the recompence of civil as well as military services, it would cease to be the Legion of Honour. It would be a strange piece of presumption indeed in the military, to pretend that honours should be paid to them only. Soldiers who knew not how to read or write, were proud of wearing, in recompence



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for the blood they had shed, the same decoration as was given to distinguished talents in civil life; and on the other hand, the latter attached a greater value to this reward of their labours, because it was the reward of the brave. But then Crescentini? It is true that in a moment of enthusiasm, just after hearing the fine scenes of *Romeo and Juliet*, the Emperor gave him the cross of the Iron Crown. Crescentini, however, was of good birth; he belonged to the worthy citizens of Bologna, *a city so dear to Napoleon's heart*. He thought it would please the Italians, but was mistaken; ridicule attacked the transaction: had it been approved by public opinion, he would have given the cross of the Legion of Honour to Talma, St. Prix, Fleury, Grandmenil, Lais, Gardel, and Elleviou: he refrained from doing so out of consideration for the weakness and prejudices of the age, and he was in the wrong. The Legion of Honour was the reversion of every one who was an honour to his country, stood at the head of his profession, and contributed to the national prosperity and glory. Some officers were dissatisfied, because the decoration of the Legion of Honour was alike for officers and soldiers. But if ever it cease to be the recompence of the lowest class of the military, and a medal be instituted through aristocratical feelings to reward the mere soldier, or if ever the civil order be deprived of it, it will cease to be the Legion of Honour.'

## CHAPTER XXVI

### COLONIES—ADOPTION, &c.

THE Council of State had to discuss a project for establishing a board of agriculture in the West India Colonies. Truguet opposed the plan as dangerous. 'It is the colonists,' he observed, 'who have occasioned all the trouble in the colonies: it is necessary to govern them with severity and vigour. Cultivation will gain nothing by these boards, but they will harass the agents of Government.'

*The First Consul.*—'Every establishment under a feeble Government is liable to become dangerous; but it is to be recollected that the colonists are French: they have the same character and sense of their rights; they cannot be treated as slaves. It would be necessary for that purpose to deprive them of the privilege of speaking, thinking, and writing. They have no representatives in the Legislature; the Constitution with just reason disallows of it: at least then they ought to have some means of appealing to the Government, of making known their wants, and of stating their grievances. If a plan can be pointed

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out, which gives less importance to the colonists, I am willing to adopt it ; but I do not see how it is possible to contrive one with less influence, and that is perhaps its fault. Doubtless, it is proper to govern the colonies with energy ; but there is no energy without justice. To this end it is indispensable that the Government should be informed of every thing, and that it should hear the parties concerned ; for it is not sufficient to be just, merely to do good ; it is still farther necessary that the governed should be convinced of this, and they cannot be so unless they have the means of making themselves heard. Even were the Council of State composed of angels or of Gods, who could see with the first glance of the eye what was best to be done, it would signify nothing unless the colonists had the conviction of having had their statements duly attended to.<sup>1</sup> Strength is also founded on opinion. It is principally in this point of view that the proposed establishment is necessary. There is at present no medium of communication between France and her colonies : the most absurd reports are circulated there ; the true principles of the Government, so far from being properly understood, are burlesqued in every account of them. This is because those of the colonists who are in Paris are forced to collect their information in ante-chambers, or from the enemies of the Government, or in society which has no connection with it. If on the contrary there were established here, under the eye of the Government, a sort of colonial association, it would learn the truth, would repeat it, and write word of it home. It is then a channel of information that we want to open with them. The citizen Serres has committed outrages, unheard-of oppressions at Senegal ; some of those banished there have revolted against him. I shall have them tried, because they ought to know that their first duty is obedience to the authority of the mother-country ; but I shall have him tried also, for it was his to make it respected. If there had been here a deputy from Senegal, or a board of commissioners, this man would have been more on his guard, and would have conducted himself better. It is said, "*Choose your agents better :*" but the citizen Serres enjoyed a good reputation before this ; it was power that turned his head. Besides, it is not simply with a view to keep a check on the agents of Government that the plan is good ; it is also of use to defend them from calumny. A thousand stories have been told of this poor General Dugua ; he had, they said, encouraged the negroes to insurrection : there is not a person who has not heard the most violent accusations against him. Now, if there was any charge against him, it was that of having treated them with too much harshness. In spite of all I could

<sup>1</sup> A finer or more liberal definition of justice, or of what governments owe to the people, surely never was given.

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do to put a stop to the calumny, it has not been the less eagerly circulated against an unfortunate man, who devoted himself to destruction by this means. An agent of Government, urged by necessity, makes some relaxations in the laws of the customs, and suffers foreign flour to be introduced into the colonies; instantly he is denounced by the inhabitants of Nantes and Bourdeaux as a corrupt officer, a man sold to the views of the enemy, and yet it is necessity and the welfare of the colony that have determined him to act in the manner he has done. Do you imagine in such a case, that if there were deputies from the colonies near at hand, they would not be eager to point out the truth and to defend the men who had rendered an important service to their country? The colonists and the merchants have interests always opposed to each other. When it is in agitation to establish a certain tax on the produce of the colonies, all the boards of commerce send in their memorials, and no one watches to defend the interests of the colonies. The law arrives there armed with all its rigour, without any one's being at the pains to explain the motives to the colonists or to give them an assurance that every circumstance has been duly weighed. I am aware that we keep the colonies for the sake of commerce, for the advantage of the mother-country; but at the same time, the colonists themselves are Frenchmen, are brothers; they contribute to the support of the state, they have interests of their own to defend, and the least we can do for them is to allow them this imperfect means of letting us know their sentiments as to what those interests are.'

*Truguet.*—'It would at any rate be best to postpone the plan; the moment is unfavourable.'

The First Consul objected to the adjournment, and added: 'People suppose that the colonists are on the side of the English; but I can say that at Martinique there are the best-disposed citizens. The partisans of the English are well known; they are far from numerous. So when they sent M. Dubuc here, they wrote to inform me that he was a friend of the English. The agents of the Government have been received with the greatest enthusiasm by the inhabitants.'

*Truguet.*—'Not by the greater number.'

*The First Consul (growing warm).*—'See how things are misrepresented! There are persons who are determined to find only partisans of the English in the colonies, in order that they may have a pretext to oppress them. Well, M. Truguet, if you had come into Egypt to preach up the freedom of the negroes or Arabs, we should have hung you up at the mast-head. It has been so contrived, that all the whites should be delivered over to the ferocity of the blacks, and yet it is thought strange that they should be dissatisfied. Well then, had I been at Martinique, I should also have been on the side of the English,

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because above all things it is necessary to save one's life. I am for the whites, because I am white ; I have no other reason, yet that is reason good enough. How was it possible to grant liberty to the Africans, to men without any kind of civilization, who did not even know what a colony meant, or that there was such a place as France ? It is quite evident, that those who proposed the emancipation of the blacks must wish for the slavery of the whites ; but after all, do you suppose that if the majority of the Convention had seen what they were doing and been acquainted with the colonies, they would have persisted in granting freedom to the negroes ? Doubtless not ; but few persons were in a situation to foresee the consequences at the time, and a sentiment of humanity always appeals powerfully to the imagination. But at present, for any one to persist in these principles, is to shew a want of good faith ; it is mere pride and hypocrisy. Without going so far, would you have consented, would you have suffered, that the French should have been brought in subjection to the Italians, to the Piedmontese ? We might have been well treated ; they might have made of us what the blacks have made of the whites. We have been obliged, on the contrary, to take strong measures of precaution, and to keep them in a state of dependence ; and even had it been necessary to let all Italy perish or sacrifice two soldiers of my army, I would have let all Italy perish ; because before all things, I am of my army and for my army. To this day even it is necessary to have an eye on that country ; nevertheless they are whites like us, a civilized people, and our neighbours.'

Perhaps there is not anywhere on record, and particularly coming out of the person's own mouth, a passage which paints so powerfully, with such nakedness and force, not merely the character but the inmost soul and extremity of purpose in an individual, as the one just given. It would be as much in vain to reason with a man whose mind is devoured and burnt up with his unquenchable zeal of partisanship, as to insist that a person is not to writhe with pain who has a living coal of fire applied to his breast. We see a soul of fire without water or clay, that nothing could tame, could soften, or deter. It is not a question of degree, but a total separation in principle and an antipathy in nature to the ordinary and cherished weaknesses of human nature ; so that no extreme case or disproportion in the objects could make any difference on a mind that had a capacity but for one class and modification of feeling. In this one passage he has given a clue (radiant with light) to all his actions, to all his greatness and his littleness, his elevation and his fall, without resorting to studied policy, to accident, or the advice of friends. Buonaparte need not talk of Arabs or uncivilised nations ; he is himself one of them. No wild Indian



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could brood over in his hut or make a triumphant boast at the stake of a more utter abnegation of all the mawkishness of general benevolence ; nor snap with less ceremony or firmer nerves all the ties but those which bind him to his tribe and link him in a chain of sordid interest with others with whom he is knit in a common cause, and who are ready to stand by him in like manner. No son of the Desert, whose feelings have been burnt into him by a scorching sun, who is hardened against compunction by the extremity of want, who recognises only in the stranger or in his fellow-man a deadly foe whose existence is at war with his own and that of all belonging to him, could express a more determined disbelief in and contempt for all the decencies, charities, and professed courtesies of general philanthropy as mere names and shadows. The tendency of civilisation and intellectual intercourse has been to extend the circle of sympathy with the circle of knowledge, to burst the barriers of tribe, nation, and colour, and to extort the confession that wherever there was a kindred feeling, there was a claim to pity, to justice, and humanity. Thus 'we see a softness coming over the heart, and the iron scales of ambition that fenced and guarded it melt and drop off.' 'A negro has a soul, an' please your honour,' said the Corporal, doubtfully? 'I am no great casuist, Trim,' replied my uncle Toby, 'but I suppose that God Almighty would not leave him without one, any more than thee or me.' This is one of those glancing strokes of the pen which first served to throw a golden streak of light over this dark subject. If pleasure and pain, good and evil were black and white, then justice and injustice, right and wrong might depend on this distinction. But old Fuller's quaint rhetoric contains a better moral when he calls the negroes 'the images of God carved in ebony.' The hand does not feel pain the less because it is black? Why then should it feel it the more because it is black, which does not alter the essence of the question? But it is not like mine, which is white! By what law of nature is it bound to be like it, except to the ignorant and prejudiced; who, knowing of no other colour, could not believe the existence of any other; and wondering to find that such people existed, and struck with the difference, required two hundred years more to look upon them as human beings? If our progress in this respect is slow, difficult, and imperfect, that is no reason why, by a sudden revulsion, we should undo all that has been done, and undermine the very foundation and principles by which any future progress can be made. This is indeed shutting our eyes and leaping into the dark gulf of wilfulness and barbarism. How far the negroes might be humanely treated and made tolerably comfortable, in contradiction to the principles by which they are kept in slavery, I shall not dispute; but I am sure that they must be as ill-treated as possible under the

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sway of that hard code, which strips them of all title to charity because they are black. Why is it assumed that the negroes are incapable of civilisation? They are capable of being taught to wait at table, to ride behind a coach, to cook, to play on the fiddle; why then are they not capable of being taught to work out of doors as common labourers? There is no reason given. If it is determined to keep them slaves by force, then they have but one way to become free, that is, by exterminating their masters. Nothing shall persuade me that a slave is not at least a more respectable character than a slave-driver. Why should the French keep the Italians in subjection? Why lay down this alternative as necessary? It is the way to be subjected yourself. True patriotism warrants no conclusion contrary to liberty or humanity. What were the French to Napoleon? France was his adopted country. No one can feel a natural or blind attachment to thirty millions of people. France, England is a mere name, a geographical or political denomination, to which we are bound only by moral and rational ties, as a part of the great society of mankind, whose welfare, whose liberty, whose existence we are sworn to defend against the unjust aggressions or encroachments of every other part, but not to sacrifice the whole to it. Why should Buonaparte put the question of sacrificing the lives of two of his soldiers or letting all Italy perish? This is an extreme case indeed, but it shews the extremity of will and character in the speaker, and is so far invaluable. If all Italy could not weigh down two lives, each Italian life must be worth nothing, a mere cipher, or it would mount up in such a sum. Adam Smith has observed, with the spirit and candour of a philosopher, that perhaps a pain in the little finger would vex a person more than the hearing of the death of a million of men in China by famine or otherwise, and that this is mere infirmity; but that if it were proposed to any one having it in his power whether he should feel a slight pain in his finger or a million of men should perish of hunger, a man would be a villain who should prefer the latter. Buonaparte seemed to think that the dictates of his will were to outweigh those of common sense and feeling; and that he was to act with rigid stoicism on the bare calculations of self-interest, as if they had been the severe deductions of reason and philosophy.

There is the same extraordinary tenacity of purpose and incorrigible determination to subject the reason and nature of things to mere arbitrary will discernible in the discussions which occurred in the Council of State relative to the law of adoption. We can hardly have a complete understanding of Buonaparte's character without turning to them; and they will be useful in more than one point of view.

*The First Consul.* 'The citizen Tronchet, in rejecting the principle of adoption, has cited the Romans; yet it took place among them in

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their Comitia, in presence of the whole people. The citizen Portalis has also said that wills were made before the Roman people. The reason of which is, that these acts were derogatory to the rights of families and the order of succession. The objection drawn from our Constitution is not well-founded. Whatever is not expressly prohibited by it is permitted. Adoption is neither a civil contract nor a judicial act. What is it then? An imitation by which society strives to ape nature. It is a kind of new sacrament; for I cannot find in the language any word that exactly defines its nature. The child of the blood and of the bone passes (so to speak) by the volition of the community into the blood and the bones of another. It is the loftiest act that can be imagined. It inspires the sentiments of a son into him who had them not, and reciprocally teaches those of a father. Whence then ought this act to proceed? From on high, like the thunderbolt. You are not the son of such a one, says the Legislative Body; nevertheless, you shall have the same sentiments as if you were. One cannot then raise one's-self too high for such an operation. It is feared that in this manner the use of adoption should be too much limited; but we thereby honour it. Neither is it necessary that the legislature should enter into the details of each case; but as a high-priest, it comes forward to impart the sacred character. Suppose disputes to arise between the natural son and the son by adoption. The last will reply: It is the same authority which has established the marriage from which you proceed; it is the law itself which has made me your brother. An objection has been started to the revocability of adoption; but I would not have it revocable. Divorce is cited as a parallel case. How can any one compare that which dissolves with that which creates? When the State has pronounced the adoption to have taken place, surely it is not possible to think of permitting it to be recalled. It would be different if it originally emanated from a court of justice. It would be then not more than a sentence passed. When the father wished to remonstrate with the adopted son, the latter might say: You are not my father! The adopted might also abuse the secrets of the affairs or of the feelings of the adopter. No, it is not to be admitted.'

Tronchet maintained the opinion of the First Consul; Rœderer combated it. 'It is,' said he, 'more especially for the poorer classes that adoption is of use; for the labourer, for instance, who adopts the infant that the administration of the hospitals has entrusted to his care. The First Consul aims at giving the institution too elevated a character. The labouring man will not feel this, but on the contrary will be deterred by it.'

*The First Consul.* 'The imagination must be powerfully affected.

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If there are differences between the natural and the adoptive father, if embarked in the same boat, they are threatened with imminent danger, the son ought to save his adoptive father. There is nothing but the will of the sovereign that can impress this sentiment. The Legislative Body must not pronounce in this case as it does in questions of property, of imposts, but as the high-priest of morality and the head of a sacred institution. The vice of our modern legislators is to have nothing that speaks to the imagination. It is not possible to govern man except by it; without imagination he is no better than a brute-beast. If the priests were to establish adoption, they would make an imposing ceremony of it. It is a mistake to govern men like machines. The whole society must interfere here. Your system leads to the revocability of adoption.'

*The Minister of Justice.* 'The Legislative Body will only sanction; for the consent of the parties is sufficient for the contract.'

*The First Consul.* 'There is no contract with a minor. A contract implies only geometrical obligations, it has nothing to do with sentiment. Insert the word *heir* in your law, and so let the question rest. *Heir* carries along with it none but geometrical ideas; adoption, on the contrary, involves the ideas of institutions, of morality and sentiment. Analysis leads to results the most false and vicious. It is not for five sous a day, for a paltry distinction, that men go to be killed; it is by speaking to the soul that the will is electrified. It is not the notary who will produce this effect for the twelve francs that we pay him. The Council do not treat the question properly, they make it an affair of geometry; they view it as framers of the law, and not as statesmen. The imagination should consider adoption as a resource amidst the misfortunes of life. I put the question to the reporter, what difference there is between the heir and the adoptive child?'

*Berlier.* 'In order to reply to this question, one must first settle the nature and effects of the kind of adoption which it is proposed to establish, otherwise the means of comparison are wanting; but according to my ideas, the legal heir, or heir by blood, is to the adopted one, what the reality is to the fiction, saving the modifications to be introduced into their respective rights and duties.'

*The First Consul.* 'Should the real father of the adopted become rich, then the latter would abandon his adoptive father. He ought to be allied to him for ever, otherwise he is no more than the heir. What holds the place of the Deity on the earth? The legislature. Who is the son of his father? No one knows for certain. It is the will of the legislature which decides. The adopted son ought to be like that of the flesh and bone. If there is the smallest difference admitted, you are wide of your object, or I understand nothing of the matter.'



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Any thing more strikingly characteristic than this is not to be found recorded in the pages of history or fiction. No dramatic author, with all the licence of his art, with all the desire to produce effect, and all the genius and knowledge of nature to do so, ever worked up an *ideal* character to a pitch of greater extravagance and at the same time more consistent regularity than this. Buonaparte, in default of natural issue of his own, wished to adopt one of his brother's children as his own, and in establishing a law to make them equal, exercises a power of volition that overturns every obstacle that stands in its way. The wishing the adopted child to stand in as near a relation to the parent as the natural, and his reasonings to make it appear that this is possible, amount to the acuteness and perversity of frenzy. To effect a favourite purpose he clothes law with omnipotence, makes it able to create what nature has refused to do, and to reconcile a contradiction in terms. It would be as rational to pass a law to make the barren breed, or to transform a marble statue into a living being, and to expect it to feel towards you the sentiments of filial piety, or to inspire a corresponding affection towards it, as to impress this character by mere force of words on a being that has it not by natural relation. It is true, law makes a difference in natural children, that is, requires other moral and artificial conditions before it adds its highest sanction; but to suppose that after all these conditions have been complied with, it can add the same sanction in a case where the most essential of all is wanting, is bad reasoning in every respect. Yet Buonaparte talks loudly of sentiment, as if sentiment were the creature of arbitrary institutions. The law is founded on nature, and does not create it. This attempt is like trying to unite hard substances without cement, by merely pressing them violently together: as long as the pressure continues they remain in contact, but as soon as it is taken away they fall asunder. I will venture to say that Buonaparte would not have argued in this manner, nor have suffered any one else to do so, after the birth of the King of Rome. Yet he is as absolute in his tone as any theological bigot, who has undertaken to impose contradictions in terms as articles of faith on mankind, in defiance of their reason and senses. There is one other remark to be made on this extract; it proves with the clearness of day-light, that the scandalous stories respecting the birth of the adopted child whom he was so anxious to place on a level with one of the blood and bone, are utterly unfounded; for the rage and impatience here manifested to convert a legal fiction into a natural reality, would indeed have been absurd and wholly unaccountable, had the intended child and heir of his adoption been really and truly his own son.

As a contrast to these instances of excessive perversity of self-will, I

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will here add another, which shews equal acuteness with true liberality and considerateness of feeling. In speaking of sending back children from the public schools after making trial of their abilities for a certain time, Buonaparte says, 'It is a very bad idea. One has no right thus to fix a stain on the honour of a child; for it is one that would stick by him all his life. A great many children appear stupid at twelve or fourteen years of age, while others are very forward at ten. One ought never to despair of a child till he has arrived at the age of puberty; it is then alone that he attains the development of all his faculties, and that a judgment can be formed of him. Till then, no encouragement should be spared.' This single observation would do honour to any one who had spent his life in studying the character of children and the progressive unfolding of the faculties. Buonaparte was seldom wrong, except when he was determined not to be right. His understanding was strong, but his will was still stronger.

### CHAPTER XXVII

#### FIRST SUGGESTION OF THE CONCORDAT

Buonaparte's object almost from the first appears to have been to consolidate the Revolution, by softening its features and mixing up its principles with others which had been longer and more widely established, thus to reconcile old to new France, the philosophers and the priests, and the Republic with the rest of Europe. This was an attempt to make the lamb lie down with the lion, and the only wonder is that it succeeded so far as it did, which it could not have done but for the *éclat* of his name, the dread of his power, and the extent of his abilities and resources. It was by means of the Concordat that he meant to heal the breaches in religious opinion, and the following seems to be the best account of the train of his feelings and reasonings on this subject.

It had been known for several months that Buonaparte was carrying on a negotiation with the Court of Rome. The prelate Spina, Cardinal Gonsalvi, and Father Caselli were at Paris as plenipotentiaries from the Pope; Joseph Buonaparte, Cretet, Counsellor of State, and the Abbé Bernier were those of the First Consul. In the Catholic church the priests were all in motion, and in the world the politicians, each hoping to make the most of their different schemes. The single fact of a negotiation being on foot with the Pope was quite enough to shew what there was to be expected, and what the First Consul had in view.

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On the 21st of Prairial, one of the Counsellors of State, N——, dined at Malmaison. After dinner the First Consul took him out alone with him into the park, and turned the conversation on religion. He combated for a considerable time the different systems of philosophers on modes of worship, deism, natural religion, &c. All this he designated as *ideology*. He more than once quoted Garat as at the head of the ideologists. ‘Hold,’ said he; ‘I was here last Sunday, walking out in this solitude, in the silence of nature. The sound of the bells of the church at Ruel suddenly struck my ear. I was affected; so great is the power of early habit and of education! I said to myself then, what an impression must it not make on simple and credulous minds! Let your philosophers, your metaphysicians, reply to that; a religion is necessary for the people. It is also necessary that this religion should be in the hands of the Government. Fifty emigrant bishops in the pay of England at present govern the French clergy as they please. It is necessary to destroy this influence; the authority of the Pope is required for that purpose. He displaces them, or makes them give in their resignation. It is declared that the Catholic religion being that of the majority of Frenchmen, it is proper to regulate the exercise of it. The First Consul nominates fifty bishops, the Pope inducts them. They name the curates, the State pays their salaries. They take the oath; those who do not are banished. Such of them as preach against the Government are denounced to their superiors to be punished. The Pope confirms the sale of the goods of the clergy; he consecrates the Republic. They will then chaunt *Salvum fac rem Gallicam*. The bull is arrived. There are only a few expressions to alter. It will be said I am a Papist. I am nothing. I was a Mahometan in Egypt, I will be a Catholic here for the good of the people. I do not belong to any religion; but the idea of a God’—and lifting his hands to Heaven—‘Who is it,’ he said, ‘who has made all that?’ N—— then spoke in his turn, for hitherto he had listened without saying a word:

‘To discuss the necessity of a religion is to mistake the question. I am ready to allow the utility of a particular worship. But a religious worship may exist without a clergy; for priests and a clergy are two very different things. There is implied in a clergy an hierarchy, one and the same spirit, one and the same end: it is a body, a power, and a colossal one. If this body had the chief of the state for its head, the evil would be only half; but if it acknowledges a foreign prince as its head, it is then a rival power. Never has there been a more favourable opportunity in France for making an entire revolution in religion. You have at present the Constitutionalists, the Apostolic Vicars of the Pope, the Emigrant Bishops in England, with many shades of differ-

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ence in all three. Citizens and priests, all is disunion; and the greatest part of the nation is in a state of indifference.'

'You deceive yourself,' interrupted Napoleon, 'the clergy exists always, it will always exist while there is a religious spirit in the people, and this spirit is inherent in them. We have had instances of republics, of democracies, of all that we see, but never any state without religion, without a form of worship, without a priesthood. Is it not better then to regulate the worship and gain over the priests than to leave things as they are? At present the priests preach against the Republic: are we to send them into exile? No; for to succeed in this we must change the whole system of government. What makes it popular is its respect for religion. We may send the English and Austrians out of the country; but as to Frenchmen who have families and who are only guilty of holding other religious opinions, it is impossible. We must then attach them to the Republic.'

*N*——. 'They can never become sincerely attached to it. The Revolution has despoiled them of their privileges and their property. They will never forgive this double offence, but will always wage war against it. They will be less formidable while they are scattered, than when they are established and re-united. There is no need either to banish or to persecute any one, but merely to let every priest say mass as he judges fit, and every Frenchman go to church or chapel as he pleases; and if, after all, the opposition of the priests to the Republic was pushed to such a point as to trouble the latter, I should not hesitate to sacrifice them to the public tranquillity.'

*Buon.* 'You would then proscribe them?'

*N*——. 'Must we proscribe the Republic?'

*Buon.* 'That is playing on words.'

*N*——. 'No, it is defining things. Besides, with a good discipline and an enlightened police, I do not think we should have occasion to proceed to that length.'

*Buon.* 'And on my part I tell you that the priests who shall accept of office will by that alone have made a schism with the old titular clergy, and will then be interested in preventing their return and in favouring the new order of things.'

*N*——. 'I hope it may turn out so, but I am not sure of it. This, however, is but a very small part of the great question. The Catholic religion is become intolerant, and its priests are counter-revolutionary: the spirit of the present time is entirely opposed to theirs; we are nearer the Gospel than they.'

*Buon.* 'What we are about to do will give a mortal blow to Popery.'

*N*——. 'On the contrary, it will revive and give it new force.'

*Buon.* 'Ought I not to do just the contrary to what Henry IV. did?'



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N——. ‘Different times have different manners. For myself if it is indispensable to have a predominant worship, I should prefer his.’

Buon. ‘My good friend, you know nothing of the matter.’

N——. ‘Everything is prepared for such a change. We are very differently situated from what England and Germany formerly were, and the times of the Reformation had not a Buonaparte. In the actual state of men’s minds, you have but to say a word, and Popery is forever ruined, and France declares for Protestantism.’

Buon. ‘Ay, one half of it, and the other half will remain Catholic; and we shall have quarrels and dissensions interminable.’

N——. ‘Had we reasoned thus during the Revolution, the Constitutional Assembly would have given way before the feudal system, and the National Convention before royalty and hereditary right. Every revolution political or religious must look for opposition.’

Buon. ‘Why then provoke it on the part of the people and the priests? The enlightened part of the community will not raise an insurrection against Catholicism; they are too indifferent. I then save myself great difficulties in the interior, and I can by means of the Pope abroad’——There he stopped.

N——. ‘Yes, reckoning the sacrifices which will also place you in a state of dependence on him. You have to deal with an adversary who is artful and more powerful against those who treat with him than against those who have once broken with him. The thing offers at present only a favourable side. But when you imagine you have done with the Pope, you will see what will happen. The occasion is without example. If you let it escape’——

Buon. (*After a moment’s reflection*) ‘My friend, there is no longer either good faith or belief; there is no longer any fear of the clergy; it is merely a political arrangement. Things are too far advanced to retreat, and the part which I have taken appears to me the safest.’

N——. ‘Indeed, since the bull is arrived, all I could say must be of very little use.’

Thus ended this remarkable conversation. It shews pretty clearly the motives that actuated Buonaparte in this measure—some latent feelings of religion, and the prospect of making use of the Papal See, as an engine of power, and also for restoring internal tranquillity. The question itself is one which I cannot pretend to judge, without knowing more of the state of religious feeling in France than I do; but I shall attempt to lay down one or two general remarks on the subject, on which, I think, the solution of the problem and the policy or impolicy of Buonaparte’s conduct may in a great measure be presumed to depend. In the first place, it appears to me right to consider not what is good in itself but what is fit for the time and place in which it is intended to

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be put in practice. If Buonaparte could by a Concordat have brought back the times of Popery in their full power and splendour, when the Catholic faith was like one entire chrysolite without flaw or seeming spot in it, I should for one have no objection to that. Popery, whatever were its faults, its abuses, or its absurdities, was in this sense a true and noble religion, that it let down Heaven upon earth. Men no more doubted of a future state and of the glory hereafter to be revealed than of their own existence ; and if the priests took possession of the power and riches of this world, they gave us another in lieu of it—no bad exchange. It was not a clear loss. This faith was implicit, firm, and pure, for it had never been called in question ; and the impression of that of which a doubt had never been entertained or was supposed to have been entertained by others, became by habit and the common consent of mankind equivalent to an object of sense. Europe was a temple in which Popery had its worship and its altars, was embodied in pictures and in imagery, was borne on the sounds of music, ‘ like an exhalation of rich-distilled perfumes,’ was solemnised in processions, in festivals, in ceremony, in dresses, in buildings, was sanctioned by the voice of learning, by the dread of power, shewed its mitred front in palaces and cities, smote the heart in the depths of solitude, shed its light on the path of life, and hung its lamp in the tomb. This state of involuntary abstraction was a great, perhaps the greatest, benefit. There was no condition so high that it did not spread a lustre round it, none so low that it did not raise it from pain and from despair. Faith is the evidence of things unseen, and Popery furnished this evidence in the highest degree—a trust and conviction in sacred things, strengthened and exalted beyond the reach of doubt, of guilt, or passion by time, by numbers, by all that could appal or allure the imagination. Within the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, under the shadow of its countenance, there was a repose on ‘ the Ancient of Days,’ deep and calm as the sleep of cradled infancy. This is still in a good measure the case in Italy, where you see an innocent girl crossing her forehead with holy water, and feeling her soul refreshed ; an old woman kissing the feet of a crucifix at the corner of a street, and not suspecting that this subjects her to the ridicule of any living being ; an old man bareheaded making his annual pilgrimage to Rome, counting his beads unconscious of all around, and eyeing St. Peter’s as the road to heaven, as if he were already entering the precincts of the New Jerusalem. To those who think this nothing, I have nothing to say. Those who could take the finest aspirations and most gorgeous visions of the human mind as to its own origin, destiny, and nature, and make out of this air-woven theory a solid fabric and a material language, familiarised to the thoughts of the whole community, and speaking

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audibly to the lowest and the highest, were, I think, architects of human happiness and builders of the loftiest fiction. I so far approve of that deep sleep, of that solemn gloom, of those bright visions, and would not disturb them. It is to no purpose to tell me that the rites of this religion were childish mummeries, that these theoretical doctrines were the wildest absurdities—that moves me not a jot; when I see truth and philosophy inspire the same enthusiasm and the same reverence that it is complained were lavished on folly and superstition, then I shall give the preference to the former over the latter. What does it import that in wrangling about the difference between real and pretended excellence, we arrive at the object of our pursuit and lose all feeling about it? Philosophers were so far wrong in relinquishing the hold which the other world gave them over the minds of the people: ever since, instead of learned ease, leisure, dignity, they have had nothing but disputes, mortifications, and the contempt of the vulgar. What have those gained by it who were most active in sundering reason from authority? Have not those who have in fact advanced the cause of truth and discovered any new link in the chain been uniformly exposed to the sneers of the world and baited with the rabble's curse? Have not the most daring and acute been exposed to the greatest obloquy? Have not the different sects in turn persecuted, slandered, and extirpated one another? We have discarded Popery, but have got nothing in its stead: or why complain of the servile submission to the infallibility of the Pope, when every one still believes just as much in the newspaper of the day or the libel he last read, but without the consistency, dignity, or quiet? Reason is not yet out of its long minority, nor has it mounted its promised throne. Could Buonaparte therefore have restored the pristine integrity of the Catholic church with all its accompaniments, I should have had no objection, but the thing was in our time impossible, just as much as it is impossible for the brain to dream waking; faith is founded on the sleep of reason, and he could only bring back hypocrisy, the abhorred alike of God and man. The only good of the Catholic religion was the faith in it, without which it would be like a painted sepulchre or an ill-acted play. Nay more, could he have carried back the state of public faith and feeling to the time preceding the Reformation, this would not have been enough unless he could have violently suppressed all the causes then at work to produce its overthrow, unless he could have corrected the abuses and corruptions of Popery arising out of its very success and unbridled power, and thus have brought its pretensions into question and given it a check that way; or to make it last another thousand years, have thrown the world back to the beginning of the dark ages, and to the period of the triumph of

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ignorance and barbarism over civilisation and knowledge. But this was too much for any man to do, or even to think of. We must therefore work with the instruments that are allotted us; and no man can resist the spirit of the age in which he lives. The mind may reverence an absurdity, but cannot do so after it knows it to be one. That which before was held up as an object of awe and veneration, if in that case attempted to be forced upon it, becomes an insult. The world grows old like the individual, and has its season of enthusiasm and its season of indifference; but at all times affectation is bad. The faith in religion is good only while it is sincere. Why did people at the time of the Reformation give up Popery? Because it was found out to be an imposture, and they could not believe in an imposture, though they would. The Catholic religion without faith is stark-naught; and yet this is the only Catholic religion that could be established in France after the Revolution.

To make the public mind in France a fit recipient for Popery, that is, to restore the blind and implicit belief in it which could alone make it desirable, it would be necessary to enforce a strict quarantine against all those works in which for the last hundred years the faith in priests and Popery had been undermined by merciless wit and raillery: would the French people then give up Molière or Voltaire to a Concordat? Nor would this be sufficient; it would be necessary to destroy or prohibit all works of reasoning, of history, or science; all that had contributed to form the national mind and tone of thinking since the Reformation, and construct it anew out of the elements of chaos and the obscurest depths of ignorance. It would be necessary to destroy the press, an engine that would destroy whatever power attempted to crush it.—It, however, seems to me that the establishment of Protestantism recommended above, would be even worse than the establishment of Popery; for if we must have an establishment, let us have the oldest. The Protestant religion is cold, formal, lip-service, that neither warms the heart nor inspires the head. In England, the established religion has no effect on the people; they go to church as a matter of course or as a way of passing the time; but they neither understand what they hear nor are affected with what they see, nor do they think of it from one week's end to another. There are no pictures, no crucifixes, no incessant scene-shifting to keep them alive, no learned language which they think may be that of the other world. Hunger and the law alone keep them in order; the hope or fear of a future state is quite powerless, for they meet with nothing to remind them of it adapted to their ordinary habits and modes of thinking. The sectaries alone have any religion; and the Methodists all the enthusiasm. In Scotland it is different; in those cold and sterile regions



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the spirit of opposition to authority and of fiery controversy still encourages the zeal for religious forms and opinions, and is aided by the simplicity of manners and local circumstances. In Ireland we see Popery in its worst and most degraded state, where it is confined to the most ignorant of the people and not supported by public opinion or by the authority of the state, though it has relaxed none of its claims to domination over the human mind. The priests and their flocks are well-fitted to each other. Certainly, the way to detach the mass of the people from such brutish bondage is to remove every distinction or obstacle that separates them from the rest of the community. The way to prevent others from leaguings and plotting against you is not to exclude them from your confidence or counsels. Statesmen talk of religion as necessary to the vulgar—this is the ridiculous air of a fine gentleman. The people have no religion but what they imbibe from their superiors. If the higher classes are without religion, they will soon find the lower imitating their example in this as in all other things. It is in vain to think of reserving infidelity as a private luxury for the rich. The poorer sort are spies upon the rich and see through appearances with a shrewdness and tact often proportioned to their general ignorance and consequent suspicion of the motives and feelings of those at whose mercy and disposal they find themselves. If it were otherwise, the servants in great families would betray their masters' secrets, and do away by mischievous tattle all the good effects of their appearing once a week at church in stately formality, as a compliment to heaven and an example to their dependents. Hypocrisy must be deep indeed, systematic, and professional, that sets at defiance this ordeal; and we find even that the monks and priests, whose business it was and who had made a science of it, could not at the time of the Reformation carry on the farce any longer. The common people have eyes and ears; and society is an electrical machine, by which good and evil, vice and virtue are communicated with instantaneous rapidity from one extremity to another. The true solution of the difficulty is that given in the dialogue above, where the State-Counsellor recommends a perfect freedom and toleration of all sects and religions. Let each person follow and pay for his own religion, for it is contrary to equitable reasoning to make any one else pay for or follow it; nor is it any business of the state, except as an engine of power, which is an argument against it. It is not the duty of government to shew us the way to the other world, but to afford us protection in this. The whole business of legislation reduces itself to establishing a good and effectual system of police, so as to keep the peace between individual and individual. According to modern logic and prevailing sentiments, government ought to interfere as little as

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possible with religion or morals or the fine arts or commerce. Let these all be left to make their own way and to find their own level from their intrinsic and understood advantages, and let government merely stand by as a peace-officer to prevent any one from using violence or fraud in his transactions with others. It is pretty generally allowed at present that religion ought to be tolerated, and that trade ought to be free. At one time it was thought that both would perish, and that the community could not subsist, unless the government took the management and encouragement of both directly and absolutely into its own hands. The rule is, to give men leave to do all the good they can, only hindering them from hurting one another. The encouragement of the fine arts is useless, if the taste and genius of the people do not point that way; if they do, they will produce all their wonders and refinements from inclination and liking. Again, it is in vain to make laws to punish vice, if manners forbid their execution; it is equally useless if the manners preclude the vice. This observation, of course, applies only to personal vices, or to such as affect ourselves only, and not to such as immediately affect others. I believe a complete system of legislation might be formed upon some such simple principle as that of only opposing force by force; and perhaps the *Code Napoléon* might have approached nearer to it without inconvenience. The liberty of the press would have been one grand feature and corollary from such a system of legislation; and though Napoleon says he should have had 'thirty royalist and as many Jacobin journals established to run him down,' he might have baffled both in this way, as well as by shooting a bookseller.<sup>1</sup> Libels or invectives do nothing against principles; and as to individuals, it is the attempt to suppress truth that gives falsehood its worst edge. What transpires (however secretly or maliciously) in spite of the law, is taken for gospel; and as it is impossible to prevent calumny, so it is impossible to counteract it, while all that can be said in answer to it is attributed to people's not daring to speak the truth.—Or if he could not take so bold and difficult a step in clearing the way to a new system, conformably to existing feelings and opinions, at least he need not have thrown any additional or unnecessary stumbling-blocks in its way, such as the revived Gallican church, which would impede the progress of society in its real path, and could not throw it back into its old station. That was not the sort of blocks of granite to cast on the soil of France, to give solidity and purchase to the new ideas of government and civilisation. Besides,

<sup>1</sup> An irritable poet of great celebrity, whose political bias is no secret, being invited to a booksellers' dinner, was called upon for a literary toast or sentiment. He gave 'Buonaparte.' 'What! Mr. —, did we understand you rightly? We asked you for a literary toast or sentiment.' 'Why, yes; egad—he shot a bookseller once!'

## MARENGO

encouraging the priests was only warming the viper in his bosom ; if triumphant, he needed them not ; if in difficulty, they would be sure to betray him. There was no possibility of conciliating or rendering them neuter ; even their impotence would only increase their malice by a comparison with former times, which their restoration would necessarily suggest.

The same objection might be made to the recal of the emigrants. As a step to reconcile men's minds to nobility, it might be politic ; but not consistent with republican principles. Buonaparte asks on this subject (which I will so far anticipate), ' Is it not natural to respect the son of a sage or a hero more than the son of a common man ? ' And the answer is, Yes, but not more than his father. This feeling, as far as it is natural, will have its effect without positive institution. The descendants of Milton and Shakespeare were living lately, but they were only thought of for the sake of their ancestors. Had they been mere nobles, their posterity would have been honoured and they themselves forgot. But it is said, that property is transmitted, and why not titles and honours ? Because property can be transmitted, and the respect (such as it is) attendant on it ; but talents and virtues are not transmissible, and therefore it is not parallel to say that the honours or homage originally paid to these should be transmitted by patent without them. This is making a property of honours and of public opinion, as a privilege to which men are entitled by birth and for their own sakes, and not for the benefit of the public. There is but one step farther necessary in this false train of reasoning to arrive at the principle of absolute monarchy, which makes a property of thrones and the rights and liberties of nations a bye-word !

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### MARENGO

It is necessary to return at present and take up the thread of historical events in their order. The first thing Buonaparte did on assuming the reins of Government was to write a letter to the King of England soliciting peace. The letter and the answer to it are as follows, and both remarkable enough.

## LIFE OF NAPOLEON

*‘ French Republic—Sovereignty of the People—Liberty—Equality.*

*‘ Buonaparte, First Consul of the Republic, to His Majesty the King of Great Britain and Ireland.*

‘ Called by the wishes of the French nation to occupy the First Magistracy of the Republic, I have thought proper, in commencing the discharge of the duties of this office, to communicate the event directly to your Majesty.

‘ Must the war, which for eight years has ravaged the four quarters of the world, be eternal? Is there no room for accommodation?

‘ How can the two most enlightened nations in Europe, stronger and more powerful than is necessary for their safety and independence, sacrifice commercial advantages, internal prosperity, and domestic happiness to vain ideas of grandeur? Whence is it that they do not feel peace to be the first of wants, as well as the first of glories?

‘ These sentiments cannot be new to the heart of your Majesty, who rule over a free nation with no other view than to render it happy.

‘ Your Majesty will see in this overture only my sincere desire to contribute effectually, for the second time, to a general pacification, by a prompt step taken in confidence, and freed from those forms, which, however necessary to disguise the apprehensions of feeble states, only serve to discover in those that are powerful a mutual wish to deceive.

‘ France and England may, by the abuse of their strength, long defer the period of its utter exhaustion, unhappily for all nations. But I will venture to say, that the fate of all civilised nations is concerned in the termination of a war, the flames of which are raging throughout the whole world.

‘ I have the honour to be, &c.

‘ BUONAPARTE.’

The style of this letter has been criticised as empirical, and as an indecorous schooling of Majesty; and in all ordinary conjunctures, the objection would hold good. But where the personal character and motives of the Government were continually cavilled at and made in this very instance an insuperable bar to peace, it was surely allowable for the chief magistrate to come forward in his own person and to take a frank and decisive step, as free as possible from official embarrassment and mystery. Though a diplomatic licence, it was at any rate a less flagrant one than the assassination of ambassadors, which was the *legitimate* termination of the last political negotiation (that of Rastadt)



## MARENGO

Buonaparte had been engaged in. If, however, his appeal to the personal feelings of George III. was forward and overweening, there is no want of prudery and reserve in Lord Grenville's reply, which reminds one of Miss Harris's retort on her sister, who had proposed to forget all mutual faults, that 'she has nothing to charge her conscience with.' This comparison may be thought trifling and low; and I should think so, if meanness could not insinuate itself into cabinets or hypocrisy mount upon a throne. The document is a curious and instructive specimen of the *cypher-hand* of Pitt, in which it is impossible to detect either beginning, middle, or end, which rings the changes of pompous and conventional phraseology on a continual vapid assumption of the question, which defines nothing, states nothing, proves nothing, but goes round and round in a circle of charges, committals, and equivocations, and in the flourishes and mazes of which (containing a deadly purpose under a routine of hollow common-places) England lost her liberties, her strength, herself and the world. It is a question between two Governments, which is sincere in its desire of peace; and one of them endeavours to prove its sincerity by saying it will be ready to make peace with the other, *whenever it shall have ceased to exist*. Its existence is the avowed obstacle to peace; which, instead of a pledge of pacific intentions, amounts to a standing declaration of war. It is easy to see that that party that obstinately pronounces the other incapable of making peace, is itself determined against it. Few states would carry on war, if their rivals would please to submit to their yoke. It is as if a person should profess a cordial desire and readiness to be reconciled to an enemy, on condition that the latter should hang himself on the next tree. This in private life would be thought an irony, instead of an amicable overture. What would have been said if Buonaparte had proposed to the King of Great Britain to resign his crown and authority in favour of a Republican form of Government or of the surviving branch of the Stuarts, and that then he might make peace with him? Would it have been enough to screen such an official outrage, to have added a saving clause, that this was not an absolute *sine qua non*; though, till it was complied with, he must carry on 'a just and defensive war.' Oh no! This is only the language which established governments hold to green usurpations—it would not otherwise be borne; 'it is the gibberish and *patois* of affected legitimacy,' which 'the gorge of freedom rises at;' it is outlawing a government under the mask of parleying with it; or inviting an adversary to sign terms of peace with a pen, while you, who set yourself up as both judge and executioner, strike off his hand with an axe. A very little of this tone is fatal to peace and liberty; we had nothing else for near half a century.

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*‘ Lord Grenville in reply to the Minister of Foreign Relations at Paris.*

‘ Downing Street, January 4, 1800.

‘ SIR,—I have received and laid before the King the two letters which you have transmitted to me ; and his Majesty, seeing no reason to depart from those forms which have long been established in Europe for transacting business with Foreign States, has commanded me to return, in his name, the official answer which I send you herewith enclosed.

‘ I have the honour to be, with high consideration,

‘ Sir, your most obedient, humble servant,

‘ GRENVILLE.’

*‘ Note to the Minister of Foreign Relations at Paris.*

‘ The King has given frequent proofs of his sincere desire for the re-establishment of secure and permanent tranquillity in Europe. He neither is nor has been engaged in any contest for a vain and false glory. He has had no other view than that of maintaining, against all aggression, the rights and happiness of his subjects. For these he has contended against an unprovoked attack, and for the same objects he is still obliged to contend ; nor can he hope that this necessity could be removed, by entering at the present moment into negociations with those whom a fresh revolution has so recently placed in the exercise of power in France ; since no real advantage can arise from such negociation to the great and desirable object of general peace, until it shall appear that those causes have ceased to operate, which originally produced the war,<sup>1</sup> and by which it has since been protracted, and in more than one instance renewed. The same system, to the prevalence of which France justly ascribes all her present miseries, is that which has also involved the rest of Europe in a long and destructive warfare, of a nature long since unknown to the practice of civilised nations.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> That is, the manifestation of a desire for peace on the part of the French Government has nothing to do with the question of war, so that their hostility could not have been among the causes that produced or prolonged it. This is true ; but instead of all this circumlocution and rotundity of phrase, would it not have been better and more manly for his Majesty to have said at once that he had gone to war for the royal cause, which he so broadly hints at in the concluding paragraph ; and that till this object was attained, no earthly consideration (save the last extremity) should force him to make peace—and that then he would break it again as soon as possible, and launch into the same insane and fatal career—fatal alike, whether prosperous or unsuccessful !

<sup>2</sup> It is true it was long since Europe had joined to force a people to submit to a despotic yoke, for it was long since any people (on the Continent) had shaken off such a yoke. The attacks of all Europe also gave a peculiar character to the war, by combining the horrors of civil discord with foreign aggression ; and it was the determination of the French not to submit to this double blessing as a gracious boon, that produced the miseries of France and the resentment of Europe.

## MARENGO

For the extension of this system, and for the extermination of all established governments, the resources of France have from year to year, and in the midst of the most unparalleled distress, been lavished and exhausted' [*That is, to prevent its own extermination*]. 'To this indiscriminate spirit of destruction, the Netherlands, the United Provinces, the Swiss Cantons (his Majesty's ancient friends and allies) have successively been sacrificed. *Germany has been ravaged; Italy, though now rescued from its invaders*, has been made the scene of unbounded rapine and anarchy.<sup>1</sup> His Majesty has himself been compelled to maintain an arduous and burthensome contest for the independence and existence of his kingdoms. Nor have these calamities been confined to Europe alone; they have been extended to the most distant quarters of the world, and even to countries so remote both in situation and interest from the present contest, that the very existence of such a war was perhaps unknown to those who found themselves suddenly involved in all its horrors.<sup>2</sup> While *such a system* continues to prevail, and while the blood and treasure of a numerous and powerful nation can be lavished in its support, experience has shewn that no defence but that of open and steady hostility can be availing. The most solemn treaties have only prepared the way for fresh aggressions; and it is to a determined resistance alone that is now due whatever remains in Europe of stability for property, for personal liberty, for social order, or for the free exercise of religion. For the security, therefore, of these essential objects, his Majesty cannot place his reliance on the mere renewal of general professions of pacific dispositions. Such professions have been repeatedly held out by all those who have successively directed the resources of France *to the destruction of Europe!*<sup>3</sup> and whom the present rulers have declared to have been all, from the beginning and uniformly, *incapable of maintain-*

<sup>1</sup> Really this is too much, even for a State-paper. As if the French armies, after having beaten back the Austrians and Piedmontese, who were coming to ravage France, were to lay down their arms or refuse to set foot on a soil sacred to slavery, or were not to advance to meet, to scatter and pursue those ever-renewed bands of mercenaries and barbarians, that came on from the farthest bounds of Europe like flocks of ravenous birds, seeking a prey, but bleaching the earth with their bones till victory was sated and 'sweet revenge grew harsh.'

<sup>2</sup> These pointed allusions to Italy and Egypt sound like personal taunts thrown out against Buonaparte, in return for his having made so untimely and unbecoming a proposal for peace.

<sup>3</sup> This again is in true character and keeping with that besotted presumption, which having been taught that it can do no wrong, sees and can see only in the defeat of its own attempts at the destruction of others, a violent and unprovoked aggression on its absolute prerogative; and privileged to confound its self-will with right reason, thinks it an unquestionable right, a sacred duty, to resort to every means to keep that privilege inviolate.

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*ing the relations of amity and peace.*<sup>1</sup> Greatly, indeed, will his Majesty rejoice, whenever it shall appear that the dangers to which his own dominions and those of his Allies have been so long exposed have really ceased; whenever he shall be satisfied that the necessity of resistance is at an end; that after the experience of so many years of crimes and miseries,<sup>2</sup> better principles have ultimately prevailed in France; and that all the gigantic projects of ambition, and all the restless schemes of destruction, which have endangered the existence of civil society,<sup>3</sup> have been finally relinquished; but the conviction of such a change, however agreeable to his Majesty's wishes, can result only from experience and the evidence of facts.<sup>4</sup>

*'The best and most natural pledge of its reality and permanence would be the restoration of that line of Princes which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and in consideration and respect abroad'*—[and which, be it remembered, carried on war for a great part of the last century to dethrone his Majesty's family, on the very same principle that he wishes to restore theirs];—*'such an event would at once have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace.* It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory; and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, that security which they are now compelled to seek by other means.<sup>5</sup> But,

<sup>1</sup> A government that can carry on war can make peace. They are convertible terms. The changes in the French Government did not prevent their keeping on the contest, but they prevented us from closing it, by giving hopes of their utter ruin. The factions did not produce the war, but the war the factions.

<sup>2</sup> The fact of the crimes and miseries is undoubted; the cause of those crimes and miseries is the only thing in question. Of course his Majesty, with proper dignity, repelled any such imputation from himself and his Allies, and the French people, by legitimate etiquette, must plead guilty to the whole. I am tired of noticing these flimsy bubbles, that expire at a touch.

<sup>3</sup> To wit, a certain perverse determination not to undergo the fate of Poland, an example which was not thought to endanger the existence of civil society, though it fed the hope which led to all those horrors of which his Majesty complains.

<sup>4</sup> Let us look at the reasonableness of this favourable alternative. The change was to be effected in time of war. Was this the way to discourage or to foment those internal dissensions which tore France in pieces, and which caused those crimes and miseries which were the subject of so much outward lamentation and secret triumph? Peace was refused; therefore the French Government must carry on the war. If they did this without judgment or success, this would be seized on as a motive for prosecuting it with double vigour; if they triumphantly repelled the new Coalition, this would be made a pretence for crying out against fresh projects of ambition and aggrandisement. There is no end of this, nor of the contempt and odium with which a future age will brand it.

<sup>5</sup> It is with the existence of the Republic, not with its acts, that the other Governments are at war; why, then, charge the war upon its acts, except as a cover to the real motive, and confessedly a false one?



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desirable as such an event must be both to France and to the world, it is not to this mode exclusively that his Majesty limits the possibility of secure and solid pacification. His Majesty makes no claim to prescribe to France what shall be the form of her Government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation.<sup>1</sup> His Majesty looks only to the security of his own dominions and those of his Allies, and to the general safety of Europe.<sup>2</sup> Whenever he shall judge that such security can in any manner be attained as resulting either from the internal situation of that country, *from whose internal situation the danger has risen*, or from *such other circumstances, of whatever nature, as may produce the same end*, his Majesty will eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his Allies the means of immediate and general pacification. Unhappily *no such security*<sup>3</sup> hitherto exists; no sufficient evidence of the principles by which the new Government will be directed; no reasonable ground by which to judge of its stability.<sup>4</sup> In this situation, it can for the present only remain for his Majesty to pursue, in conjunction with other Powers, those exertions of just and defensive war, which his regard to the happiness of his subjects will never permit him either to continue beyond the necessity in which they originate, or to terminate on any other grounds than such as may best contribute to the secure enjoyment of their tranquillity, their Constitution, and their independence.

‘ GRENVILLE.

‘ Downing street, January 4, 1800.’

The answer to this thinly-varnished declaration was Marengo. Buona-  
parte was not the man to be stopped by a specious arrangement of rhetorical common-places: he pierced the web of hollow policy attempted to be woven round him with his sword. If not peace, then war. On receiving the account, he said to Talleyrand, ‘ It could not be more favourable.’ He had not yet struck though he meditated the blow, which made Mr. Pitt, who had advised and reckoned largely on the continuance of the war, exclaim—‘ Shut up the map of Europe, it will be in vain to open it for twenty years to come!’ The battle of Marengo, by which Buonaparte broke the Continental Alliance, and

<sup>1</sup> Except by bombarding her towns and landing expeditions and *brigands* on her coasts, to restore the exiled Pretender.

<sup>2</sup> A mere verbal distinction, if the two things, security and interference with others, are inseparable.

<sup>3</sup> No kind of security has been pointed out.

<sup>4</sup> One way to insure that object would be to let it alone; but this there was no intention of doing. It is fine fooling, when you are determined to undermine or knock a thing in pieces, to complain you do not know what chance it has of stability.

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seated himself firmly in power, though perhaps the worst-fought, the most doubtful and casual of all his victories, was at the same time the most daring in its conception and fortunate in its results. A single half-hour's fighting changed the fate of Europe. This was owing to the manner in which the scene of action was laid. It was the most poetical of his battles. If Ariosto, if a magician had planned a campaign, it could hardly have been fuller of the romantic and incredible. He had given wings to war, hovering like Perseus in the air with borrowed speed. He fell upon his adversary from the clouds, from pathless precipices—and at the very moment of being beaten, recalled victory with a word. It might be conceived, that by effecting a junction with Masséna at Genoa, and attacking the Austrians in front in the ordinary and obvious course, he would have had a better chance of victory; but then the victory could not have been so complete as by coming upon the enemy's rear and cutting off his retreat, nor would it have had the same effect in taking him by surprise. Buonaparte, situated as he was, had not merely to win a battle, but to charm opinion. The very boldness of the enterprise was an earnest of its success; the slightest reverse would in such critical circumstances produce a panic; and the First Consul, where another might have given up the day as lost, held out with confidence to the last, prepared to take advantage of every chance. Faith has its miracles in war as well as in religion. Nor is there quackery in this; for it is fair to seize upon the imagination of others and disarm them of their presence of mind as well as of their weapons. The only danger is, if this illusion comes afterwards to be dispelled by a reverse of fortune, both as it emboldens others and disheartens the person himself; but no one ever fought up against adversity better than Buonaparte (if we perhaps except the first stunning effect of the disasters in Russia), or, divorced from fortune, threw himself more manfully and resolutely on the resources of his own genius and energy, doing as much to retrieve his affairs as he had done to advance them.

On the 7th of January, 1800 (three days after the date of the refusal of the British Ministry to treat for peace) a decree of the Consuls directed the formation of an army of reserve. All the veteran soldiers were required to come forward and serve the country under the command of the First Consul. A levy of 30,000 conscripts was ordered to recruit the army. General Berthier, then Minister at War, set out from Paris on the 2d of April to head the troops; the forms of the new Constitution not allowing the First Consul to take the command nominally. No sooner was intelligence received of the commencement of hostilities and the turn which things were taking in that quarter, than he judged it expedient to march at once to the assistance

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of the Army of Italy ; but he determined to cross by the Great St. Bernard, in order to take the army of Melas in the rear, to seize his magazines, artillery, and hospitals, and to give him battle after having cut him off from Austria. The loss of a single battle would ensure the destruction of his whole army and the conquest of Italy. This plan required much boldness, rapidity of execution, and secrecy. The last was very difficult to attain ; for the movement of an army cannot well be kept a secret. In order to conceal his plan, the First Consul determined to divulge it himself so openly, that the emissaries and agents of the Allies were led upon a false scent, and ridiculed the pretended preparations as a stratagem to draw off the Austrian Army, which was blockading Genoa. Dijon was pompously pointed out as the place of rendezvous, and it was said that Buonaparte would proceed there to review the troops, which he actually did, though there were only 5000 or 6000 raw recruits and retired invalids assembled in the town. This army became an object of general derision, and caricatures were multiplied on the subject, one of which represented a boy of twelve years old and an invalid with a wooden leg, under which was written ‘*Buonaparte’s Army of Reserve.*’ Thus affected ridicule and contempt were the weapons with which they began, and by being persevered in throughout, succeeded at last ; for greatness sustains itself by an effort, but sinks easily to the level of the meanness and littleness of mankind !

Meanwhile the real Army of Reserve had been formed, and was ready to march. La Vendée having been pacified under the Consular Government, a considerable portion of the troops was drawn without inconvenience from that country. The regiments composing the guard of the Directory were no longer required to keep things quiet at Paris and went to join the army. Many of these regiments had not served in the disastrous campaign of 1799, and retained their spirit and confidence unimpaired. The artillery was sent piecemeal from various arsenals and garrisons. The greater part of the provisions, necessary to an army which had to cross barren mountains where nothing eatable was to be met with, were forwarded to Geneva, embarked upon the Lake, and landed at Villeneuve, near the entrance of the valley of the Simplon. On the 6th of May the First Consul left Paris for Dijon, and arrived at Geneva on the 8th. He here had an interview with the celebrated Necker, who strove to recommend himself to his favour, but with little success. He praised the military preparations going on much, and himself more. On the 13th of May Buonaparte reviewed the vanguard of the Army of Reserve at Lausanne, commanded by General Lannes ; it consisted of six old regiments of chosen troops, perfectly clothed, equipped, and appointed. It moved

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immediately forward to St. Pierre ; the divisions followed in echelon, amounting in all to 36,000 fighting men, with a park of forty guns, and under the command of Victor, Loison, Vattrin, Boudet, Chambarlhac, Murat, and Monnier. There is a road practicable for artillery from Lausanne to St. Pierre, a village at the foot of the St. Bernard, and from St. Remi to Aosta on the other side. The difficulty then lay in the ascent and descent of the Great St. Bernard, a difficulty so great as to appear nearly insurmountable. General Marescot had been sent to reconnoitre ; and on his reporting that the passage seemed barely possible, Buonaparte replied, 'Let us set forward then.' The way over Mount Cenis presented the same obstacles, and the country beyond was more open and exposed to the enemy. There is only a rugged mountain-path over the St. Bernard, which often winds over almost inaccessible precipices. The passage of the artillery was the most arduous task. The guns had been taken in pieces, and the carriages, the ammunition, together with the cartridges for the infantry and mountain-forges, were transported on the backs of mules. But how get the pieces themselves over ? For this purpose, a number of trunks of trees, hollowed out for the reception of the guns, which were fastened into them by their trunnions, had been prepared beforehand ; to every piece thus secured a hundred soldiers were attached, who had to drag them up the steeps. All this was carried into effect so promptly that the march of the artillery caused no delay. The troops themselves made it a point of honour to be foremost in this new kind of duty ; and one entire division chose to bivouac on the summit of the mountain in the midst of snow and excessive cold, rather than leave their artillery behind them. Throughout the whole passage the military bands played, and at the most difficult spots the charge was beaten to give fresh animation to the soldiers ; while the cry of the eagle was faintly heard, and the wild goat turned to gaze at so unusual a sight. Field-forges were established at the villages of St. Pierre and St. Remi for dismounting and mounting the artillery. The army succeeded in getting a hundred waggons over.

On the 16th of May the First Consul slept at the convent of St. Maurice, and the whole army passed the St. Bernard on the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th of May. Buonaparte himself crossed on the 20th, either on foot or riding a mule belonging to one of the inhabitants of St. Pierre, which the Prior of the convent had recommended as the most sure-footed in all the country. His guide the whole way was a tall robust youth of twenty-two, who conversed freely with him, answering the questions that were put to him, and confiding all his troubles to the First Consul with the simplicity of his age and situation in life. Napoleon took no notice of his distresses, but on parting with



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him, gave him a note to the superiors of the convent; and the next day, he was surprised to find himself in possession of a house, a piece of ground, and of all he wanted. The First Consul rested an hour at the convent of the Hospitallers, at the top of the Great St. Bernard, and performed the descent on a sledge down an almost perpendicular glacier. The horses had more difficulty in descending than in ascending, though few accidents happened. The monks of the convent were well provided with stores of wine, bread and cheese; and each soldier as he passed received a large ration from the good fathers.

On the 16th General Lannes arrived with the vanguard at Aosta, a town abounding in resources, and on the 17th reached Chatillon, where he attacked and routed a corps of 4000 or 5000 Austrians, who had been stationed there for the defence of the place. The army thought every obstacle had been surmounted; it was marching through a fine valley, with plenty of every thing, and mild weather, when all at once its progress was stopped by the appearance of Fort Bard; an interruption which was quite unlooked-for, but which had like to have proved fatal. This fort is situated between Aosta and Ivrea upon a conical hill and between two mountains at fifty yards distance from each other; at its foot flows the river Doria, the valley of which it absolutely bars: the road passed through the fortifications of the town, which is walled, and is commanded by the fire of the fort. The engineer-officers of the vanguard who approached to reconnoitre, reported that there was no passage except through the town; and General Lannes having attempted a *coup-de-main* which failed, the panic spread rapidly in the rear, and orders were even given for stopping the passage of the artillery over the St. Bernard. But the First Consul, who was at Aosta, immediately repaired to Fort Bard, climbed up the rock of Albaredo on the left-hand mountain, which overlooks both the fort and the town, and soon discovered the possibility of taking the latter. There was no time to be lost: on the 25th at night-fall the 58th demi-brigade, led by Dufour, scaled the wall and gained possession of the town, which is only separated from the fort by the stream of the Doria. During the night the fort poured grape-shot at half musquet-distance upon the French, but without dislodging them; and at last the fire ceased, out of regard to the inhabitants.

The infantry and cavalry passed one by one up the path of the mountain, the same which the First Consul had climbed, and which had hitherto been trod only by goatherds. On the following night the artillery-officers and gunners took their guns through the town, using every precaution to hide the knowledge of the circumstances from the Commandant of the fort: the road was covered with litter and dung, and the pieces concealed under branches of trees and straw,

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were drawn by men with cords in the most profound silence. Thus was a space of several hundred yards traversed, close under the batteries of the fort. The garrison, though suspecting nothing, made occasional discharges, which killed or wounded a number of gunners; but did not damp the general zeal. The fort did not surrender till the 1st of June, the French at that time having planted several cannon on the Albaredo, which thundered on the batteries below. Had the passing of the artillery been delayed till the capture of the fort, the chief hopes of the campaign would have been lost. Thus do the greatest events depend on the most trifling causes; and so little would the best-laid schemes avail without presence of mind in the execution and ingenuity in providing for casualties as they arise!—The First Consul knew of the existence of Fort Bard, but believed it to be of no importance. The Commandant dispatched letter after letter to Melas to inform him of the march of a large army with cavalry by a path of steps in the rock on his right, but assured him that not a single waggon or cannon should follow; and on the surrender of the fort, the officers were surprised to learn the manner in which the whole French artillery had passed within pistol-shot of them. Had it been impracticable to convey the artillery through the town, the First Consul would have taken up a position at the entrance of the passes at Ivrea (which would have forced Melas to fall back from Nice) and there awaited the taking of the fort.

Meantime, from the 1st of May, Melas had been marching troops on Turin, which he entered in person on the 22d. On the same day the French General Turreau attacked the outposts on Mount Cenis with 3000 men, made himself master of it and took up a position between Susa and Turin, which gave the Austrian General some uneasiness. On the 24th Lannes arrived before Ivrea, which being defended chiefly by cavalry or the troops which had been beaten at Chatillon, he easily took it, the enemy retiring behind the Chiusella to Romano, whence he was driven two days after in disorder upon Turin. The advanced guard immediately took possession of Chivasso, whence it intercepted the passage of the Po, and seized a great many boats laden with provisions and wounded soldiers; and where on the 28th Buonaparte reviewed the vanguard, harangued and bestowed merited eulogiums on the corps that composed it. A feint having been made to throw a bridge of boats over the Po, Melas weakened his troops covering Turin and detached a large part of his forces to the right bank of that river to oppose the constructing of the bridge. This gave the First Consul an opportunity to operate upon Milan unmolested. An Austrian officer who was known to Buonaparte, came to have a parley at the outposts; the intelligence he carried back to Melas had the effect of a

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thunderbolt upon him. The whole Army of Reserve, with its artillery, arrived at Ivrea on the 26th and 27th of May. A corps of 2000 Italian refugees, under General Lecchi, had on the 21st moved from Chatillon upon the Upper Sesia, met with the legion of Rohan which it defeated, and taken up a position in the valley of Domo d' Ossola to secure the passes of the Simplon. Murat was at Vercelli; and Moncey's corps with 15,000 men detached from the Army of the Rhine, reached Belinzona on the 31st of May.

The head-quarters of the Austrian army were at Turin, but half the forces were at Genoa, or scattered in the Col di Tende. In these circumstances three courses were open to Buonaparte. First, to march upon Turin, repulse Melas, join Turreau and open a communication with France: but this would be to risk a battle with a formidable enemy without a certain retreat, Fort Bard not being yet taken. Secondly, he might pass the Po, and join Masséna under the walls of Genoa; but this would be liable to the same objection without any general object. Thirdly, he might leave Melas behind, retire upon Milan, and there join Moncey, who had just debouched by the St. Gothard. The last plan was the most eligible, and that which he fixed upon. For by being once in possession of Milan, he could secure all the magazines, *dépôts*, and hospitals of the enemy's army; give him battle with this incalculable advantage, that if beaten, he would have no retreat, while his own would be safe by the Simplon and St. Gothard; or if he chose, he might let Melas pass uninterrupted, and he would thus without striking a blow remain master of Lombardy, Piedmont, the territory of Genoa, and raise the blockade of that capital. The Simplon led to the Valais and Sion, whither the magazines of the French army had been forwarded. The St. Gothard led into Switzerland, which was covered by the Army of the Rhine then upon the Iller, and which had been for some time in possession of the French, such precautions affording too strong a temptation to a people that are declared to be incapable of maintaining the usual relations of peace and amity!

On the 31st of May the First Consul moved rapidly upon the Ticino; and after a sharp resistance by the Austrian straggling troops (General Girard being the first to pass the river) the object was effected by the help of four small boats. He entered Milan on the 2d of June amidst the general rejoicing of the inhabitants, who were surprised at seeing him at the head of the troops, it having been reported that he had perished in the Red Sea. He remained here for six days, receiving deputations and shewing himself to the people, who welcomed him as their liberator. The government of the Cisalpine Republic was restored; but a considerable number of the warmest Italian patriots

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languished in the dungeons of Austria. How many more groan there at present ! A proclamation was addressed to the army, promising them as the result of their efforts 'unclouded glory and solid peace.' General Moncey's division came slowly up. The First Consul reviewed them on the 6th and 7th of June, and on the 9th set out for Pavia, which Lannes had occupied on the 1st, as Duhesme's division had entered Lodi and Mantua without opposition just after. Murat surprised Placenza by a *coup-de-main*, and intercepted a dispatch from Vienna full of the most groundless reports. Fort Bard had fallen on the 1st.

Melas now quitted Turin and appeared to direct his march on Alexandria to the right of the Po. The First Consul therefore detached Lapoype's division to line the Po from Pavia to the Doria Baltea, and to watch the side opposite Placenza ; determining himself to move on Stradella, in order to cut off Melas from the road to Mantua and compel him to receive battle with his line of operations intersected by that river. General Lannes passed on the 6th at Belgiojoso, opposite Pavia ; on the 8th Murat left Placenza, defeated an Austrian corps which had come up to attack him, and moved on Stradella, where the whole army was uniting. In the midst of these preparations, news came of the taking of Genoa, which had surrendered on the 4th. Besieged by the Austrians by land and blockaded by the English Admiral (Keith) by sea, it had been pressed by famine ; the inhabitants grew impatient, and on the 2d of June the women assembled tumultuously, demanding 'Bread or death !' Every thing was to be apprehended from hunger and despair ; and Masséna promised, if he were not relieved by the approach of some of Napoleon's troops in twenty-four hours, to capitulate. The next day Adjutant-General Andrieux, who was sent to General Ott to treat for the evacuation of the place, met an Austrian staff-officer in the General's ante-chamber who was the bearer of a dispatch from Melas to raise the siege and to proceed in all haste upon the Po. Thus critically situated, he was glad to accede to Masséna's proposals, and to let the French garrison of 10,000 men march out with their arms and baggage. Napoleon blames him for not marching at their head to join Suchet at Voltri and then facing about to attack the rear of the Austrians ; but not knowing the real state of affairs, he had agreed to let them pass out without a leader, and proceeded himself with 1600 men in vessels to Antibes. Napoleon therefore had now to trust to himself alone. Ott left Hohenzollern in command of Genoa, and came up by forced marches to join the main body of the Austrian army on the Po. This reinforcement amounted to thirty battalions or about 18,000 men. Ott's grenadiers, which formed part of it, were accounted the flower of the Austrian troops.



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On the evening of the 8th, the enemy's scouts came to observe the French bivouacs on the right bank of the Po. General Lannes with the whole French vanguard routed a body of 4000 or 5000 Austrians who advanced to attack him, not supposing the whole army to have crossed over; and at night he took up a position in view of the Austrian camp which occupied Montebello and Casteggio. He had no inducement to make an attack, having only 8000 men, and expecting reinforcements from Victor's division which was only three leagues off; but the Austrian General brought on the battle at day-break. The contest was bloody. Lannes as well as the troops under him behaved with the greatest intrepidity. About mid-day Victor came up and decided the event. The field of battle was strewn with the dead. The Austrians fought desperately, being sensible of the danger they were in, and still bearing in mind the successes of the last campaign. They lost a great number of killed and prisoners. When the First Consul arrived on the ground, every thing was over. The troops, though worn out with fatigue, were overjoyed at their success. On the 10th, 11th, and 12th Buonaparte remained at Stradella, getting his army together, and securing its retreat by throwing two bridges across the Po. He sent messengers to Suchet to hasten his march upon the Scrivia. There was now nothing to hurry him, Genoa having fallen. It was dangerous to descend into the plain of Marengo to engage the enemy, who were greatly superior in cavalry and artillery, which could do little against his position at Stradella, with the Po and the adjoining marshes on his right, large villages in front, and considerable eminences to the left. During the battle of the 11th, Desaix, who had returned from Egypt and had been performing quarantine at Toulon, arrived at the head-quarters at Montebello, with Rapp and Savary. The whole night was spent in conferences between him and the First Consul on all that had passed in Egypt since the latter had quitted it—the negotiation of El-Arisch, the composition of the Grand Vizier's army, and the battle of Heliopolis. Desaix burned with eagerness to distinguish himself: he was immediately entrusted with the command of the division of Boudet.

Melas had his head-quarters and his whole army at Alexandria. He did not move, though his situation was critical and became more so every day, with Suchet in his rear and Buonaparte opposed to him in front with an imposing force. He might, however, either cut his way through the First Consul's army with superior numbers; or reach Milan by swift marches on the left bank of the Po, before the French could re-cross that river; or retreat upon Genoa, join the English squadron, and regain Mantua and the Adige by the ports of Italy. It was in providing against these various chances (some of which prob-

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ably never entered Melas's head) that Napoleon nearly lost the battle of Marengo as he afterwards did that of Waterloo, by dividing his attention with over-jealous importunity over all that was possible, instead of confining his efforts to the main point. When all is at stake, it is better to guard against the worst than to aim at the utmost point of perfection. In consequence, General Lapoype was ordered to fall back upon the Ticino, to intercept the enemy, should he be moving in that direction, and Desaix was dispatched to the extreme left to observe the high-road from Alexandria to Novi; while Buonaparte, uneasy at Melas's inaction, crossed the Scrivia on the morning of the 13th, and marched to San Juliano in the midst of the plain of Marengo, in vain looking for an enemy there. He slept that night at Torre di Garafola. Melas hearing of the advance of the French into the plain, recalled a detachment which he had sent against Suchet. The night of the 12th was passed in council. The blame of their situation was thrown upon the Austrian cabinet, who had listened to none but idle rumours; but they determined to fight their way out of it with arms in their hands. The chances were greatly in favour of the Austrians, who were superior in numbers and had three times as many cavalry as the French. The latter amounted to between 28,000 and 30,000 men.

On the 14th at break of day, the Austrians defiled by the bridges of the Bormida and made a furious attack on the village of Marengo, where Victor had established himself the day before. The resistance was obstinate for a long time. Buonaparte at the first sound of the cannon instantly sent orders to General Desaix, who was half a day's march to the left, to return with his troops to San Juliano. The First Consul arrived on the field of battle at ten in the morning, just as the Austrians had carried Marengo and Victor's division, after a gallant defence, was giving way in the utmost disorder, the fugitives covering the plain, and crying out in dismay, 'All is lost!' The enemy having taken Marengo advanced against General Lannes who was stationed in the rear of the village, and formed in line opposite the right wing of the French, already extending beyond it. The First Consul immediately ordered 800 grenadiers of the cavalry-guard, the best troops in the army, to station themselves a thousand yards behind Lannes, inclining to the right, in a good position to keep the enemy in check; and directed the division of Cara St. Cyr still farther on to Castelleriolo, so as to flank the entire left of the enemy, while he himself with the 72d demi-brigade hastened to the support of Lannes. In the mean time, the soldiers perceiving the First Consul, in the midst of this immense plain, surrounded by his staff and 200 horse-grenadiers with their fur caps, the sight revived their hopes, and the fugitives

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of Victor's corps rallied near San Juliano in the rear of General Lannes's left. The latter, though attacked by the main body of the enemy's force, fought with such bravery and coolness that he took three hours to retreat only three quarters of a league, exposed to the grape-shot of eighty pieces of cannon; at the same time that Cara St. Cyr by an inverse movement advanced upon the extreme right, and turned the left of the Austrian line.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, the corps of Desaix came up. On seeing the disorder of the troops, he said, 'Well, it is a battle lost!' Buonaparte replied, 'I think it is a battle gained.' He made Desaix take a position in front of San Juliano. Melas, who believed the victory decided, withdrew to Alexandria, overcome with fatigue, and left General Zach to finish the pursuit of the French army. The latter, thinking that this army was effecting its retreat by the road from Tortona, directed all his efforts to reach that place before them by carrying San Juliano at the point of the bayonet; though, had retreat been necessary, Buonaparte had at the commencement of the action ordered it between Tortona and Salo, and the Tortona road was of no importance. The division of Victor had now rallied, and shewed signs of impatience to renew the contest. All the cavalry was collected before San Juliano, on Desaix's right and Lannes's left. Balls and shells showered into the place; and Zach had already gained possession of a part of it with a column of 6000 grenadiers. The First Consul gave orders to General Desaix to charge this column with his fresh troops. He proceeded to do so accordingly; but as he advanced at the head of a troop of 200 men, he was shot through the heart by a ball, and fell dead at the instant he had given the word to charge. By his death Napoleon was deprived of the man whom he esteemed most worthy to be his second in the field. He shed tears for his loss, never speaking of him afterwards without regret; and he was one of those who he believed would have remained faithful to him to the last. His death did not disconcert the troops, but inspired them with greater ardour to avenge it. General Boudet led them on. The 9th light demi-brigade did indeed prove itself worthy of the title of *Incomparable*. General Kellermann with 800 heavy horse at the same moment boldly charged the middle of the left flank of the column, cut it in two, and in less than half an hour these 6000 grenadiers were broken, dispersed, and put to flight. General Zach and all his staff were made prisoners.

Lannes immediately charged forward. Cara St Cyr, who was to the right and flanked the enemy's left, was nearer the bridges of the Bormida than they were. The Austrian army was thrown into the utmost confusion and only thought of flight. From 8000 to 10,000 cavalry spread over the field, fearing St Cyr's infantry might reach the

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bridge before them, retreated at full gallop, overturning all in their way. Victor's division made all imaginable speed to resume its former position at the village of Marengo. The pressure and confusion at the bridges of the Bormida was extreme, and all who could not pass over fell into the power of the victor. It would be difficult to describe the astonishment and dismay of the Austrian army at this sudden change of fortune. General Melas, having no other resource, gave his troops the whole night to rally and take some repose, and the next morning at day-break sent a flag of truce with proposals for an armistice, by which the same day Genoa and all the fortified places in Piedmont, Lombardy, and the Legations were given up to the French army, and by which the Austrian army obtained leave to retire behind Mantua without being made prisoners of war. Thus was the conquest of all Italy achieved by a single blow.

Melas obtained such favourable terms from an apprehension that in case of a refusal he might still effect his junction with the English Army of 20,000 men who had just arrived off Genoa and the Austrian garrison of 10,000 men at that place, and because the French had no strong places in Italy. General Suchet marched upon Genoa and entered that city on the 24th of June, which was given up to him by Prince Hohenzollern to the great mortification of our troops who had come in sight of the port. The Italian fortresses were successively given up to the French, and Melas passed with his army through Stradella and Placenza and took up a position behind Mantua. Soon after the battle of Marengo, the Italian patriots were released from the Austrian prisons and returned home amidst the congratulations of their countrymen and cries of '*Long live the Liberator of Italy!*' There were no Italians thrown into prison in Buonaparte's time. Either therefore the Italians must have been more favourably inclined to the new order of things or his rule was much milder than the Austrian. Buonaparte set out from Marengo for Milan on the 17th; he found the city illuminated, and a scene of the most animated rejoicings at the change which had taken place. Genoa recovered its Republican form of government. The Austrians when in possession of Piedmont had not reinstated the King of Sardinia on his throne, notwithstanding the expostulations of the Russians, nor allowed him to approach Turin. The First Consul established a provisional government in Piedmont, and appointed General Jourdan to superintend it, in order to give him a mark of his confidence, and efface old misunderstandings. Masséna, notwithstanding his unlucky surrender of Genoa, and as an acknowledgement of his services at the battle of Zurich, was left in the chief command of the Army of Italy.

In France the news of the battle of Marengo was at first scarcely



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credited. The first account that reached Paris was brought by a commercial express who had set out from the field of battle between ten and twelve o'clock, and reported that the French Army had been totally defeated. This only made the contrast more striking, when the victory over the enemy was made known with all its attendant advantages to the Republic. But can it be believed (as it is said) that on this mere report of a defeat all the intriguers were in motion to displace the First Consul and place Carnot at the head of the government in his stead? Oh! ever prone to run before opinion, and to rivet disgrace upon themselves by shrinking from all participation in misfortune! It may be supposed that Buonaparte took no slight umbrage at this meditated dereliction, and looked gloomy on his return amidst all the lustre which wreathed his brow, perhaps presaging future disloyalty, or brooding over sweet and bitter thoughts of the curbs which such a people required! He is said from this time to have conceived a jealousy and distaste to Carnot, which subsequent bickerings did not diminish. They came together at last in the common cause, in the pass of Thermopylæ! This story however rests on no good authority, though it is not improbable in itself. The soldiers of the Army of the Rhine when they heard of the battle of Marengo were ashamed of having done so little, and avowed a noble emulation not to lay down their arms till they had done something to match it. The battle of Hohenlinden followed not long after. Moreau pursued his victory, taking possession of Salzburg: Augereau, at the head of the Gallo-Batavian Army, penetrated into Bohemia, and Macdonald passing through the Grison country into the Valteline, formed a communication with Masséna. The peace of Lunéville was the reluctant consequence, by which Tuscany was ceded to France, and the whole left bank of the Rhine. Each of these conditions was peculiarly galling to the Emperor, because Tuscany belonged to his brother; and as to the provinces on the Rhine, he objected to giving away what was not his to bestow. Had the question been to take what did not belong to him, there would have been less difficulty.

Buonaparte set out for Paris the 24th of June through Turin, crossing Mount Cenis, and stopped at Lyons for some time to gratify the curiosity of the inhabitants and to lay the first stone of the Place Bellecour, which had been pulled down in the beginning of the Revolution. He arrived at Paris on the 2d of July, unexpectedly and in the middle of the night; but the next day, as soon as the news was spread abroad, every one ran to testify their eagerness and joy; the labouring classes left their occupations, and the whole city thronged round the court and windows of the Thuilleries to see him to whom France owed another respite from bondage with such unlooked-for triumphs. At

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night every house was illuminated, even the poorest inhabitants taking part in the general rejoicing. It was a day, like which few occur in history; yet in this instance how many such were crowded into the life of a single man! The Pillar of Victory still stands in the Place Vendôme; and the French, reduced to their natural dimensions, sometimes stop to wonder at it.

### CHAPTER XXIX

#### THE INFERNAL MACHINE

FOREIGN war and intestine commotions having failed, recourse was next had to assassination, to get rid of the head of a government which promised no stability, and every truce or peace with which was held to be a kind of profanation—or null and void, like a forced compact with robbers. Both the Royalists and Jacobins agreed in this as their *forlorn hope*; the last seeing in Buonaparte an immediate obstacle to the execution of their plans, the former seeing in him (let his acts and pretensions be what they would) the utter extinction of the principle from which, according to them, all power ought to flow. This coincidence alone, had they been capable of attending to any thing but their own headstrong will which they mistake for reason, should have given the violent Republicans pause; for ‘the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of the light,’ and the satellites of power are led by an infallible instinct to what promotes their cause, are steady and consistent, and always take the surest means to their one sole end. The friends of liberty on principle (divided as they are among themselves and distracted by various theories) have only to look as a practical guide to their conduct to the enemies of liberty on principle. They cannot be far out, while they oppose the common foe face to face and hand to hand. As long as Buonaparte remained a stumbling-block and a bug-bear to the latter and they bent all their efforts of open force or secret machination against him, he should have been still regarded as on the broadest scale, the refuge and the rock of salvation of the popular side. They might wish to get rid of him as a matter of taste or reasoning: in point of fact, they could not do without him. He himself had great dread of the Jacobins, as was but natural, and which shewed the secret affinity between his cause and theirs. ‘’Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all.’ He knew from experience what their feelings and principles were; and as the attraction was stronger, the repugnance and struggle to disentangle

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himself from them was proportionably violent, as men hate the vices to which they are most prone. As to the opposite pretensions, they appear to him like mere shadows or a faded pageant. He never entered into the essence of royalty, or he would not have trusted himself to it. He might assume it as a robe, but it never made a part of the man. He on this account pronounced royalism to be a disease of the skin, but Jacobinism to be 'an internal disorder,' because he felt it within himself. He declared that 'with a company of grenadiers he would put the whole Fauxbourg St. Germain to flight, but that the Jacobins were an incorrigible set to deal with.' It would not appear so by the event. If the first are easily put to flight, at least they return to the charge; and they do so, because they are governed not by reason but by custom, and are the creatures not of circumstances or experience, but of implicit faith and old allegiance. The motto of legitimacy and of all belonging to it is in a word inveterate prejudice without reflection and power borrowed from accident: Buonaparte was originally and unalterably the reverse of this, the very counterpart and antidote to it; intellect without prejudice and inherent power and greatness. He did not even seem to comprehend the reverence due to antiquated absurdity nor the omnipotence of eternal imbecility.

The first attempt made was by some discontented Italian patriots.—Arena, brother to the deputy who was said to have aimed a dagger at Buonaparte in the Council of Five Hundred, with whom were united Ceracchi and Diana, two Italian refugees, Topino Lebrun, a painter, and two or three more enthusiasts in a low condition of life. Italians have long been in the habit of resorting to the dagger for a worse cause than that of removing a tyrant or imitating the example of their countryman Brutus. One of these men had been a great admirer of Buonaparte, and had made a statue of him during his first campaigns in Italy; but he afterwards grew dissatisfied with his conduct, and determined to take his life. For this purpose, he solicited permission to make another model; but his heart failed him when the time came. The conspirators then formed a plan to assassinate the Chief Consul at the Opera-House. They were betrayed by an accomplice, and two of them, Ceracchi and Diana, were arrested by the police behind the scenes, armed and prepared to execute their design. Buonaparte spoke slightly of the attempt: 'a look,' he said, 'from his brave guard would have disconcerted them.' The circumstances were not made public, nor were the conspirators brought to trial till the repetition of similar attempts seemed to make an example necessary. Yet on such frail threads did the hopes of cabinets at this time depend that Talleyrand declared in the Council of State that 'the affair of Ceracchi and his associates had interrupted all diplomatic communications for

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a considerable time, particularly with the Emperor of Russia, who broke off a treaty in consequence, and made it necessary to re-open the campaign !’

Soon after, a man of the name of Chevalier with another named Veycer, who belonged to the old *terrorist* faction, contrived a plan to kill the First Consul by means of an *Infernal Machine*, or a barrel of gunpowder stuck round with grape-shot and pieces of old iron, and placed in such a manner as by the assistance of a slow match to explode at the moment when the First Consul was passing through the street. A man who had been employed to lay caltrops, so that the carriage could not move on, told his suspicions to the police. The experiment was tried in the outskirts of Paris, and the explosion led to the discovery and arrest of the parties, so that the scheme never came to anything, though it was hushed up for reasons of policy. The Royalists became acquainted with these men in prison and with the plot they had hatched, and readily conceiving that ‘the sovereign’s thing on earth’ was such a remedy for a desperate cause, in their hands it had very nearly produced the effect intended by it. A letter from the Count de Lille to Buonaparte, inviting him to restore the Crown of France to him, having been answered with cold politeness, and a mission of the beautiful Duchess of Guiche to Paris to insinuate the same gracious project having ended in her receiving orders to quit the country, it was time to exchange these persuasive arts for stronger measures. On the evening of the 10th of October 1800, Buonaparte had agreed to go to the Opera ; but afterwards being unwell or fatigued by business, changed his mind and wished to stay at home. Josephine and one or two friends who were with him persisted in urging him to go, and came to a couch where he had fallen asleep and waked him at the time. One brought him his hat, another his sword. He was in a manner forced into his carriage, where he again fell fast asleep and was dreaming of passing the Tagliamento, when all of a sudden he awoke amidst noise and flame. He had passed this river in great peril by torch-light three or four years before, when his carriage was set afloat by the stream ; and the flashes of fire and sudden lifting up of the carriage by the explosion on the present occasion, no doubt, produced the coincidence in his dream. The circumstances were these. A cart bearing the barrel of gunpowder with the other implements of destruction as described above, had been placed by two of the conspirators, Carbon and St. Regent (who had been Chouan chiefs) at the corner of the Rue St. Nicaise, where the First Consul had to pass, in such a manner as to intercept the progress of the carriage which had hardly room to get by. St. Regent had set fire to the match at the appointed instant ; but the coachman, who was intoxicated, driving unusually



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fast, the carriage had passed the machine a second or two before it went off, which defeated the project. The explosion was terrible. It reached the horse of the last man of Buonaparte's guard, shattered the windows of the carriage, killed eight persons, wounded twenty-eight (among the rest the incendiary St. Regent), and damaged a great number of houses. The report was heard for several miles round Paris. Buonaparte immediately exclaimed to Lannes and Bessières who were with him in the coach, 'We are blown up!' They would have stopped the carriage, but he ordered it to drive on, and arrived in safety at the Opera, where the noise had been heard, and where his entrance, together with the disordered looks of his attendants caused great agitation; but the calm appearance of the First Consul re-assured the audience, and the performance, which was Haydn's *Creation*, went on. Buonaparte's coachman, Cæsar, remained the whole time insensible of what had happened, and had taken the explosion for the firing of a salute: but a dinner having been given him by his brother-coachmen in honour of his escape, a hackney coachman who was present said he knew who had played him the trick, having seen the cart issue from a stable-yard near which he took up his stand: and this clue led to the discovery of the real authors of the conspiracy.

In the mean time, Buonaparte was furious against the Jacobins and against the Minister of Police, whom he accused of conniving at their plots and machinations. At several Councils of State which were held upon the subject, he declaimed against the metaphysicians, went back to the Septembrisers, the affair of Babœuf, the 31st of May, constantly exonerated the priests and the Royalists, and charged the whole upon a handful of miscreants, who were invariably at war with all established governments and with the peace of society. Fouché by his sullenness and reserve did not remove these suspicions, though he persisted in ascribing the attempt to the Chouans and their party. The First Consul wished for an act of summary justice against the remains of the Jacobins, which after several impatient discussions and considerable reluctance on the part of the Council of State and the Legislative Body he obtained; and 130 of the principal agitators (men obnoxious from their share in the Reign of Terror, such as Choudieu, Taillefer, Thirion, Talot, Felix Lepelletier, Rossignol, and others) underwent a sentence of transportation, which was carried into instant effect, though some of them were allowed to return at a subsequent period. An attempt was made by Berlier<sup>1</sup> to save two of them,

<sup>1</sup> At the time that Buonaparte was accused of favouring the Royalists too much, he addressed Madame Monge, and said, 'You will be satisfied with me to-day, I have appointed three Jacobins to the Council of State.'—'Who are they, First Consul?'—'Réal, Brune, and Berlier,' was the reply.

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Talot and Destrem, from being punished for a crime of which it was very soon known they had not been guilty ; but this met with a cold reception from the First Consul, who said they had been condemned as enemies of the State, and referred in proof to the act of the Legislative Body, in which not a word was said of the 10th of October. This was vindicating injustice by chicanery.

A month after the affair had happened, the Minister of Police made his report on the attempt of the Infernal Machine. He had the contrivers in his custody ; and they turned out (as he had all along predicted) to be agents of the Royalist party. He entered into a detailed account of the plot to assassinate the First Consul as brought over from England by Georges Cadoudal in the November preceding, of the landing of his accomplices Carbon, Joyan, Lincelan, St. Regent, &c., of their intrigues, and the impenetrable mystery which involved them. At length, the horse which had been fastened to the Infernal Machine afforded some traces ; and led to the seizure of Carbon, who being found secreted in the house of two nuns, Madame Goyon and Madame de Cicé, made a discovery of the whole affair. These gentlewomen, in secreting a public assassin, were doubtless influenced by mistaken motives of piety and loyalty. St. Regent and Carbon were condemned, and suffered on the scaffold, though they were tried before the ordinary tribunals and in common course of law ; which made the arbitrary decree which had been passed against a number of innocent individuals appear in a more unfavourable light. Nothing can excuse Buonaparte on this occasion but the imminent peril he was in, and the previous attempts against his life by fanatics of the same party, which had worked up his old grudge against them to a pitch of violent irritation ; and which having once fixed his purpose, he would not relinquish it when the immediate grounds were removed. It is hard for a man to be shot at like carrion because he is not a piece of well-preserved mummy by one party or a man of straw by the other ; and in the distraction of the moment, he will wreak his vengeance on the first object that presents itself. I cannot help entertaining some doubt, that there was from the beginning an understanding between Fouché and Buonaparte, and that the detection of the true conspirators was postponed till the blow had been struck against the pretended ones, who were equally formidable to him, whether he looked to past events or future contingencies. If they could not brook the First Consul, how should the Emperor escape ? The silence and inaction of so complete a double-dealer as Fouché are suspicious. The other conspirators, Chevalier and Veycer, and Arena, Ceracchi, and their coadjutors were soon after tried and executed. The Republican faction made no more attempts of the kind. It was not till after

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repeated experience that Buonaparte became convinced, that those who act on their own impulses and from a love of liberty and independence are less dangerous than those combinations, where in the casting of the parts the principals are safe and remote, and where the subordinate agents are merely blind and servile instruments in the hands of their superiors. The bands of *Chauffeurs* or Chouans who infested the public roads, and kept up a daring and clandestine communication between intriguers in the capital and foreign powers were the occasion of the appointment of a special tribunal to try such offences. No coach could venture to leave Paris without a guard of four soldiers. This has been considered as a stretch of ungovernable ambition and a stride to absolute power. It was surely a measure also of private self-defence and public safety. The Orangemen are supposed to justify the promulgation of military law in Ireland; as a few spouting-clubs produced the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* in England.—When Mr. Fox was over in Paris in 1802, he used to have frequent and warm disputes with the First Consul on the subject of the Infernal Machine, the latter laying the blame of it on the English Government, and the former vehemently repelling the charge on the ground that no Englishman would lend his countenance to assassination. This argument shewed his own patriotism and honesty: but the feelings of a nation change with its maxims, and these are impaired by the cause in which you embark and the associates whom you select. Mr. Wyndham in his love of paradox and extreme abhorrence of the principles of Jacobinism might see the matter in a very different light. It might be thought a courtesy to foreign manners as well as a compliment to foreign princes—who were frantically calling out, ‘Give us a tomb or a throne!’—adroitly to remove the great impediment to the latter; and members of the British Cabinet might be found then as well as twenty years after to ask,—‘What is the death of General Buonaparte to us,’ whether owing to a sudden explosion or a lingering climate? <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For a further elucidation of a certain under-tone in English casuistry on this subject at the period referred to, see an elaborate article on tyrannicide in a paper called ‘The Friend,’ by S. T. Coleridge. ‘The ghost is an honest ghost,’ and speaks, I’ll be bound, no more than was set down for him. This shews how much the national spirit must have been altered, and how strong the tide must have set in to the support of legitimacy by the most unwarrantable means, when the finest intellects could not escape the general contagion, and could only avoid general obloquy by withdrawing into privacy or lending themselves to the basest prostitution.

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## CHAPTER XXX

### PEACE OF AMIENS

BUONAPARTE had erected Tuscany into a kingdom, and given it to the Duke of Parma, an Infant of the House of Spain, under the title of the King of Etruria. He and his wife <sup>1</sup> paid a visit to Paris in May 1801. It was on this occasion that the audience at the theatre enthusiastically applied to Buonaparte the verse—

‘J’ai fait des rois, Madame, et n’ai pas voulu l’être.’

The Count of Leghorn (for it was under this title that he travelled) turned out a very poor creature, according to common report, and it was on this account that Buonaparte had him shown ostentatiously about, ‘to let people see how a king was made. It was enough to disgust them with royalty.’ There was more policy than honesty in this proceeding. It might seem by this as if he had not at the time a design of becoming one himself, though still it was tampering, as it were, with the subject; and it was obvious to infer that the diadem which he gave to another, he might bind on his own brow. He must certainly feel that he was made of very different stuff from ordinary kings. When I think of that fine head (so unlike a crowned head), of those Republican bands led by freedom to victory, of that severe and almost antique simplicity of aspect which France presented as a contrast to the Gothic frippery of her old government and the rest of Europe, I am still willing to believe that the changes which were afterwards carried into effect were alien to his own breast, were a concession to those who prefer the tinsel to the gold, and were forced from him (in sullen scorn and defiance) by the persevering determination to annul and disallow all claims (how sterling or lofty soever) but those which were founded on external sound and shew. We shall see that he himself speaks with great confidence and complacency of the favourable impression made on foreign Courts by his surrounding himself with the usual paraphernalia and symbols of power.

<sup>1</sup> Maria-Louisa, sister of Ferdinand VII. of Spain, since Duchess of Lucca. The late Duchess of Lucca was universally hated for her avarice, insolence, and duplicity. To give an instance of the manner in which these people make use of religion and authority as a screen for the most monstrous or the most petty vices, she had ordered a costly chandelier to ornament her private chapel; but the tradesman who had made it, knowing her utter disregard of pecuniary obligations, was unwilling to part with it till he had been paid the money. On this, she prevailed upon him to hang it up under the pretence of seeing the effect. ‘There!’ says she, ‘now it is consecrated property; take it down at your peril!’



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The Allies certainly reckoned on the loose and fluctuating mass of power in France, as the great means of disuniting and subduing it, either by want of concert in the armies or by the collision of the different factions. The danger on this side, at least, Buonaparte averted by taking the reins into his own hands, and giving unity and stability to the State; and come what would, France thus secured the great principle of the Revolution, the right of changing her existing government for one more congenial to it; like England, which had altered the succession, but retained the forms of her established Constitution. The Continental Powers saw the advantages which the new Government derived from the change; and though they did not hate it less, feared it more:—

——— 'Like to a sort of steers,  
'Mongst whom some beast of strange and foreign guise  
Unawares has chanced, far straying from his peers;  
So did their ghastly gaze betray their hidden fears.'

The Emperor Paul alone, the most rash and splenetic amongst them, seemed to swallow the bait entire; and disappointed at the ill-successes of his troops under Suwarrow, and disgusted with the exclusive maritime claims set up by the English and their selfish conduct, made common cause with Buonaparte, and gave himself up to his admiration of the man as a kind of infatuation, disregarding the political principle for the sake of the dramatic effect. This soon led to his own tragic end. His new associate did not neglect the opportunity to ingratiate himself with Paul. The English had refused his request to give up Malta to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem; Buonaparte sent him the sword which Pope Leo X. had given to the Grand Master, L'Ile Adam, for his defence of Rhodes against the Turks. The English ministry refused to include 8000 or 10,000 Russian soldiers taken either in Italy or in Holland under the Duke of York's command, in an exchange of prisoners; Buonaparte had them collected together, clothed and equipped, and sent back to Russia. Napoleon also sent a French actress to St. Petersburg. The Queen of Naples, alarmed at the part her court had lately taken against the French, and at the defeat of General Damas soon after the battle of Marengo, made a journey express to Petersburg to solicit the intercession of the Emperor Paul; and at his request Buonaparte spared Naples. The Czar was overpowered with so many marks of courtesy and generosity. He was ready to run his errands, to do his bidding, to 'put a girdle round about the earth' or close up the passage of the seas for him. He lent a favourable ear to a project for marching a joint army of French and Russian troops through Persia to the Indus, and entered heart and

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hand into the armed neutrality of the North. He addressed a letter to Buonaparte couched in these terms: 'Citizen First Consul—I do not write to you to discuss the rights of men or citizens; every country governs itself as it pleases. Wherever I see at the head of a nation a man who knows how to rule and how to fight, my heart is attracted towards him. I write to acquaint you with my dissatisfaction with England, who violates every article of the law of nations, and has no guide but her egotism and interest. I wish to unite with you to put an end to the unjust proceedings of that government.' This alludes to the encroachments at this time made by the English in the right of search at sea, very necessary perhaps as a measure of security to give her the uncontrolled command of the sea, but contrary to old established custom and to all previous treaties. The Americans, disgusted with the violence of the Directory, and provoked by the attempts of Talleyrand at speculation, had for some time sided with the English and nearly gone to war with France; but the steps taken by the First Consul restored the friendly intercourse between the two nations. Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, who were at peace with England, enraged at seeing their fleets and vessels stopped on the high seas as interlopers by English cruisers, and dragged into English ports as felons, joined with Russia to resist such arbitrary and unadmitted claims. The Emperor published an edict to seize on all British goods and subjects in his dominions; the three great northern fleets were to assemble in the Baltic and to be prepared to act offensively in the spring of 1801. The Danes took possession of Hamburgh, thus cutting off the navigation of the Elbe; and Prussia, like a gaunt hound, did not scruple to seize on Hanover (the independence of which it was especially bound to guarantee) as a mark of the good faith and disinterestedness of regular governments towards each other. This maritime coalition was broken up by two events, by the gallant and desperate attack of Nelson on the Danish fleet in the Sound (in which he ran all the risks of bravery and genius, though with less than his wonted success); and by the death of the Emperor Paul, who was assassinated in the night of the 23d of March 1801, by those of his own household. His son succeeded him. The death of a sovereign seemed to cost little, so that the sovereignty survived; the historic Muse did not put on mourning for the occasion, nor did Europe talk of waging eternal war against those who had thus staggered the person of an anointed king. The ashes of a monarch are no more than common dust, unless when the tree of liberty rises out of them; as regicide, sacrilege, treason are words of slight import, provided they are not coupled with the rights and happiness of millions. It is then that both princes and people stand aghast, and (strange as it may seem) league together for mutual safety

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and support ! On the arrival of the news in London, instead of the Russian Ambassador receiving his passports, Lord St. Helen's proceeded forthwith to Petersburg. Buonaparte, who might think they would use little ceremony with him, if they turned round in this manner on one of their own *clique*, was the only person who seemed shocked at it ; and his ministers had some difficulty in recalling to his mind that it was no more than the common mode of disposing of arbitrary sovereigns in despotic countries. Paul's successor, not willing to afford a similar triumph to the zealots of religion and social order, hearkened to the counsels of his father's murderers. The Northern Powers acquiesced (perforce) in the maritime claims advanced by England ; Denmark gave up Hamburg, Prussia let go its grasp on Hanover, and things remained much on the same footing as before on that side of the Continent. Soon after, in June 1801, Buonaparte, in concert with Spain, marched an army into Portugal, took Olivenza and Almeida, and forced the Prince-Regent of Portugal (who was son-in-law to the King of Spain, and the close and strenuous ally of England) to conclude a separate peace and shut its ports against the English. In the mean time, Malta had surrendered to the English fleet ; and the French forces in Egypt, attacked and beaten by the British army under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, who was killed in making good his landing in March 1801, were compelled to capitulate and return to France in June the same year. Thus the English remained masters at sea, the French by land ; each nation had pushed its advantages to the utmost ; and this state of equilibrium and uncertainty what farther to attempt, if not an argument for peace (considering the objects at stake and the irritation of political feeling), was at least a favourable opportunity for taking breath and collecting all their strength for the meditated blow, before this unnatural struggle was renewed to the complete triumph or absolute destruction of one or the other party. France fought for its own existence or for the continuance of the new order of things, and in this object it had triumphed ; England fought confessedly (or with a purpose, if only darkly avowed, not the less fixed and rooted) for the re-establishment of the ancient order of things or of what was called social order, which could not be effected without the total subjection of France. In this object it had failed ; and therefore it was easy to foresee (according to the common course of events and operations of men's passions) on which side the temptation with the watchful desire to renew the contest would lie—on theirs who had secured the object for which they took up arms, or on theirs who had been baffled in their attempts to dictate a government to another country on the plea of just and necessary defence, which plea could never be wanting while a hope remained or an opportunity offered for overturning the independ-

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ence and government of the rival State. There was time enough for bringing this great and mighty question to an issue ; and there was no danger that the motives for recurring to it would cease with intermission or reflection. The sense of disappointed revenge does not rankle less in the breast of monarchs for being long brooded over ; and peace or war is always in their own hands. It is easy to make or find the pretexts. Besides, new ones were wanted, the old ones not only having failed of success, but being the least palatable possible. The Peace of Amiens, therefore, was acceded to after some reluctance and 'face-making,' not to prevent future animosities and effect a true reconciliation, but it was a sponge to wipe out old scores and begin the game over again on a new ground.—Some threats were indeed thrown out, and some preparations were made after the evacuation of Egypt for an invasion of England ; but these were neither serious nor formidable, and ended in nothing but Lord Nelson's scouring the Channel so that not an enemy's fishing-boat could appear in it and blockading the French flotilla in the harbour of Boulogne. The preliminaries of peace were signed 10th October, 1801, to the general joy of the people of Great Britain ; but so much did the swallowing of this bitter pill go against the stomach of the higher authorities, that it took five months, till the March of the following year, to adjust the particulars of the treaty. Mr. Pitt went out of office on the occasion, and Mr. Addington succeeded to keep his place warm for him on his return to it. The colonies which the English had taken during the war (which was all they had got by it) were for the most part restored ; Malta was to be given up under a general guarantee to the Knights of St. John ; and it was the refusal to comply with this stipulation that was the immediate cause of the renewal of the war a twelvemonth after.—To resume the account of one or two other points.

Buonaparte, soon after his accession to the management of affairs, proposed to strike from the list of emigrants all but those who had held an important rank or taken a distinguished part in foreign armies or in the bands of insurgent royalists ; or those among the clergy who refused to take the oaths of allegiance to the government. In consequence, they presented themselves in crowds and of all classes, and nearly all the members of the First Constituent Assembly, who had fled, returned to France. During the absence of the First Consul in Italy, at the time of the battle of Marengo, Cambaceres had gone beyond his instructions in enlarging the list of exceptions : on his return Napoleon found among the number of those who were allowed to come back, several great names that had borne arms against France. He testified considerable dissatisfaction and chagrin at this. He consulted with Berlier whether these erasures could not be recalled, as



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having been procured by false certificates of civism. 'There are five or six thousand emigrants,' he said, 'whom it is at all events necessary to prevent from returning to the country to trouble its repose, unless they pass over our dead bodies. But out of a hundred thousand persons wandering in exile, the most dangerous and hostile have contrived to return because they could afford to bribe the police; a duke could get himself struck off the list, while a poor man remained on it.' On an objection being made to the unpopularity of some part of the laws respecting emigration, the First Consul replied, 'What signifies the opinion of the saloons and busy-bodies? There is only one opinion that I care for, that of the common peasants.' Not long after, to shew the temper and views of the class of persons thus readmitted (as it were on their *parole*) to the bosom of their country, Buonaparte was at the theatre to witness a play, called 'Edward in Scotland,' in which the emigrants and royalists made constant applications of different passages to the Bourbons, and found a parallel between the Consular Government and the succession of the House of Hanover; and it was observed that the most violent and continued interruption proceeded from a box directly opposite the First Consul's, belonging to the Duke of Choiseul, one of the emigrants who had been shipwrecked at Calais some years before, and whom Buonaparte had released from prison. The piece was suppressed, and the emigrants and royalists exclaimed bitterly against the tyranny of the First Consul.<sup>1</sup> Such were the difficulties and straits to which he was reduced by the attempt to reconcile different prejudices and parties, the safety of the State with humanity towards individuals, the foundations of liberty with the exercise of power. It would have been easy for Buonaparte to have lent himself to either extreme of old prejudices or new principles, but to combine and hold the balance between them was not so easy. He might have brought back the Bourbons or the Revolutionary Tribunals; or he might have permitted the uncontrolled liberty of the press and been covered with the imputation of crimes like a leprosy; or have suppressed the police and laid his breast bare to the assassin's knife; or suffered the Allies to overrun France without striking a blow; or have retired into private life with the *bonhomie* and self-denial of a simple citizen; and he would have pleased many people. But how to enforce authority in the midst of party rage without being accused of tyranny; how to repel the aggressions of all Europe without being railed at as a conqueror; how to secure the peace and tranquillity

<sup>1</sup> Dupatel, the author of a piece called 'The Three Valets,' and which was erroneously supposed to reflect on the three consuls, had every amends made him by Napoleon for the first ebullition of his resentment, as soon as the mistake was discovered.

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without infringing on the freedom of the country, how to conciliate religious scruples without bringing back the spirit of intolerance and superstition ; how to avail himself of powerful interests and great bodies in the State without attacking liberal institutions and the rights of all ; these were problems which it was beyond the power of the strictest logic or the giddiest romance to answer. Had he tried to hold the balance less even between the conflicting interests, or had he inclined, whenever there was a doubt, to the right instead of the expedient, I do not say he would have succeeded better, but I think he would have deserved to succeed better. Being himself new, he should have taken his stand on what was new ; and all public acts and institutions having a prospective operation, instead of cleaving to antiquity, should make an advance to futurity, for that is the direction in which the world moves, not backwards but forwards. Or what was temporary, and arising out of actual emergencies, might have been arbitrary ; what was permanent, ought to have been just and liberal. It is not true, however, that he owed his ruin to his running counter to the liberal maxims and spirit of the age ; these indeed failed him when he needed their support, and they his ;—had he appealed to them sooner, they would perhaps have sooner betrayed or compromised him by their imbecility or violence. The only obstacle he found fatal or insurmountable was the besotted bigotry of Spain, or the barbarous attachment of the Russians to the soil on which they are serfs. It will hardly be insisted that the opposition of England would have been disarmed by his making nearer approaches to the standard of modern philosophy. He himself said, that ‘it had been wished for him to have been a Washington ; but that had Washington been in his place, surrounded with discord within and invasion without, he would have defied him to have done as he did.’ In the discussions of the Council of State, Cambaceres was considered as representing the opinions of the old aristocracy, Lebrun those of the modern republicans : Buonaparte was called the *consolidated third* ; and in acting as umpire between the two and listening to their arguments, had not the less difficulty in mastering both.

The Concordat, though a favourite and long-meditated scheme, was attended with many difficulties in the execution and unpleasant consequences in the sequel. After the battle of Marengo, Napoleon had ordered Murat, who had marched against the Neapolitan troops, to spare Rome, and had restored his temporal dominions to the Pope ; in return for which he was to give to France her old religion and a new sovereign. The treaty was signed the 18th of September 1801. A proclamation of the Consuls notified the re-establishment of the Catholic worship some time after ; and on Easter Sunday (1802), the

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new ordonnance was solemnly carried into effect at Paris. All the great bodies of the state, the civil authorities, and the Consuls repaired with great pomp and ceremony to the Church of Notre-Dame. As a proof how little regular progress had been made in etiquette, there were still several hackney-coaches in the procession. It was on this occasion for the first time that the household of the First Consul put on livery. An invitation had been addressed to the public functionaries and members of the diplomatic body to follow the example. Mass was performed with pontifical magnificence by Cardinal Caprara. The new bishops took the oath of allegiance to the Republic. After a discourse delivered by M. de Boisgelin, Archbishop of Tours (the same who had preached the sermon on the coronation of Louis the XVI.) a *Te Deum* for the general peace and the re-establishment of the church concluded this religious ceremony, with which every kind of military pomp was mingled, and which was announced to the capital in the morning by discharges of artillery. At night there was an illumination and concert in the garden of the Thuilleries. The peace of Amiens and the Concordat became the favourite subjects of the French artists. The Exhibition of that year was resplendent with allegorical cars of victory and triumphal arches of peace, as fine and as evanescent as the rainbow !

The military had a great repugnance to the new arrangement, and there was some art used in getting them to attend the ceremony at Notre-Dame. Berthier invited the principal to breakfast with him, whence he took them to the First Consul's levee, so that they could not excuse themselves from accompanying him. On their return, Buonaparte asked Delmas what he thought of the ceremony? He replied, 'It was an admirable *capucinade*. All that was wanting to complete it was a million of men who have sacrificed their lives to overturn what you are trying to re-establish !' This sarcasm did not go unpunished. Rapp, who was privileged to say what he pleased, being asked if he should go to mass, answered the First Consul in the negative ; but added he had no objection to the priests, 'provided he did not make them his aides-de-camp or his cooks.' In fact, from the little esteem in which they are held, the French priests to this day look like fellows who have stolen something. In Italy, they have none of this dejected, sneaking look ! After the Concordat the decade was regularly exchanged for the week, and the public offices were shut on Sundays. The adoption of the new system cost Napoleon more uneasiness and trouble than was suspected. The refractory priests gave themselves great airs upon it ; the Pope became more untractable than before. The clergy were constantly urging claims inconsistent with the existing laws and manners of society ; and with any other man

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than Buonaparte, would certainly have resumed their ancient preponderance or brought new calamities on themselves. Scandalous scenes ensued. The curate of the church of St. Roch having refused to read the funeral service over the remains of a Mademoiselle Chameroi, a female opera-dancer, the populace were near stoning him; and Monge said dryly, 'It was a dispute of one set of actors against another.' The First Consul put a stop to these proceedings; but was it possible to suppress the spirit in which they originated, and which lurked under the cowl and surplice, like the plague in tainted robes?

The affairs of St. Domingo were another rock on which this double policy split. What was he to make of that gigantic group of black heads ranged round the standard of revolt? Was he to proclaim their unqualified enfranchisement and natural independence and to extend to them all the benefits of the Declaration of Rights, in disregard of circumstances and consequences? This cosmopolite philanthropy would be contrary to all his maxims and principles of government. Was he to resolve on their absolute subjugation or indiscriminate slaughter? This would be equally repugnant to humanity and prudence. What then was he to do? After considering whether he could not play off the men of colour against them (like chess-men on a board) he resolved with great justice and moderation to adopt a middle course, that is, to maintain the system which Toussaint-Louverture had established, to disarm the men of colour, to extend Toussaint's authority over the whole colony, to appoint him commander-in-chief of St. Domingo, and to confirm his regulations respecting the civil liberty and voluntary labour of the blacks. All now went on well for two years (1800 and 1801). But Toussaint himself defeated the friendly intentions of the First Consul and the prospects of his countrymen, instigated, according to Buonaparte, by the English, who foresaw the ruin of their own system, should the blacks restrain themselves within the bounds of moderation and propriety in submission to the mother-country. Toussaint threw off his dependence and set up for himself. It is curious to hear Buonaparte's complaints on this occasion. He says, 'To give an idea of the indignation which the First Consul must have felt, it may suffice to mention that Toussaint not only assumed authority over the colony during his life, but invested himself with the right of naming his successor; and pretended to hold his authority not from the mother-country, but from a *soi-disant* colonial assembly which he had created.' Recourse was therefore had to the former scheme of joining with the men of colour against the blacks, and General Le Clerc was sent out with a considerable armament for this purpose. The expedition was at first successful, and Toussaint surrendered himself and was suffered to remain in the island; but being afterwards



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detected in a clandestine correspondence with the English, he was seized and sent a prisoner to France, where he died in consequence of his confinement. The war after his departure broke out afresh; the most shocking excesses were committed on both sides; and Le Clerc with a great part of his troops having fallen victims to the yellow fever, the negroes remained in possession of the government of the island. To shew the severity of Buonaparte's character in public affairs, he compelled his sister Pauline (the wife of General Le Clerc) to accompany him on this hazardous expedition, in order to lessen the dread which was entertained of it. The behaviour of Buonaparte to the colonists has been violently censured both by friends and foes. His conduct was not certainly modelled on the maxim—*Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*; it was not that of a romantic and impassioned enthusiast in the cause of negro emancipation; neither was it (as has been pretended) that of a fiend, but a great deal too much of an ordinary statesman and man of the world. His detractors might learn, with a little self-reflection, from their censures of him to form a juster estimate of their own idols. The worst of his actions are only on a par (a degrading one, I own) with the best of theirs. A similar treatment of a revolted colony of ours would make a brilliant episode in the life of a Lord Melville or a Lord Bathurst. Buonaparte at first shewed every consideration for the blacks; and he only grew moody and exasperated when he found her chief colony torn from France and in danger of being thrown into the hands of England. His jealousy on that head instantly turned the scale. Alas! the way to outstrip us would have been in the race of generosity and magnanimity, and not by trying to be foremost in that of selfish policy or unfeeling cruelty! The death of Toussaint-Louverture was one of those topics on which the tropes and figures of political rhetoric at one time delighted to dwell. As it took place in a castle in Franche-Compté and not in the streets of London, no one could say how it happened; dark hints were thrown out, and it became a painful mystery, over which imagination drew its worst colours, and malice and prejudice left no doubt of the truth! After so many stories of the kind have been proved to be equally groundless and improbable, one might suppose that this would have been discarded with the rest, as a lawyer flings up a shameless brief; but there are some minds that seem eaten up with the measles of servility, and whom neither the height of genius nor universal fame can raise above that low pitch of moral thinking that is to be found at the second tables of the Great.—Buonaparte had some qualms on the subject of making the blacks of St. Domingo free, and leaving those of Martinique and other islands in slavery, which inconsequentiality he proposes to remedy by a law declaring that 'the blacks shall be slaves at

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Martinique and at the Isles of France and Bourbon ; and they shall be free at St. Domingo, Guadaloupe, and Cayenne ' : as if this geographical separation could stifle the pulse of liberty when it had once begun to beat, or the fitness of the blacks for slavery or freedom could be dependent on positive enactments. Napoleon labours hard at the point of amalgamating the blacks and the whites by the medium of polygamy, and states that he had held several conferences with theologians on the subject. But this expedient would degrade marriage instead of raising the blacks, as long as the whites continued masters at home. Would Buonaparte marry a French princess to a black chieftain ? No : but till then, his system would have no relation to the polygamy of the East.

The establishment of the Polytechnic and other schools on the most extensive and best-digested plans, carried instruction and improvement to every part of France. Buonaparte boasts of his munificence and exertions in this respect, and justly remarks that none but a bad government need fear the information of the people. He merely strove to keep the direction of this powerful engine of public opinion (by giving to the government the choice and payment of the teachers) as much as possible in his own hands :—if he had not, there were plenty of other hands into which it would soon have fallen. The *Institute* had been founded by the Convention ; and contained nearly all the talent and science of France. Some surviving members of the old French Academy, who regarded themselves as the fine gentlemen of letters and affected to look upon the Institute as a society of mechanics and revolutionists, undertook to set up an opposition to the latter under the auspices of Lucien Buonaparte, who was partial to this sort of pedantry and tinsel, during the absence of his brother at Marengo ; but soon after, the lofty pretensions of the Academicians were quashed, and they were admitted as the second class of the Institute. In France science was associated with the period of the Revolution, as poetry and the *belles-lettres* were referred to the age of Louis XIV. In England, on the contrary, science is patronised in the fashionable circles as *proving nothing* ; while elegant literature and the study of *humanity* are studiously banished from or barely tolerated in our polite lecture-rooms, whatever appeals to sentiment and imagination being thought dangerous. The Fine Arts were courted and encouraged under the Consulate. Admired pictures were purchased by the government ; and distinguished or promising young artists had splendid apartments assigned them in the Louvre. A colossal bronze statue of Nicolas Poussin was cast in compliment to French art. Josephine had a real taste and relish for works of art, which her husband had not ; but whenever she contrived to procure any precious *chef-d'œuvre* for her private

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collection, Buonaparte said he felt himself robbed of it, because it no longer belonged to the public and to France. To shew his sense of the value of men of genius, he declared at a later period that had Corneille lived in his time he would have made him a prince. He did not disdain to be the personal friend of Talma; nor did Talma ever repay this distinction with ingratitude or baseness. Equal attention and encouragement were given to the fine and the mechanic arts, to agriculture, manufactures, and commerce. In considering the relative value of the three last, Napoleon gave the precedence to agriculture, which raises the means of subsistence; second, to manufactures or handicrafts, which produce the conveniences and ornaments of life; third, to commerce, which exchanges what is superfluous for what is deficient in these. With respect to foreign commerce, he decided with his usual keen and comprehensive glance in favour of the principles of free trade against monopolies. The correctness and soundness of his views are indeed acknowledged on all hands, with the sole exception of what related to his own personal power and ambition; but there, it should be remembered, others did not leave him a free choice. Bridges were constructed, roads were laid out, canals dug, which extended the inland navigation from the south to the north of France, from Marseilles to Amsterdam, harbours scooped out or secured, forests planted, new products in cultivation imported, the breed of different kinds of cattle improved. The roads over Mount Cenis and the Simplon were projected and begun, the noblest ever executed by the hand of man; and public monuments, buildings, and embellishments were scattered through the capital and the principal towns in France with a prodigal and benevolent hand. The finances were at the same time kept in the greatest order; public peculators and jobbers were discountenanced and punished; every general plan, almost every individual detail was submitted to Buonaparte's immediate notice; and in his own household the strictest economy was combined with the utmost magnificence. He examined the accounts, kept an eye on the purveyors; and descending to the minutest details, was like some other princes who have nothing else to do, his own butler, steward, and upholsterer. On one occasion, thinking the charge for some silk-hangings with gold buttons extravagant, he took one of the buttons in his pocket and walked out into one of the streets in Paris to ask the price of it. The affairs of Europe, the army, the police, the administration of justice, prisons, the press, public works were all under his constant inspection and control. Often, after labouring all day in overlooking papers or comparing plans, dispatches came, and he sat up all night to read and answer them. His secretaries were worn out with the fatigue. He went through all this accumulation of labour

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himself with so little effort and so little need of any stimulus but the importunate activity of his own mind, that he used at this period of his life to take nothing but lemonade. The universal authority which he thus exerted, and of which no other person was capable, he wished to concentrate more and more within himself, and to make the portentous responsibility hereditary. The only fault of all that he did for France was, that though it received the sanction of the general opinion, it emanated almost solely from himself, and there was no provision to check the abuse of discretionary power or to secure the continuance of its beneficial tendency. To be sure, there was no danger that the pride in creating should be joined with rapacity in appropriating; and a score of well-informed men, who were Buonaparte's confidential advisers in all cases and who had risen from the people, might be supposed in the immediate circumstances to represent the people, as a bucket of water taken from the ocean is the same everywhere. There were at this time no distinct classes with peculiar advantages and privileges, always prepared to vindicate their own rights, and to impede the public good. Buonaparte clearly identified the fortunes, well-being and glory of France with his own; and it was only by straining the point to the utmost (and by chance) that the bubble burst and relieved the world from paying the penalty of the full chastisement they had so richly merited.

What Buonaparte himself laid the most stress on, and regarded as the sheet-anchor of his fame, was his code of laws. This was a work of great labour, judgment, and utility. It reduced the chaos of the ancient contradictory and arbitrary laws of France into one just and simple plan. Mr. Landor, though a declared enemy of Buonaparte, owns that he has left the best system of laws in Europe. The gainer of so many laurels surprised those about him more by his insight into jurisprudence than he had done by his knowledge of government or his achievements in war. His coadjutors in preparing and framing the *Code Napoléon* were Tronchet, Rœderer, Portalis, Thibaudeau, and others. The First Consul presided at the greater number of the meetings of the Council of State where the subject was debated, and took a very active part in the discussions, which he himself provoked, sustained, directed, and re-animated. Unlike certain orators of his Council, he did not seek to shine by the roundness of his periods, the choice of his expressions, or the mode of his delivery. He spoke without preparation, without embarrassment or pretension, with the freedom and ease of conversation, growing warmer with the effects of opposition and the developement of various ideas on the subject. He was inferior to none of the Council; he was equal to the ablest of them in the readiness with which he seized on the point of the question



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in the justness of his remarks, and the force of his reasonings. He surpassed them all in the happiness and originality of his expressions. Many persons pretended to believe (for mankind like to resolve the great into the little) that Loéré, the secretary, had given a certain colouring to the style, but it is shewn in the admirable 'Memoirs of the Consulate' by Thibaudeau, that he uniformly weakened and impaired it. The First Consul was as frank and candid as he was strong in debate. 'It is important,' he said, 'that what men like the citizen<sup>1</sup> Tronchet say should be accurately reported, for it will carry an authority with it. As to us, men of the sword or finance, who are not jurists, it signifies little what we think. I have said things in the heat of discussion of which I have seen the error a quarter of an hour afterwards; but *I do not wish to pass for better than I am.*' Napoleon thus characterised some of his fellow-labourers in the Council. 'Tronchet is a man possessed of a vast fund of information and an extremely sound judgment for his age. I find Rœderer feeble. Portalis would be the most imposing and eloquent speaker, if he knew when to have done. Thibaudeau is not adapted for this kind of discussion; like Lucien, he requires the tribune, where he can give himself full scope. Cambacères is the advocate-general; he states both sides. The most difficult of all is the summing up, but in this Lebrun leaves every one behind.'

We have a striking account of what passed in the interior of the Thuilleries and of Buonaparte's own mind on the two great points of his advancement to power and the renewal of the war in the same authentic and impartial work. The particulars are too important and characteristic to be omitted here. Josephine appears to have been kept in continual alarm by the projects in agitation respecting the establishment of hereditary succession and her own divorce as connected with it. As far back as the explosion of the Infernal Machine, she said to Rœderer, who was attacking Fouché, 'Those are Buonaparte's worst enemies who wish to inspire him with ideas of hereditary succession and divorce.' On the appointment of Buonaparte Consul for life with the power of naming his successor (10th August, 1802) the following conversation took place on the subject at Malmaison, whither the Counsellor of State N—— had gone on particular business.

*The First Consul.* 'Well, what is there new at Paris?'

*N.* 'Nothing that you do not know.'

*B.* 'What is it they say?'

<sup>1</sup> This term had not lost its value at the time. One of the most animated altercations in the Tribunate was in consequence of the substitution of the term *subjects* for that of *citizens*, in the treaty with Russia some time before.

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N. 'They talk much of the decree of the Senate.'

B. 'Aye: and what is the general opinion?'

N. 'Some are for, others against it.'

B. 'And what is your own opinion?'

N. 'It is a question tried and judged.'

B. 'And lost? Is it not so?'

N. 'It is not difficult for you to guess my meaning.'

B. 'I do not find fault with you for it, I know you are an honest man. But, my good friend, you will be cured of your reveries: we cannot go on as we have done. France will not be the less free, and she will be the first power.'

N. 'Do you think then that a decree of the Senate and a vote of the people<sup>1</sup> are such sure guarantees, and that you could not have remained Consul without it?'

B. 'I am aware that it is a feeble security for the interior; but it has a good effect on foreign states. I am from this moment on a level with other sovereigns; for by a just reckoning they are only what they are for life. *They and their ministers will respect me more.* It is not fit that the authority of a man who takes the lead in the affairs of Europe should be precarious, or should at least seem so.'<sup>2</sup>

N. 'The opinion of foreigners is of much less importance than that of France.'

B. 'With the exception of a few madmen who only wish for disorder, and of some well-meaning enthusiasts who dream of the republic of Sparta, France is desirous of stability and strength in the government.'

N. 'There is a greater number of persons than you think, who dream not of the republic of Sparta, but of the French Republic. The impression of the Revolution is still quite fresh, and the transition to another order of things and ideas somewhat sudden.'

B. 'The men of the Revolution have nothing to fear; I am their best guarantee.'

N. 'What will become of the men, when the thing shall have ceased to exist?' . . . Then passing to the subject of the designation of his successor, he approved, or pretended to approve of N.'s opposition to the measure, who observed that four or five of them had looked upon it in the light of an alienation of the sovereignty of the people.

B. (interrupting him warmly) 'It was Rœderer who officiously brought forward this question. When I was told what had passed,

<sup>1</sup> The people had voted for the Consulship for life by a majority of three millions to a few hundred discontented voices. Carnot had protested against it; and La Fayette had only consented to it, on condition that the First Consul would allow the liberty of the press.

<sup>2</sup> This seems a fair practical answer to the doubt of stability in Lord Grenville's Note.

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I said, "Who is it you would have me choose? One of my brothers?" The nation has indeed consented to be governed by me, because I had acquired a high degree of glory and rendered it signal services; but it will say that it has not for that reason sold itself to my family. As to my successor, I know no one who has the necessary qualifications, and whom the nation would approve. Is it Joseph or Lucien who was supposed to have urged this measure?"

N. 'Lucien, and that excited some apprehension; in short, the expectation of I know not what changes spreads inquietude and alarm everywhere.'

B. 'What would you have? I hear a talk of guarantees for the nation, of great bodies composed of the great proprietors for life, or even hereditary.'

N. 'This is the fourth Constitution in twelve years; if we change this, where shall we stop?'

B. 'It is better to environ the one we have with proper consideration. And as to these grand corps that they talk of, what would they turn out when we had chosen them? Something quite different from what was proposed. They are the men of 91, who wish to come in under this imposing designation, Rœderer, Mounier, La Fayette, Latour-Maubourg, and all the rest. Judge now, what we could expect from these men, who are always mounted on their metaphysics of 89. The two last have written to me to say that they would give their assent to the Consulship for life, on the condition that I would re-establish the liberty of the press. The liberty of the press indeed! I should no sooner have established it, than I should have thirty royalist journals and a proportionable number of Jacobin ones start up against me. I should have to govern once more with a minority, a faction, and to recommence the Revolution, while all my efforts have been directed to govern with the nation. And then again, the opinion of these *Messieurs*, these grand proprietaries, would be against the Revolution; they have all of them suffered more or less by it and hold it and all that belongs to it in horror. See, I have at this moment in my hands a memorial from six sugar-refiners. Well! *à-propos* of sugar; it is nothing but a continued diatribe against the Revolution, by which they think to pay their court to me. Suppose, then, I have to propose to these grand corps thus constituted, a conscription, contributions; they will resist, they will allege the interests of the people. Let me stand in need of strong measures in difficult circumstances; they will be alarmed, they will abandon me through pusillanimity. If I provoke an opposition on revolutionary principles, the nation will not trouble itself about it. Let these grand corps organise a counter-revolutionary opposition, and they will carry a good part of the nation with them.

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It is indispensable that the Government should remain in the hands of the men of the Revolution; that is their only chance. In a word, these gentlemen would cry out against the arbitrary conduct of Government, and not leave me a single minister. As it is, I do not mind them. Not that a government is to be unjust, but it cannot avoid some arbitrary acts. I have two hundred Chouans detained in prison; were I to have them brought to trial, they would be acquitted.'

*N.* 'You may believe that I enter into all you have said on this last question. I do not justify all the men of the Revolution; I speak of them in a mass; and it is only they who can defend their own work and the change which it has produced in the ideas of France and Europe. It is none but they who are your true friends; for you are theirs, and their surest safeguard. As to the privileged classes, they are irreconcilable. They will accept of places, they ask nothing better; they will dissemble, bend, and crouch, it is their trade; but let a catastrophe approach, they will come out in their natural colours, and will sacrifice you to their ancient idols. They will never really regard you as one of themselves.'

*B.* 'I know it well; these persons and the foreign cabinets hate me worse than Robespierre.'

*N.* 'With respect to national guarantees, I can understand but one—a good representative system, by which the public wants and public opinion may be fully manifested, so as to direct, without weakening, the action of the Government. With this, the rest would come in time.'

*B.* 'Sieyès spoilt all with his ridiculous constitutions; I let him have his way too much. You will let me hear your further ideas.'

*N.* 'If I am allowed to be frank.'

*B.* 'That is understood without a word said.'

Really in these circumstances, with this inertness in the people, with this proneness to defection in the chiefs, surrounded by flatterers, forced on by the Allies, with his good sword and his ambition to carve out his way for him, though I might wish that another course had been pursued, yet I do not see how it could be hoped; and I and others who have not bowed the knee to idols nor eaten of the unclean thing, have this at least to thank him for—that for fifteen years, if he did not restore the vital spirit of liberty, he turned its tomb into a citadel to keep its old and deadly foes from insulting over its corse, and by being a scourge and a terror to tyrants, could not but save the principle of the Revolution, while he saved himself.

While these discussions were pending, Josephine fluttered about, trembling with apprehension, listening to every breath, and uttering her dissatisfaction and doubts to all whom she could interest in her



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behalf. She seemed to shrink instinctively from this new and pathless career, of which she only saw the danger, held Buonaparte back from it as from the edge of a precipice, and might be thought to have foreseen the time when she and her daughter would each have to lean on the arm of the Emperor Alexander, while her *Cid* (hers once more in misfortune) was led away by barbarous and ruthless foes. She ran to meet *N*—— as soon as he retired from his audience with Buonaparte, took him to walk with her in the park, and looking anxiously round, began to complain bitterly of Lucien, Talleyrand, and others. Shortly after, she renewed the conversation. ‘Be sure,’ she said, ‘they have not given up their project of hereditary succession, and that it will take place sooner or later. They are desirous that the First Consul should have offspring, by no matter whom, and that I should afterwards adopt it; for they are sensible how much Buonaparte would do himself wrong, were he to put away a wife who was attached to him at a time when he was without power, and to whose daughter he has married his brother. But never, I have told them, would I lend myself to such infamy. Besides, it is a mistake to imagine the people would allow a spurious offspring to succeed. I cannot help thinking that in that case Lucien would try to enforce his pretensions. They will begin by doing all they can to alienate Buonaparte from me. They have hinted at a handsome allowance, if he were to divorce me; but I replied, that if that were to happen, I would take nothing from him. I would dispose of my diamonds and purchase a country-house, where I could live happily enough, would they only let me do so. It is only within these few days that poor Hortense has felt some slight illness, though she is in her ninth month; I trembled at the thought, in consequence of the infamous reports which have been spread abroad. When I said so to Buonaparte, he replied, “These rumours have been credited by the public only because the nation wished me to have a child.” I told him he deceived himself greatly, if he supposed these stories had any such motive, and that it was his enemies who circulated such calumnies. But this answer of Buonaparte’s will let you see what are his intentions, and the blindness in which he is plunged by his schemes of grandeur. He is more feeble and more easily led than people believe; for it is not possible to account in any other way for the influence which Lucien exercises over him. He is acquainted with all that Lucien has said and written about him, and yet he suffers himself to be guided by him. To see him at home in his family one would say he was a good man, and in fact he is so. Fortunately he has a strong sense of justice, since without that they would make him do much worse things. He one day asked me: “What are my faults?” I replied, “I know of two, want of firmness, and indiscretion; you

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suffer yourself to be governed by those who seek only your ruin, and are so fond of disputing that you divulge your secrets." He folded me in his arms, and owned that it was true. When I point out to him the dangers of ambition, he answers, "It is also on thy account and that of thy family, for if I was to die, thou wouldst be sacrificed!" But what a pity that a young man who possesses so many claims to glory and to the homage of his age and of posterity, should be spoiled by flatterers!—Josephine was inclined, from her affection for her husband, to throw the blame on others; but no one is ruined but by his own connivance or from inevitable circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

On the question of the duration of peace or probable renewal of hostilities, the following particulars are well worth giving, as throwing a new and intimate light on the views and dispositions of the First Consul.

'In England, the peace of Amiens, though popular, was in the opinion of politicians of all parties little better than a compulsory step, and consequently a mere truce, which could not last long. This conclusion resulted from all the discussions which took place in parliament, and from the countenance which the English Ministry afforded to the clandestine intrigues kept up in London against the Consular Government. Had the First Consul himself entertained a different opinion of the peace of Amiens, he would not have been deserving of the high place which he held, nor of his great renown. He had made peace, not from necessity, but because the French people loudly called for it; because it was glorious to France, and because, on the part of her most inveterate enemy, it was a recognition of the form of government which she had chosen to adopt. In a conversation with one of his Counsellors of State, Buonaparte expressed his opinion as follows:

*The First Consul.* 'Well, Citizen —, what think you of my peace with England?'

<sup>1</sup> Thibaudeau observes here, that 'the ideas of the unity and stability of government were so much in vogue, that if they had dared, or if the First Consul had wished it, they would have heaped all power on his single head. The intriguers would have exploded every trace of democracy. They wished to concentrate all authority from that of the Consul for life, down to the mayor of the most obscure village, and to wean the attention of the citizens, by degrees, from public affairs, in order that in the end they might be altogether estranged from them. It was the fashion to cite the ancient *intendances* or provinces as models of administration, and the old parliaments as patterns for courts of justice. There was not a single institution, decried for its intolerable abuses and proscribed by the voice of the nation, that did not then find apologists and defenders.' How ridiculous and odious all this seems, *without* the plea of antiquity and the sanction of prejudice and tradition on its side! Our *wiseacres*, the declaimers against the exercise, but dupes of the principles of arbitrary power, thought it best, instead of letting any such patched-up system fall in pieces from sheer antipathy to itself, or when no longer supported by the hand that raised it without any warrant but his momentary will, to have it *grooved* in the rock of ages, and vested as a sacred right in a privileged race!

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*Counsellor of State.* 'I think, Citizen Consul, that it does much honour to your government, and gives great satisfaction to the French.'

*First Consul.* 'Do you think it will last long?'

*Counsellor.* 'I should be very desirous for it to last four or five years, at least, to give us time to recruit our navy; but I doubt much whether it will extend to this period.'

*First Consul.* 'I do not believe it neither. England fears us, the Continental Powers are hostile to us; how then, if so, hope for a solid peace? Moreover, do you imagine that a peace of five years or more would suit the form or the circumstances of our Government?'

*Counsellor.* 'I think that this repose would be very desirable for France, after ten years of war.'

*First Consul.* 'You do not comprehend me; I do not make it a question whether a sincere and solid peace is an advantage to a well-settled state; but I ask whether ours is sufficiently so, not to stand in need of further victories?'

*Counsellor.* 'I have not reflected sufficiently on so important a question, to give a categorical answer; all that I can say, or rather what I feel, is that a state that can only maintain itself by war is most unfortunately circumstanced.'

*First Consul.* 'The greatest misfortune of all would be not to judge rightly of our position, for when we know what it is we may provide against it. Answer me, then, whether you do not apprehend the persevering hostility of these Governments, which have nevertheless signed peace with us?'

*Counsellor.* 'I should find it a hard matter not to distrust them.'

*First Consul.* 'Well then, draw the consequence. If these Governments always have war *in petto*, if they are determined to renew it one day, it is best that this should be sooner rather than later; since every day weakens the impression of their late defeats on their minds, and tends to diminish in us the confidence inspired by our late victories; thus all the advantage of delay is on their side.'

*Counsellor.* 'But, Citizen Consul, do you reckon as nothing the opportunity you will derive from the peace for the internal organisation of the country?'

*First Consul.* 'I was coming to that. Assuredly, this important consideration did not escape my attention; and I have given proofs, even in the midst of war, of my not neglecting what concerned the institutions and the prosperity of the interior. I shall not stop there, there is still much more to do; but is not military success even more necessary to dazzle and keep this interior in order? Be well assured

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that a First Consul has no resemblance to those kings by the grace of God, who regard their dominions as an inheritance. Their power has old habits to strengthen it; with us, on the contrary, all these old habits are stumbling-blocks. The French Government, at the present moment, is like nothing that surrounds it. Hated by its neighbours, obliged to keep down various descriptions of malcontents in its own bosom, it has need, in order to overawe so many enemies, of brilliant achievements, and consequently of war.'

*Counsellor.* 'I own, Citizen Consul, that you have much more to do to establish your government, than the kings our neighbours have to maintain theirs; but on the one hand, Europe is convinced that you know how to conquer, and to recollect this truth, it is not necessary that you should furnish new proofs of it every year; on the other hand, the occupations of peace are not without their lustre too, and you will know how to rivet admiration by noble undertakings.'

*First Consul.* 'Former victories, seen at a distance, do not strike much; and the labours of art only make a strong impression on those who witness them, which is the smallest number. My intention is to multiply and encourage these labours, posterity perhaps will make more account of them than of my victories; but for the present, there is nothing that carries such a sound with it as military successes. This is my conviction; it is the misfortune of our situation. A new government, such as ours, requires, I repeat it, to dazzle and astonish in order to maintain itself.'

*Counsellor.* 'Your government, Citizen Consul, is not quite, as it appears to me, a nurseling. It has put on the manly robe since Marengo: directed by a powerful head and sustained by the arms of thirty millions of inhabitants, it holds a distinguished place among European governments.'

*First Consul.* 'Do you conceive then, my good friend, that this is enough? No, it is necessary that *it should be the first of all or be overpowered.*'

*Counsellor.* 'And to obtain this result, you see no other means than war?'

*First Consul.* 'Yes, Citizen ———, I will maintain peace if our neighbours are disposed to keep it; but should they oblige me to take up arms again before we are enervated by ease and a long inaction, I shall consider it as an advantage.'

*Counsellor.* 'Citizen Consul, what period do you then assign to this state of anxiety, which in the bosom even of peace should make us regret war?'

*First Consul.* 'My friend, I am not sufficiently enlightened as to the future to reply to your question; but I feel that in order to hope for



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more solidity and good faith in treaties of peace, it is requisite either that the form of the surrounding governments should approximate nearer to ours, or that our political institutions should be a little more in harmony with theirs. 'There is always a spirit of animosity between old monarchies and a new republic. This is the root of our European discords.'

*Counsellor.* 'But cannot this hostile spirit be repressed by the smart of recent recollections, or be arrested in its progress by the imposing attitude which you might assume?'

*First Consul.* 'Palliatives are not cures: in our circumstances, I consider every peace as a short-lived truce, and the ten years of my Consulship as doomed to war almost without intermission. My successors will do as they can. [This was previous to his being chosen Consul for life.] As to the rest, be on your guard against believing that I wish to break off the peace: no, I shall not act the part of the aggressor. I have too strong an interest in leaving it to foreign powers to strike the first blow. I know them well: they will be the first to take up arms, or to furnish me with just grounds to do so. I shall hold myself in readiness for all events.'

*Counsellor.* 'Thus then, Citizen Consul, it appears that what I feared a few months ago is precisely what you wish.'

*First Consul.* 'I wait to see; and my principle is that war is to be preferred to an ephemeral peace: we shall see how this will turn out. At present it is of the utmost importance to us. It affixes its seal to the acknowledgment of my government by that power which has held out the longest against it. This is the chief point gained. The rest, that is, the future, must depend on circumstances.'

According to this account, as it relates to the grounds of Buonaparte's foreign policy, the supposed hatred of kings to the principles of popular government has cost France and Europe dear. Whether that policy was sound and justifiable or not, depends on this other question whether that hatred was real or supposed; and this question does not, I think, admit of a doubt. To contend with any chance of success against the armed prejudice, pride, and power of Europe, something more than mere good-nature, moderation, and a belief in external professions was necessary: whatever might be the danger or the inconveniences on the opposite side, instead of fastidious scruples or Quaker morality, it required the very genius of heroic daring and lofty ambition 'clad all in proof,' or a champion like Talus, the Iron Man in Spenser, to make head against it. Every one will allow that Buonaparte came up to these conditions: I am not very anxious to deny that he perhaps exceeded them.—What I like least in the foregoing conversation is the hint thrown out of an approximation to the

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form of the old governments. 'Farthest from them was best.' It was too much to conquer and to imitate them too. But the one left an opening to the First Consul's schemes of personal aggrandisement as the other did of martial glory. The splendour with which he proposed to dazzle the enemies of the Republic, seemed already to contract his brows into a frown. Even this, though an unlooked-for and the least favourable issue to the question, was not without its moral use. A people were denied the right to be free and a mark set upon them as unworthy of the rank of men, and one man stepped forth from among them who wiped out the stain with his sword, and set his foot upon the necks of kings, and humbled their pride and pretensions with the dust by placing himself on an equality with them : a whole people were taunted with their incapacity to maintain the relations of peace and amity for want of a head, and they chose one man among them to lead them forth to universal conquest. This was at least one way of asserting the cause of the people, and of answering the claim of natural and indefeasible superiority over them. If not the triumph of the best principles, neither was it the complete and final triumph of the worst. In a battle, all those on the same side claim the honour of the victory, though the general has the greatest share : so free-men can hardly complain if to triumph over their unrelenting task-masters they have to surrender the chief power into the hands of the ablest among them. As to France, it is at all events better to be stopped by a robber than sold for a slave ; and as to the Continent, the war was never a national quarrel, but a struggle between the different classes and races of men, whether one should be considered as an inferior order of beings to the other. If it were a question between the blacks and whites, the colour would at once decide the point ; to the mind's eye the complexion of the dispute, the real gist of the argument is no less clear between the natural rights and the hereditary and lasting bondage of the people. Passion and power never lost sight of this distinction : reason was more easily staggered and thrown off its guard. There are some who think the slightest flaw, a single error fatal to their own side of the question as opposed to the pretended right to inflict every wrong with impunity : in my opinion this claim alone cancels a million of faults committed against it. Any thing short of the re-admission of such a principle is virtually 'deliverance to mankind.' If however a nobler and wiser (because more consistent and disinterested) course lay open to Buonaparte, he did not want a Mentor in one who had every title to be so, both from his own obligations to him and from his well-known attachment to the cause of liberty. At the time of his being chosen Consul for life, Fayette addressed the following letter to him.

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‘La Grange, 1st of Prairial, year X (1802).

‘GENERAL,

‘When a man, penetrated with the gratitude that he owes you, and too sensible of glory not to sympathise with yours, has added restrictions to his suffrage, they are the less to be suspected, as no one will rejoice more than he to see you first magistrate for life of a free Republic. The 18th of Brumaire has saved France, and I found myself recalled by the liberal professions to which you had pledged your honour. We have seen since in the consular power that repairing system which under the auspices of your genius, has done such great things; less grand however than the restoration of liberty will be. It is impossible that you, General, the first of that order of beings, who to appreciate themselves and to take their proper rank must embrace all ages, should wish that such a revolution, that so many victories with so much blood, so many misfortunes and prodigies should have for the world and for yourself no other result than an arbitrary government. The French nation has too well known its rights to have forgotten them entirely; but perhaps it is more in a state at present, than in its first effervescence, to recover them effectually; and you by the force of your character and the public confidence, by the superiority of your talents, of your situation, of your fortune, may, in re-establishing liberty, master all dangers, and allay all inquietudes. I should then have only patriotic and personal motives for wishing you in this view to succeed in establishing a permanent magistracy as an addition to your glory. But I owe it to the principles, the engagements, and to the actions of my whole life, to be assured, before I give it my vote, that it is founded on bases worthy of the nation and of yourself.

‘I trust you will be satisfied, General, on this as on former occasions, that to an adherence to my political opinions are joined sincere good wishes for your welfare, and a profound sense of my obligations to you.

‘Health and respect.

‘LA FAYETTE.’

Every day the irritation and dissatisfaction of the two governments that had just concluded peace became greater, the one trying to maintain its temper and a friendly appearance, the other to provoke an open rupture by every species of secret calumny or vulgar taunt. The English journals were filled with gross and studied insults to the person of the First Consul, and he complained that ‘it was in vain for him to reckon upon peace, while every gale that blew breathed hatred and contempt from England.’ In spite of all this, people still trusted to the continuance of peace, and the English flocked over in crowds to Paris. They had been debarred of this privilege for nearly

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ten years, and they were devoured with eager curiosity to see the effects of the Revolution as well as the extraordinary man whom victory had placed at the head of affairs. They expected to find the country exhausted, agriculture annihilated, and the people miserable. They were astonished and not a little scandalised at the national prosperity, the splendour of the capital, and the magnificence of the court. Paris was intoxicated with the presence of so many strangers. Every attention was paid them, every preference was given them. French vanity and politeness seemed to delight in soothing and flattering English pride and jealousy. The only question was, who should give them the most welcome reception : all Paris was on tiptoe to make a few thousand English eat, drink, dance, and look pleased. The women were prodigal of their fascinations ; and the hospitality and courtesy, which were carried to a ridiculous excess, were repaid with characteristic sullenness and scorn—the English thinking there must be a design in so much ostentatious complaisance, and carrying back their personal obligations as an uneasy *make-weight* to throw into the scale of a new war ! The summer of that year was, however, bright and serene ; most of our countrymen who could afford it passed it under cloudless skies, and the hope of peace was a satisfaction to all. The thoughtless and the well-disposed believed firmly in its continuance because they wished it, as well as for the following reasons. 1. War is an unnatural state and cannot last forever, so that the imagination always looks forward to and can only repose in the enjoyment of peace. 2. If war were a benefit and not a curse (as has been pretended before now) we should go to war with our friends, and not with our enemies. Therefore men's wishes point at peace if their passions do not disturb it. 3. The French had gained the object which was at stake—the acknowledgment of the Republic ; and numbers of the English were more ashamed of the cause in which we had been engaged than mortified at its want of success. The real grounds of the war were not the pretended ones, and could not be suspected except by those who were in the secret. And lastly, it was believed that Buonaparte, who was the soul of the war, and who had put an end to it by the fame of his exploits, was both solicitous and qualified to reap an equal glory by the arts of peace.



# RUPTURE OF THE PEACE OF AMIENS

## CHAPTER XXXI

### RUPTURE OF THE PEACE OF AMIENS

THE former war with France was put an end to, in the first place, because it was unsuccessful; and secondly, because it was unpopular with a considerable party in the nation, who were favourable to the French Revolution. Before embarking finally in a struggle which was felt to be of vital importance, and which was meant to terminate only in the destruction of one or other of the contending powers, it was thought advisable to interpose a hollow peevish truce, which could be broken off at pleasure; and which would give those who had hitherto disapproved the attempt to overturn the French Republic as an unprincipled aggression on the rights and liberties of mankind, but who were grown lukewarm in the cause, or were tired out with opposition, a plausible pretext to change sides, and to come over, with loud clamour and tardy repentance, to the views of their King and Country. 'It was a consummation devoutly to be wished'—None can tell how devoutly but those who have known what it is to suffer the privation of public sympathy, the constancy of the irritation, the fruitlessness of perseverance, the bar it is to business or pleasure, the handle it affords to enemies, the coldness it throws on friendship; so that the first opening was eagerly caught at towards a reconciliation between the Opposition and the Government, the ardour of which (on one side at least) was in proportion to their long estrangement. The Minority had thus redeemed their literal pledge of consistency in the original Revolutionary quarrel, and might now join heart and hand in the new crusade against the encroachments and ambition of France. As long as the first war continued, they could not well do so without seeming to acknowledge themselves in the wrong; but by making peace, the government ostensibly took this responsibility upon itself; and with a new war, gave them the option of new opinions, so that they must in courtesy return the compliment by taking part against themselves. The peace of Amiens therefore just left a short interval or breathing-space enough for this compromise of principle, and marshalling of public opinion against the common enemy, upon distinct grounds indeed, but with the old grudge at bottom. The formal suspension of hostilities, however, and the commencing again on fresh and incidental causes of provocation gave immense additional power to the government, and an *impetus* that carried it forward to the proposed end either of destruction or conquest; for it flung the whole practical weight of public opinion in England into the war-scale, without any drawback

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or diversion from contending parties or feelings. The feeble opposition that was left chiefly served to whet and sharpen, instead of blunting the edge of deadly animosity; and many of the new converts who had hurled up the red-cap of liberty with most violence in the air, and whose suffrages it was an object to gain, were now foremost in raising the war-whoop and in cheering the combatants.

The British Government and Public at this period might be divided into three parties. The first and really preponderating party consisted of those who thought that no peace ought to be concluded with a regicide Republic; and that it was nothing short of national degradation and signing a bond of voluntary infamy to enter into truce or treaty with the traitors and miscreants who had usurped the reins of Government in France, as much as with a den of robbers and murderers whom the laws of God and man made it equally a duty to pursue to extermination or unconditional surrender. This was the high Tory party, the school of Burke and Wyndham, and more particularly including the King's friends. But this party being too weak both in numbers and in success to carry their point openly and with a high hand, they were obliged to yield to another more moderate or more politic one, who undertook to manage the same thing for them by underhand means, that is, by professing a willingness and a desire to make peace, and throwing the blame of the renewal of hostilities on the enemy. This party was the *cat's-paw* of the first; and the true agents and promoters of the secret aims of power, consisting of such men as Pitt, Addington, &c. the more knowing diplomatists, the greater part of the public press, and the decent and less violent Church-and-King men. The third were the dupes of the two first, being composed of the great mass of the people, and the friends of peace and liberty, who believed that peace had been concluded in the spirit of peace, and that if his Majesty's Ministers were compelled to break it off, it was for the causes which they themselves chose to assign as just and lawful ones. The earliest of these which were brought forward to give the alarm, were stories of armaments in the ports of France; secondly, Sebastiani seen creeping like a rat along the coasts of the Adriatic, which portended the speedy loss of Egypt; thirdly, the stipulated retention of Malta in the hands of the Knights of St. John, which the French would convert into a stepping-stone to our possessions in India; and lastly, the meditated conquest of the world by the French Consul. All these pretexts are at present given up as vague and frivolous by the most staunch and able advocates of the late war, who lament that no mention was made by our statesmen of the day of the occupation of Switzerland and the Confederation of Lombardy as the true grounds of the refusal to execute the treaty of Amiens. Neither was any mention made of another equally con-

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vincing and cogent argument against peace, that the throne of France was not as yet occupied by the Bourbons. But our Ministers being determined, in pursuance of this last object, to risk the existence and welfare of the country on the issue of an unprincipled and hypocritical war, could bring forward no excuses for incurring this responsibility and balancing this evil, but such as implied (however absurdly and falsely), that the same risk was to be apprehended every moment from the insatiable and restless ambition of Buonaparte. In order to prepare the way for this desirable turn to the negotiations (for so it was considered by the furiously loyal and patriotic) no pains had been spared. During the short interval of peace, every mode of irritation, recrimination, and invective had been industriously resorted to and tacitly encouraged. When the most revolting charges were complained of, it was answered that they could not be suppressed without tampering with the liberty of the press, though it was well known that the slightest breath from authority would have stifled them; and a celebrated advocate on the trial of Peltier is supposed to have been sent over by Government not long before (but on a sleeveless errand) to find new fuel for the flame and to extract new poison for the tooth of calumny to feed upon. Buonaparte in his public and private character was uniformly held up as a monster of ambition, cruelty, and lust. Every body knows that it is only necessary to raise a bugbear before the English imagination in order to govern it at will. Whatever they hate or fear, they implicitly believe in, merely from the scope it gives to these passions; and what they once believe in, they proceed to act upon, and rush blindly on their own destruction or that of others, without pausing to inquire into causes or consequences. Their own fury supplies them with resolution: the judgment of their betters directs the application to their cost. Gloomy, sullen, suspicious, brooding always on the worst side of things, indignant at every appearance of injustice, except when it is committed by themselves, and then scornfully resenting the imputation or turning round and boldly justifying it; quarrelling with and maligning one another till their attention is roused by a common foe, their union being increased and cemented through the jarring elements of which it is composed; never satisfied but when they have some object of jealousy or dislike to wreak their vengeance upon, they are the butt and dupes of whoever can take advantage of their ungovernable, headstrong humours; mistake the strength of their passions and prejudices for the soundness of their reason and the goodness of their cause; run from artificial terrors into real dangers; have a sort of unconscious obtuseness and *bonhomie* even in their most flagrant acts of self-will, which they conceive all the world must admire; shew the same blindfold rage in the pursuit of right or wrong; and to

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hate and be hated is the only thing in which they are sure to take the lead. The English character is surcharged with spleen, distrust, and haughtiness; and the smallest pretext, the shadow of an excuse, a rumour, a nickname, is sufficient to make these qualities blaze out in all their wonted malignity. OCCASION, as one of our own poets has feigned, ever follows FURY hard at hand.—We shall see that these remarks were verified at every step of the proceedings in the present instance. A writer of some note at the time boasted that he had done more than any one to bring about the war and foment a spirit of rancour by nicknaming Buonaparte *The Corsican*. This was not so much a piece of idle vanity in the individual as a just satire on the nation at large.

Buonaparte himself, despairing of establishing a cordial understanding with England, and probably piqued at the ill success his advances had met with, began to vent his chagrin in indirect sarcasms and national reflections. On one occasion he broke out in the following terms:—‘They are always citing the example of England for its riches and good government. Well then! I have got its budget: I will have it printed in the *Moniteur*. It will be seen that she has an actual deficit of between five and six hundred millions. She has, it is true, a considerable Sinking Fund, with which she may, as they pretend, pay off her debts in thirty-eight years: but in order to this, it would be necessary that she should stop short in her career for once, and raise no more loans. She does not call that a deficit; but she sets down among her receipts a loan which only serves to increase her debt, and it is impossible to foresee how she can ever wind up her accounts on such a system. England keeps up a land-army of one hundred and ten thousand men, which costs her three hundred and thirty-three millions of livres annually. It is enormous and the sign of a bad administration. It is the same with her marine which costs four hundred and six millions: it is considerable, no doubt, but the expense is nevertheless out of proportion. People are enraptured with England on hearsay: it is so in the *Belles-Lettres*. Shakespear had been forgotten for two hundred years, even in his own country, when it pleased Voltaire, who was at Geneva and visited by a good many of the English, to cry up this author in order to pay his court to them;<sup>1</sup> and every one repeated after him that Shakespear was the first writer in the world. I have read him; there is nothing in his works that approaches to Corneille or Racine. It is not even possible to read one of his pieces through, without feeling pity for them. As to Milton, there is only his Invocation to the Sun and one or two other passages; the rest is a mere rhapsody. I like Vely better than Hume. France has nothing

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire extolled the beauties of Shakespear long before this period, in his *Letters on England*.



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to envy in England, a country that its inhabitants leave the instant they are able. There are at present more than forty thousand on the Continent.' This passage may at least serve as a lesson against undervaluing an enemy. Buonaparte would have done right to have thought more highly of the capacity of the English in certain things, and to have trusted less to their generosity. He did not know the flint of which our character is ordinarily composed, nor the fire that sometimes lurks beneath it.

It is evident that Buonaparte had expected or wished for peace both from the low state of warlike preparation to which he suffered the army to be reduced, and from the disappointment and impatience he manifested, as the hopes of it gradually vanished, and the designs of the English Ministers were more clearly seen through. They shewed no alacrity in executing the conditions of the treaty; for people are in no hurry to do that, which they do not mean to do at all. Most of the French colonies were given back; but we retained possession of the Cape of Good Hope, of Alexandria, and Malta. The two former were at length evacuated also; but Malta still remained a bone of contention, and was just enough to answer the purpose, as while any part of the treaty was withheld, nothing was really granted. It was as easy to make peace split upon that rock as upon any other; and so far, the prize was invaluable. It was at last agreed to give it up, if a sufficient guarantee for its neutrality could be found; but when this guarantee was pointed out by providing a garrison of Austrians and Russians, instead of Neapolitans, that also was refused of course. Any terms of peace were acceptable, but what were practicable! As to the fears of Malta being hereafter seized upon by the French as the key to Egypt and our Eastern possessions, I do not believe that any such apprehensions were seriously entertained, or weighed so much as a feather in the balance; but even if they did, and there was a jealousy on the part of our merchants or statesmen that the French might possibly at some distant period wrest their acquisition to this purpose, yet no such plea is admissible in sound policy on this plain and broad principle, that there is no providing by any artifice or precautions against all possible contingencies, and that if our selfish and grasping passions were as long-sighted and speculative as they are gross and narrow-minded, there could not be a moment's peace or security for the world, and we must be always at war, to prevent the possibility of any advantage being taken of us in time to come. We seize on and plunder distant continents, and then keep the world in amazement and dread with our disinterested denunciations against the ambitious and unprincipled projects of others, that they may at some time or other rob us of our ill-gotten and uncertain booty. The First Consul, uneasy at the

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delays of the British Ministry, and at the increasing tone of exasperation on both sides, so early as the 11th of February, 1803, had an interview with Lord Whitworth (our ambassador), in which for the space of nearly two hours he set forth the various causes of his dissatisfaction with the English Government in firm and animated language, rising in fervour as he proceeded, but without failing in the usual tone of courtesy due to an ambassador.

He first complained of the delay of the British in evacuating Alexandria and Malta ; cutting short all discussion on the latter subject by declaring he would as soon agree to Great Britain's possessing the suburb of St. Antoine, as that island. He then referred to the abuse poured upon him by the English papers, but more especially by the French journals published in London. He affirmed that Georges and other Chouan chiefs, whom he accused of designs against his life, received relief and shelter in England ; and that two assassins had been apprehended in Normandy sent over by the French emigrants to murder him. This, he said, would be publicly proved in a court of justice, as was afterwards done at the trial of Pichegru and others. From this point he digressed to Egypt, of which he affirmed he could make himself master whenever he chose ; but that he considered it too paltry a stake to renew the war for. At the same time he contended that Egypt must sooner or later belong to France, either by the falling to pieces of the Turkish Empire, or in consequence of some agreement with the Porte. In evidence of his peaceable intentions, he asked, what he should gain by going to war, since he had no means of acting offensively against England, except by a descent, of which he acknowledged the hazard in the strongest terms. The chances, he said with his usual pointed frankness, were a hundred to one against him ; and yet he declared that the attempt should be made if he were now obliged to go to war. He extolled the power of both countries. The army of France, he said, should be soon recruited to four hundred and eighty thousand men ; and the fleets of England were such as he could not propose to match within the space of ten years at least. United, the two countries might govern the world, would they but understand each other. Had he found the least cordiality on the part of England, she should have had indemnities assigned her upon the Continent, treaties of commerce, all that she could ask or desire. But he confessed that his irritation increased daily, 'since every gale that blew from England brought nothing but enmity and hatred against him.' In the final result, he demanded the instant fulfilment of the treaty of Amiens, and the suppression of the abuse in the English newspapers. War was the alternative. To an allusion by Lord Whitworth to the changes in Piedmont and Switzerland as obstacles to peace,

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Buonaparte replied that those were trifles which must have been foreseen while the treaty was pending, and it was a mere pretext to recur to them now. Besides, the delivering up of Malta to the English would not remedy them. They parted with mutual civility; and Lord Whitworth expressed himself perfectly satisfied with his audience, but soon after sent over a long account of it to the Ministers, tending to inflame the quarrel and to remove the hope of an adjustment of differences to a greater distance. In a word, it was obvious that the First Consul was bent upon peace; and the more anxious he was for it, the more the English Cabinet grew alarmed and determined to break it off. They hated the man; and it was only in a war that they could hope to destroy him and the Republic. The duplicity and misrepresentation of which Buonaparte was the object on this occasion, made him determine in future to recur to the common forms of diplomacy and communicate his sentiments through his Ministers, to whom he could in that case appeal as evidence in his justification. The former method was, however, more suited to the genius of the man and to his situation as the head of a free state, who having no sentiments or interests but those of the community to express, expressed them openly, manfully, and with the degree of energy and warmth they infused into his breast; and that by a republican boldness and simplicity presented a marked contrast to those state-puppets, who being actuated only by their pride and passions while they profess to aim at the public good, should always explain themselves by proxy, that there may be no clue to their real feelings and intentions, and as little connexion between their lips and the sentiments of their hearts, as there is between their interests and those of the people.

On the 8th of March, a speech from the Throne recommended to the British Parliament the seconding the Government in completing all the measures of defence which circumstances might appear to render necessary for the honour of the Crown and the essential interests of the People. These precautions were to be grounded on considerable preparations said to be making in the ports of France and Holland, and on differences of a high importance which existed between his Majesty and the French Government. Buonaparte had been just reading this notable message in a dispatch which he had received from London, when he had to enter the drawing-room at the Thuilleries where the Foreign Ambassadors were collected, and stopping short before the English Ambassador, he put the following hurried questions to him in a tone of surprise and impatience:—‘What does your Cabinet mean? What is the motive for raising these rumours of armaments in our harbours? How is it possible to impose in this manner on the credulity of the nation, or to be so ignorant of our real intentions? If the actual

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state of things be known, it must be evident to all that there are only two armaments fitting out for St. Domingo ; that this island engrosses all our disposable means. Why then these complaints ? Can peace be already considered as a burden to be shaken off ? Is Europe to be again deluged with blood ? ' He then addressed Count Marcoff and the Chevalier Azara—' The English wish for war ; but if they draw the sword first, I will be the last to return it to the scabbard. They do not respect treaties, which henceforth we must cover with black crape.' He then again turned to Lord Whitworth : ' To what purpose is this pretended alarm ? Against whom do you take these measures of precaution ? I have not a single ship of the line in any port in France. But if you arm, I will arm too ; if you fight, I will fight. You may destroy France, but you cannot intimidate her.' Lord Whitworth bowed, and made no reply. The First Consul left that part of the saloon, and, without going the usual round, retired soon after. The rest of the company followed, except the English and Russian Ambassadors, who withdrew to the recess of a window, and were seen conversing together long after. Such is the amount of a scene in which Buonaparte's temper and language were represented to have risen to such a height, that Lord Whitworth every moment expected he would strike him, and was prepared to have run his sword through his body if he had ! And the English nation gloried for many a year in the notion of the rage into which Buonaparte was thrown by our not making peace with him, and of the signal revenge which our Ambassador would have taken on the spot, had he not contained himself within certain limits ! To fables and caricatures of this kind did the Tory party think it necessary to resort to rouse the passions and prejudices of the multitude to a pitch of madness. The principles of the Revolution in themselves wearing a seductive and popular aspect, the only chance its opponents had was to divert attention from them, by vilifying the persons of those who defended them, and holding them up alternately as objects of terror and ridicule. They did every thing to provoke Buonaparte beyond the bounds of patience, and then make a merit of having succeeded, representing it as a new ground of war ; as if he who had received, not those who had offered the insults and provocations, was the aggressor, and he was a man of that violence and irritability of temper, that no peace could be kept with him. Every thing being thus referred to personal prejudice and rancour, the fairest offers were treated as insidious, the plainest proofs were answered by a volley of abuse, or by a sneer of contempt. Buonaparte, by his flaws and starts of temper, showed that he was still one of the people, and responsible to them for the issue of affairs. He was naturally mortified at the vain professions of peace by which he had been amused, and



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disgusted at the barefaced imposture by which they were broken off. He was not one of that favoured race of mortals who can do no wrong ; who are invulnerable to opinion, accountable to none but themselves, and who preserve the same equanimity because they receive the same obedience and outward homage whether they ruin or save—alike indifferent to the execration or the gratitude of their country. Persecution drives men beside themselves ; the withholding of the best-founded claims makes them set up unreasonable ones. We cannot be surprised, if Buonaparte, to shield himself in some degree from the annoyance of vulgar ribaldry and the supercilious airs of power, seriously bethought himself of borrowing an armour of proof, which the Pope helped to buckle on for him, and of binding the laurel-wreath of victory (as it was not to be that of peace also) with the golden circlet of an imperial crown.

The First Consul did not, however, all at once throw away the hope of an accommodation, as the following speech in the Council of State just after will testify :—‘ It is asked if the present political juncture will not be unfavourable to the establishment of a national bank. The Romans, when besieged, sent an army into Africa. If we should have war, which is not to be presumed, it would diminish the imposts by thirty millions. We should live in Europe, in Hanover. Italy would furnish us with forty millions, instead of twenty ; Holland with thirty millions, instead of nothing, which it actually contributes. I told the English Ambassador, “ You may indeed kill Frenchmen, but not intimidate them.” I am unable to conceive the motives of the King’s message. There are two points : first, the armaments ; this reduces itself to the expedition to Louisiana, two thousand men detained by the frost, and three *avisos* at Dunkirk, which set sail for St. Domingo the very day of the message. The English Ministers cannot pretend ignorance of that ; it is sufficiently public. Otherwise, if they had demanded explanations, they might have been made easy on that head. Secondly, there are the discussions on the treaty. But I am not aware of any such ; there are none. Do they mean to allude to Malta, or to keep it ? But treaties must be executed, and France cannot recede on that point without receding on all the rest. It would be contrary to honour. A nation ought never to do anything contrary to its honour ; for in this case it would be the lowest of all ; it were better to perish. If we gave up this point, they would next demand to have a commissary at Dunkirk. These times are past ; we are no longer what we were. We will not become the vassals of England. They well-nigh threatened me with war eight or nine months ago, if I did not conclude a treaty of commerce. I replied : “ All in good time ; I will not have a treaty of commerce ; I wish to establish a *tariff*,

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which will suit us best." Nevertheless, it was in this manner that they forced a treaty upon M. de Vergennes; though he knew well enough that it was injurious. If they mean to speak of Malta and intend to keep it, war is inevitable, though Malta belongs to the sea, and it was to receive a garrison of Neapolitans, who are well known not to be very favourable to us: but then our honour! The English are in the habit of disturbing the Continent, and from the little resistance they in general meet with, are exceedingly sensible to it; so much the worse for them! Would it not seem that we have it in view to invade England? We ask nothing from her; all that we require is the execution of treaties. If the message has a reference to the exterior, it can only be to Malta. If it has to do with domestic affairs, its object may be to put on board their vessels five or six thousand individuals, who give them cause of uneasiness, in consequence of what has taken place at the funeral of Colonel Despard, or for some other end of which I am ignorant, and am at a loss to divine. For in general, when the English are resolved on war, they begin by issuing secret orders, five or six months before-hand, to capture all merchant-vessels; and they give notice to the Exchange. On the contrary, this message has fallen as if from the clouds; they knew nothing of it the evening before. The King was following the chase; the Exchange was not apprised of it. So that it has had an effect which was never before known in England; the funds have fallen from 72 to 62. It is, then, an inexplicable caprice, and all for nothing. For what says the message? It calls for neither men nor money: it only says that it hopes the Commons will shew themselves *if we invade England*, and the Commons reply, that they will. Behold a mighty discovery! Besides, all this does more harm to England than to us, for she exists only by her credit. All her merchantmen have orders not to stir. War would oblige her to incur expences, and make her sustain losses forty times greater than those which we should have to suffer. It would be without object.'

The whole proceeding, of which Buonaparte makes a political mystery, is an obvious moral truism. The English Cabinet had determined all along never to conclude peace, and it could no longer put it off without an abrupt declaration of war. The excesses of the French Revolution had shocked and terrified the upper classes; the glory and the growing prosperity of the Republic under its new leader, galled their pride still more. No sacrifices, no risks, no breach of faith was too great to avoid setting the seal to a system which affronted and gave the lie to all their boasted pretensions and maxims. But in order to prevent the scandal of a sudden rupture (the true reasons of which would not bear disclosure), it was brought forward as if quite unawares, and from a momentary panic at imaginary armaments in the ports of

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France. The fears and anger of the country being thus excited by an object which had no existence, might then be easily directed to any object the Government pleased. It would be a pity that such a stock of patriotism and loyalty should be collected by the most approved conduit (the King's speech), and in the grand reservoir of public opinion (the breast of the Commons of Great Britain) in vain. Our passions would not be the less inflamed by finding that we had been duped into them. The blow once struck, we should not stop to inquire into the grounds of the quarrel, but be ready to commit ourselves to destruction in order to avoid it. Such is the web of which loyalty and patriotism are vulgarly composed; and in this manner was the war of 1803 got up by a paltry stratagem, and by disseminating a false alarm of an invasion which only war could bring about.

The reports of war soon gained ground, and the First Consul spoke out more plainly on the subject. Of the tone and spirit in which he met these first hostile demonstrations on the part of Great Britain, the following observations delivered at an audience (the 11th Floreal), convey a remarkable specimen:—‘ Since the English (he said, after the Foreign Ambassadors were gone) wish to force us to leap the ditch, we will leap it. They may take some of our frigates or our colonies; but I will carry terror into the streets of London, and I give them warning, that they will bewail the end of this war with tears of blood. The Ministers have made the King of England tell a lie in the face of Europe. There were no armaments going on in France; there has been no negotiation. They have not transmitted to me a single note: Lord Whitworth could not help acknowledging it. And yet it is by the aid of such vile insinuations, that a Government seeks to excite the passions. For the last two months I have endured all sorts of insults from the English Government. I have let them fill up the measure of their offences; they have construed that into feebleness, and have redoubled their presumption to the point of making their Ambassador say: *Do so and so, or I shall depart in seven days.* Is it thus that they address a great nation? He was told to write, and that his notes would be laid before the eyes of Government. *No*, was the reply, *I have orders to communicate only verbally.* Is not this an unheard-of form of negotiating? Does it not shew a marked determination to shuffle, equivocate, play at fast and loose as they please, and leave no proof against themselves? But if they falsify facts, what faith can be placed in their sincerity in other respects? They are deceived if they think to dictate laws to forty millions of people. They have been led to believe that I dreaded war, lest it should shake my authority. I will raise two millions of men, if it be necessary. The result of the first war has been to aggrandise France by the addition of Belgium and Pied-

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mont. The result of this will be to consolidate our federative system still more firmly. The bond of union between two great nations can be no other than justice and the observation of treaties. The one towards which they are violated, cannot, ought not to suffer it under pain of degradation. Let her but once give way, and she is lost. It would be better for the French people to bend to the yoke, and erect the throne of the King of England in Paris, than to submit to the caprices and arbitrary pretension of her Government. One day they will demand the salute from our vessels; another they will forbid our navigators to pass beyond such a latitude. Already even they observe with jealousy that we were clearing out our harbours, and re-establishing our marine. They complain of it; they demand guarantees. A short while ago the Vice-Admiral Lesseigues touched at Malta; he had two ships with him; he found fifteen English ones there. They wanted him to fire a salute; Lesseigues refused: some words passed. If he had yielded, I would have had him carried in procession on an ass; which is a mode of punishment more ignominious than the guillotine. I flatter myself that when our conduct shall be made known, there is not a corner of Europe in which it will not meet with approbation. When England consented to a peace, she thought that we should tear one another to pieces in the interior, that the Generals would give France trouble. The English have done all they could; but their intrigues of every kind have been in vain. Every one has occupied himself only in repairing his losses. A little sooner, a little later, we must have had war. It is best to have it at once, before our maritime commerce is restored.'

There were some Members of the Senate present on this occasion; amongst others, Laplace and Bougainville, who talked of the facility of a descent upon England. All is easy to French imagination: it costs only words. After some vain altercations and affected concessions, which came to nothing, and were meant to come to nothing, Lord Whitworth took his departure. On occasion of this circumstance being communicated to the Legislative Body, the orator Fontaine made a speech, not like Buonaparte, laying down facts one by one, like the pieces of a mosaic-pavement, clear at once and solid, but running into extravagant assumptions and false sentiment. 'If the English,' he said, 'should dare to combat us, be it so! France is ready to cover herself once more with those arms which have conquered Europe. It is not France that will declare war; but she will accept the challenge without fear, and will know how to maintain it with energy. Our country is become anew the centre of civilized Europe. England can no longer say that she is defending the indispensable principles of society, menaced to its foundations: it is we who may hold this language, if



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war was rekindled : it is we who shall then have to avenge the rights of nations and the cause of humanity, in repelling the unjust attack of a Government that negociates to deceive, that asks for peace to prepare for war, and that signs treaties only to break them. If the signal is once given, France will rally by an unanimous movement round the hero she admires. All the parties whom he keeps in order near him will only dispute who shall manifest most zeal and courage. All feel the want of his genius, and acknowledge that he alone can sustain the weight and grandeur of our new destinies. The exiles newly recalled to their country will be foremost to defend it,' &c. We have here some of the first flashy indications of that vain-glorious and overweening spirit, which, turning the grand question into a national quarrel, and affecting obliquely to disclaim the principles of freedom out of which it arose and which sanctified it, substituted the effervescence of French conceit for the old leaven of Jacobinism, looked round with gaping credulity for universal admiration, when it could only take a stern defensive attitude and submit with firm resignation to an honourable stigma ; made so many enemies, lost so many friends, and while it set no bounds to the arrogance of its pretensions, struck at the principle which had hitherto supported them, and to which they must return to make a final stand.

Great Britain declared war against France the 18th of May, 1803. Period ever fatal and memorable—the commencement of another Iliad of woes not to be forgotten while the world shall last ! The former war had failed, and the object of this was to make another desperate effort to put down, by force of arms and at every risk, the example of a revolution which had overturned a hateful but long-established tyranny, and had hitherto been successful over every attempt to crush it by external or internal means. The other causes assigned at different periods and according to the emergency were mere masks to cover this, which was the true, the constant, and sole-moving one in all circumstances and in all fortunes ; through good report and evil report, in victory or defeat, in the abyss of despair or the plenitude of success, in every stage and phasis of its commencement, progress, or double termination. There might have been a doubt on this subject at one period (though none to a sober and dispassionate judgment) ; but those who say otherwise at this time of day, and after the catastrophe, are not to be believed. Whether that object was just or not, is a different question ; and there may be two opinions upon the subject, that of the free or of the slave. Of all the fictions that were made use of to cloak this crying iniquity, the pleas of justice and humanity were the most fallacious. No very great ceremony was employed on the present occasion, but rather a cavalier and peremptory tone was

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encouraged. Malta was a merely nominal pretext. The encroachments of France, and the extension of its influence since the conclusion of the treaty, were said to endanger our possessions in India, and to require Malta as an additional security. But had not we extended our conquests in India in the mean time? Or would this have been held a valid plea, if the French had broken off the treaty on that ground? But we ourselves are always exceptions to the rules we impose so magisterially on others. Justice is not an attribute of the sea; conquests on the Continent of Asia are very different things from conquests on the Continent of Europe. Morality is one thing between the tropics, and another nearer to the pole, and so on. As to the domineering spirit and ambitious projects ascribed to France, it is true she had come off victor in the late contest, which was a great crime, no doubt, and an outrage on all proper decorum. In war, however, one of the two parties must have the best of it; and it is not usual for the conquering party to give up its advantages. If you attack an adversary, and he strikes you down, your returning to the charge in despair or revenge does not prove that you are in the right. Baffled malice is not justice; nor does it become so by a repetition of the offence, nor by any quantity of mischief it inflicts on itself or others. The federative system which Buonaparte talked of strengthening was calculated to barricado France against the successive Coalitions and the formidable lines of circumvallation which both now and afterwards the Allied Sovereigns drew around it. Lombardy was not independent, but had been wrested by France from its unwilling subjection to Austria. Let the facts speak, whose sway was mildest or best. If legitimate Princes expect, after losing the game of war, to receive back the stakes, they do not practise the precepts which they preach. They would play long enough at the game on these terms. As to Buonaparte's making himself master of Switzerland, it was not defacing the shrine of liberty, but stopping up a door in a wall, through which a hireling assassin stole to destroy it. Buonaparte did not shed the blood of the Swiss, but prevented them from shedding it themselves in a useless quarrel. William Tell could not come to life again to defend the neutrality of his country; or if he had, would hardly have sided with its old oppressors (though there is no saying). Buonaparte left the Swiss in possession of their ancient laws and franchises; and only claimed so much influence over them or management in their concerns, as to prevent their territory from becoming the rendezvous of foreign cabals and conspiracies against the French Republic, or a thoroughfare for the hordes of slaves and barbarians to march to their long-promised prey. The old Republic was jealous of the new one; and the country-places from simplicity and custom, the towns from a mixture of aristocratic

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pride were averse to change. The plan which Buonaparte chalked out for them was, for the most part, a model of moderation and good sense. He wished to preserve the right of voting for their representatives in the democratic Cantons and pastoral districts; continued the *grabeau* or right of calling their Magistrates to account every two years; extended the privilege of exercising the functions of Government to a greater number of families in the aristocratic Cantons; kept the independence of the Cantons distinct; told the patriot Reding that the sun would return from the West to the East before the Valais would return under the yoke of the oligarchy of Berne, and kept the Valteline out of the clutches of the Grisons. Still it was treading on ticklish and forbidden ground. It gave a handle to the poets and jurists against him, extremes of the human understanding, the conjunction of which is omnious. He did not enough regard the real strength and the mock-morality of England. He said if the English Cabinet had shewn the least disposition to interfere, he would have made himself *Landamman*. In the same spirit he declared that 'England could not contend single-handed against France.' Perhaps not, if England could have been lashed to the Continent; but as this was not likely to happen, I do not see that we were to go to war for an idle national vaunt.

In order to put ourselves into a situation to judge impartially in this case, and to see on which side the impediments to maintaining the relations of peace and amity lay, let us for a moment reverse the picture, and turn the tables the other way. Let us suppose that from the first cessation of hostilities a system of unqualified abuse and unsparing ribaldry had commenced on the other side of the water against the English nation and government; that his Majesty King George III. had been daily accused of the most shocking public and private vices, and his name unblushingly coupled with epithets that cannot be repeated; that the females of the Royal Family had been held up to opprobrium and contempt, as engaged in the grossest and most scandalous intrigues; that on application being made to put a stop to the evil, the only redress that could be obtained was an appeal to a Court of Justice, where all the charges were insisted on with double relish and acrimony, amidst a shout of exultation and jubilee from the whole venal press; let us suppose that the ruling Monarch of this country had been, without the intermission of a day, taunted with the mention of his constitutional malady, and with his being the descendant of a petty German Elector; let us suppose the surviving branches of the Stuart family to be maintained in France at the public expense, and their pretensions to the throne of England sometimes broadly insinuated, never clearly disavowed, but kept in a doubtful state, to be brought forward at a

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moment's warning ; that bands of organised rebels and assassins, in the pay of these Princes, hovered constantly on the English coast to excite insurrection, and glided even into the Royal palaces ; that they had several times attempted the life of the King, but that they were still in the same favour and kept up a clandestine intercourse with the Republican Government ; let us suppose that remonstrances were made against these proceedings, which were received with official coldness and contempt ; let us suppose it to have been considered as a mark of want of zeal and devotion to the person and government of the First Consul for any Frenchman to visit England, or to be introduced at the English Court ; let us suppose every advance towards confidence or cordiality to be carefully shunned, every handle for recrimination or distrust to be eagerly seized on ; that the articles of the pretended treaty of peace were executed slowly, one by one ; that the reluctance to conclude it evidently increased in proportion to the delays that had taken place ; that at last, when the farce could be kept up no longer, it was suddenly put an end to by a flat refusal to execute one of the stipulations, and by forged rumours of preparations in the ports of England to invade France—who would have asked in that case on which side the bar to peace lay, or which Government harboured a rooted and rancorous desire for the renewal of the war ? But it may be said that there was a difference between Napoleon Buonaparte and George III. Yes, it was on that difference that the whole question turned. It was the sense of degradation, and of the compromise of the kingly dignity in condescending to make peace on a friendly and equal footing with an individual who had risen from the people, and who had no power over them but from the services he had rendered them, that produced a repugnance, amounting to loathing, to a peace with the Republic (like the touch of the leprosy, like embracing an infectious body), that plunged us into all the horrors and calamities of war, and brought us back in the end to the arms and to the blessings of Legitimate Government !—Persons who are fond of dwelling on the work of retribution, might perhaps trace its finger here. The Monarch survived the accomplishment of all his wishes, but without knowing that they had been accomplished. To those who long after passed that way, at whatever hour of the night, a light shone from one of the watch-towers of Windsor Castle—it was from the chamber of a King, old, blind, bereft of reason, ‘ with double darkness bound ’ of body and mind ; nor was that film ever removed, nor those eyes or that understanding restored to hail the sacred triumph of Kings over mankind ; but the light streamed and streamed (indicating no dawn within) for long years after the celebration of that day which gladdened the hearts of Monarchs and of menial nations, and through that second night of slavery



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which succeeded—the work of a single breast, which it had dearly accomplished in darkness, in self-oblivion, and in more than kingly solitude !

### CHAPTER XXXII

#### PREPARATIONS TO INVADE ENGLAND

THE English, previously to any formal declaration of war, had seized on all the French shipping in their ports; and Buonaparte, provoked beyond measure by the infraction of the treaty, and by this new outrage, made severe and perhaps unwarrantable reprisals, by detaining all the English residing in France as prisoners of war. Nothing could certainly excuse the extremity of this mode of retaliation, both on account of the extent of the injury and the description of persons on whom it chiefly fell, but that it might serve as a lesson to a people who preached lofty maxims of morality to others and thought their own will a sufficient law to themselves, that justice and courtesy are reciprocal among nations, and that if one of them chuses to indulge its enmity without cause and without bounds, it at least cannot do so with impunity. He never expressed any regret on this subject, but rather his concern that he had not made the regulations more rigorous, in revenge for our having degraded the French prisoners of war by sending them on board the hulks. We had met with our match for once; and were like spoiled children, who had cut their fingers in playing with edged tools. Buonaparte's spirit and firmness were often carried into obstinacy; or it would have been more to his credit if he had relaxed from this arbitrary determination after the first ebullition of impatience and resentment was over; and probably he would have done so, but for fresh and aggravated provocations. Repeated landings of Chouans and brigands on the French coast might not tend to improve his temper, or to make him sensible of what was due to the generosity and magnanimity of the English character. He indeed afterwards offered to compromise the matter, by including the *détenus* in an exchange of prisoners; but the English Government stood out upon a political punctilio, disregarding the prolonged distresses of their countrymen over which they affected to make such pathetic lamentations, but which they would not go an inch out of their way, or abate a jot of their sullen scorn and defiance to alleviate. Why then should Buonaparte? A few exceptions were occasionally made in favour of literary and scientific men, or those who were considered as

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something more than mere Englishmen. The rest were condemned to linger out a long and painful captivity, which was equally without dignity or even the sting of disgrace, and as hopeless in the prospect of its termination as it was unaccountable in its commencement. It is not too much to conjecture that the Tory Ministry felt no very acute sympathy, nor took a very active interest in their sufferings. They had been rightly served, and had been caught in the trap that had been prepared for them by their idle curiosity and ridiculous *Gallomania* !<sup>1</sup> Their harsh treatment affixed an odium on the French government and nation ; and it was of little consequence by what means the popular mind on this side the channel was gangrened and inflamed. It was immaterial what ingredients were thrown into the boiling cauldron of national hate, or employed to make the charm of loyalty 'thick and slab.' Whatever swelled the war-whoop or cut off the chance of reconciliation, pleased. The seizure of Hanover (as belonging to the King of England, though at peace with France) was in the same point of view regarded as no unpropitious omen ; and the occupation of Tarentum and other sea-ports of the kingdom of Naples by the French, soon after the breaking out of hostilities, was cited as a proof of the justice and expediency of the war, and as disclosing in the clearest light their real character and previous intentions, together with the unprincipled and perfidious policy of their leader. The latter seems at least to have been determined that if he could not have peace, he would make other countries support the expences of war. Buonaparte was all along treated like an outlaw, which he could not help : if he had behaved like a driveller or poltroon, this would have been his own fault.

The First Consul had hoped for the duration of peace. He had indeed been so little apprehensive of an immediate recurrence to a state of hostility, that he had granted an unlimited leave of absence to every French soldier who had applied for it ; and this permission had been taken advantage of to such an extent that the greater part of the infantry regiments were nearly reduced to skeletons. They would even have been wholly disbanded, had it not been for regard to the officers, who had no means of subsistence but their pay. The cavalry in like manner had been suffered to dwindle away almost to nothing. The parks of artillery and field-equipages were broken up. Every other consideration had given way to economy. New plans were adopted for re-casting the artillery, and every thing had been taken to the large

<sup>1</sup> When a young artist at this period was questioned whether he had been over to France, and he answered that he had not, nor had he any wish to go, he received a smiling reply from the most flattering quarter, 'You are very right, you are very right, Mr.—.'

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foundries, where they had already begun to break up the cannon for the purpose of throwing them into the furnaces. None of the materials of war were at hand or in a state of forwardness. Such a condition was not calculated to excite the alarm of the neighbouring States; but might have its share in reviving their hopes, and hastening the moment of an attack. As the First Consul had reckoned on the approaching conclusion of peace and was chiefly occupied in promoting internal improvements, he had not paid much attention to the plans represented to him by the War Minister Berthier and by General Marmont; so that the breaking up of the whole field of artillery was going on rapidly, when the cry of war suddenly reached his ears.

He was greatly vexed at so unpleasant a circumstance. He sent in haste for the War-Minister and for Marmont. 'Really,' said he, 'if you were not my friends, I should suspect that you were betraying me. Send instantly to the arsenals and foundries, to suspend your fatal projects, and get as much artillery in readiness as you can possibly collect.' The navy was in a still less promising condition. Most of the sailors had been sent to take possession of the colonies restored to the French, and the marine department had just dispatched a flotilla to occupy a small factory in the East Indies, in which they had been re-instated. Such was the security and neglect of ordinary precautions against the possible renewal of war, that prevailed on all sides. The difficulties the First Consul had to contend with in meeting the emergency, were immense; but his activity and the resources he called into play were in proportion. He never relaxed in his efforts, nor shewed any signs of embarrassment. With that soldier-like frankness which is the mixed result of courage and of pride, and which was a part of his character, he lost no time in making France acquainted with her real situation. He laid before the Legislative Body the several communications which had taken place previously to the rupture; and as they proved that he had done every thing on his part to make good the treaty which had been wantonly set aside, the nation warmly took up his cause, pressed round its chief, and cheerfully came forward with the means required for issuing victorious out of a struggle in which his enemies could hardly pretend that he was the aggressor, but which was aimed at the existence and independence of the state he governed.

The larger towns voted the sums necessary for building ships of war, which were named after the places which had contributed the means to equip them. The first Conscription, the plan of which had already been discussed in the Council of State, was drawn out, numbering in its ranks a multitude of hardy young men, accustomed to the labours of the field, and capable of facing the hardships of a soldier's life; while the decorations of the Legion of Honour and the rewards and promotions

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distributed among the common soldiery tended to give a new character to the army. The cavalry and artillery were remounted : every thing was soon put upon a war-footing. The First Consul was constantly receiving projects for an attack upon England. His first step was to put in motion a part of the troops that were stationed on the Lower Rhine, and order them to advance into Hanover. The management of this expedition was entrusted to General Mortier, who commanded the first military division. The Hanoverian army, under the Duke of Cambridge and General Walmoden, withdrew at the approach of the French, and successively occupied different positions ; but were at length compelled to disband, after giving up their arms, horses, and ammunition. The regiments of French cavalry were now sent to Hanover to be remounted, as they had formerly been sent into Normandy ; and the Electorate furnished considerable military stores of all kinds. If the English were justified in keeping possession of Malta (in the teeth of treaties) lest it should at some future time be made a means of annoying us in India, were not the French at least equally justified in taking possession of a country whose Sovereign was at war with them, and whose resources would be instantly turned against them with the first occasion, in spite of the provisions of the Germanic Constitution ? This was the answer given to Prussia and Austria, who, being in the true secret of the war, gave themselves little trouble about the diplomatic glosses on either side. The Prince-Royal of Denmark was the only Sovereign who protested against the informality of the measure, and raised an army of thirty thousand men in Holstein ; but being unsupported by any other power, he soon laid aside the offensive attitude which he had assumed.

The First Consul had long intended to visit the Netherlands ; he took the occasion of the rupture with England to fulfil this intention, and at the same time to inspect the coast and harbours of the Channel. He set out from St. Cloud with Madame Buonaparte (who accompanied him in almost all his journeys) and dined at Compiègne. He went to visit the palace, which had been turned into a school of arts and manufactures, and where no fitter spot could be found for serving the dinner than the landing-place of the great stair-case. Buonaparte expressed a feeling of regret at beholding the dilapidated condition of so noble a building, and that same evening wrote to the Minister of the Interior to give orders for the repair of this majestic pile. The school of arts was removed to Chalons. It was right not to have the school and workshops there ; but perhaps it would have been better to have left the ruin standing as a memento of the past, a warning for the future. He might in that case have been himself still standing, but for the affectation of restoring decayed palaces and obsolete institutions ! He



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was received at Amiens with an enthusiastic welcome. He stayed some days here, visiting the several establishments and manufactories, in the company of Citizens Monge, Chaptal, and Berthollet. He next passed through Montreuil, Etaples, Boulogne, Ambleteuse, Vimereux, Calais, and Dunkirk, ordering the most skilful engineers at those several places to fall in with his suite, and asking questions of every person he met. From Dunkirk he proceeded through the principal fortified towns and sea-ports to Antwerp, which remained in the condition in which he had received it back ; but where, after its condition had been thoroughly examined, those important works were undertaken which were in the sequel carried into effect.

A Naval Council was assembled for the purpose of deliberating on the means the Chief Consul possessed of grappling with the power of England at sea ; and he became soon convinced that the resources at his actual disposal were wholly inadequate to the object which he had in contemplation. The Council was unanimously of opinion that the fleet of men of war afforded no chance of success. The only chance that remained of contending with England on an equal footing was to attempt a descent, which could not be effected without the aid of a flotilla. Decrès, the Minister of Marine, was against the plan, saying that if the French constructed a flotilla, the English would raise one also, and come out to meet them. Admiral Bruix was for it, and his opinion prevailed. The First Consul immediately gave orders to the civil and naval engineers to draw up plans and estimates of the expences of the works in each department of the service, and to present models of the vessels which they deemed best calculated for the undertaking. He then proceeded to Brussels, where he was received with the most lively acclamations, and returned to Paris by way of Liege, Givet, Sedan, Rheims, and Soissons. He did not pass through a single town that was famed for any particular branch of industry without visiting its workshops and manufactories, and without constantly manifesting his regret at being obliged so soon to withdraw his attention from the sources of national prosperity to objects of a very different nature. Immediately after his return to Paris, on comparing the various reports that had been sent in, he issued directions for constructing a vast number of gun-boats, flat-bottomed boats, and other craft, to the amount of some thousands. Each considerable city had voted money for the building of a man of war ; the less wealthy and populous made the same offer of gun-boats or flat-bottomed boats. These offers were accepted ; and in order to lose no time, and not to interfere with the ships of war which were on the stocks, the keels were laid along the banks of navigable rivers, where the carpenters and other workmen were assembled from the adjacent districts ; and when finished they were

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floated down to the mouths of the rivers running into the sea between Harfleur and Flushing, and being collected into little squadrons and sent forth from their retreats, crept close along the shore, favoured by the breezes or protected by the batteries erected on the capes and promontories, to their place of rendezvous. Holland likewise furnished her own flotilla on the same plan.

While the French navy (if this Lilliputian armament can be called so) was displaying such unwonted activity, the army was not idle. The regiments, the greater part of which were composed of conscripts, quitted their garrisons, and proceeded to form camps, which extended from Utrecht to the mouth of the Somme. The camp of Utrecht was commanded by General Marmont, who had been succeeded as inspector of artillery by General Songis. This and Mortier's formed the first and second corps. The others, under the orders of Davoust, Soult, Ney, Lannes, and Junot, with the regiments of dragoons and chasseurs, lined the coast from the Scheldt to the mouths of the Oise and of the Aisne. The troops thus distributed were employed and exercised in the manner of the Romans; they laid down the musket to take up the mattock, and the mattock to resume the musket; and, to complete the omen derived from this similarity, a Roman battle-axe was reported to have been dug up near Boulogne, at the same time that medals of William the Conqueror were also said to be found under the spot where Buonaparte's tents had been fixed. The engineers projected immense works, which were all executed in this manner by the troops. They scooped out the harbour of Boulogne, which had been selected as the centre of the intended operations; they constructed a pier, built a bridge, opened a sluice, and dug a basin capable of holding two thousand of the vessels of the flotilla. It was resolved to form a port at Vimereux, which was to be raised fifteen feet above the surface of the sea in the highest tides. The troops accordingly fell to work, and in less than a year they had excavated and lined with masonry a basin fit to receive two hundred gun-boats.

At Ambleteuse the works which had been left unfinished in the time of Louis XVI. were recommenced. The bed of the river was so obstructed that the water would not run off, but covered several thousand acres of land in high cultivation, thereby reducing numbers of families to poverty, and generating unwholesome effluvia and noxious distempers in the neighbourhood. All this was in a short time remedied. A sluice was formed; and the river returning within its channel, gave back to agriculture the land which it had overflowed, and to the adjacent country the salubrity which it had lost. Thus in time of war did Buonaparte contrive and execute the works of peace! The troops who were employed in these various and arduous labours were paid; they

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proceeded in them with alacrity, and only left off when they were compelled by the tide, and then they resumed their firelocks and went to exercise. It was the same at Boulogne, where all the works and establishments of a great naval arsenal sprung up as if by magic. Magazines were formed, ships built, cannon founded, sails and cordage made, biscuit baked, and the army, which was busy in all these tasks, trained at the same time. Various manœuvres were performed by night, and the soldiers were practised in embarking and disembarking with celerity. The superintendence of so many undertakings might be said to surpass human powers; and yet the Chief Consul (as if he had been only amusing himself with a fleet of cockle-shells) found time to attend to the vast concerns of France and Italy. No wonder it was called ambition: it was power, and so far to be feared! He had hired near Boulogne a small mansion called *Pont de Brique*, on the Paris road. He usually arrived there when the soldiers least expected him, immediately mounted his horse, rode through the camps, and was back again at St. Cloud when he was supposed to be still in the midst of the troops;—or he visited the harbour, spoke to the men, and went down into the basins to ascertain with his own eyes to what depth they had dug since he had been last there. He often took back to dine with him at seven or eight in the evening Admiral Bruix, General Soult, Sganzin, superintendent of the works, Faultrier, inspector of the artillery, and the commissary charged with the supply of provisions; so that before he retired to bed, he knew more of what was going forward than if he had read whole volumes of reports. The coolness of his head seemed to keep pace with the hurry of his movements, and the clearness of his views with the complication of affairs and interests he had to attend to. It was at this period that the army was first divided into separate corps; M. de la Bouillerie, a friend of General Moreau, was appointed paymaster-general. Buonaparte placed great confidence in him, which he afterwards repaid, as so many others did.

While Buonaparte's projected expedition was viewed with various sentiments at home, and was ridiculed by many as childish and extravagant, from a comparison of the gun-boats with the size of British men-of-war, it caused a great deal of bustle and alarm (serious or affected) on this side of the Channel. All our fleets were put into requisition from the Baltic to the Tagus, from the Tagus to the coasts of Sicily. Not a fishing-boat but seemed to have new life put into it, and to prepare for the conflict. Upwards of five hundred ships of war, of various descriptions and sizes, scoured the ocean in different directions. English squadrons blockaded every port in the Channel or Mediterranean; and our cruisers were either seen scudding over the waters, like sea-gulls dallying with their native element and hovering near their prey, or

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stood in and insulted the enemy on his own shores, cutting out his vessels or dismantling his forts. Byland, the hubbub and consternation was not less. Britain armed from one end to the other to repel the threatened invasion. An army of volunteers sprung up like grasshoppers. Every hill had its horseman : every bush or brake its sharpshooter. The preparations were not the least active at the greatest distance from the scene of danger. Petitions were put into our liturgy to deliver us from an insolent and merciless foe, who ' was about to swallow us up quick ' ; nor was there a church-door in the remotest corner of Great Britain on which was not posted a call on high and low, rich and poor, to bestir themselves in the common defence, proceeding from Mr. Cobbett's powerful pen, which roused the hopes and fears of the meanest rustic into a flame of martial enthusiasm.

' Victorque sinon incendia miscet  
Insultans.'

There never was a time in which John Bull felt his zeal or courage greater, or felt it so with less expence of real danger. We had all the trappings, the finery, the boastings, and the imaginary triumphs of war, without the tragic accompaniments which were left for others to bear : our spirit of martyrdom was never put to the proof, we had become a nation of heroes without shedding a drop of our blood, and the bugbear which had made such a noise drew off without a blow being struck on British ground. What a difference between that period and the present ! France seemed then to rear up and enlarge its vaunted power, as if it would fall upon and crush us : the Revolutionary hydra haunted and took sleep from our eyes ; now we can scarcely find its faded form in the map, it is like a cloud in the horizon, or no more to us than if it had never existed, or than if the waters of the Channel had rolled their briny ooze over it ! France would have troubled us no more then than now, if we could but have been persuaded *to let it alone*.

This state of things continued for nearly two years, which were passed in idle menaces on one side and vulgar bravado on the other, keeping alive the spirit of rancour and hostility, and inflaming old wounds or opening new ones, till the chance of any cordial reconciliation became as hopeless as any good to be derived from the contest. The new Continental Coalition towards the beginning of 1805 broke up the war of words and defiance, by diverting Buonaparte's attention to a quarry more within his grasp ; and the battle of Trafalgar put the finishing stroke to the plan of a descent upon our coasts. Buonaparte has been sometimes accused of rashness and extravagance in dreaming of the invasion at all, and at others charged with duplicity in pretending that he ever seriously meditated it. He did not, however, it is clear, trust to his



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flat-bottomed boats alone for effecting his object. They were merely intended in the last resort to transport the troops, after he had gained the command of the Channel for a few days, by collecting there a larger fleet of French men-of-war than any the English could bring against him at a moment's notice. This event was to be brought about by putting into motion an immense and precarious system of naval tactics and manœuvres, which by their very complexity, secrecy, and the uncertainty of the elements, which must concur in their punctual execution, were almost sure to miscarry. His plan was for the different fleets he could muster (to the amount of fifty or sixty vessels in all) to get out of the harbours where they were blockaded by the English, to rendezvous at Martinique, and the English ships being dispersed in pursuit of them, to set sail back again all at once, and form a junction (together with the Spanish fleet who were by this time at war with England) off Brest or in Boulogne harbour, so as to make Buonaparte master of the Straits of Dover for three or four days, and thus to enable him to effect the landing of one hundred and sixty thousand men in two thousand flat-bottomed boats prepared for the purpose, and to march immediately to London and take possession of the capital. In fact, in pursuance of an infinite variety of orders, details, and contrivances, the Toulon and Rochefort squadrons under Villeneuve and Miciessy, the one with twenty, the other with six ships, made their escape, rallied at Martinique, and returned to Europe after an action with Admiral Calder, and some delay in consequence of it. The English squadrons before Ferrol and Rochefort finding the enemy had escaped, left those stations, and proceeded to join the Channel fleet before Brest, which then became superior to Admiral Gantheaume's fleet of twenty-one ships, who could not quit the roads of Bertheaume and Brest in order to effect his union with Admiral Villeneuve. The latter at a loss what to do in these new circumstances, and always taking the feeblest course, instead of making direct for Brest according to Napoleon's latest instructions and his own declarations, put into Corunna and afterwards into Ferrol, whence he proceeded to get himself blockaded in Cadiz harbour. This was in the latter end of the summer of 1805. He only went there to fight the well-known battle of Trafalgar, which destroyed the French and Spanish navies, and completely prostrated the reputation of their unfledged commanders before that of the English. In the meantime the delay of Villeneuve in arriving off the mouth of the Channel, and the failure of so many intricate combinations, proved ruinous to the projected expedition against England. It was a vast and unwieldy machine, made up of a number of minute parts and problematical movements, the derangement of any one of which must be nearly fatal to the whole. It must be confessed

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that this was the weak side of Buonaparte's character (for the excess of strength always inclines to a degree of weakness) that he sometimes seemed disposed to mistake the number and extent of the means that he called into existence and the clearness and comprehension with which he arranged them, as far as it was possible beforehand, for the final success of the measure, and that his own energy and resolution, both from natural temperament and the confidence of habitual success, made him put the will for the deed ! The very boldness and strength of will which are necessary to great actions, must often defeat them ; for a high spirit does not easily bend to circumstances or stoop to prudence. Whatever were his own resources, he could not always command the co-operation of others ; yet his plans were on too large a scale not to require it. Neither was he wrong in attributing his failure to the elements : he was only wrong in building sanguine hopes in schemes which depended on their favourable guidance, or in placing himself at their mercy. It is however likely that he had never much stomach for the invasion of this country ; he perhaps thought where nothing could be done, it was as well to make a proportionable display of preparations and an ostentatious career of evasions ; and he turned from it twice, first to venture on his Egyptian expedition, and the second time to hail the sun of Austerlitz.

Neither can I think so poorly of my countrymen (with all my dissatisfaction with them) as to suppose that even if Buonaparte had made good his landing, it would have been all over with us. He might have levelled London with the dust, but he must have covered the face of the country with heaps and *tumuli* of the slain, before this mixed breed of Norman and Saxon blood would have submitted to a second Norman conquest. Whatever may be my opinion of the wisdom of the people, or the honesty of their rulers, I never denied their courage or obstinacy. They do not give in the sooner in a contest for having provoked it. They would not receive a foreign invasion as a visit of courtesy ; nor submit to be conquered like a nation of women, hardly complaining of the rudeness. The French alone have arrived at that point of politeness and effeminacy. The English are not a sufficiently theatrical people to disguise the fact of having been beaten, if they had ; and are too sensible of disgrace not to resent it to the death. I cannot pretend to say, to what point of resistance their love of their king or country might carry them ; but they have too much hatred of the French ever to submit to them as masters.

Buonaparte's hopes of a favourable reception, or of no very determined resistance in Ireland, were better founded ; and one of the alternatives proposed to Villeneuve was to touch on the Western coast of Ireland, and leave a detachment of troops there as a cover to the

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attempts upon England. That country was disaffected to the English Government, and torn in pieces by religious and civil discords; and worse usage was resorted to in order to regain its affections than that by which they had been alienated. It had been lately united to England, and its legislative independence abolished by a breach of faith and a mockery of justice, which seemed the order of the day with the British Ministry, of which Mr. Pitt was become once more the presiding genius. Two sanguinary rebellions (the issue of which was each time nearly doubtful) had broken out and been crushed by force of arms and the most odious system of civil treachery and *espionage*. Instead of a desire to heal and remedy what was amiss, there was no wish but to irritate and degrade—to aggravate the injustice and punish the resistance to it—to consider the nation as enemies and subjects at the same time. Ireland was always treated as a conquered province, to be kept in submission by fear and harshness; an illiberal and narrow-minded policy denied it agricultural and commercial advantages, and the difference of faith added religious intolerance to civil persecution. No pains were taken to instruct or improve; to diffuse comfort or to open the channels for industry, but rather to obstruct them. England was the step-mother of Ireland. That wretched, short-sighted, malevolent system was pursued, which supposed that every advantage gained by Ireland, and every advance she made in civilization and prosperity, was a loss and an injury done to England; instead of that true and enlightened one, equally approved by reason and humanity, which knows and which feels that one state cultivating its natural and peculiar advantages to the utmost can never be a detriment, but must be a benefit to another, while they are united by friendly intercourse and by the bond of a common government. As well might one county of England think to prosper by ruining the husbandry of the adjoining county. Religious differences heightened and inflamed the original grievance; doubled the burdens of the poor; jaundiced their minds, and by throwing them into the hands of the Popish clergy, fostered their ignorance and made the evil hopeless. Sloth, poverty, and a sense of debasement rendered them reckless of consequences, unable to see their way out of them, except by violence and bloodshed; and thus a whole people, by mismanagement and mischievous prejudices, were daily plunged deeper into civil strife or a state of merely animal existence. The example of other countries, and ‘envy of happier lands,’ that had asserted their independence, gave the last temptation to their disloyalty; and Ireland about this time hung trembling in the balance between her wavering allegiance to Great Britain and her inclination to accept the overtures to aid her in the recovery of her disputed rights. Buonaparte wished that she should throw herself

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into the arms of France ; but to this the leaders of that party who were desirous to separate Ireland from her union with England, would never consent ; and on that understanding, they finally parted.<sup>1</sup>

It was in the interval here spoken of, immediately after the breaking off of the Treaty of Amiens, and while Buonaparte was strengthening and enlarging the foundations of his power, that this country (strange to say) was inundated with theories and elaborate treatises to prove the nullity of all attempts at liberty and the blessings of absolute monarchy. Mr. Malthus's celebrated Essay on Population, which got into great vogue just at this time, stifled the voice of humanity ; and by representing the perfectibility of social institutions as the greatest evil that could happen from the overwhelming population that would rush in when the restraints of vice and misery were taken away, effectually served to make every gradation towards improvement and approach to liberty and happiness suspected and to be viewed with an instinctive horror and distrust. Dr. Bisset at great length went into the flourishing state of the Romans and the happiness of the world under the latter Emperors ; and Mr. Mitford in his History of Greece fully exposed the mischiefs of Republics. And all this at a period when the press, the pulpit, the taverns, and the theatre resounded with patriotic appeals and invectives against the strides of the French Usurper towards universal dominion. One would have thought these studied and systematic apologies for the evils of war, ambition, and arbitrary government were intended to flatter him and smooth his path to power. Far from it : they were meant to aid and exasperate the popular and party watch-words of the day. For power and prejudice knew full well with that consistent truth and keeping that belongs to them and that shames the faltering and misguided friends of freedom, that his strongest pretensions and his hold on power were rooted in the illusions of liberty and the progress of liberal principles ; and that by blighting these which were the supports of the new system, they lent the most effectual aid to the antagonist system they wanted to prop up, and by stopping the current of enthusiasm and the hope of public good, let public opinion drift back again unseen but irrevocably to that sink of apathy, corruption, and inveterate abuse, which was the haven of their desires, and the bourn from which slavery never returns.

<sup>1</sup> 'When the Catholic question was first seriously agitated,' said Napoleon, 'I would have given fifty millions to be assured, that it would not be granted ; for it would have entirely ruined my projects upon Ireland, as the Catholics, if you emancipate them, would become as loyal subjects as the Protestants.'—*O'Meara*, vol. i. p. 356.



# CONSPIRACY OF GEORGES, PICHEGRU, &c.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### CONSPIRACY OF GEORGES, PICHEGRU, AND OTHERS

It should seem that the contest in which England had embarked to restore the Bourbons and overturn the popular Government of France, had not only involved a sacrifice of the political principles which had hitherto distinguished us from the rest of the world, but also, as the cause became desperate, led to a change in the moral sentiments of the country. In our fits of revenge and disappointment, we had worked ourselves up to regard the enemy opposed to us in mortal strife, as wretches, outlaws, traitors, rebels, who were to be got rid of at any price, and we did not scruple to snatch at any means which were calculated to attain so worthy an end, and which were daubed over with the colours of loyalty and patriotism by the passions which suggested them. Mr. Fox had been unwilling to allow that the British Cabinet knew any thing of the *Infernal Machine*: perhaps the number and description of persons (some of them the very same) that now continually crossed the Channel, and were landed from English cutters on the coast of France, might have staggered him in his opinion, had he had to defend it anew with the First Consul. If in our habitual language and feelings we are determined to consider any one as no better than a mad dog or a wild beast, we shall before long let our actions slide into the same train. I should not enter into or insist on this view of the subject, but that a hollow tone of moral purity has been made the pretext for undermining the foundations of every species of political liberty, and that I conceive the extreme measures to which England resorted at this period, and the flagrant departure from the blunt and strait-forward character to which she laid claim, proved to a demonstration that there was a radical change in her counsels, and that the war had a far deeper and deadlier object at stake (beyond the professed and immediate one) rankling in the hearts of its leaders, and urging them on in a course of infatuation and dishonour.

The original object of the war, whether this were overturning the new form of Government or checking the political ascendancy of France, was still as far or farther than ever from its accomplishment. Neither peace nor war seemed to dissolve the power nor to influence the good fortune of the French Ruler. We had made peace with him, thinking that he was a mere soldier: finding that he applied himself with equal zeal and success to advancing the prosperity and glory of the

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Republic in peace, and despairing of ruining him that way, we made war upon him again. We had gained nothing more by this step than to be able to repel and set at defiance the threat of invasion, and we did not talk as yet of returning the compliment. One sign of success, however, is a blind adherence to our purpose in the midst of failure, and a determination not to turn back, though we have not the most distant prospect of ever coming to our journey's end. Though we could not carry the war with broad and open front into France, yet the rupture of the Peace of Amiens gave us the opportunity of insinuating plots and conspiracies, and disseminating civil war by the intervention of flights of emissaries sent over from England, and their intrigues with the swarms of emigrants that Buonaparte (after he was chosen Consul) had called home, as if for the very purpose. There was more in it than this. Buonaparte had become the direct obstacle of peace, that is, to the projects of the old Governments; he was the main prop of the Colossus that was said to threaten the extinction of the civilised world: the power and genius of Republican France were centered in his single person. What scheme then so feasible or so effectual as to cut short the ramifications and intricate knots of conspiracy with the dagger, and to get rid of the obnoxious individual at whom they all pointed, by a side-blow or the chance-medley of assassination, which it would be easy to lay on the uncontrollable fury of the opposing factions and the desperate designs and characters of the different agents? From the complexion and well-known history of most of these (robbers, outlaws, incendiaries) it is evident that such a catastrophe was likely to happen; and at any rate, it was not the result the least thought of or the most carefully guarded against. Indeed, the dissolute character and reckless fanaticism of these men, who were sent over at imminent risk of their lives, and concealed with the profoundest mystery, so that they could only strike some dark and deadly blow which they would consider as an act of devoted heroism, was the only chance or hope the conspiracy had of success: it had no other means or strength, nor were any risings to be effected in the West nor the French Princes to come forward till the decisive blow had been struck. Mr. Drake and Mr. Spencer Smith, our envoys at Munich and Stuttgart, were busy in carrying on an intrigue with some pretended Jacobin insurgents, offering them money from the English Government (who else could give it?) and always pointing out Buonaparte as the great obstacle to success; the Duke D'Enghien was at Ettenheim waiting the event; Pichegru went over from London (where he had been lurking) to sound Moreau, and to gain over the disaffected among the military; and Georges Cadoudal, and other Vendean Chiefs, were brought to Paris and had frequent interviews with the Polignacs, De La Revières,

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and some of the most distinguished emigrants in Paris, to forward the like chivalrous and spirited designs.

Indistinct rumours were for some time afloat as if to prepare the public mind for a great change; and letters were received from London, confidently stating that the First Consul would shortly be arrested in his career. Alarming intelligence was also received of meetings and discourses held by peasants in La Vendée. The First Consul grew uneasy, and determined to search the matter to the bottom. He is said to have had a remarkable *tact* for judging when he was upon a volcano; but this is not wonderful in one (even of less sagacity) who had a knowledge of every circumstance that was passing, and so deep an interest in the event. There was at this time (the beginning of 1804) no Ministry or Police, that office having been abolished soon after the peace at the suggestion of Talleyrand, as useless and odious, and partly to get rid of the troublesome influence of Fouché, to whom the Minister for Foreign Affairs was by no means friendly. A Counsellor of State (M. Réal) had the superintendence of every thing of this sort, in concert with the Grand-Judge. Trials by councils of war had of late been rare; but there were a number of persons detained in prison as spies or for other political offences. Buonaparte had a list of these laid before him. Among them was a man named Picot, and another named Le Bourgeois, who had been apprehended the foregoing year at Pont-Audener in Normandy, as coming from England with intent to assassinate the First Consul. They had hitherto been merely kept in prison. They and three others were now ordered to be brought before a commission to be tried. The two first-mentioned refused to answer, and were condemned and shot without making the slightest discovery. They persisted in declaring that the Republic would not survive the war. Their obduracy lessened the pity of the spectators; but not a step had been gained. The other trials were postponed. A disclosure of the intrigues and manœuvres of the English resident at the court of Wirtemberg took place about this time. The First Consul became very anxious; and one night, looking over the list of prisoners, saw the name of Querel, who was described as a native of Bas Bretagne, and as having served as a surgeon in the rebel army. He had come to Paris about two months before; a creditor whom he was unable to pay had given information against him. 'This man,' said Buonaparte, 'is not actuated by enthusiasm, but by the hope of gain, and he will be more likely to confess than the others.' He was accordingly tried the next day as a Chouan, and condemned to death; but as he was led to execution, he demanded to be heard and promised to make important disclosures. He was conducted back to prison, where he made his declarations. He in fact confessed that he had come from England,

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and had been landed on the coast from Captain Wright's ship in company with Georges, in August 1803. In different nights of August, September, and December, 1803, and January 1804, Wright had landed Georges, Pichegru, Rivière, Coster, St. Victor, La Haye, St. Hilaire, and others, at Beville in Normandy. The four last-named had been accomplices in the affair of the *Infernal Machine*; and most of the rest were well known to the Chouan chiefs. They remained during the day at a little farm-house near the place where they had landed; the proprietor of which had been bribed to assist them. They travelled only by night, pretending to be smugglers, concealing themselves in the daytime in lodgings which had been previously procured for them. They entered Paris singly, where they never went out or showed themselves but when summoned for some particular purpose, and where Georges also lay hid. They had all been landed from an English cutter at the same spot, at the foot of the cliff of Beville near Dieppe, which they ascended by means of the *Smuggler's Rope*, and were met by a man from Eu or Treport, called Troche, the son of a watch-maker, who was an old emissary of the party. Savary, with some police-officers, was instantly dispatched to the spot, where he found all the particulars to correspond with the previous statement, and saw an English cutter near the shore, (as it was said, with an illustrious personage on board) but which, on some alarm being given, sheered off.

At the same time an emigrant, named Bouvet de Lozier, was also arrested. After he had been confined for some weeks, he became desperate, and hung himself in the prison one morning. The gaoler hearing an unusual noise in the room, ran in and cut him down in time.<sup>1</sup> While he was recovering his senses, he broke out into incoherent exclamations that Moreau had brought Pichegru from London, that he was a traitor and had persuaded them (the emigrants) that the army were all for him, and that he would prove the cause of their destruction. This excited fresh suspicions. The police knew that a brother of Pichegru, who had been a monk, lived in Paris. He was discovered in an obscure lodging, and being interrogated, owned that he had seen his brother within a few days, and asked 'If it were a crime?' Moreau was arrested on his way from Gros-Bois (his country-house), and large rewards were offered for the apprehension of Pichegru and Georges. Pichegru was betrayed by one of his old friends with whom he lived, and who came to the police and offered to deliver him up for a hundred thousand francs paid on the spot. Pichegru had been received, and was secreted in this man's house somewhere near the barrier of Neuilly, whence he had gone to his different interviews with Moreau. He was a

<sup>1</sup> Had he succeeded in the attempt, it would probably have been attributed to Buonaparte, and recorded long after among 'his other atrocities.'



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large, powerful man, and the police had some difficulty in seizing him ; they rushed upon him while he was asleep, struck out a light which was burning by his bedside, and overturned a table on which his pistol lay. He was carried before the Grand-Judge, and at first persisted in an absolute denial of any knowledge of the conspiracy, till he had been successively confronted with such of Georges's accomplices as had already been arrested. Georges himself still continued to elude the vigilance of the police. Paris was surrounded with a *cordon* of troops, and the barriers were closed night and day, and only opened for the market-people to pass and repass. The cavalry of the guard and of the garrison furnished guard-posts on the outer Boulevards, and had videttes round the wall inclosing the capital. Continually moving from one towards the other, the latter formed permanent patroles, having orders to apprehend every one who should seek to gain the country by scaling the walls. Paris remained in this state of gloomy alarm, presenting the aspect of a city in a state of siege, for nearly three weeks. At the end of that period, Georges was betrayed and taken, having first shot one of the men employed to arrest him. He was discovered in a cabriolet, in which after being driven from hiding-place to hiding-place, and shunned by all his associates, he had passed the last two days in riding about Paris, and meant to have attempted his escape from it, just as he was seized. Such is the state of harassing anxiety and desperation to which these men were led in the first instance by a strong principle of party-spirit, which had no other support or encouragement to carry it through to the very jaws of agony and death than the love of violent excitement, and the sense of the depth of the stake that was played for ! It was in itself no very enviable situation for Georges to be in, to be an object of execration and vengeance to a whole city ; what then hardened him against compunction or remorse ? It was the reflection that he had been able to throw a whole city into consternation, and might yet baffle his pursuers. The resolution of such men is strengthened instead of being weakened by the mischief they have done, even though it has recoiled upon themselves ; the mind is happily relieved from the sense of insignificance ; nor can they be bribed, by any temptation, to keep their hands off the wires and pulleys that move such mighty levers, and lead to the convulsion of states. Georges is described as a man of great courage and activity, brutal and ignorant, and deaf to every thing but his own rooted prejudices. Buonaparte, after the establishment of the Consulship, tried to win him over, but in vain. He told him, that even if he succeeded in restoring the Bourbons, they would only look upon him as a peasant, a miller's son. Georges probably thought himself that he was only a miller's son. The fanatic bows down before his idol, without asking what the object of his

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homage thinks of him ! Georges then went over to England, where he became a confidential spy and agent of the Bourbons. He and his confederates underwent a public trial in the month of May, (1804) before the tribunal of the department of the Seine, and in the presence of all the Foreign Ambassadors. Georges, Polignac, Rivière, Coster, and sixteen or seventeen others were found guilty, on the clearest evidence, and by the confession of several among them, of having conspired against the life of the First Consul and the safety of the Republic, and were condemned to death. Georges and Coster, with seven or eight more, were executed. Rivière was pardoned at the particular instigation of Murat, whom he repaid with ingratitude, and is said in 1815 to have set a price upon his head. Buonaparte pardoned some of the others, particularly the Marquis Polignac, at the instance of his wife. Moreau was condemned to two years' imprisonment, which was commuted to banishment to America. M. Jules de Polignac, confidant of the Count d'Artois, and some others, were also sentenced to imprisonment. Pichegru killed himself in prison, while the trials were going on.

The object of this conspiracy, which had excited so much expectation, which had set so many engines at work, and the crushing of which seemed to have put an end to similar attempts from the same quarter, appears to have been first to tamper with and gain over the army by means of the disaffected generals ; and then, having got rid of Buonaparte by a *coup-de-main*, which would have cost nothing to some of the most stirring and trustworthy of the actors in the plot (as it was judiciously cast to embrace all kinds of characters) to march with them to Paris and proclaim the Bourbons. This notable scheme, on which expence and lives were lavished in proportion to its wildness and profligacy, failed (as it was just ripe for execution) through the indecision or dormant ambition of Moreau, whose 'half-faced fellowship' was the pivot on which it turned. He had long been a malcontent ; and was marked out by temperament and circumstances to figure as a marplot. The soundness of his principles had been more than doubted ever since the defection of Pichegru in 1797, whose correspondence with the enemy he kept a secret for several months, (when his silence might have been fatal to his country) and afterwards, when the correspondence was discovered by other means, affected to denounce and set it in the most glaring light, thus showing an equal disregard to public or private obligation. Nothing saved Moreau from general reprobation and contempt for his conduct on this occasion but the natural mildness and indolence of his disposition, it not being sufficiently considered that men without bad or mischievous passions themselves are often made the easiest and most dangerous tools of the sinister designs of others. He never relished Buonaparte. This was natural enough, both from the

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competition between them as to military reputation and from the opposition of their characters. Moreau had no pretensions out of the field of battle; and he hated and affected to condemn Buonaparte for having pushed on in a career, for which he himself possessed neither talents, acquirements, nor inclination. During the whole of the Consulate, his conduct was that of the dog in the fable. His cynical affectation of simplicity was wounded pride; and there was too much of petty spleen and sullen mortification in the expression of his dissent not to be attributed to personal pique and disappointment rather than to manly reason or public principle. Diogenes was said to trample on Plato's pride with greater pride. Moreau was one of those commonplace characters who do not see beyond themselves or beyond certain vague generalities, who have not vigour enough to understand the departure from approved forms required on great occasions, or magnanimity enough to applaud the success. He had not sufficient attachment to the rule to reconcile him to the exception. He could sooner pardon those who had ruined the country by technical imbecility, than those who had saved it by boldness and decision. He could not adopt the words of the poet in addressing one who resembled the warrior and statesman who first suggested them—

‘ Still as you rise, the state exalted too,  
Finds no distemper while ’tis changed by you.’

He would more willingly have it run to waste by incapacity, or trampled in the dust by the opposite party, than that one of his own should have the glory of delivering or reconstructing it. It was not the advancement or depression of the common weal that he cared about, but his own share in the event, or whether he occupied the top-most round in fortune's ladder. This is the case with the Moderates and Precisians in all times and places. They had endured Robespierre, because he had not shocked their self-love; and on the other hand, that he did so, was with them Buonaparte's *sin against the Holy Ghost*. Moreau lent his assistance to the General of Italy on the 18th of Brumaire; but seemed soon sick of the success of that enterprize. His spleen broke out in spite of himself. On one occasion, Carnot had made the First Consul a present of a pair of pistols richly mounted: Moreau entered the room soon after, when Buonaparte said, ‘This is well; for here comes Moreau, who will honour me by accepting them.’ Moreau took them sullenly, and without a word of acknowledgement. Napoleon asked him to the public dinners, which he declined attending; so that at last the First Consul desisted from the attempt; ‘He has refused me twice,’ he said, ‘he shall not do so a third time. He will one of these days run his head against the pillars of the Thuilleries; but I wash my hands of

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him.' When the Legion of Honour was established, and it was proposed to extend it beyond the military to men of science and merit of every description, Moreau said with a sneer, 'Then I will propose my cook as a candidate; for he is very skilful and a person of great merit in the science of cookery'—thus by his very petulance and the narrowness of his views showing his unfitness to censure others. He was led away by his wife (a Mademoiselle Hullin), a Creole, whom he had married at the recommendation of Josephine. Her mother (Madame Hullin) gave herself such airs afterwards, that Talleyrand was once actually obliged to interfere to prevent her taking precedence of Madame Buonaparte; and she used to say that the wife of the First Consul ought to have been a woman like her daughter and not a *guenon* like Josephine. It was a misfortune to Moreau, as Buonaparte shrewdly observed, to be governed in this manner; for in that case a man is neither himself nor his wife, but nothing. Both she and her mother were violent Royalists, full of intrigue, which they carried on with that fool-hardiness, which in women arises from a mixture of vanity, feebleness, and the sense of impunity. Independently of this circumstance, it may seem strange that Moreau, who quarrelled with Buonaparte for not being sufficiently republican, should have gone over to the Royalist side in revenge. But the truth is, that *Royalist* or *Republican* often signifies nothing more than the necessity of belonging to some party that has strong prejudices and large numbers to support it; and that the mind veers from one side to the other, according to circumstances, to save thought and exertion.

Moreau had for some time lived retired at his estate of Gros-Bois, which was the rendezvous of the discontented military or of intriguing royalists. He affected to hold himself aloof from the actual government, but did not set up any particular claims of his own. It is however difficult for a man to remain long neuter who is courted by one party, and who is averse to the other. It was thought that he could give a turn to the sentiments of the military at the present juncture; and it was also conceived, that he and Pichegru could not better patch up their old friendship, which had been broken off by the untimely discovery of a former plot, than by concerting a new treason. Lajolais, an aide-de-camp and private secretary of Moreau at the time of Pichegru's correspondence with Kinglin, was made the go-between. He went to London with various overtures, where he saw the Count D'Artois at Pichegru's lodgings. Pichegru came over some time after. He had several meetings with Moreau by stealth and with considerable backwardness on the part of the latter. The first time was on the Boulevards. He went one evening in a hackney-coach with Georges, accompanied by Lajolais, and Picot, a trusty servant of Georges, to the



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Boulevard de la Madeleine, where Lajolais alighted, and went to fetch General Moreau from his house in the Rue d'Anjou close by ; Pichegru and Georges then alighted and walked about with General Moreau for some time, while Picot and Lajolais waited in the coach. As they returned to the coach, Georges's servant heard Pichegru observe to his master, speaking of Moreau—' It seems that fellow has ambition too ! ' This account which was at first given by Picot was confirmed by Lajolais. Georges's servant did not know who Lajolais or Pichegru was. It came out on the earliest examination of Georges's associates, that a tall, respectable-looking man, whom they did not know, bald and of the middle age, attended their meetings, that he was received uncovered, and treated with the greatest respect. It was conjectured that this must be one of the French Princes ; and as from the age it could neither be the Count d'Artois nor the Duke of Berri, suspicion fell upon the Duke d'Enghien, who was on the nearest frontier, and whom other depositions stated to be busily occupied with similar transactions. This led to his arrest and death. The mysterious stranger afterwards turned out to be Pichegru, who was not known to Georges's people, from his having been landed at a different period and having come to Paris with Lajolais alone. In the interview with Moreau above described, it appeared the latter had agreed that the first thing to be done was to remove the First Consul ; that after this something might be done with the army ; but instead of wishing to restore the Bourbons, he talked of bringing back the Republican party and placing himself at the head of it. This enraged Georges, who said that '*Blue for blue*'<sup>1</sup> he would prefer the one, who was already at the head of the government.' Georges declared that his plan was ripe, and that he would take off the Chief Consul by such a day ; but he would only do so as a preliminary step to the proclaiming of Louis XVIII. Moreau upon this broke off the conference, and told Pichegru ' he would have no more to do with that brute.' The instinct of the savage seemed in this instance truer than the reasonings of the renegade. When questioned on the trial as to the particulars of their meeting, Georges constantly answered—' I don't know what you mean,' and Moreau denied having ever seen Georges. It was the death of Pichegru, whose evidence was wanted to prove this point, that saved Moreau. Pichegru also went once to see him at his own house, and had by mistake opened the door of a room full of company ; but was recognised by Madame Moreau just in time to invent some excuse for the accident and to prevent his betraying himself. These delays and disagreements among the parties concerned gave time for the discovery of the extensive conspiracy that had been formed, and made it ' like

<sup>1</sup> The Revolutionists were called *blues* and the Royalists *whites*.

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a devilish engine back recoil upon itself.' There can be no doubt that Moreau was privy and had lent his countenance to the design of overturning the existing state of things by the death of the First Consul; but with the nearer prospect of the removal of his rival, his own ambition rose on the fancied ruin of another, and his hesitation and lurking distaste to the Bourbons proved fatal to the whole scheme. Moreau had not courage to be a usurper; honesty to be a patriot; nor even sufficient loyalty to be a traitor!

Pichegru died in prison by his own hand. Buonaparte, when he heard of it, said—'This is a pretty end for the conqueror of Holland.' Besides the First Consul's respect for his military talents, he had been his old tutor at Brienne—and yet, in the rage of heaping every kind of absurdity and atrocity on the character of the French ruler, nothing would serve but to charge him with having had Pichegru dispatched by his orders in prison—and this at the very time when he had shown equal magnanimity and moderation in pardoning the Polignacs and letting Moreau escape contrary to his deserts, whether we consider his conduct at this crisis or the use he made of his liberty afterwards. Even the pages that still record these acts of clemency are interlarded with alternate charges of open and secret murder, as if to let the ferment in the lees of ancient prejudice subside by degrees, and keep up an affected balance between calumny and candour. If Moreau had been found dead in prison, something might have been said for it; for Moreau was set up as a rival to him and might be dangerous: yet he relinquished his hold of this man (and even furnished him with the sums necessary for him to repair to the United States<sup>1</sup>) to wreak his revenge, as we are told, upon one who neither had done nor could do him harm, and whose life (if he thirsted for it) was in a course of forfeiture by the law. Is it nothing that Pichegru contemplated this as the end of his career, death with infamy, and was willing to elude the stroke of the law by anticipating it? Suicide is so far from being improbable in such circumstances, that it is judged necessary to remove from felons and convicts the means of self-destruction. To say nothing of the remorse or sense of dishonour which Pichegru might have felt, he could not have been indifferent to the utter confusion and overthrow of schemes to which he had sacrificed every thing; and nothing leads sooner to a violent end than a strong purpose defeated. That several things of the same kind followed about the same time is naturally accounted for, from the circumstance that at this period of convulsion and civil strife, many persons were placed in the most trying situations, where their

<sup>1</sup> Buonaparte bought Moreau's estate of Gros-Bois, and his house in the Rue d'Anjou; he gave the first to Berthier and the last to Bernadotte, in whose hands it still continued the focus of designs against him.

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minds being over-wrought by varying hopes and fears, could neither brook their own blighted prospects nor the triumph of their adversaries. More convincing evidence came out against Pichegru every day, and for some time he had sought for the consolation of books. He was a strong man and could not have fallen without a struggle; his body was publicly exposed, and there were no marks of violence upon it; his death was effected by petty, mechanical means, to which an assassin would not have resorted; Georges Cadoudal lay in the next room, who would have heard any unusual stir; a sentinel was placed in the outer passage, into which both their apartments opened, and another was stationed before Pichegru's window in the Temple-garden, so that a deed of this nature could not have been perpetrated without the knowledge of several persons, who would not have kept it long secret. However devoid of probability or common sense, the story strengthened our prejudices against Buonaparte, and that was sufficient to make it pass current. It had no other foundation whatever.

Captain Wright, while the trials were pending, was shipwrecked on the coast of Vannes, and brought to the Temple with some of his crew, when they were recognised as the same who had landed Georges and the rest in Normandy. Captain Wright was examined before the Court, but declined answering any questions, as it might implicate his Majesty's Ministers; by that alone implicating them in a connexion with Vendéans and Chouans (taken over in vessels belonging to the Royal Navy) which they always disclaimed as lustily and modestly as they did all knowledge of Mr. Drake's transactions with Mehée de la Touche. Mr. Pitt was not a man who would ever think of pleading guilty to what could not be proved against him, or whose well-rounded and self-conscious style did not always leave him in convenient possession of some mental reservation which made the practical truth or falsehood of the statement a matter of perfect indifference. Captain Wright was detained not as a spy (as he might have been) but as a prisoner of war, in the hope that he might throw some light on the degree of understanding between the Vendéans and the English Government. He lingered in the Temple till the end of 1805, when he put an end to his existence (as it is asserted) after reading the account of the capitulation of Mack at Ulm. This was when Buonaparte was engaged in the campaign of Austerlitz; and he is accused of having sent secret orders from that field of glory, and from a distance of three hundred leagues, to dispatch an obscure English Lieutenant, from a paltry grudge he bore him as the friend of Sir Sidney Smith and his companion at the siege of Acre. This was grossly to misunderstand the character of a man who always proportioned his esteem for an enemy to the valour he had shown, and who had a column of wounded Austrians drawn up

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before him, whom he saluted, saying, 'Honour and respect to the unfortunate brave!' We attribute our own vindictive passions and narrow views to others, and then deduce the most villainous actions from motives which exist only in our own angry bosoms or morbid apprehensions. Buonaparte, in fact, instead of being that monster of cruelty and revenge that our fears or hatred had painted him, was of too easy and buoyant a temperament, not mindful of his danger, not straining his advantages, and relying too much on his own great actions and the admiration of mankind, to the neglect of those means of safety to which malice or cowardice might otherwise have prompted him.<sup>1</sup>

The only instance in which he struck a severe and stunning blow was one into which he was led in the outset by a mistake and by some studied management; and which would probably have never come to any thing but for an intercepted letter—I mean the arrest and condemnation of the Duke d'Enghien. I have no wish to qualify that affair, nor do I quail at its mention. If it were to do over again, and I were in Buonaparte's place, it should be done twice over. To those who think that persons of Royal blood have a right to shed your blood by the most violent and nefarious means, but that you have no right to transgress the smallest form to defend yourself, I have nothing to say: to others, the question nearly decides itself. This was the third attempt to assassinate the First Consul in the space of two years; and it was high time that he should look to himself and assert his place and manhood, by bringing the question to an equal issue with those who thought to pour out his blood like ditch-water; and that he must perforce (under the spell of names and sacrilegious awe) bare his breast to the pogniards of hired stabbers and desperados sent to dispatch him without the possibility of retaliating on the principals. The indispensable blow was struck: a Bourbon fell; they found themselves vulnerable through the double fence of pride and prejudice; their dread of the repetition of any similar attempt upon themselves was as strong as their disregard of every other tie; and from that time the annual flight of these bands of harpies, screaming and preparing to pounce upon their destined prey, ceased. The affair proceeded (it is true) under a cloud which has never been rightly cleared up, as to the degree or nature of the Duke's participation in Georges's conspiracy (for those who are involved in such sinister transactions cannot expect all the benefit of light): but the sentence rested upon a no less lofty

<sup>1</sup> Palm is another of the Saints and Martyrs of the new legitimate calendar, who was shot by order of Davoust for instigating the inhabitants of the district while under military occupation to assassinate the French soldiers. Buonaparte hardly knew of it: yet to judge from the accounts circulated, one would suppose he had superintended the execution in person, and was actuated by personal prejudice against the man.



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though giddy height of justice and policy, and vindicated itself by the event. It was contrary to forms, I grant; but all forms had been previously and notoriously dispensed with by the opposite party, and an appeal shamelessly made to mere force, fraud, and terror.

Georges was of course known to be merely a principal instrument in the plot, its hand, not its head: and the question was, for whom or in whose name he would have acted the day following that on which he should have dispatched the First Consul. It was naturally concluded that a more important person was concealed somewhere, and waiting for the blow to be struck before he made himself known. Search was made everywhere, but in vain. At length, two of Georges's people being interrogated (as we have already seen) declared that every ten or twelve days there came to their master a gentleman whose name they did not know, about thirty-four or thirty-five years of age, with light hair, bald forehead, of a good height, and rather corpulent. They stated that he was always well dressed, and concluded him to be a person of consequence, as their master always went to the door to receive him; when he was in the room, every body, Messrs. de Polignac<sup>1</sup> and Rivière as well as the others, rose and did not sit down again till he had retired; and whenever he came to see Georges, they went together into a cabinet, where they remained alone till he went away, and then Georges attended him to the door. This afterwards turned out to be Pichegru; but nobody suspected him at the time. Curiosity and anxiety were raised to the highest pitch to learn who this stranger could be whom Georges and his accomplices treated with such respect. It was imagined it could be no other than one of the Princes. The search was renewed with redoubled ardour, and inquiries set on foot whether any scouring and cleansing were going forward in any of the apartments with gilt ceilings in the hotels of the Marais or the Fauxbourg St. Germain, which had long been uninhabited; but nothing was discovered. The description given answered neither to the age of the Count d'Artois nor with the person of the Duke of Berri, whom, besides, Georges's people knew. The Duke d'Angoulême was at Mittau with the Pretender; the Duke of Bourbon in London. There remained only the Duke d'Enghien; and on him the bolt fell. The First Consul scarcely recollected the name when it was mentioned; but he was known to be a prince of daring and resolution, not likely to be inactive when 'the chase' of kingdoms 'was a-foot.' He had been for sometime residing at Ettenheim, on the right bank of the Rhine, whither

<sup>1</sup> It appears by this that the Polignacs (the confidential friends of Count d'Artois) were in the constant habit of seeing Georges at his own house; yet neither the Count d'Artois nor the English ministry (it is said) who had sent them over, knew any thing of the designs of this gang of cut-throats and banditti!

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since the late events numbers of emigrants had repaired daily. It was alleged that he went every week to the theatre at Strasburg, though he would hardly risk his life without some further object than a play ; and it was calculated that he could just go and come to Paris and back again to his place of retreat, in the interval between the appearance and re-appearance of the stranger who visited Georges. This coincidence determined the First Consul. He immediately signed and issued the orders for the seizure of the Duke. ' This,' he said, ' is beyond a jest. To come from Ettenheim to Paris to plot an assassination, and to fancy one's-self safe because one is behind the Rhine ! I should be a fool to suffer it.' The step was determined on in a Council where the two other Consuls, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fouché, and the Grand-Judge were present, and where Cambacérès opposed the forcible seizure in a neutral territory (that of Baden) saying it would be better to wait till the Duke repeated his alleged visits to the capital ; but this objection was overruled by Talleyrand.

A long conversation ensued, in which the First Consul collected the voices which had supported the opinion of the Minister for Foreign Affairs ; and leaving the Council, went to his cabinet, where he dictated the necessary orders to his secretary (Maret) for the apprehension of the Duke d'Enghien. The Minister at War in consequence ordered General Ordener to go to New Brisac ; and on his arrival there, with the *gendarmérie* to be placed at his disposal, and a detachment of cavalry belonging to the garrison, to cross the Rhine at the ferry of Rhinau, to proceed expeditiously to the residence of the Duke d'Enghien at Ettenheim, to take him prisoner,<sup>1</sup> and to send him to Paris with all his papers, in hopes of finding amongst them some positive information concerning his connection with the present conspiracy. The order (which was dated the 10th of March) was forthwith punctually executed ; and to meet the remonstrances which the Elector of Baden was likely to make, it was briefly intimated to him by Talleyrand that he must remove that band of emigrants which had once more made its appearance on the banks of the Rhine.

The Duke d'Enghien was seized on the 15th of March, 1804, and carried the same day to the citadel of Strasburg, where he remained till the 18th, when he set out for Paris under the escort of the *gendarmérie*. There he arrived on the 20th of March about eleven in the forenoon : his carriage, after being detained at the barrier till four o'clock, was driven by the outer Boulevards to Vincennes, where the Prince was kept prisoner. The Commission appointed to try him met that same evening. It consisted of seven Officers of regiments of the garrison of Paris, with the commandant General Hullin as their President, who were no

<sup>1</sup> The order included Dumouriez, who was supposed to be with him.

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otherwise prejudiced against the prisoner than from the general indignation which they felt in common with others against the late conspiracy and all those who might be supposed to have instigated or to be concerned in it. The Commission assembled late in the evening in one of the large rooms of the inhabited part of the castle, which was mostly in ruins, *viz.* the building over the gate of entrance on the side next the park. The trial was not secret, as has been pretended; it was open to all who could come at that hour of the night, and Savary, who was there to take command of the troops, remarks that there were many persons present, as he could with difficulty get through the crowd. He had in the morning received a letter addressed by Napoleon to Murat (the governor of Paris) who gave him the necessary order to collect the detachments of infantry and cavalry of the garrison at Vincennes.

At the time that Savary entered, the reading of the examination was finished: the discussion upon it had begun and was very warm. The Duke d'Enghien had already answered so sharply that it was clear he had no notion of the danger in which he stood. 'Sir,' said the President to him, 'you seem not to be aware of your situation; or you are determined not to answer the questions which I put to you. You shut yourself up in your high birth, of which you take good care to remind us; you had better adopt a different line of defence. I will not take an undue advantage of your situation, but observe that I ask you positive questions, and that instead of answering, you talk to me about something else. Take care, this might become serious. How could you hope to persuade us that you were so completely ignorant as you pretend to be of what was passing in France, when not only the country in which you resided, but the whole world is informed of it? And how could you persuade me that with your birth you were indifferent to events, all the consequences of which were to be in your favour? There is too much improbability in this for me to pass it over without observation: I beg you to reflect upon it, that you may have recourse to other means of defence.' The Duke d'Enghien replied in a grave tone, 'Sir, I perfectly comprehend you: it was not my intention to have remained indifferent to them. I had applied to England for an appointment in her armies, and she had returned for answer that she had none to give me, but that I was to remain upon the Rhine, where I should soon have a part to act, and for that I was waiting. I have nothing more to tell you, Sir.'

The Duke d'Enghien was tried and found guilty of the three several charges preferred against him; 1. of having served in the armies of the Prince de Condé (his grandfather) and other foreign corps against France; 2. of having been and being still in the pay of England; 3. of being privy to and waiting to avail himself of the success of the

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present conspiracy against the government and the life of the First Consul. The two first were proved by his confession, and were indeed notorious; of the third and last charge, though nothing showed the contrary, there was not sufficient proof; and indeed the chief ground on which it had rested fell to the ground when it was discovered soon after that the individual who visited Georges, and who had been imagined to be the Prince, was Pichegru. Before signing the paper containing his sentence, he earnestly requested an interview with the First Consul: a letter had been previously transmitted from the Duke which was not received till after his death. His sentence was carried into execution almost immediately after it was passed; he was shot in the castle-ditch at Vincennes, about six in the morning of the 21st.

There appears to have been something mysterious, hurried, and as it were preconcerted in the manner of his death. It is not improbable that Buonaparte would have pardoned him, had he received his letter in time; or had care been taken to inform him of the exact circumstances of the case. It is certain that the seizure of his person had been made under a strong impression that he was an active and prime-mover in the meetings and plans of the Chouans for taking the First Consul's life: and had this been proved to be the case, assuredly not twenty neutralities of Baden nor his being twenty times a Bourbon ought to have screened or saved him. Otherwise, a robber is safe who has escaped into a neighbour's garden; or if I see an assassin aiming at me from an opposite window, I am not to fire at him lest I should damage my neighbour's house. It is the more probable that an active and important share in the conspiracy (supposing the first step to have succeeded) was allotted to him, because the Duke of Berri was expected to land with Georges's crew just before, and the same fate was prepared for him. But what in the former case was a dictate of natural and universal justice superior to forms or calculations, became without this a matter of state-policy and hard necessity. If the Duke had merely served in the former wars against France, that was an old story; or if he was about to engage in new attempts upon her soil, and these were to be carried on by the regular and approved modes of warfare, then there would have been no sufficient ground for Buonaparte to go out of his way to seek satisfaction from an enemy whom he could meet on equal and honourable terms elsewhere. But the persons with whom the Duke was confessedly still in league resorted to other means than those of open hostility, and he had no method of defending himself against them, or of wresting these unfair weapons from their hands, but by making reprisals and setting a dreadful example to show that such unprincipled conduct would come home to themselves. Not to retaliate when he could was to encourage them and give them impunity



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in the foulest practices ; he had a hostage within his reach and in his hands, and to make him pay the forfeit of insulted honour and faith and restore in so far the balance of both, was not a murder but a sacrifice. The Duke was of illustrious blood, it is true, or he would not have been a Bourbon ; he was said to be gallant and brave, but he was connected by a common cause and by the ties of near relationship with those who did not scruple to call the bandit and the assassin to their aid : the blow was not aimed at him, but at pretensions which assumed a haughty paramountship to the laws both of nature and nations ; and though the example might be a lamentable one, yet the guilt did not lie at the door of those who exacted the penalty, but of his own party, who had rendered it necessary by keeping no measures with those whom they chose to regard as outlaws and rebels. Why, if the Prince knew nothing of the secret machinations that were going on, or was not ready to avail himself of the catastrophe, was he found hovering on the borders, as it were dallying with temptation and danger ? It will be said that it was a natural yearning to be near his native soil, as some have returned from banishment to lay down their heads on the block from an unutterable fondness for the place of their birth. It may be answered that the same desire to be near his country at the risk of his life might make him willing to return to it with the loss of personal honour as well as of his country's independence. The question seems to lie in a small compass and may be made clearer by being brought back to ourselves. A man is found lurking near a house while a gang of robbers, of whom he is one of the chiefs, enter it by stealth and are proceeding to murder the inmates. What does he do there ? Is his saying that he is a gentleman by birth, bold, or that he disapproves entirely of what is passing, to shelter him ? Or is his having escaped into the adjoining premises to make him safe from pursuit ? If I am attacked by main force, it is said I must appeal to the law ; but if the law is not at hand to protect me, I take it into my own hands, and shoot a highwayman or housebreaker. Lastly, in all cases of reprisal, it is not the individual who is culpable or supposed to approve the original provocation ; but he is made answerable for his party as the only way of putting a stop to the continuance of some flagrant injustice. There was an objection to the mixture of violence and law in the case, which gave a doubtful complexion to it ; but the trial was of little other use than to identify the prisoner and take the public responsibility of the act. It was an extreme and deliberate exercise of a vigour beyond the law. It should be remembered also that this example was made while the examination of the conspirators was pending, and while the chiefs of the plot, Georges and Pichegru, were yet undiscovered. Terror and doubt hung over the decision ; nor it is improbable that the dismay it excited

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and the energy it displayed prevented the blow which Buonaparte directed against the Duke d'Enghien from falling on his own head.

The death of the Duke d'Enghien caused a great sensation in Paris and Europe. Though it might require strength of mind and iron nerves to withstand the first shock and the long-continued reverberations of calumny and misrepresentation, yet this was so far from being a reason against the measure, that it was its main object to dispel that very prejudice on which this outcry was founded, and which did not arise because the blood of a Prince had been shed unjustly, but because the blood of a Prince had been shed. It was necessary to 'make these odds even' in the struggle which was at issue, or to give it up altogether. It was one among the few answers which have been given to the idle and insolent pretension that the blood of common men is puddle, and that of nobles and princes a richer flood, which cannot be weighed against the former any more than wine against water. Those who were principally interested in holding up this distinction, and had till now acted upon it to the most unlimited extent, finding it no longer avail them, took the hint and were more cautious in guarding so precious a deposit from being let out from noble veins. The Emperor Alexander, among others, assumed a lofty tone on the occasion, which was brought down by Talleyrand's asking him in an official note, 'Whether if a set of English assassins had been hired to effect his father's death, the Russian Cabinet would not have thought itself authorised to seize and punish them though they had been lurking four leagues from the Russian territory?' This home-thrust was never parried either by Alexander or by the standing retainers on that side of the question. Finally, let us hear what Buonaparte himself says on the point. The following appeal is frank and cogent.

'If I had not had in my favour the laws of my country to punish the culprit, I should still have had the right of the law of nature, of legitimate self-defence. The Duke and his party had constantly but one object in view, that of taking away my life: I was assailed on all sides and at every instant; air-guns, infernal machines, plots, ambuscades of every kind, were resorted to for that purpose. At last I grew weary and took an opportunity of striking them with terror in their turn in London; I succeeded, and from that moment there was an end to all conspiracies. Who can blame me for having acted so? What! Blows threatening my existence are aimed at me day after day, from a distance of one hundred and fifty leagues; no power on earth, no tribunal can afford me redress; and I am not to be allowed to use the right of nature and return war for war! What man, unbiassed by party-feeling, possessing the smallest share of judgment or justice, can take upon him to condemn me? On what side will he not throw blame, odium, and

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criminal accusations? Blood for blood; such is the natural, the inevitable, and infallible law of retaliation: woe to him who provokes it! Those who foment civil dissensions or excite political commotions expose themselves to become victims of them. It would be a proof of imbecility or madness to imagine and pretend that a whole family should have the strange privilege to threaten my existence, day after day, without giving me the right of retaliation; they could not reasonably pretend to be above the law to destroy others, and claim the benefit of it for their own preservation: the chances must be equal. I had never personally offended any of them; a great nation had chosen me to govern them; almost all Europe had sanctioned their choice; my blood, after all, was not ditch-water; it was time to place it on a par with theirs. And what if I had carried retaliation further? I might have done it: the disposal of their destiny, the heads of every one of them, from the highest to the lowest, were more than once offered me; but I rejected the proposal with indignation. Not that I thought it would be unjust for me to consent to it in the situation to which they had reduced me; but I felt so powerful, I thought myself so secure, that I should have considered it a base and gratuitous act of cowardice. My great maxim has always been that in war as well as in politics, every evil action, even if legal, can only be excused in case of absolute necessity: whatever goes beyond that is criminal.

‘It would have been ridiculous in those who violated so openly the law of nations, to appeal to it themselves. The violation of the territory of Baden, of which so much has been said, is entirely foreign to the main point of the question. The law of the inviolability of territory has not been devised for the benefit of the guilty, but merely for the preservation of the independence of nations and of the dignity of the sovereign. It was therefore for the Elector of Baden, and for him alone, to complain, and he did not; he yielded, no doubt, to violence and to the sense of his political inferiority; but even then, what has that to do with the merits of the plots and outrages of which I had been the object, and of which I had every right to be revenged?’ And he concluded that the real authors of the painful catastrophe, the persons who alone were responsible for it, were those who had favoured and excited from abroad the plots formed against the life of the First Consul. For, said he, either they had implicated the unfortunate Prince in them, and had thus sealed his doom; or by neglecting to give him information of what was going forward, they had suffered him to slumber imprudently on the brink of the precipice, and to be so near the frontiers at the moment when so great a blow was going to be struck in the name and for the interest of his family.

‘To us, in the intimacy of private conversation, the Emperor would

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say, that the blame in France might be ascribed to an excess of zeal in those who surrounded him, or to dark intrigues or private views ; that he had been precipitately urged on in the affair ; that they had as it were taken his mind unawares, and that his measures had been hastened and their result anticipated. "I was one day alone," said he ; "I recollect it well ; I was taking my coffee, half-seated on the table on which I had just dined ; when sudden information is brought me that a new conspiracy is discovered. I am warmly urged to put an end to these enormities ; they represent to me that it is time at last to give a lesson to those who have been day by day conspiring against my life ; that this end can only be attained by shedding the blood of one of them ; and that the Duke d'Enghien, who might now be convicted of forming part of this new conspiracy, and taken in the very act, should be that one. It was added that he had been seen at Strasburg ; that it was even believed that he had been in Paris ; and that the plan was that he should enter France by the East, at the moment of the explosion, while the Duke de Berri was disembarking in the West. I should tell you, observed the Emperor, that I did not even know precisely who the Duke d'Enghien was (the Revolution having broken out when I was yet a very young man, and I having never been at court) ; and that I was quite in the dark as to where he was at that moment. Having been informed on these points, I exclaimed, that if such was the case, the Duke ought to be arrested, and that orders should be given to that effect. Everything had been foreseen and prepared :<sup>1</sup> the different orders were already drawn up, nothing remained but to sign them, and the fate of the young Prince was thus decided. He had been residing for some time past, at a distance of about three leagues from the Rhine, in the States of Baden. Had I been sooner aware of this fact, and of its importance, I should have taken umbrage at it, and should not have suffered the Prince to remain so near the frontiers of France ; and that circumstance, had it happened, would have saved his life. As for the assertions that were advanced at the time, that I had been strenuously opposed in this affair, and that numerous solicitations had been made to me, they are utterly false, and were only invented to make me appear in a more odious light. The same thing may be said of the various motives that have been ascribed to me ; these motives may have existed in the bosoms of those who acted an inferior part on that occasion and may have guided them in their private views ; but my conduct was influenced only by the nature of the fact itself and the energy of my disposition. Undoubtedly, if I had been informed in time of certain circumstances respecting the opinions of the Prince and his disposition, if, above all, I had seen the letter which he wrote to me, and which,

<sup>1</sup> This account differs a little from Savary's, given above.



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God knows for what reason, was only delivered to me after his death, I should certainly have forgiven him." It was easy for us to perceive that these expressions of the Emperor were dictated by his heart and by natural feeling, and that they were only intended for us; for he would have felt himself much humbled, had he supposed that any body could think for a moment that he endeavoured to shift the blame upon some other person; or that he condescended to justify himself. And this feeling was carried so far that when he was speaking to strangers or dictating on that subject for the public eye, he confined himself to saying that if he had seen the Prince's letter, he should perhaps have forgiven him on account of the great political advantages that he might have derived from so doing; and in tracing with his own hand his last thoughts which he concluded will be recorded in the present age and reach posterity, he still pronounces on the subject, which he is aware will be considered as the most delicate for his memory, that if he were again placed in the same circumstances, he should again act in the same manner! Such was the man, such the stamp of his mind and the turn of his disposition.

'Napoleon one day said to me, with reference to the same subject, "If I occasioned a general consternation by that melancholy event, what an universal feeling of horror would have been produced by another spectacle with which I might have surprised the world! . . . . I have frequently been offered the lives of those whose place I filled on the throne, at the price of one million a head. They were seen to be my competitors, and it was supposed that I thirsted after their blood; but even if my disposition had been different from what it was, had I been formed to commit crimes, I should have repelled all thoughts of the crime thus proposed to me as seeming altogether gratuitous. I was then so powerful, so firmly seated; and they seemed so little to be feared! Revert to the periods of Tilsit and Wagram; to my marriage with Maria Louisa; to the state and attitude of Europe! However, in the midst of the crisis of the affairs of Georges and Pichegru, when I was assailed by murderers, the moment was thought favourable to tempt me, and the offer was renewed, having for its object the individual, whom public opinion in England as well as in France pointed out as the chief mover of all these horrible conspiracies. I was at Boulogne, where the bearer of these offers arrived: I took it into my head to ascertain personally the truth and the nature of the proposal. I ordered him to be brought before me—"Well, sir!" said I, when he appeared.—"Yes, First Consul, we will give him up to you for one million." "Sir, I will give you two millions; but on condition that you will bring him alive."—"Ah! that I could not promise," said the man hesitating, and much disconcerted at the tone of my

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voice and the expression of my looks at that moment.—“Do you then take me for a mere assassin? Know, Sir, that though I may think it necessary to inflict a punishment or make a great example, I am not disposed to encourage the perfidy of an ambuscade;” and I drove him from my presence. Indeed his mere presence was already too great a contamination.’—*LAS CASES*, vol. iv., p. 277.

Such were the real sentiments and line of conduct held by one who has been accused of nourishing a thirst for the blood of this unfortunate race, from the time that one of them refused (in answer to a pretended proposal to that effect) to waive their hereditary claims upon the throne of France:—a contrary supposition is more likely that his life was aimed at from the moment he had declined, in answer to a formal application to that effect, to proclaim Louis XVIII. as king. Talleyrand is roundly accused by Buonaparte and others of having instigated the designs against the Bourbons, and particularly of having had a principal hand in the seizure of the Duke d’Enghien and the holding back of his letter to the First Consul, from a desire to embroil him fatally with that family, whose return Talleyrand dreaded. He was met by Savary the morning of the Duke’s arrival earlier than usual going to inform Buonaparte of the circumstance; and again he stumbled upon him the same evening coming out of Murat’s door. Possibly it had been discovered while the Prince was detained in his carriage at the barrier that he was not Georges’s visitor; and the trial had been hurried forward to prevent the chance of Buonaparte’s relenting, when this particular should become known. Talleyrand is at present desirous of having the matter hushed up, or of exonerating himself by casting a double odium on others. He need not be alarmed. He would sooner be forgiven for having been accessory to the death of twenty Bourbons than for having spared the life of one of them when in his power. He never made royalty look little by great actions or elevated views; and that is the only crime which courts never pass over!

Buonaparte has himself chalked out the best line of conduct for him on this occasion, and which would have left no rubs or flaws in the work. ‘If I had acted right,’ he has been heard to say, ‘I should have followed the example of Cromwell, who on the discovery of the first attempt made to assassinate him, the plot of which had been hatched in France, caused it to be signified to the French king, that if the like occurred again, he, by way of reprisal, would order assassins to be hired to murder him and a Stuart. Now I ought to have publicly signified that on the next attempt at assassination, I would cause the same to be made upon the Bourbon princes, to accomplish which last indeed I had only to say that I would not punish the pro-

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jectors.' This bluff, downright, plain-spoken Rowland for an Oliver of old Noll's was after all the best and safest footing to put the question upon, free from all affectation of legal forms or diplomatic  *finesse* , which in such circumstances give either a false bias or prove impediments in the course of even-handed justice.

### CHAPTER XXXIV

#### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EMPIRE

THERE is something in the form of monarchy that seems vastly adapted to the constitution and weaknesses of human nature. It as it were puts a stop by a specific barrier to the tormenting strife and restless importunity of the passions in individuals, and at the same time happily discharges the understanding of all the labour and turmoil of its concern for the public good. The crown, the emblem of precedence and sovereignty, for which all are contending, is snatched from the reach of all to be placed on the brow of a baby yet unborn ; the troublesome differences of right and wrong, which produce such infinite agitation of opinion and convulse the bosom of states, are set at rest by the maxim that the king can do no wrong ; and a power whose origin is lost in the distance of time and that acts upon no other warrant than its own will, seems in a manner self-existent, and baffles alike resistance or censure. Once substitute the lineal distinctions of legitimacy and illegitimacy for those of right and wrong ; and the world, instead of being turned upside down, runs on in a smooth and invariable course. That a thing *is*, is much easier to determine than whether *it is good or bad* ; and the first question is the only one at stake in a monarchy ; it is the last that is always pending in commonwealths, that makes them so difficult of establishment and so soon unhinges them. *Le Roi le veut* stops all mouths ; and if we only admit that whatever is, is right, there is nothing more to be done, neither good nor harm ; though there may be a great deal of the latter to be suffered. A name, a prejudice, a custom are self-evident things : the inquiry after truth and good is ' long, obscure, and infinite.' If a ray of light breaks in upon it, it does not penetrate the mass of ignorance and folly ; or if the flame of liberty is kindled, it is extinguished by the sword. A hundred freemen only differ with and defeat one another ; ninety-nine slaves follow one tyrant, and act all together. Whatever is great and good is seated on a steep ascent ; the base and selfish is placed on

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an inclined plane below. If in this disadvantage of the ground on which the cause of improvement and emancipation rests, we can keep it suspended half-way down or from being precipitated with scorn and loud imprecations into the abyss, it is doing something.

Let any one look at those four men in the last chapter, the first of them one of the earliest defenders and earliest betrayers of the Republic, the second who had formerly denounced him now courted by him to league with a third, an assassin, outlaw, and desperado in the Royal cause, whose ignorance and incapacity to conceive of any thing else made him true to his first engagements, against a fourth who excited the envy and resentment of the two first for having outstripped them in the career of popularity and power, and was obnoxious to the hatred and vengeance of the third for being a main obstacle to the return of the Bourbons. And then I would ask, in this state of things, when reason and patriotism was divided against itself and torn in a thousand pieces, when the blindfold and furious bigot was alone faithful, and when the great principle of the Revolution found its firmest support and most unflinching ally in personal aggrandisement and soaring ambition, that preferred grasping at the supreme authority itself sooner than let it revert into the old, impure channels : I would ask in this state of things what better could be hoped by the most sanguine than to gain time, to hurl back and set at defiance to the uttermost that abomination of abominations, the evils of an endless struggle with which had almost made the thing itself seem endurable, and to make a drawn battle for the present, a compromise between the establishment of a great principle in theory and the imperfect adherence to it in practice? Those who are most sincerely and unalterably attached to the rule will not be most apt to take exception at the departure from it, for still it was in the nature of an exception, and not the admission of the opposite doctrine. ‘Entire affection scorneth nicer hands.’ Mr. Landor, whom I conceive to be capable of all the fervour and steadiness of the love of liberty and hatred of tyranny, says, that ‘the two worst crimes of the Revolution were the death of Malesherbes and the coronation of Buonaparte.’ I do not see that point with his eyes. I have nowhere in any thing I may have written declared myself to be a Republican; nor should I think it worth while to be a martyr and a confessor to any form or mode of government. But what I have staked health and wealth, name and fame upon, and am ready to do so again and to the last gasp, is this, that there is a power in the people to change its government and its governors. That is, I am a Revolutionist : for otherwise, I must allow that mankind are but a herd of slaves, the property of thrones, that no tyranny or insult can lawfully goad them to a resistance to a



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particular family, or impair in any possible degree the sacred and inalienable right of insolent, unmitigated controul over them ;—and it is not in the power of mortal man to bring me to that acknowledgment on the part of myself and my fellows. This is the only remedy mankind have against oppression : if this is not enough, yet I am contented with it. While this right remains in force, not written indeed in the preambles of acts of parliament but engraved in a nation's history, proved in the heraldry of its kings, a country may call itself free. The French changed from a monarchy to a republic, and from a republic to the empire, but they changed in either case ; nor was the breach made in the doctrine of passive obedience and hereditary right any more healed or soldered up by this means, than if at the time of the beheading of Louis XVI. they had sent to a needy German Elector or to the Prince of Orange to succeed him with the same title and with certain conditions of their own. If the new dynasty ever became a race of *rois faineans*, existing only for themselves or to injure and molest the people, they would have the highest example and authority to expel and overturn them. The change of the form of government might be considered as an advance towards an accommodation with the old aristocracies ; but they did not receive it so either at first or at last. On the contrary, if the reign of terror excited their fears and horror, the establishment of the Empire under Buonaparte seemed even a greater affront and encroachment on their pride and privileges ; and so far from being an atonement for the ravages of Jacobinism, was the seal and consummation of them. The fellowship between him and the Allies was that between the panther and the wolf. If they did not consider him as the legitimate successor of Louis XVI. and as having stopped up the volcano of the French Revolution, neither can I : if they still looked upon him as one of the people raised by their choice or who had usurped that power, so must I ; for it was only by their triumph over him that the image of the ‘divine and human majesty’ joined together and hallowed by prejudice and superstition could be restored, of which no efforts of his could produce more than a splendid and mortifying counterfeit—if mortifying to republican stoicism, how much more so to royal fortitude ! The balance of the account, if not quite on our side, was not quite and forever closed against us.

The repeated attempts made against the life of the First Consul gave a handle for following up the design which had been for some time agitated of raising him to the imperial throne and making the dignity hereditary in his family. Not that indeed this would secure him from personal danger, though it is true that ‘there’s a divinity doth hedge a king ;’ but it lessened the temptation to the enterprise

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and allayed a part of the public disquietude by providing a successor. All or the greater part were satisfied (either from reason, indolence, or the fear of worse) with what had been gained by the Revolution; and did not wish to see it launch out again from the port in which it had taken shelter to seek the perils of new storms and quicksands. If prudence had some share in this measure, there can be little doubt that vanity and cowardice had theirs also—or that there was a lurking desire to conform to the Gothic dialect of civilized Europe in forms of speech and titles, and to adorn the steel arm of the Republic with embroidered drapery and gold-tissue. The imitation, though probably not without its effect,<sup>1</sup> would look more like a burlesque to those whom it was intended to please, and could hardly flatter the just pride of those by whom it was undertaken. The old Republican party made some stand: the Emigrants showed great zeal for it, partly real, partly affected. Fouché canvassed the Senate and the men of the Revolution, and was soon placed in consequence at the head of the police, which was restored, as it was thought that fresh intrigues might break out on the occasion. The army gave the first impulse, as was but natural; to them the change of style from *Imperator* to *Emperor* was but slight. All ranks and classes followed when the example was once set: the most obscure hamlets joined in the addresses; the First Consul received waggon-loads of them. A register for the reception of votes for or against the question was opened in every parish in France; from Antwerp to Perpignan, from Brest to Mount Cenis. The *proce-verbal* of all these votes was laid up in the archives of the Senate, who went in a body from Paris to St. Cloud to present it to the First Consul. The Second Consul Cambacères read a speech, concluding with a summary of the number of votes; whereupon he in a loud voice proclaimed Napoleon Buonaparte Emperor of the French. The senators, placed in a line facing him, vied with each other in repeating *Vive l'Empereur!* and returned with all the outward signs of joy to Paris, where people were already writing epitaphs on the Republic.<sup>2</sup> Happy they whom epitaphs on the dead console for the loss of them! This was the time, if ever, when they ought to have opposed him, and prescribed limits to his power and ambition, and not when he returned weather-beaten and winter-flawed from Russia. But it was more in character for these persons to cringe when spirit was wanted, and to show it when it was fatal to him and to themselves.

Thus then the First Consul became Emperor by a majority of two

<sup>1</sup> For instance, would the Emperor of Austria have married his daughter to Buonaparte if he had been only First Consul?

<sup>2</sup> M. Cambacères was said to be the first '*qui cira (Sira) les bottes de Buonaparte*'—greased his boots or Sired him.

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millions some hundred thousand votes to a few hundreds. The number of votes is complained of by some persons as too small. Probably they may think that if the same number had been against the measure instead of being for it, this would have conferred a right as being in opposition to and in contempt of the choice of the people. What other candidate was there that would have got a hundred? What other competitor could indeed have come forward on the score of merit? *Detur optimo*. Birth there was not: but birth supersedes both choice and merit. The day after the inauguration, Buonaparte received the constituted bodies, the learned corporations, &c. The only strife was who should bow the knee the lowest to the new-risen sun. The troops while taking the oath rent the air with shouts of enthusiasm. The succeeding days witnessed the nomination of the new dignitaries, marshals, and all the usual appendages of a throne, as well with reference to the military appointments as to the high offices of the crown. On the 14th of July, the first distribution of the crosses of the Legion of Honour took place; and Napoleon set out for Boulogne to review the troops stationed in the neighbourhood and distribute the decorations of the Legion of Honour among them, which thenceforth were substituted for weapons of honour, which had been previously awarded ever since the first war in Italy.

The Emperor arrogated nothing to himself in consequence of the change in his situation. He had assumed the mock-majesty of kings, and had taken his station among the lords of the earth; but he was still himself, and his throne still stood afar off in the field of battle. He appeared little more conscious of his regal style and title, than if he had put on a masquerade-dress the evening before, of which if he was not ashamed (as it was a thing of custom) he had no reason to be proud; and he applied himself to his different avocations with the same zeal and activity as if nothing extraordinary had happened. He thought much less, it was evident, of all these new honours than of the prosecution of his operations at Boulogne, on which he laboured incessantly. The remoteness or doubtfulness of success did not relax his efforts; having once determined on the attempt, all the intermediate exertions between the will and its accomplishment with him went for nothing, any more than so much holiday recreation. Something more of the *vis inertiae* would have allayed this inordinate importunity of voluntary power, and led to greater security and repose.

From Boulogne the Emperor went a second time to Belgium, where the Empress joined him; they occupied the palace of Lacken near Brussels, which had formerly belonged to the Archduke Charles. He this time extended his journey to the Rhine; and from Mentz he dispatched general Caffarelli to Rome to arrange the visit of the Pope to

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Paris. It was from Mentz likewise he sent orders for the departure of the Toulon and Rochefort squadrons as a first step towards carrying into effect the invasion of England ; but owing to unforeseen circumstances, it was winter before they sailed.

Buonaparte returned from this tour at the end of October ; his attention was engaged during the month of November with the preparations for the Coronation, the Pope having set out from Rome for the purpose of performing the ceremony. The court was ordered to Fontainebleau to receive him, the palace there which had fallen into ruins having been repaired and newly fitted up by Napoleon. He went to meet the Pope at Nemours ; and to avoid formality, the pretext of a hunting-party was made use of, the Emperor coming on horseback and in a hunting-dress, with his retinue, to the top of the hill, where the meeting took place. The Pope's carriage drawing up, he got out at the left door in his white costume ; the ground was dirty, and he did not like to tread upon it with his white silk shoes, but he was at last obliged to do so. Napoleon alighted from his horse to receive him. They embraced. The Emperor's carriage had been driven up and advanced a few paces, as if by accident ; but men were posted to hold the two doors open, and at the moment of getting in, the Emperor took the right door, and an officer of the court handed the Pope to the left, so that they entered the carriage by the two doors at the same moment. The Emperor naturally seated himself on the right ; and this first step decided without negotiation upon the etiquette to be observed during the whole time of the Pope's stay in Paris. This interview and Buonaparte's behaviour was the very highest act and *acme* of audacity. It is comparable to nothing but the meeting of Priam and Achilles ; or a joining of hands between the youth and the old age of the world. If Pope Pius VII. represented the decay of ancient superstition, Buonaparte represented the high and palmy state of modern opinion ; yet not insulting over but propping the fall of the first. There were concessions on both sides, from the oldest power on earth to the newest, which in its turn asserted precedence for the strongest. In point of birth there was no difference, for theocracy stoops to the dregs of earth, as democracy springs from it ; but the Pope bowed his head from the ruins of the longest-established authority in Christendom, Buonaparte had himself raised the platform of personal elevation on which he stood to meet him. To us the condescension may seem all on one side, the presumption on the other ; but history is a long and gradual ascent, where great actions and characters in time leave borrowed pomp behind and at an immeasurable distance below them !—After resting at Fontainebleau, the Emperor returned to Paris ; the Pope, who set out first



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and was received with sovereign honours on the road, was escorted to the Thuilleries and was treated the whole time of his residence there as if at home. The novelty of his situation and appearance at Paris excited general interest and curiosity; and his deportment, besides its flowing from the natural mildness of his character, was marked by that fine *tact* and sense of propriety which the air of the ancient mistress of the world is known to inspire. Manners have there half maintained the empire which opinion had lost. The Pope was flattered by his reception and the sentiments of respect and good-will his presence seemed everywhere to create, and gave very gracious audiences to the religious corporations which were presented to him, and which were at this time but few in number. To meet this imposing display of pomp and ceremony, Buonaparte was in a manner obliged to oppose a host of ecclesiastics, of old and new nobility, and to draw the lines of form and etiquette closer round him, so as to make the access of old friends and opinions less easy. This effect of the new forms and ceremonies was at least complained of; but if they thus early kept out his friends, they did not in the end keep out his enemies.

The day fixed for the Coronation arrived. It was the 2d of December, 1804. Notwithstanding the unfavourableness of the weather, the assemblage of the deputations from all the Departments, from all the chief towns, and of all the regiments of the army, joined to all the public functionaries of France, to all the generals, and to the whole population of the capital, presented a fine and imposing sight. The interior of the church of Nôtre-Dame had been magnificently embellished; galleries and pews erected for the occasion were thronged with a prodigious concourse of spectators. The imperial throne was placed at one end of the nave, on a very elevated platform; that of the Pope was in the choir, beside the high-altar. I am not averse to be thus particular in preserving 'the memory of what has been, and never more will be.' If these were false triumphs and false pomps of that cause which was ever next my heart (since a little child I knelt and lifted up my hands in prayer for it) they were better than the total ruin and grinning infamy that afterwards befel it. The Pope (who was made the antic of the day) set out from the Thuilleries, preceded by his chamberlain on an ass (which there was some difficulty in procuring at the moment), and who kept his countenance with an admirable gravity through the crowds of observers that lined the streets. The Pope arriving at the archiepiscopal palace, repaired to the choir of the cathedral by a private entrance.

The Emperor set out with the Empress by the Carrousel. In getting into the carriage, which was open all round and without panels, they

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at first seated themselves with their backs to the horses—a mistake which though instantly rectified, was remarked as ominous; and it had all the ominousness which hangs over new power or custom. The procession passed along the Rue St. Honoré to that of the Lombards, then to the Pont au Change, the Palace of Justice, the court of Nôtre-Dame, and the entrance to the archiepiscopal palace. Here rooms were prepared for the whole of the attendants, some of whom appeared dressed in their civil costumes, others in full uniform. On the outside of the church had been erected a long wooden gallery from the archbishop's palace to the entrance of the church. By this gallery came the Emperor's retinue, which presented a truly magnificent sight. They had taunted us with our simplicity and homeliness: well then! here was the answer to it. The procession was led by the already numerous body of courtiers; next came the marshals of the Empire, wearing their badges of honour; then the dignitaries and high officers of the crown; and lastly, the Emperor in a gorgeous state-dress. At the moment of his entering the cathedral, there was a simultaneous shout, which resembled one vast explosion of *Vive l'Empereur*. The immense quantity of figures to be seen on each side of so vast an edifice formed a tapestry of the most striking kind. The procession passed along the middle of the nave, and arrived at the choir facing the high-altar. This part of the spectacle was not the least imposing: the galleries round the choir were filled with the handsomest women which France could boast, and most of whom surpassed in the lustre of their beauty that of the rich jewels with which they were adorned.

His Holiness then went to meet the Emperor at a desk, which had been placed in the middle of the choir; there was another on one side for the Empress. After saying a short prayer there, they returned, and seated themselves on the throne at the end of the church facing the choir: there they heard mass, which was said by the Pope. They went to make the offering, and came back; they then descended from the platform of the throne, and walked in procession to receive the holy unction. The Emperor and Empress, on reaching the choir, replaced themselves at their desks, where the Pope performed the ceremony. He presented the crown to the Emperor, who received it, put it himself upon his own head, took it off, placed it upon that of the Empress, removed it again, and laid it on the cushion where it was at first. A smaller crown was immediately put upon the head of the Empress; who being surrounded by her ladies, every thing was done so quickly that nobody was aware of the substitution that had taken place. The procession moved back to the platform. There the Emperor heard *Te Deum*: the Pope himself went thither at the con-

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clusion of the service, as if to say, *Ite, missa est!* The Testament was presented to the Emperor, who took off his glove, and pronounced the oath with his hand upon the sacred book. He went back to the episcopal palace the same way that he had come, and entered his carriage. The ceremony was long; the day cold and wet; the Emperor seemed impatient and uneasy a great part of the time; and it was dusk before the cavalcade reached the Thuilleries, whither it returned by the Rue St. Martin, the Boulevards, the Place de la Concorde and the Pont-Tournant. The distribution of the eagles took place some days afterwards. Though the weather was still unfavourable, the throng was prodigious, and the enthusiasm at its height; the citizens as well as the soldiers burst into long and repeated acclamations, as those warlike bands received from the hands of their renowned leader (not less a soldier for being a king) the pledges of many a well-fought field.

The Cisalpine Republic at the same time underwent a change which was easily managed. The Emperor was surrounded by men, who spared him the trouble of expressing the same wish twice, though many of them afterwards pretended that they had sturdily disputed every word and syllable of it, opposing a shadow of resistance to fallen power instead of the substance to the abuse of it, and finding no medium between factious divisions and servile adulation. Lombardy was erected into a kingdom, and the Emperor put the Iron Crown of Charlemagne upon his head. Those who look upon this as a violent usurpation seem wilfully to forget all the intermediate steps which led to it, as though it were an effect without a cause. A crown resting on merit alone appears ridiculous, because there is no necessary connection between the two things; a crown worn without any merit in the wearer seems natural and in order, because no reason is even pretended to be assigned for it. If such things are to be at all, who so worthy of the distinction as those who achieve them as tokens of what they have done and are to do—if they are not to be at all, I am still better satisfied. The Pope, who had done all that was required of him, expected something in return: he asked for the restoration of Avignon in France, of Bologna and Ferrara in Italy, to the Holy See. The Emperor turned a deaf ear; and on the Pope's insisting, gave a flat refusal. This was the beginning of a great deal of petty disagreement and annoyance that was creditable to neither party. His Holiness went away not in the best humour, though Buonaparte made him magnificent presents of every thing but what he wanted. They bid farewell to each other, the Emperor leaving the Pope at Paris to set out for Italy, by way of Troyes and Burgundy, which he wished to visit. They met again at Turin, whence the Pope proceeded by way

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of Casal to Rome, and the Emperor through Asti and Alexandria to be crowned at Milan. He stopped at Alexandria (the 14th of June 1805) to review the troops on the anniversary of the battle of Marengo. He on that day put on the same coat and laced hat he had worn in the field of battle. This dress, which was old and moth-eaten, was pierced in more than one place by the Austrian bullets. It was on the same occasion that he had a monument erected on the top of Mount St. Bernard to perpetuate the memory of that victory; and that the remains of Desaix, which were discovered with some difficulty in the same vault and in the same state in which they had been left five years before, were deposited with funeral pomp in the sacristy of the Convent.

A deputation of the Cisalpine Republic with Melzi (afterwards Duke of Lodi) at its head, had come to Paris to offer Buonaparte the Iron Crown of Italy, and they had returned in time to welcome him to Milan. The enthusiasm in this city was excessive; nor is it to be wondered at after the vicissitudes of surprise and disappointment, of hope and fear, of defeat and victory, to which they had so often been subjected and were still doomed to be so, the sport of fortune, not masters of their own fate! Buonaparte was a favourite with the Italians; he was their's by birth-right, by his knowledge of their language, by his intimate acquaintance with all the local circumstances of their history and institutions, no less than by the benefits he had conferred upon them and that brilliant career which had commenced upon their soil! Of the many great works he caused to be performed amongst them, the completing of the cathedral of Milan was not the least flattering to their pride. The ceremony of the coronation took place in this vast building. A detachment of the guard of honour at Milan went the day before to fetch the Iron Crown of the ancient kings of Lombardy, which was carefully preserved at Muntza; it became once more that of the kingdom of Italy. On this occasion, the Emperor instituted the order of the Iron Crown, and after the ceremony of the coronation went in state to the Senate, where he invested Prince Eugene Beauharnais with the vice-royalty of Italy.

While at Milan, the French read the accounts in the newspapers, published from the intercepted correspondence of Sir Arthur Wellesley, of the immense strides made by the English power in India, and could not help being struck with the different measure of moderation or aggrandizement, which we seemed to have for ourselves or our neighbours! This happened just at the time when the annexation of Genoa to the French Empire gave a severe shock to the political prudery of the English cabinet. Genoa however, as circumstances stood, was rather a burden than an acquisition to France, so as to



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cause an increase in the public expenditure. Genoa had long possessed nothing but marble palaces, the relics of its former grandeur. During all this accession of honours and these multiplied transactions, the Emperor found time to transmit the most minute directions respecting the equipment and embarking of the still meditated naval expedition through one of his confidential agents at Boulogne. So little did the weight of two crowns press upon his brain or make it giddy! At Brescia he learned the return of Missiessy's squadron two months before its time, bringing the English fleets with it, which caused him a degree of chagrin, which he strove in vain to hide. Afterwards, the delay and incapacity of Villeneuve disconcerted the whole project, as has been already hinted. Buonaparte, after passing through Brescia, Verona, Mantua, and the other cities of Italy, to take possession of Genoa, returned to Paris by way of Fontainebleau towards the end of June, and hastened to the coast only to witness the disappointment of a series of calculations, which almost unavoidably fell to pieces from the number of links of which it was composed. Every thing was so far ready at the time that the signal to embark was looked for every hour, but it never came. Events of a different complexion opened a new career for his love of enterprise and his ambition, if the repelling the unprovoked and unexpected aggressions of others is by any courtesy of speech to be called so.

Before proceeding to take up that part of the subject, it will not be amiss to give a few particulars of Napoleon's private habits and mode of life at this period of his history.

Every morning at nine o'clock regularly (when he was at home) the Emperor came out of the interior of his apartments, dressed for the day. The officers of the household were the first admitted. Napoleon gave them his orders for the day. Immediately after, the *grand entries* were introduced, consisting of persons of the highest rank, who were entitled to this privilege either by their functions or by special favour. This privilege was at that time considered as the highest possible distinction. Napoleon addressed each person in turn, and listened good-naturedly to all that was said to him. The round being made, he bowed and every one withdrew. Sometimes those who had any particular request to make remained alone with him a few moments after the others. At half an hour after nine the breakfast was served. The prefect of the palace<sup>1</sup> went to apprise him of it and to go before him into the saloon where he was to breakfast, and there waited on him alone, assisted by the first *maître-d'hôtel*, who performed all the details of the duty. Napoleon breakfasted on a small mahogany stand covered with a napkin. The prefect of the palace was in attendance,

<sup>1</sup> At that time M. de Bausset, who gives the above account.

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his hat under his arm, standing near the little table. Temperate as ever man was, the breakfast of the Emperor often lasted not more than eight or ten minutes. But when he felt an inclination to close the doors, as he said sometimes laughing, the breakfast lasted long enough, and then nothing could surpass the easy gaiety and grace of his conversation. His expressions were rapid, pointed, and picturesque. Those who had the good fortune to be about his person found these the most agreeable hours of their lives. He often received during breakfast-time a few individuals in whose society he had the greatest pleasure, among whom might be mentioned particularly the names of Monge, Bertholet, Costaz, Denon, Corvisart his physician, and the celebrated David, Gerard, Isabey, Talma, and others. The satisfaction of all parties was mutual and complete. Endowed with abundant resources, a superior understanding and extraordinary quickness, it was in moments of the most unguarded confidence and intimacy that Napoleon, by the common consent of all who knew him, shone the most.

Having returned to his cabinet, Napoleon applied himself to business, and received the Ministers and Directors-General, who attended with their port-folios; these different occupations lasted till six in the evening, and were never broken in upon, except on the days of the Councils of the Ministers or the Councils of State. The dinner was regularly served up at six o'clock. At the Thuilleries or at St. Cloud, their Majesties dined alone, except on Sundays, when the whole of the Imperial family were admitted to the banquet: the Emperor, the Empress, and the Emperor's mother were seated in elbow-chairs, the rest had common chairs. The dinner consisted but of one course, prolonged by the dessert; the simplest dishes were those which Napoleon preferred. The only wine he drank was Chambertin, and he seldom drank it pure. The attendants were the pages, the *maîtres-d'hôtel*, and other servants out of livery. The dinner lasted ordinarily from a quarter of an hour to twenty minutes. Buonaparte never tasted spirits or *liqueurs*. He usually took two cups of coffee pure, one in the morning after breakfast, and the other directly after dinner. All that has been said of his abuse of this beverage was at that time false and ridiculous.

Having gone back to the drawing-room, a page presented to the Emperor a silver-gilt waiter on which were a cup and a sugar-basin. The principal servant poured out the coffee; the Empress then took the cup from the Emperor; the page and the head-servant withdrew, the prefect of the palace still remaining till the Empress had poured the coffee into the saucer and handed it to Napoleon. It happened so often that this prince forgot to take it at the proper time, that the

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Empress Josephine and after her the Empress Maria-Louisa had hit upon so complaisant a mode of remedying this slight inconvenience. Shortly after, the Emperor returned into his cabinet to resume his labours, for *rarely* (as he observed) *he put off till to-morrow what he could do to-day*. The Empress descended to her apartments by a private stair, which had a communication with both suites of rooms : on entering the drawing-room, she there found the ladies of honour in attendance, some other privileged ladies, and the officers of her household : card-tables were set out for form's sake and to break the constraint of a circle. Napoleon sometimes came there through the Empress's apartments, and talked with as much simplicity as freedom with the ladies of the court or the rest of the company. But in general he stayed only a short time. The officers on duty prepared to attend the evening *levée*, and to receive their orders for the next day. Such was the life habitually led by the Emperor at the Thuilleries. Its uniformity was interrupted only when there was a concert, a play, or by the chace. During his stay at St. Cloud, the manner of living was the same, with the exception of the time employed, in fine weather, in rides in the neighbourhood. The Council of Ministers was held every Wednesday : the members were always invited to stay dinner. At Fontainebleau, Rambouillet, or Compiègne, where Napoleon went to hunt, there was always a tent set up in the forest for breakfast, to which all the party was invited : the ladies followed the chace in their carriages. It was usual for eight or ten persons to be asked to dine. Napoleon's mode of life when he was with the army or on a journey of course varied according to the nature of the circumstances. The whole economy of the household was regulated with the exactest care by the Grand-Marshal Duroc (Duke of Frioul) under the superintendance of the Emperor himself. Nevertheless, we are not to suppose that there was an appearance of any thing mean or niggardly. Napoleon's own tastes were simple and modest ; but he liked to see display and magnificence around him. His court was always brilliant and in the best taste. There was order and not waste.

It sometimes happened that Napoleon pre-occupied with affairs of state, rose from breakfast or dinner for days together without a word having been said. But such occurrences, it is to be noted, were rare ; and even when his brow was serious and his lips silent, he still showed himself just, polite, and kind. Few persons (according to the best testimony) have in private possessed more equability of temper, and greater gentleness of manners. In political discussions indeed he did not willingly give ground ; but even when his features were kindled into warmth and his expressions betrayed anger, he had often too much reason for it ; and his indignation was more than once roused by

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ingratitude, which sprang up in the very height of his prosperity. Two instances may be given here to explain the difference of the tone of sentiment and etiquette in the new and the old court. M. Victor de Caraman (since the return of the Bourbons Ambassador to the Court of Vienna) had been arrested and put in prison in the time of the Consulate. His wife, encouraged by the Empress Josephine, whose extreme goodness was known to all France, had the boldness to make her way through the guard and mount on the steps of Napoleon's carriage to make an affecting appeal in behalf of her husband. She was listened to with attention and without any marks of impatience; but she did not obtain a favourable answer. In her hurry and distress, Madame de Caraman forgot her work-bag in the carriage, which was sent to her the next morning. On seeing it, she expected to find her husband's pardon in the work-bag. It is certain that in the days of romantic chivalry, or in a case less grave, this trait of gallantry might have suggested itself. Josephine declared that the Emperor was at first tempted to do so; but that he fancied the oversight had been voluntary and premeditated, and then he altered his mind, the statesman getting the better of the courtier. Some months afterwards, M. de Caraman was sent to reside at Ivrea in Piedmont, under the eye of the police. Another illustration to the purpose is the circumstance that at a later period it was debated whether the Emperor should not dine in public as the Princes of the House of Bourbon had formerly done; but this was negatived on the ground that the mere act of eating or drinking was one that concerned the individual alone; and though it was proper and of a piece to make a state-ceremony of this with regard to the former family, as all that they did was for their own sakes, and supposed by that alone to be worthy of the homage and wonder of the people, yet in the new dynasty and upon modern principles it was a paralogism and an impertinence to obtrude the Imperial family upon general notice, except as servants of the public, and in cases where the latter were primarily and ostensibly interested. This distinction, which was not merely in words, but acted upon at the time,<sup>1</sup> is worth volumes as a comment on the character and uses of the two governments.

About the period at which we have arrived, the Abbé de Pradt, Cardinal Maury, the old academician La Harpe, and Chateaubriand, became a sort of appendages to the Imperial Court. Buonaparte's youngest brother, Jerome, was out of favour with him for having married an American lady, whom he refused to divorce in order to wed a continental princess. He afterwards yielded to his brother's solicitations. Madame de Stael (who had been banished to Geneva

<sup>1</sup> In the time of Maria Louisa.



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on account of her eloquence and intrigues) had just given new umbrage by her declamations against the Catholic religion, in her romance of *Delphine*, and was not allowed to come to Paris to enjoy the success of it. Buonaparte is accused of having intermeddled too much and too harshly with literature; but not till it had first meddled with him. He was fond of the theatre and often criticised the new pieces that came out (some of them of a political tendency) with the spirit of a statesman and the acuteness of a philosopher. Some persons have complained that he criticised the plan and style of a tragedy with the same confidence as if it had been the order of a battle. Surely, he who had overcome and seemingly reconciled all parties (besides being a mere soldier) must be allowed to have possessed some knowledge of mankind, as he who had risen to the summit of power could not be altogether a stranger to aspiring and lofty sentiments. The Cid of modern Europe had earned a right to admire Corneille.

### CHAPTER XXXV

#### BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ

TOWARDS the end of 1804 a memorial by one of the Austrian Ministers roused Mr. Pitt from the state of inaction, in which he had so long remained supine but writhing under the sense of disappointment, to dream once more of Coalitions which had hitherto been and were still to be formed during his lifetime only to be broken in pieces again. Marengo had staggered, Austerlitz gave the finishing blow to the schemes of pride and arrogance which filled up the whole measure of his perverted capacity. In the month of January 1805, he gave orders to the English legation to feel the pulse of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg; and on the 11th of April following, the treaty of concert was signed between England, Austria, and Russia, the two latter powers engaging to bring large armies into the field, while England was to furnish proportionable subsidies, in prosecution of the old nefarious object. Austria being the nearest was in the field first, and commenced operations according to the legitimate privilege by an attack on Bavaria, a neutral power, in order to force her into the Coalition; but the tide of war soon turned, and Bavaria became the ally of France. In the June of the same year, Baron Vincent, the Austrian General, had gone out of his way to visit Napoleon at Verona, and had paid him sovereign honours by a salute of artillery. No declaration of war was issued, and Count Cobentzel, the Austrian

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Plenipotentiary, still remained at Paris, so that every thing concurred to lull Buonaparte into a false security; but a spark was sufficient to rouse him into action, and the thunderbolt fell on those who thought to take him by surprise. He was so little apprehensive on the subject at first, that he would not for some time credit the rumours of a rupture with Austria, and sent Savary to Frankfort-on-the-Maine to learn the truth of the matter, and to buy the best maps of the German Empire. Certain news, however, soon came of the advance of General Mack upon Munich, and of the arrival of the Russians in the Austrian territory. The Emperor now lost no time in raising the camp at Boulogne and in pushing the troops forward by the shortest routes to the banks of the Rhine, so that they might arrive there by the time that the Austrian army reached the Danube.

General Marmont received orders to make the best of his way from Holland. Bernadotte, who was in Hanover, had to cross part of the territory of Prussia, with whom France was at peace, and the sovereigns of the two countries had only lately exchanged honorary distinctions. At the same time, therefore, that the Emperor sent Bernadotte orders to march, he dispatched the Grand-Marshal Duroc to Berlin to apprise the king of Prussia of the critical situation in which he was placed by an attack without any previous declaration of war, to express his extreme regret at being obliged on the sudden to march his troops over certain portions of the Prussian dominions, and to excuse himself on the ground of absolute necessity alone. Duroc's reception was not so cordial as it had been on a former occasion. The King said little, digested the affront inwardly as well as he could; but long after his chagrin broke out on more than one occasion, when he could only resort to complaints, saying to Napoleon—'But why did you violate my neutrality of Anspach and Bareuth?' Baron Hardenberg spoke out more plainly in an official note on the subject, and there is little doubt that a war would have been the result, had it not been for the battle of Austerlitz. Prussia had just about the same time refused a passage through Polish Prussia to the Russian army, which was however consented to in consequence of the dissatisfaction of the court with Bernadotte's movement; and the Emperor Alexander soon after came to Berlin, under pretence of a visit to his sister, the hereditary Princess of Saxe-Weimar, but in truth to draw over Prussia to the Coalition.

Napoleon had already made all his calculations. The maps of England had disappeared, and given place to those of Germany, which was more debateable ground. Not sorry to exchange his bridge of boats for firm land, he made those about him follow the intended march of the troops, and explained his own designs in these words:

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‘If the enemy,’ he said, ‘comes to meet me, I will destroy him before he has regained the Danube : if he waits for me, I will surprise him between Augsburg and Ulm.’ And so it happened. He issued his last orders, and set out for Paris ; where having arrived, he repaired to the Senate, informed them of the circumstances which led him to give a new destination to the troops and to call for fresh supplies, and proceeded next day to Strasburg. He reached that city while the French army was passing the Rhine at Kehl, Lauterburg, Spires, and Manheim. He inspected the establishments of the fortress, and gave orders for the reconstruction of the fort of Kehl. He had sent proposals to the Prince of Baden and to the Landgrave of Hesse-Darmstadt to join him : the first did so a little before the battle of Austerlitz ; the other thought it best to wait till it was over. On the approach of the different troops to the foot of the mountains situated in the country of Wurtemberg, the Duke had drawn up his little army near Ludwigsburg, his summer-residence, and was preparing to make a formal resistance, when the Emperor’s aide-de-camp appeared to request permission to pass. This mark of courtesy satisfied him ; and the Emperor met a magnificent reception from the court of Wurtemberg, sleeping two nights at the palace of Ludwigsburg. It was on this occasion the Princess-Royal of England (who had been married to the Duke of Wurtemberg) sent home word to express her surprise at finding Buonaparte so polite and agreeable a person and not at all the hideous caricature he had been held up in this country, lest John Bull should not be sufficiently terrified to answer the purposes of those who wanted to goad him to madness. During his stay here, hostilities commenced on the road from Stutgard to Ulm between Marshal Ney’s corps and the Austrians commanded by the Archduke Ferdinand and Field-Marshal Mack. Buonaparte directed Marshal Ney to debouch by the high Stutgard road, making the enemy believe that the whole army were following him, when he suddenly wheeled round with the rapidity of lightning to Nordlingen, where shortly after arrived the corps of Davoust from Manheim by the valley of the Neckar, that of Soult from Spires by Heilbron, and lastly, that of Marshal Lannes who reached Donawert just in time to prevent an Austrian battalion, who had appeared on the right bank of the Danube, from destroying the bridge, and drove them back to the other side of the river.

The Emperor then caused the country to be scoured as far as the Lech ; and placed himself in communication with General Marmont, who had passed the Danube at Neuburg, and also with the Bavarian army which was leaving Ingolstadt to join him. He ordered Augsburg to be occupied, which is forty miles in the rear of Ulm, where the

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Austrian head-quarters were; and sent Soult forward to blockade Memmingen, a small town to the south of Ulm, which was the only line of retreat the enemy had left, and into which they had thrown six thousand men. He then went and fixed his head-quarters at Augsburg to observe what course the Austrian army was about to take, round whom he had drawn a circle by the movement he had made in advance with his different corps, as completely as with the foot of a pair of compasses. From Augsburg he proceeded to Zurnershausen, and caused Ulm to be hemmed in on all sides. It was difficult to understand why the Austrian generals had remained here so long (as if spell-bound) in the midst of all these complicated preparations to surround them, neither attempting to escape nor offering battle to the French. At length, as the Emperor approached by Guntzburg within sight of Ulm, he learned that a strong detachment under the Archduke Ferdinand had escaped from the place, and was making its way into the mountains of Bohemia in spite of the attempt of one of Marshal Ney's divisions to stop it. The same day a second column left the place, but was met by another division of Ney's corps and driven back into Ulm. The corps of Marshal Lannes was ordered to support that of Marshal Ney, and that same evening the two corps slept on the heights which overlook Ulm on the left bank of the Danube, while Marmont approached it on the right. The Emperor took post at Elchingen, which was the key of Bohemia. Ulm was closely invested, and its outposts driven in.

The Austrians remained in this situation four days without making any overture. In the mean time, Memmingen had surrendered with its garrison of six thousand men, the news of which was brought the Emperor in a wretched bivouac, where it was necessary to procure a plank for him to keep his feet out of the water. He had just received the capitulation, when Prince Maurice Lichtenstein came with a flag of truce from Marshal Mack. He was led forward on horseback with his eyes bandaged. When he was presented to the Emperor, his look showed that he did not expect to find him there. Mack, not suspecting his presence, had sent to treat for the evacuation of Ulm and for permission for the army which occupied it to return to Austria. The French themselves allow that it was the constant practice of the enemy's generals to attempt to outwit their own, whenever Buonaparte was not on the spot. The Emperor could not help smiling at the proposal, and said, 'What reason have I to comply with this demand? In a week you will be in my power without conditions. You expect the advance of the Russian army, which is scarcely in Bohemia yet; and besides, if I let you go, what guarantee have I that your troops will not be made to serve when once they are united with the Russians?



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I have not forgotten Marengo. I suffered M. de Melas to go; and Moreau had to fight his troops at the end of two months, in spite of the most solemn promises to conclude peace.<sup>1</sup> There are no laws of war to appeal to, after such conduct as that of your government towards me. Most assuredly, I have not sought you; and then again I cannot rely on any engagements into which your General might enter with me, because it will depend on himself alone to keep his word. It would be a different thing if you had one of your Princes in Ulm, and he were to bind himself; but I believe the Archduke is gone.' Prince Maurice replied in the best manner he could, and protested that the army would not leave the place without the conditions he demanded. 'I shall not grant them,' rejoined the Emperor; 'there is the capitulation of your General who commanded at Memmingen; carry it to Marshal Mack, and tell him I will grant no other terms. Besides, I am in no hurry; the longer he delays, the worse he will render his situation and that of you all. For the rest, I shall have the corps which took Memmingen here to-morrow, and we shall then see.'

Prince Lichtenstein was conducted back to Ulm. The same evening General Mack wrote a letter to the Emperor, in which he plainly stated that the only consolation which was left him in his misfortunes was his being obliged to treat with him; that no other person should have made him accept such mortifying conditions; but since fortune would have it so, he awaited his orders. Next morning Berthier went to Ulm and returned in the evening with the capitulation, by which the whole army surrendered. It was to march out with the honours of war, file off before the French army, lay down its arms, and set out for France, with the exception of the generals and officers, who had permission to return home on condition of not serving till a complete exchange. For eight days that the French troops had passed before Ulm, it had rained incessantly: all at once the rain ceased, and the Austrian army filed off in the finest weather imaginable. That was a day glorious to France, and that threw back once more to a perilous distance the ever-returning, undismayed hope of tyrants to set their feet once for all upon the necks of mankind! Mack has been loudly accused of treachery on this occasion, without any positive grounds. He was probably under the influence of that species of fascination which takes place in the intellectual as well as the physical world from an apprehension of superior power; and which rendered him incapable of summoning resolution to meet the danger when it came, as it had before deprived him of the faculty of locomotion to avoid it. The

<sup>1</sup> This was what was called ambition in Buonaparte; because he had to put down these continual breaches of faith and ever-springing hopes of the subjugation of France.

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outrageous revilers of Mack will hardly include the Archduke Ferdinand in the same censure, who yet suffered the Austrian force to be cooped up in this precarious position from the same want of decision, and left it to its fate a few days before. Mack was, however, guilty of a greater offence than even the surrender of Ulm; he paid Buonaparte a visit after the signature of the capitulation at the Abbey of Elchingen, who drew from him (as men are communicative in calamity) the secrets of the Allies, as it respected their new engagements and ulterior objects. Mack was afterwards confined in an Austrian dungeon; where it was not known for a long time what became of him. General Mathieu Dumas had it in charge to accompany him back to Ulm and to make the necessary dispositions for the ceremony of the following day. The French army was drawn up in order of battle on the neighbouring heights; the dress and accoutrements of the soldiers being put into the best state that circumstances would admit. The drums beat—the bands played; the gates of Ulm opened; the Austrian army advanced in silence, filed off slowly, and went, corps by corps, to lay down its arms at a certain spot which had been previously agreed upon. This day put into the power of the French thirty-six thousand men; six thousand had been taken at Memmingen, and about two thousand at the battle of Wertingen; so that the total loss of the Austrians could be estimated at little short of fifty thousand men, with seventy pieces of cannon and about three thousand five hundred horses, which served to mount a division of dragoons, which had come from Boulogne on foot. The ceremony lasted the whole day. The Emperor (who flung more glory into one day then, than would fill up whole years now) was posted on a little hill in front of the centre of his army; a large fire had been lighted, and by this fire he received the Austrian generals to the number of seventeen. He complained of the iniquitous proceeding of their Government ‘in coming without any declaration of war to seize him by the throat;’ and said that ‘the Aulic Council would have done better if instead of mixing up Asiatic hordes in European quarrels it had joined with him to repel Russian encroachment.’ Thus early did the dread of Russian power haunt him; and so clearly did he think it the policy of the other Continental states to make head against it. But it was not the irruption of barbarism which they feared, but the progress of light and civilisation! A trifling circumstance occurred during this interview, which sets Buonaparte’s character in a just light. An officer, more remarkable for his petulance than his wit, repeated aloud an expression as coming from one of the soldiers, tending to throw ridicule on the vanquished. Napoleon, whose ear caught up every thing, was highly displeased; and sent one of his aide-de-camps to

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tell that general officer to retire, saying to those near him, 'He must have little respect for himself who insults men in misfortune!'

The Emperor slept at Elchingen, and set out next day for Augsburg, where he lodged at the Bishop's palace. He stayed there only time enough to arrange a new set of marches for the troops, and then departed. He had learned fresh particulars of the approach of the Russians. Travellers from Lintz had seen the first troops of that nation enter the town, and place themselves in carts and waggons collected beforehand, hastening forward to the Rhine. The news of the capture of Ulm soon after reached their commander-in-chief, Kutusow, and made a change in his plans. These same Russians who were now pressing on in the full confidence of their brutality and ignorance to the frontiers of France (like a herd of filthy swine snuffing another Poland) and for the third time compelled to turn back, made a sad outcry when some years after the French returned the intended compliment—they revenged it too by accident—God knows not by right, unless failure in wrong constitutes a right!—From Augsburg Buonaparte set forward for Munich, where, though the Elector had not yet returned, he was well received by the Bavarians; and the city was illuminated. The French army now crossed the Iser over all the bridges from that of Munich to that of Plading, and approached the Inn. The Emperor, with a large portion of the army, took the road to Mühldorf, where the Russians had just been. Beyond this, there was not a single bridge which they had not burned, thus giving a foretaste of their dexterity at the work of devastation and an intelligible warning what sort of customers they were. From Mühldorf the Emperor proceeded to Burkhhausen and thence to Brannau. A garrison of two thousand Russians left in the latter place would have occasioned considerable inconvenience and delay, but they had only burned the bridge over the Inn. The bridge at Lintz was also burned: the troops here crossed to the left bank of the Danube, and were pushed forward by slow and cautious marches into Bohemia, following the track of the Russians. At Lintz, Buonaparte received a visit from the Elector of Bavaria and his son; and Duroc, who had been dispatched on a mission to Berlin, rejoined him in that town. He brought back nothing satisfactory: it appeared pretty certain that the conduct of Prussia would be governed by events, or in other words that Napoleon would have to reckon that power too among his enemies, should fortune prove unfavourable to him. He seems to have drawn the natural inference that should fortune prove favourable to him, this would give him at least an equal right to use his discretion with respect to Prussia—an inference (unavoidable as it is) which has been aggravated into the most wanton cruelty and injustice!

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At Lintz also the Emperor received accounts of the army of Italy and of the retreat of the Archduke Charles towards Vienna, after a sanguinary but indecisive action with Massena. General Giulay, one of the officers included in the capitulation of Ulm, came with a flag of truce to propose an armistice; but as the object evidently was to gain time and to allow the Archduke and the Russians to form a junction at Vienna, which might save the Austrian monarchy from the danger which threatened it, Buonaparte would not listen to it, and said they might fight and treat at the same time. He also observed that General Giulay had no power to treat for the Russians; and sent him back, if his intentions were serious, to have them included as parties in the armistice. Buonaparte therefore set out for Vienna and arrived at St. Polten, where he was detained a day or two by a severe check which one of Marshal Mortier's divisions had received from the Russians. This with the loss of three eagles vexed the Emperor; and by no means put him into a better humour for agreeing to General Giulay's proposals, which were renewed here. On the contrary, the troops were urged on to Vienna, and Marshals Lannes and Murat entered that capital by a stratagem of war which showed a good deal of spirit and adroitness. General Giulay was still with the Emperor, and for the last fortnight there had been much talk of an armistice, so that the usual strictness of discipline was relaxed. The Austrians, placed on the left bank of the Danube, had however made the necessary dispositions for burning the bridge of the Tabor, and had merely covered it by a post of hussars. Marshals Lannes and Murat, anxious to save this means of communication so important to the army, went themselves accompanied by a few officers, to the Austrian piquet; entered into conversation with them on the rumours of an armistice; and while their attention was thus drawn off, a column of Lannes's grenadiers, headed by an intelligent officer, advanced through the suburbs of Vienna in the island of the Prater, gained the bridge in double-quick time, and after throwing into the water all the fire-works prepared for blowing it up, seized upon the cannon, and established themselves on the opposite bank of the river. This surprise, which was executed in a moment, was of the utmost consequence, as it prevented the junction of the Archduke with the Russians, and put Vienna with all its stores and the advantages it possessed into the hands of Napoleon. He was much pleased with the success of this bold stroke, and fixed his head-quarters at the palace of Schönbrunn, where he prepared to manœuvre with all his forces, (which were pouring into Vienna from every quarter) either upon the Russians or the Archduke Charles, according as either one or the other should be most within his reach.



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The army of General Kutusof, which had recrossed the Danube at Stein (and which if it had proceeded in the first instance to Vienna might have given a different turn to affairs) was marching by Znaim to rejoin the main Russian army at Olmutz, where the Emperor Alexander was. The Archduke Charles, instead of advancing to protect the capital, was obliged to turn to the right so as to gain Hungary, and troops were instantly marched upon Presburg, to remove still further off the possibility of his effecting a junction with the Russians. Mortier and Marmont outside the walls of Vienna watched the roads to Italy and Hungary. Ney was still in the country of Salzburg before Kuffstein, which had a strong garrison. Napoleon was somewhat dissatisfied that Massena had not come up in time to join him before he gave battle to the Russians. He set out for Znaim; and on the day of his departure, the advanced-guard overtook the Russian rear-guard under Prince Bagration, and had a severe action with it at Hollabrunn. Both parties behaved like men, and General Oudinot was wounded. Buonaparte in consequence gave the command of the grenadiers to Duroc, being desirous that he should distinguish himself during the campaign. The French picked up a number of stragglers and sick in the rear of the Russian march. They appear to have imbibed thus early an overweening contempt for their doughty antagonists from the stupidity of their countenances. But stupidity has its advantages as well as wit. If a man strikes his hand against a piece of wood or stone, he will be the sufferer.—At Znaim the Emperor was informed that the Russians had marched by the road to Brunn; and he made the army take the same road. In that city he was joined by Bernadotte's four regiments of light cavalry under Kellermann; they had come by the Budweis road, and had left Bernadotte and his corps with the Bavarian cavalry under General Wrede (which was worn out with fatigue in its pursuit of the Archduke Ferdinand) at Iglau in Bohemia. On his arrival at Brunn, Buonaparte found the citadel evacuated and the magazines full of stores, as if a friend had just quitted the place; and pushed on that same evening with all the cavalry to Olmutz. At the first post they fell in with the enemy's rear-guard, and a sharp action ensued, in which the horse-grenadiers of the guard succeeded in cutting the Russian line in two.—It was dark before this smart affair was over. The Emperor returned to Brunn, and came next day upon the ground, where it had occurred to him to place his army, which was coming up in different directions. He moved on the cavalry of the advanced-guard to Vichau; went thither himself, and on his return walked his horse over all the sinuosities and inequalities of the ground in front of the position which he had ordered to be taken. He paused at every height, had the

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distances measured, and frequently said to his attendants, 'Gentlemen, examine the ground well; you will have a part to act upon it.' It was the same on which the battle of Austerlitz was fought, and which was occupied by the Russians before the battle. He passed the whole day on horseback, inspected the position of each of the corps of his army, and remarked on the left of General Suchet's division, a single hillock overlooking the whole front of that division. The Centon was there, as if for the express purpose: here he had brought the same night fourteen Austrian pieces of cannon, part of those found at Brunn. As *caissons* could not be placed there, two hundred charges of powder were piled up behind each of them; the foot of the Centon was then cut away as an escarpment, so as to secure it from assault. The Emperor returned to sleep at Brunn.

After the occupation of Vienna and the affair of Hollabrunn, Napoleon was strongly solicited by all about him to make peace. The difficulty was, after he had made it, to make others keep it. He was nevertheless himself disposed to it; but the Russians were in presence, and it was first requisite to measure his strength with them. Two envoys arrived from the Emperor of Austria, M. Stadion and another, announcing the arrival of a third from the Emperor Alexander; but the Emperor contented himself with referring them to M. Talleyrand, who was expected at Vienna, of which General Clarke had just been appointed governor. It was at this period that Buonaparte received the news of the battle of Trafalgar, with which Nelson closed the career of his triumphs and his life. The French fleet, though superior in force, was not only beaten but destroyed by the courage of the English sailors and the skill of their daring and high-spirited commander; and has remained from that time a mere wreck of itself. The Spanish Admiral Gravina, who was wounded in the fight, died in consequence; and Villeneuve soon after put an end to himself, unable to bear the disgrace of so many defeats and disasters. This event took place on the 21st of October, 1805. Buonaparte seeing all his hopes of naval victory thus at once 'in the deep bosom of the ocean buried,' probably thought it necessary to do something to parry the blow, and immediately set himself about it.

He had been several days at Brunn, when he ordered the corps of Bernadotte to draw nearer. This augured the approach of something decisive: but he wished first to try the effect or to gain the credit of an act of courtesy. He sent for one of his aide-de-camps (Savary, afterwards Duke of Rovigo) at day-break: he had passed the night over his maps: his candles were burnt down to the sockets; he held a letter in his hand, and after being silent some moments, he abruptly said, 'Set out to Olmutz; deliver this letter to the Emperor of Russia,

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and tell him that having heard of his arrival in his army, I have sent you to salute him in my name. If he questions you,' added he, 'you know what answer to give under such circumstances.'—Savary left the Emperor and proceeded to the French advanced posts at Vichau, where he took a trumpeter, and so repaired to those of the Russians, only about a league distant on the road to Olmutz. He was detained at the first post of Cossacks, till notice could be given to Prince Bagration, whose sent him on to Olmutz to Kutusow, the commander-in-chief: this journey was performed through the whole Russian army, which he saw assembling and taking arms, as the morning rose. Kutusow asked him for the dispatch which he had brought for the Emperor; observing that he slept in the fortress, and that the gates could not be opened at present. He went away, leaving Savary with an officer belonging to the Russian staff, among whom were a great many young men who crowded round and talked loudly of the ambition of France and of the means of curbing it. At ten in the forenoon a bustle took place in the street, and on inquiring the cause of it, the aide-de-camp was told, 'It is the Emperor.' He had but just time to throw off his cloak, and take his dispatch out of his pocket-book, when Alexander entered the room where the envoy had been waiting. He made a motion for all present to retire, and they were left alone. Savary was struck with the nobleness of the Czar's figure: he was at this time six-and-twenty. He was already hard of hearing with his left ear, and turned the right to hear what was said to him. He spoke in broken sentences, slowly, and laying a stress upon the last syllables, but in the best French, without any accent. After hearing Savary's message and taking the letter, he said, 'I duly appreciate the proceeding of your master: it is with regret that I have armed against him, and I shall seize with great pleasure the first opportunity of giving him that assurance. He has long been the object of my admiration.' Then changing the subject, he said, 'I will go and peruse this letter, and bring you an answer to it.' In half an hour Alexander returned; and holding his answer with the address turned downwards, entered into a long conversation with Savary, in which he laid it down in a dictatorial but good-humoured tone, that France to show her moderation and good faith could do no less than restore all she had been fighting for during the last ten years, being contented with the honour of beating the Allies, who would not from that time (as they could lose nothing in the end) stand in the same awe of her encroachments and ambition. When this conversation was over, the Emperor gave Savary his answer to the letter he had brought from Napoleon, still holding the address downwards, and adding—'Here is my answer; the address does not express the title he has of late assumed. I attach

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no importance to such trifles : ’—the address was—‘ To the Chief of the French Government.’ Nevertheless, it was for such trifles that Europe had been at war for the last ten years, and continued so for the next ten.—Savary was then conducted back to the advanced posts ; and on his way saw the Russian guards pass by, which had just come from St. Petersburg to join the army. They were composed of men of great stature, and who seemed insensible to fatigue. M. de Novosilzow wished to accompany the French aide-de-camp back to Brunn, as he had particular business with M. de Haugwitz, who was expected there from Berlin, but this wheedling proposal M. Savary declined. He found Napoleon at the post-house at Posorzitz, three quarters of a mile from the last out-posts, and gave him the letter and an account of all that had passed. He appeared thoughtful for some time, connecting what he now heard with the hints which Mack had dropped at Ulm and with the reported defection of Prussia. At length, he desired Savary to return with all speed and propose an interview with the Emperor Alexander for the morrow. He did so accordingly, and the Russian Emperor seemed disposed to grant it ; but on a report that the French were retreating, Napoleon having fallen back purposely to the position he had previously chosen for the battle, Alexander was persuaded to send Prince Dolgorouki in his stead. When Buonaparte heard of his arrival, he was walking in the bivouacs of the infantry, where he had slept upon some straw. Such was his desire for peace, that scarce hearing the message, he mounted his horse, and hastened to the spot, his piquet being hardly able to keep up with him. He alighted, walked alone with Prince Dolgorouki on the high road ; but the latter gave some offence by what he said, for Buonaparte replied sharply—‘ If that is what you have to say to me, go and tell the Emperor Alexander that I had no notion of these expectations when I asked to see him ; I would only have shown him my army, and referred to his equity for the conditions of a peace : if he will have it so, we must fight : I wash my hands of it.’ The Prince then took leave, and when he was gone, the Emperor made his aide-de-camp repeat over and over all that had passed, exclaiming at every pause—‘ But those people must be mad to insist on my giving up Italy, when it is impossible for them to take Vienna from me. *What plans had they then, and what would they have done with France, if I had been beaten ?* Let it end as God pleases ; but by my faith, before eight-and-forty hours are over, I shall have given them a sound drubbing !’

While thus speaking, he returned on foot to the first post of infantry of the army ; it was the carbineers of the 17th. The Emperor was irritated, and he vented his impatience by striking with his switch the lumps of earth lying on the road. The sentinel, an old soldier, over-



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heard him ; and having placed himself at ease, he had his gun between his knees, and was filling his pipe. Napoleon as he passed close by, looked at him and said, 'Those Russians fancy they have nothing to do but to swallow us up !' The old soldier immediately joining in the conversation—'Oho !' replied he, 'that won't be such an easy job—we'll stick ourselves right across !' This sally made the Emperor laugh ; and resuming his composure, he mounted his horse, and returned to head-quarters.

He now thought of nothing but preparations for the battle, which he resolved to put off no longer. Bernadotte had joined him with two divisions of infantry ; Soult had three ; Lannes two ; the grenadiers formed a strong one ; the foot-guards one. Marshal Davoust had one within reach ; the Emperor, besides the light cavalry, had three divisions of dragoons, two of cuirassiers, and the two regiments of carbineers, with the horse-guards. He caused abundance of provisions and ammunition of all kinds to be brought upon the ground from Brunn. It was the last day of November, 1805 ; the next day, the 1st of December, he himself stationed all the divisions of the army, seeming to know the ground as well as the environs of Paris. Marshal Davoust occupied the extreme right, being in communication between Brunn and Vienna. One of his divisions was commanded by General Friant. Marshal Davoust was separated by ponds and long narrow defiles from Marshal Soult, who was opposed to the left of the Russian army, the division of General Legrand forming his right, with that of St. Hilaire to the left of Legrand's, and Vandamme's division to the left of St. Hilaire's. In the second line, behind Marshal Soult, was the division of grenadiers, and on their left were Bernadotte's two divisions. On the left of Soult, Lannes was posted with his two corps on a ground rather in advance on the road to Olmutz, near the Centon. The light cavalry were placed between Lannes and Soult, with an open ground in front, the dragoons behind, and the cuirassiers with the horse-guards at a short distance. The Emperor passed the whole day on horseback, speaking to the soldiers, viewing the artillery, and inspecting all the appurtenances of the war. He dined at his bivouac, where he was met by all the marshals, to whom he enlarged on what might happen the next day. The Russian army was seen arriving the whole afternoon, and taking up a position to the right about a quarter of a mile off.

In the evening of the 1st of December there was an irregular firing of small arms to the right, which was kept up so late as to give the Emperor some uneasiness. He sent to see what it was ; and it turned out to be a skirmish between General Legrand's advanced-guard and the Russians, who wished to gain possession of a village at the foot of

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their position for the purpose of attacking the right of the French army the next day. The moon at first shone bright; but the night becoming overcast, they desisted, and merely collected their force together on that point. The aide-de-camp, who had been sent to reconnoitre, on his return found the Emperor lying on some straw in a hut which the soldiers made for him, and so fast asleep that he was obliged to shake him in order to awake him. When he had heard the report, he desired it to be repeated; sent for Marshal Soult and mounted his horse to go himself and inspect his whole line and see this movement of the Russians on his right: he approached as near to it as possible. On his return through the bivouacs, he was recognised by the soldiers, who spontaneously lighted torches of straw: this spread from one end of the army to the other; in a moment there was a general illumination, and the air was rent with shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* It was very late before he returned; and though he continued to take repose, it was not uninterrupted by uneasiness as to what might be the object of the movement on his right on the following day. He was awake and stirring by day-break, to get the whole of the troops under arms in silence.

There was a thick fog which enveloped all the bivouacs, so that it was impossible to distinguish objects at any distance. This was an advantage to the French, and gave them time to form their ranks. As it grew light, the fog seemed disposed to clear off. An unbroken silence prevailed to the very extremity of the horizon: no one would have suspected that there were so many men and so many noisy engines of destruction crowded together in so small a space. Buonaparte sent again to reconnoitre the position of the Russians to the right: they were already in motion; but the remains of the fog made it difficult to distinguish what they were about. It was scarcely seven in the morning: at length, the fog cleared off, and the sun rose in splendour. The two armies appeared almost close upon one another.

The Emperor saw his whole army, infantry and cavalry, formed into columns. He was surrounded by his marshals, who teased him to begin: but he resisted their importunities till the fire of the Russians on the right became brisker; he then dismissed all the marshals and ordered them to commence the attack. The onset of the whole army at once had something appalling in it: you might hear the words of command of the different officers. It marched, as if to exercise, to the very foot of the Russian position, halting at times to rectify its distances and direction. General St. Hilaire attacked the front of the Russian position, called in the language of the country the hill of the Pratzter. He there sustained for two hours a tremendous fire of musketry, which might have staggered any one but himself:

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he had not a battalion that was not engaged in the thickest of the fight. Vandamme, who had more space to traverse, came up at this point of time, attacked and overthrew the enemy's columns, and became master of their position and artillery. The Emperor immediately marched one of Bernadotte's divisions and a part of the grenadiers to the aid of Vandamme and St. Hilaire, while he ordered Marshal Lannes to lose no time in falling upon the right of the Russians, that they might not come to the relief of their left, who were wholly occupied in defending themselves. They would have fallen back, and re-ascended the Pratzer : but were followed so closely by General Legrand and by Friant's division (detached from Marshal Davoust) that they were obliged to stand at bay, neither advancing nor retiring. General Vandamme then, under the superintendence of Soult and supported by a division of Bernadotte's, made a sudden change of direction by the right flank for the purpose of turning and enclosing all the troops engaged with St. Hilaire's division. This movement succeeded ; and the two divisions, united on the Pratzer itself by this manœuvre, made a second change of direction still wheeling to their right, and descended from the Pratzer to attack in the rear all the troops opposed to General Legrand, thus following the steps of the Russians the night before and making a complete semicircle. Buonaparte seeing how things went, ordered up the rest of the grenadiers and the foot-guards, to complete the enemy's disorder, and thus decided the battle. He instantly dispatched his aide-de-camp, Lebrun, to Paris with the news, and sent off messengers to the Electors of Bavaria and Wurtemberg.

General Vandamme had received a check at the commencement of his first change of direction, the fourth regiment of the line losing one of its eagles in a charge of Russian cavalry ; but the accident had no bad consequences from the timely succour of the *chasseurs* of the Guard and the grenadiers on duty about the Emperor. He had ordered Bernadotte's division, instead of turning round upon the enemy with Vandamme's the second time, to go right forward upon the infantry of the Russian guard. It did so ; broke it, and drove it fighting a full league ; but it returned back, no body knew why, to its first position, where to his great astonishment Buonaparte found it in the evening. The left of the French army under Lannes, and the cavalry of Murat had in the meantime broken and put to flight the whole right of the Russian army, which at night-fall took the road to Austerlitz, to join the relics of that part with which Marshal Soult had been engaged. Had Bernadotte's division continued marching in the direction prescribed to it, instead of falling back, it would have been posted across the road from Austerlitz to Hollitsch, by which the Russian army was retreating, and thus have completed its destruc-

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tion. Bernadotte's want of good-will to the work began about this time to lead him into repeated blunders; and probably his blunders helped to increase his ill-will. All the Russian troops that had descended from the Pratzer were taken prisoners on the spot. There were left on the field of battle one hundred pieces of cannon, with forty-three thousand prisoners of war, exclusively of the wounded and slain who remained on the ground. This was one of Buonaparte's great battles. No wonder if in the end he became swollen and as it were choked up with victories! He came back in the evening along the whole line, where the different regiments had fought. It was already dark: he recommended silence to those who accompanied him that he might hear the cries of the wounded; he immediately went to the spot where they were, alighted himself, and ordered a glass of brandy to be given them. In this manner, he remained till very late upon the field of battle; his escort passed the whole night upon it, taking the cloaks from the Russian dead to cover the wounded with them. He himself ordered a large fire to be kindled near each of them, sent for a muster-master, and did not retire till he arrived; and having left him a picket of his own men, enjoined him not to quit the wounded till they were lodged in the hospital. These brave men loaded him with blessings, which found the way to his heart much better than all the flatteries of courtiers. He thus won the affection of his soldiers, who knew that when they suffered it was not his fault, and who therefore never spared themselves in his service. It was so late when they arrived at Brunn, that there was only time to issue the order to Marshal Davoust to collect his corps and pursue the Russians the following day.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### THE TREATY OF PRESBURG

ON the 3d of December, the day following the battle, Prince John of Lichtenstein arrived at the castle of Austerlitz charged with a message from his master to solicit an interview with Napoleon, to which the latter assented. The Emperors both of Austria and Russia were in a precarious situation, there being no escape left for their troops in the line of retreat on which they had been driven but the bridge of Göding at Hollitsch, to which the corps of Davoust was nearer than the wrecks of the Russian and Austrian army. Napoleon alone knew that



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Davoust was inferior in numbers to the Allies, and that they might therefore still force their way through him ; he also apprehended the accession of Prussia to the Coalition, and had just learned by intercepted dispatches from M. Stadion, that the Archduke Charles had arrived on the Danube, while Masséna was still on the other side of the Julian Alps. He therefore granted the interview which had been solicited, in the hope of concluding peace and avoiding fresh hazards.

On the 4th at nine in the morning, the Emperor set out with his suite and guards, and proceeded along the high-road of Hollitsch to a mill in front of the advanced posts of Bernadotte, about three leagues from Austerlitz. Napoleon arrived first, and ordered two fires to be made ; the horse-guards were drawn up in order of battle, two hundred paces in the rear. It was not long before the Emperor of Austria was announced. He came in a landau, accompanied by Princes John and Maurice Lichtenstein, the Prince of Wurtemberg, Prince Schwartzenberg, Generals Kienmayer, Bubna, and Stutterheim, and two superior officers of Hulans. There was with the Emperor of Austria an escort of Hungarian cavalry, which halted, as the French had done, about two hundred paces from the spot where the interview was held. The Emperor Napoleon, who was on foot, went to meet the Emperor of Austria from the place where the fire was as far as the carriage, and embraced as he accosted him. Prince John of Lichtenstein alighted from the same carriage, and followed the Emperor of Austria to the Emperor's fire : there he remained during the whole interview, as did Marshal Berthier near the Emperor. All the other persons in the suite of the two Sovereigns were together at one and the same fire, which was separated only by the high-road from that of the Emperors. The conversation here turned on the events of the battle, the French studying to say nothing that might be galling to the feelings of their adversaries ; but no one could make out what was passing at the other fire. At any rate, the parties seemed to be in excellent humour ; they laughed, which was construed into a favourable omen, and accordingly in about an hour the two Sovereigns separated after a mutual embrace. The attendants then ran to do their duty, and as they approached, Napoleon said to the Emperor of Austria, ' I agree to it ; but your Majesty must promise not to make war upon me again.'— ' No, I promise you I will not,' replied the Emperor of Austria, ' and I will keep my word.' He did so—after the manner of princes !

The day was drawing to a close, when the two Emperors parted, and took the road to their respective armies. Napoleon rode his horse at a foot-pace, musing on what had just been said and on what he meant to do. He called to General Savary, and said, ' Run after the Emperor of Austria : tell him that I have desired you to go and wait

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at his head-quarters for the adhesion of the Emperor of Russia, as far as he is concerned, to what has just been concluded between us. When you are in possession of this adhesion, proceed to the *corps d'armée* of Marshal Davoust, stop his movement, and tell him what has happened.' But the wily Tartar had taken the affair into his own hands. Savary, according to the instructions of the Austrian Emperor, found Alexander at Göding the next morning, where though it was only four or five o'clock, he was already up; and his sappers were busy in preparing to destroy the bridge, as soon as his army should have passed, which it did shortly after, to the number of twenty-six thousand men, without cannon, without baggage-waggons, many without arms, the greater part without knapsacks,<sup>1</sup> a great many wounded, but still with the countenance of men resigned to their fortune and marching intrepidly in their ranks. At the interview with the French aide-de-camp, Alexander paid a number of compliments to the talents displayed by his master in the battle a few days before; saying at the same time that it was the first battle he had been in; and he gave his word to comply with all that the King of the Romans had stipulated for him. On this understanding, he received an assurance that he and his troops should retire unmolested. After the Russians had filed off, the bridge of Göding was destroyed to prevent pursuit, and Savary returned in search of Davoust. He had arrived the day before within a short half-league of the bridge of Göding, and was preparing to force his way to it through an Austrian detachment, when he received a note from the Emperor Alexander to inform him of the interview between the Emperors of France and Austria, and that an armistice had taken place, leaving it to be supposed that he himself was included in it. Davoust deemed it his duty to defer to the positive assurance of Alexander; he in consequence suspended his movement, and accordingly Savary found him on the morning of the 5th in the same place where he was the day before, and the Russians at a safe distance, whereas on the preceding day he might in half an hour have been master of Göding and of the bridge over the Marche, when the Russian army was still two or three leagues off on the Austerlitz road, facing Bernadotte. It was at the moment when the Emperor Francis parted from the Emperor Alexander to go to the interview with Buonaparte that Marshal Davoust was on the point of forcing Göding, the only retreat of the Russian troops; and in this critical situation the Emperor of Russia thought fit to write that note, to which Marshal Davoust, out of respect for the veracity of the monarch, judged it right on his part to give credit, not enter-

<sup>1</sup> Till 1806, the Russian infantry laid their knapsacks on the ground before they began to fire; so that when they were repulsed, they lost all their baggage.

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taining the least idea of a trick. As there are some characters on whom no reliance can be placed because they are sunk below contempt, there is another class whose word is not to be taken because they are raised above censure. Savary ventured to drop a hint of what he suspected to some Austrians who were with him, who only smiled. His eyes were then opened, and it was clear enough why the Emperor of Russia had absented himself from the interview of the preceding day, and why the Emperor of Austria had come to it. They had divided between them the two parts, which were to extricate them from the dilemma in which each found himself. When Buonaparte afterwards sent General Junot to the Russian army to treat for peace, the Emperor Alexander had set off for Petersburg; and Junot not thinking it his business to follow him, brought back the letter entrusted to him by the Emperor, who was on his return to Vienna. He stopped a few days at Brunn, which he spent in disposing his army in cantonments, causing its losses to be ascertained, inspecting the hospitals, and sending by some of his aide-de-camps a gratuity of a Napoleon to each wounded soldier, and larger sums to the different officers in the same situation. There is no need to say that this bounty was gratefully received. He also took an opportunity one day of rating Murat soundly for having suffered himself to be deceived by a false report and losing the chance of enclosing the Russian army on the 3d by not pushing forward with his cavalry to Olmutz. These *sound ratings* he afterwards paid for at a dear rate. Inferior or vain minds see no distinction between just and unjust blame; and suppose that it is not reason, but passion and petulance that speaks in their reproof.

He then set out for Schönbrunn to accelerate the conferences for peace, which were held at Vienna, and also to see how he stood with Prussia. For several days M. Haugwitz had been near M. Talleyrand; but he had kept aloof from him, hoping that events would have taken a different turn, as his mission was not to make peace but war. The Emperor received him the day after his arrival at Schönbrunn. At first he abstained from reproaches, but he let him see that he was not the dupe of the designs of Prussia. He asked the meaning of the Russian army at Breslau, and of another in Hanover, communicating by the Prussian territory with the main army. At last, he began to grow warm and spoke out: 'Sir,' said he, 'is this conduct of your master's towards me frank and sincere? It would have been more honourable for him to have made war openly upon me, though you have no motive for it: you would have served the Allies, because I should have looked twice before I had given battle. You wish to be the allies of all the world: that is not possible: you must choose between them and me. If you are resolved to throw yourselves into the

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arms of those gentlemen, I shall not oppose your doing so ; but if you remain with me, I wish for sincerity, or I will separate myself from you. I prefer open enemies to false friends. If your powers are not sufficient to treat on all these questions, qualify yourself to do so : for my part, I shall go and march upon my enemies wherever they are.' This address was delivered with great warmth. The Emperor looked down on M. de Haugwitz from the elevated position on which he had been placed by victory : he looked down too on baffled spite and detected duplicity. It was this malice at once smothered and laid bare which afterwards burst forth into that prodigious flame of patriotism and loyalty, of which we have heard so much, and of which (for what will not folly and madness do in the affairs of men?) we have seen the effects. Because Prussia was foiled in her design to crush and betray France then, it was to give her the right along with the inclination to do so afterwards. The debt of enmity, not paid, accumulates both principal and interest. Buonaparte had Prussia at this time at his mercy, and spared her. Of course, this was not a thing to be soon forgotten or forgiven.

Circumstanced as Buonaparte then was, with the Austrians held in check and the Russians gone, he might in a few marches have turned the whole Prussian monarchy. In this situation, M. Haugwitz, though contrary to his instructions, thought it best to patch up a treaty with France, by which Hanover was ceded to Prussia in lieu of the Margravates, and he was in hopes that this bait would sweeten the bitter alternative to his master. But while he was signing the treaty with France at Vienna, M. Hardenberg, ignorant of the events at Austerlitz, had signed another at Berlin with the Ambassador of England. M. Haugwitz met the bearer of this intelligence half-way between Vienna and Berlin, to which latter place he was hastening to procure the ratification of the King to the convention with Napoleon. But that monarch loudly expressed his disapprobation of what had been done : nevertheless, unable to go to war and as ill brooking peace, not knowing how to fulfil or disentangle himself from so many opposite engagements, he hit upon a middle course between his interest and his honour, which was to keep Hanover as a pledge till the peace. Austria obtained such a peace as in her disastrous condition she might expect. She lost the old Venetian States, which were annexed to the kingdom of Italy. She also had to give up to Bavaria the Tyrol and the country of Saltzburg, with some possessions in Suabia, and lastly, the Brisgau to the Grand-Duke of Tuscany. By the same treaty, the Electors of Bavaria and Wurtemberg were made kings, and the Margrave of Baden Grand-Duke. Had Junot followed the Emperor Alexander to St. Petersburg, it is possible peace might have been concluded that



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year. England too might have been included in it, had it been possible for England to submit to peace!

Before his departure from Vienna, Napoleon learned the news of the joint entry of the Russians and English into Naples. He had an old quarrel with the Queen of Naples, who conceived herself privileged both as a queen and a woman to do whatever she pleased. The interference of this double and uncontrolled sway in the affairs of mankind is too much to be borne; nor is there any cure for it but the taking away the power to indulge in its caprices. 'As for her,' exclaimed Napoleon, on hearing of this new breach of faith, 'I am not surprised at her conduct: but woe betide her if I enter Naples—never shall she set foot there again!' He sent officers from his staff to compose that of the army about to assemble on the Neapolitan frontiers; and ordered his brother Joseph (whom he had left at Paris to preside over the Council of Ministers in his absence) to go and take the command of that army. He also received some unpleasant intelligence of another description from Paris. There had been a considerable run upon the national bank; and the funds had fallen suddenly. This caused him some anxiety and increased his impatience to be at home. On investigating the matter, he found that the panic had arisen from sinister reports, with which some of those harbingers of mischief who had been suffered to return and infest their old haunts in the Fauxbourg St. Germain (and who wished their country ill because they deserved ill of it) had chosen to fill up the pause that precedes the signal of defeat or victory; and also from an indiscreet (and as it might have proved, ruinous) appropriation of eighty millions of the public revenue to purposes of private speculation.<sup>1</sup> This temporary withdrawing of the public money, which was concerted by persons immediately employed by government and well affected to it, might, if Buonaparte had met with reverses in Moravia, have been fatal to him. Such is the rash and incontinent activity of the French character! It is singular enough that the Austrians were obliged to pay the first instalments of the contributions levied upon them out of the subsidies sent over from England, and that the French commissioner, M. Bourienne, went to Hamburgh to receive them.

A circumstance occurred at this period, which places the character of the Emperor in a true and amiable light. During his residence at Vienna, between the battle of Austerlitz and the signature of the peace, he had occasion to remark a young female who pleased him. As chance would have it, she had herself taken a particular fancy to

<sup>1</sup> This alludes to a transaction between the members of the French Victualling-office and the Prince of Peace to supply the Spanish navy with provisions at a certain profit.

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the Emperor, and she accepted a proposal made to her to go one evening to the palace of Schönbrunn. She spoke only German and Italian; but as the Emperor himself spoke the latter language, they easily became acquainted. He was surprised to learn from this young woman, that she was the daughter of respectable parents, and that in coming to see him she had been swayed by an admiration which had excited in her heart a sentiment she had never yet felt for any other person. This, though a rare circumstance, was ascertained to be a fact: the Emperor respected the innocence of the young lady, sent her home, had arrangements made for her settlement in life, and gave her a portion. Another interview was talked of with a celebrated German countess, the favourite of an English nobleman, which, it is said, had it taken place, might have ended more tragically. Buonaparte was put on his guard, and the assignation was dropped. A few days before his leaving Vienna, the Archduke Charles, for whom the Emperor had a great esteem, solicited an interview with him. They met at a hunting-seat, called La Venerie, near Schönbrunn, and conversed together for a long time in an apartment by themselves.

The Emperor on leaving Vienna passed through Scharding and Passau, where he met General Lauriston, whom he sent as governor to Venice. He arrived at Munich a few days before new-year's day, 1806. The Empress was there, having come to witness the marriage of her son, the Viceroy of Italy, with the Princess Augusta of Bavaria. It was celebrated with great pomp, and the festivities lasted for a week. A match had been talked of between the Princess Augusta and the Prince of Baden; but this was broken off, and the Prince gave his hand soon after to Mademoiselle Stephanie Beauharnais, a niece of Josephine. The Viceroy returned to Milan; and Buonaparte to Paris, where he arrived towards the end of January. Shortly after the Emperor's return, accounts were received of the occupation of Naples by the French troops. The remainder of the winter was spent in *fêtes* and amusements. Murat was invested with the sovereignty of the grand-duchy of Berg, which Bavaria had ceded to France. M. Talleyrand received the principality of Benevento, and Marshal Bernadotte (contrary to the expectation of many people) that of Ponte-Corvo, both in the kingdom of Naples. The Prince of Baden came to Paris to conclude his marriage, which was celebrated in the chapel of the palace. On this occasion magnificent entertainments were given at the Thuilleries. The ladies of the court, most of whom were distinguished for grace and spirit, danced in character at the balls; and these *fêtes*, independently of the immediate interest attached to them, presented all the elegance and splendour of enchanted pageants. 'Tis gone like a fairy revel; nor in the round of ever-

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rolling years will the like be seen again to humble and to exalt all that there is of pride in the heart of man. Yet why complain of the void that is left? If such things happened every day, there would be nothing in them : it is enough that they survive in poetry and history. If a Buonaparte or a Charlemagne appears once in a thousand years, it gives the world something to think of in the interim ! During the same winter, he determined to place the crown of Naples on the head of his brother Joseph ; and twelve senators were deputed to invest him with the sovereignty. The Emperor also resolved to change the government of Holland, by substituting the monarchical for the elective form (not a change for the better) ; and the choice of the leading men of the country, who were at this time favourable to France, fell on Prince Louis, the Emperor's brother, who accepted with some reluctance the crown that was offered him. Thus the battle of Austerlitz had the effect of creating three new kings and matching plebeian with princely blood. Such was the commencement of that system by which Buonaparte ' made kings his sentinels and thrones his Martello towers ; ' led youth and beauty as a sacrifice or a lure to the shrine of his ambition or policy, and stood on the ground of the Revolution to clasp the hand of its old and natural enemies in close and hollow fellowship. If all this was but a masque, it was a gorgeous one : those who were the most nearly concerned and the best judges, felt it to be something more, and resolved to make another effort to dispel ' the horrible shadow ! '

Several medals and other trophies were executed to commemorate the battle of Austerlitz. Soon after his return to St. Cloud, M. Denon, who had the chief superintendence of works of art, came to the Emperor while at breakfast, bringing with him a series of medals on this subject. It commenced with the departure of the army from the camp at Boulogne to proceed towards the Rhine. The first represented on one side a head of Napoleon, and on the other a French eagle holding fast an English leopard. ' What does this mean ? ' said Napoleon. ' Sire,' said M. Denon, ' it is a French eagle strangling in its talons the leopard, one of the emblems of the coat-of-arms of England.' The attendants were astonished to see Napoleon throw this gold medal with the utmost violence to the other end of the room, thus addressing M. Denon : ' Vile flatterer ! how dare you tell me that the French eagle strangles the English leopard, when I cannot send out to sea the smallest fishing-boat that the English do not seize upon ? It is indeed the leopard that strangles the French eagle. Let this medal be instantly destroyed, and never present any of the same kind to me again.' Looking over the rest of these medals, and taking up the one relating to the battle itself, he found fault with the design, and desired M. Denon to have it recast. ' Put only on one side, *Battle*

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of *Austerlitz*, with the date, and on the opposite side the eagles of France, Austria, and Russia; trust me, posterity will be at no loss to distinguish the victor.' This simple idea of Napoleon's was nevertheless not completely carried into effect; instead of the eagles, were introduced the heads of the three Emperors. It is easy to perceive from this account that the greater part of those pompous inscriptions, of those extravagant compliments, set forth with so much *éclat* and displayed on so many public monuments, were not to the taste of Napoleon, much less of his suggesting. Few men in his place would have manifested the same moderation and simplicity. It was the same sentiment of delicacy which made him refuse Marshal Kellermann, who had been deputed by a large body of his fellow citizens, permission to erect at their proper cost a monument expressly in honour of him. This trophy Napoleon could only hope to merit by the course of his whole life. Such was his reply; and if his statue was afterwards fixed at the top of the pillar in the *Place Vendôme*, it was originally intended that the column should be solely in honour of the French armies, and the statue was to have been one of Peace. The architect Poyet had also proposed to raise a triumphal pillar in honour of the Emperor, but could not obtain his consent. If the brazen column built of the cannon won by victory excited admiration, the sixty-five fountains which in the same year first poured their waters through the capital, inspired the public gratitude, and proved beyond dispute that the Chief of the State was much more occupied in setting on foot works of public utility than those of a vain glory. In the course of his administration, all that was really great and useful came from himself; while what appertained to luxury and outward show, was the indirect result of the powerful impulse that had been given to the Fine Arts, and of the passionate admiration due to one who had achieved so many victories and so many titles to renown.<sup>1</sup>

In the spring of 1806, Russia had made no declaration of her intentions; Austria had but ill executed the conditions of the treaty; Prussia was restless and uneasy, and England was at her old work. The Emperor, uncertain of the future, sought to strengthen his

<sup>1</sup> The cannon taken at Austerlitz were not all made use of to erect the column in the *Place Vendôme*. M. Gaudin, Minister of Finance, came one day to Napoleon to demand a score of these cannon for his own use. 'What then!' exclaimed the emperor, 'is our minister of Finance going to make war upon us?'—'No,' replied the Duke de Gaëta, 'not upon you, but on some villainous old machines that kill the workmen in the mint; and if your Majesty will give me twenty of these cannon to reconstruct the beams of the engines, I will have the name of Austerlitz engraved upon them.' This appeal prevailed; M. Gaudin had the cannon placed at his disposal; and these engines are still used to stamp the heads on the coin of the present kings of France!



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interests in the East, and sent General Sebastiani, who was just recovered of a severe wound received at the battle of Austerlitz, as his ambassador to Constantinople. In the beginning of that year, however, Mr. Pitt died, and Mr. Fox succeeded him, which gave a short deceitful gleam of hope to the world. While Mr. Pitt lived, war was certain; his death offered a bare chance of peace. He had long been the mouth-piece of the war-party, and the darling of that part of the aristocracy who wished to subdue the popular spirit of English freedom, to get the whole power of the country into the hands of a few borough-mongers, and of course to crush and stifle the example and the rising flame of liberty everywhere else. The perverse schemes of this party, the rooted instinct of power in the hearts of kings, Mr. Pitt clothed with a drapery of words, an everlasting tissue of rhetorical common-places, not to express, but to disguise them, and to make it impossible ever to disentangle them from the dark recesses of pride and passion in which they lurked. Without a heart or natural affections, without a head to conceive of good or a hand to execute even the bad he meditated, this parliamentary automaton was a sort of lay-figure to hang a waving tapestry of gaudy phrases upon, so as to screen the designs of Ministers and baffle Opposition. Engaged in a quarrel that was never to have an end, and for an object that must be kept in the back-ground, it was necessary to have a set of plausible excuses always ready, that applied to every thing because they really meant nothing, and to find out an orator to ring the changes on them in measured and lofty periods, to whom no fact, feeling, or image in his own breast ever suggested the reality of any thing but words, and to whom the shriek of death or the cries of despair were lost in the sound of his own voice. If we were at war, it was for 'the existence of social order,' a term that included between its extremes the highest liberty or the worst despotism: if we did not make peace, it was because 'existing circumstances' would not permit us—no matter whether those circumstances were prosperous or adverse, whether it was we who would not make peace with the enemy or the enemy who would not make peace with us. It was impossible to drive the Minister out of his routine of verbiage or to force an explanation from him that admitted of being either verified or disproved; and with these and a few more phrases of the same stamp he served the ends of his employers, deluded Parliament, and brought the country to the brink of ruin. He died when the power, which he had pledged himself to destroy or to be destroyed by it, had nearly attained its utmost height; and the best thing that can be said for him is that the defeat of all his plans and predictions, either from pride or shame, probably caused his death.

Mr. Fox would no doubt have tried to save both countries from the

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alternative to which Mr. Pitt's policy wished to force them, but with what success or degree of firmness is not so certain. He had always been Mr. Pitt's ablest and most strenuous antagonist in that ruthless career of ambition and servility to which his rival lent himself; and the debates between them on the question of peace or war, (particularly in 1797 and 1798, before Mr. Pitt went out of office) were some of the most equally sustained, the most animated and characteristic in the records of our parliamentary eloquence. The great leader of Opposition was a man of impulse and feeling, generous and sociable to a fault, sanguine in the cause of liberty and truth, and a man of a plain, strait-forward, but strong and well-stored understanding. He had not been the dupe of Mr. Burke's romantic and fanciful view of the French Revolution, with his high-coloured descriptions of the Queen of France and the rest of his apparatus for theatrical effect; for Mr. Fox, with that justness of thought which is the result of goodness of heart, saw or felt that the whole drift of Mr. Burke's theory went to make politics a question or department of the imagination, and that this could never be true, because politics treat of the public weal and the most general and wide-extended consequences, whereas the imagination can only be appealed to by individual objects and personal interests, and must give a false verdict in all other cases. It would never do, he saw, to make choice of half a dozen *dramatis personæ*, to adorn them with tropes and figures, and sacrifice to this paltry foreground and meretricious embellishing the welfare of millions, who because they were millions could never be brought forward by the imaginative faculty and could only be weighed in the balance of abstract truth and reason. Neither did he suffer himself to be entangled in the mazes of Mr. Pitt's verbal sophistry. He shook off with honest indignation the trammels of words which were attempted to be thrown over him like an enchanter's web; cleared away the obvious facts from the cloud of technical distinctions rolled over them, strove hard (Antæus-like) to keep the question on the ground of common sense and feeling, which the other wished to resolve into airy generalities and lofty assumptions; and in reality, Mr. Fox succeeded as far as it was possible with so disingenuous and artful an opponent, and with the prejudices of his hearers against him. Even those on the ministerial side confessed that Mr. Fox often convinced them while he spoke, by his forcible and manly appeals, till Mr. Pitt rose and clouded over their apprehensions again with a flimsy arrangement of stately but undefined topics.

Mr. Fox on his accession to office on the death of his predecessor, had a difficult task to perform—neither to forfeit his popularity nor to offend power. He had hardly nerve for both. His virtue was more

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owing to constitution than principle; and though an honest man, he was not incorruptible. He had a great deal of good-nature in his composition, and good-natured men are seldom qualified to be martyrs. He was a patriot, but liable to be led away by the weaknesses of party or friendship; he was a friend to truth and freedom, but his very impatience of the least wrong might make him a dangerous auxiliary to those who wished to bring about the greatest. There is no medium in such cases, except for the lookers-on; and if he did not take a decided part against the Government, he must go all lengths with it. His life was deficient in three great points, the beginning, the middle, and the end. He had set out a Tory and went over to Opposition from some juvenile pique against Lord North: he then coalesced with Lord Shelburne, and lastly with Lord Grenville, whose well-known principles and influence could hardly leave him master of his own opinions. Several circumstances concur to indicate that he came into office with a determination to remain in it, such as his tone of reprimand to those who complained of some abuses of ministerial influence (which he had been doing nearly all his life) and the quackery of such professions as that 'if he were an artist and could paint, there were no colours he could use black enough to depict the baseness of Buonaparte's conduct to Prussia'—as if Prussia had been the most innocent creature breathing. He however (to his eternal honour be it spoken) redeemed while in office one of the great pledges of humanity, by abolishing the Slave-trade. While he held the reins, hopes also continued to be entertained of peace, and Buonaparte, with Talleyrand to assist him, strained every nerve to urge it forward, first by an overture through Lord Yarmouth and then in the conferences with Lord Lauderdale, who was commissioned to go over to Paris—but at his death things reverted into their old and natural course (as it seemed, unless when some severe constraint was put upon the inclinations of the King and his Ministers) and a new Coalition was in the field before the end of the year, which had witnessed the dissolution of the last. This time it was Prussia and Russia that were leagued against France, and England as usual that was to pay the cost.

During the late conferences, Buonaparte had endeavoured to bribe the English Government to peace by offering to restore Hanover. This was resented as a deep indignity by Prussia, though she professedly held Hanover only as a pledge *ad interim*; and by her double-dealing with both parties, gave each a right to make her the scapegoat. When the conferences were broken off, however, this project fell to the ground; but Prussia, though she kept Hanover, also kept her ill-humour. This did not prevent a cordial union and a thorough good understanding shortly after between England and Prussia; for there

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are stronger ties between princes than mere interest or territory—mutual hatred of the unauthorised intruders on their power. Prussia indeed stood in an awkward situation, and was bound to do something to recover her character. She had neither the pride of success nor the dignity of misfortune. Her hand had been arrested, as she had prepared to strike an insidious blow: she had followed the war hitherto only as a sutler to pick up what she could get; and from the mercenary, she had to pass suddenly to the chivalrous and heroic part. Perhaps some disjointed recollections of manifestos and marches in the year 1792 haunted her dreams; nor was that old wound well healed. There was a great deal of ill-blood from a sense of provocation given, but without any blow struck: the ferment became extreme throughout the country, and assumed a very melo-dramatic appearance indeed. It was reported from Paris that France held Prussia cheap, and this gave birth to the most tragic scenes of loyalty and patriotism. The example of Frederic the Great was held up to the imitation of the King, and he was reminded of the battle of Rosbach. The Queen and Prince Louis of Prussia did all they could to fan the flame. Letters were circulated filled with invectives against the French. It was said that the Prussian cavalry had sharpened their sabres on the threshold of the French Ambassador. Some young men at Berlin had indeed thrown stones at his windows; and there was no insult or offensive allusion of which he had not been made the object.

In the mean time, the war-party at Paris were not idle in fomenting the quarrel. They were exceedingly pleased at the rupture of the negotiations with England. Murat, whose new honours had turned his head, was the leader of this party, and let slip no opportunity of instigating Buonaparte to war, and of giving him an unfavourable opinion of Talleyrand and all those who inclined to peace. This Minister (whose sagacity was not far behind his want of principle) contended that the Emperor's power could only be consolidated by peace, and that 'all his victories could only be designated by an algebraic series, of which the first term was  $a$  and the last  $y$  or zero.' The Grand-Duke of Berg, on the contrary, was for carrying things with a high hand, and thought he had nothing to do but to march from battle to battle, from possession to possession, like the leader of a band of Condottieri, consulting only his arrogance and his personal prowess, his plume of feathers and his sword being the only ideas in his head. Having been just created Grand-Duke of Berg, he intimated his design of taking possession of the three abbeys of Etten, Essen, and Werden, in the county of Marck. The Prussians resisted; high words passed, and a few musquet-shots were exchanged. The Princess Caroline also, not satisfied with her husband's good fortune or her



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brother's renown, wished with the petulance belonging to her sex and youth, to make conquests of her own, and to fire the ambition of all those who had to endure her caprices. There soon appeared on the scene therefore a troop of young admiring courtiers, eager to march to new fields of glory, and to humble still more the insolent pretensions of the clownish Prussians before the accomplished cavaliers of the saloons of Paris. Thus the desire of place and distinction, the moment it is attained, uses its power only for its own private gratification, and plays the game of vanity or interest with equal temerity and forgetfulness. There is something too in the tone of French assumption and defiance peculiarly offensive to other nations. We can bear pride in a superior, for there is something serious and dignified in it; but self-conceit (to those in misfortune) jars through every fibre of the frame. French impertinence has perhaps done more than the horrors of the Revolution or Buonaparte's strides to power to rivet the chains of Europe. It was that air of making light of their enemies, which whetted so many daggers against them, more than any other given cause, and which till they get rid of it (which they will do when they get rid of the air they breathe) will never allow them to be respected in adversity nor safe in the lap of conquest. Buonaparte was as little swayed as possible by these petty cabals and idle boastings or by any thing but the necessity of the case or his own views of policy; but they had a tendency to inflame the irritation between the two countries and to precipitate the war. The ultimatum of the cabinet of Berlin was a challenge rather than an expostulation; and Berthier wrote from Munich to express his apprehensions that the Prussians would commence hostilities, without any previous declaration, as had been done in 1805.

The Emperor quitted Paris on the 21st of September 1806; to which he had returned on the 26th of the preceding January. The Empress accompanied him as far as Mentz. The Imperial Guard which had returned to Paris after the battle of Austerlitz (and where Buonaparte in his simplicity had promised they should stay in future) once more began its march. Orders were sent to Strasburg for embarking on the Rhine all the troops from that fortress and the neighbourhood, and to Holland to direct that the Dutch army should without delay enter Munster and advance towards the Weser. After receiving the visits of several German princes, the Emperor continued his journey through Aschaffenburg to Wurtzburg, where he arrived in the evening of the same day on which he left Mentz. He stopped at the palace of the Grand-Duke, and here he waited news of the enemy. The different corps of the French army were assembled at their respective positions, and approached the frontiers of Saxony. This was the first error of the Prussians, who having the start in point of time ought

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to have attacked the scattered corps of the French before they had time to effect a concentration of their force; or at least have come to dispute the more difficult passages of the Oder and the Elbe with them; instead of which (as men not knowing what to do) they remained motionless at their positions at Erfurt and Weimar, suffering the invading army to debouch by Saalfeld, where Marshal Lannes defeated the corps of Prince Louis of Prussia, who was killed in the action. The Emperor himself marched by the valley of the Maine, having with him the corps of Bernadotte and Ney, and being flanked on his right by Soult and Davoust. Having passed the Saale at Saalburg, he learned the day after that the enemy had abandoned his position at Erfurt and was coming to the Saale to meet him. He also learned from a Saxon convoy that part of the Prussians were gone to Naumburg and from the letters captured at the post-office at Gera that another part was still at Weimar. The Emperor then formed his resolution, which was to march on Jena with the corps of Lannes, Ney, and Soult; the rest of the army he ordered to continue its march on Naumburg and to attack the enemy if they were found at Weimar. By this movement the Emperor turned the Prussian army, having arrived by a road which they should have taken to meet him, while they were advancing to force the passage of the Saale by a road into which they should have driven the French, had they manœuvred with more skill. On the 13th of October, a little before sunset, the Emperor arrived at Jena, with Marshal Lannes and the foot-guards. He was near Marshals Soult and Ney, whom he ordered to join him. Bernadotte, Davoust, and the Grand-Duke of Berg had on their part also arrived at Naumburg.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### BATTLE OF JENA AND ENTRANCE INTO BERLIN

THE Emperor had sent forward from Gera one of his orderly officers, M. Eugene Montesquieu, as the bearer of a letter to the king of Prussia, which he gave into the hands of the first Prussian troops whom he encountered about a league above Jena. On entering Jena, the French had certain news of the Prussian army. It had left Weimar in two great corps; the largest, under the immediate command of the King and of the Duke of Brunswick, had taken the road from Weimar to Naumburg; the other under the orders of the Prince of Hohenloe, had directed its march on Jena. In fact, the advanced-

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guard of the French had no sooner reached the summit of the hill which looks back upon Jena, than they discovered the enemy's line almost in front of them. The Emperor alighted from his horse and went to reconnoitre. The sun had not quite set; and he advanced till some musquet-shots were fired at him. He returned to hasten the march of the columns to their positions, which he recommended to the generals not to take up till it was dark. He slept in the bivouac amidst the troops, having made all the generals sup with him. Before he lay down to sleep, he descended the hill towards Jena on foot to see that nothing was left behind, when to his surprise he found the whole of Marshal Lannes's artillery which was to begin the fight next day, sticking fast in a ravine which in the obscurity of the night had been mistaken for a road. He was exceedingly vexed; but instead of wasting time in reproaches, he set to work himself to do the duty of an artillery-officer. He collected the men, made them take their park-tools, and light the lanterns, one of which he held himself for the convenience of those whose labours he directed. In this manner the ravine was sufficiently widened, and the extremities of the axle-trees cleared of the rocks. The Emperor did not leave the spot till the first waggon had passed through, which was late at night. He did not return to his bivouac till he had issued fresh orders. There was a hoar frost upon the ground, accompanied with fog, which prevented the dense masses of the French troops, crowded together on the top of the hill, from being distinguished by the enemy, or they might have annoyed them with their fire.

The French were under arms by day-break; but the fog was still so thick, that advancing towards the enemy on an open ground in front, they missed their way, and came upon a wood where the Prussian left was posted. At nine, the fog cleared up, the sun shone out, the two armies found themselves close together, and the cannonade commenced in the centre, with the greatest sharpness on the Prussian side. Ney, who was on the right of Marshal Lannes, attacked the extreme left of the Prussians, repeatedly taking and being driven from a village where it was lodged; and would have lost a great number of his men, had not a division of Soult's coming up at the time (though fatigued after a long march) joined in the action, turned the Prussian left, and compelled them to evacuate the village. The Emperor blamed Ney, though gently, for persisting in his attack, instead of waiting for the expected reinforcement. While this movement was operating on their left, Marshal Lannes made a vigorous attack on the Prussian centre. The boldness of his advance made them shift their whole position. The action then recommenced, and a new incident decided the fortune of the day. The Emperor had left Marshal Augereau at Mentz to collect

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the regiments which had been sent back from Austerlitz to France, and to follow with what haste he could. He made such good speed that he arrived at Jena while the battle was going on. He did not pause a moment, but advanced through a fir-wood in such a manner as to appear in the rear of the Prussian right, at the instant that Lannes was attacking it in front, commencing a discharge of musquetry before the Prussians had time to reconnoitre. Buonaparte's columns seemed to meet together at the scene of action as we sometimes see the clouds assembling from the different points of heaven before a thunder-storm. This attack being as determined as it was unexpected made the enemy's line waver. The Emperor had but few cavalry with him, the main body being on the road to Naumburg; but as soon as the oscillation was observed in the Prussian ranks, they were sent forward and ordered to charge with desperation. This movement succeeded in preventing the Prussian army from rallying; and the head of Murat's cavalry just then coming up completed the disorder, and united with the rest in pursuing the routed enemy on the road to Weimar, along which they were escaping.

The Emperor from the spot where he stood, saw the flight of the Prussians, and the French cavalry taking them by thousands. Night was approaching; and here, as at Austerlitz, he rode round the field of battle. He often alighted from his horse to give a little brandy to the wounded; or placed his hand on the breast of a soldier to feel if his heart beat or there was any chance of life. His joy on such occasions was only checked by the recollection of those he could not succour. If he found a greater number of dead in one part of the field than another, he looked at the buttons to ascertain the number of the regiment; and afterwards at the first review he would question the men as to the manner in which they had been attacked, and how the loss had happened. He returned to pass the night at Jena, where he received the professors of the University and rewarded the vicar of that place for the attention he had shewn to the sick and wounded.

On the same day (the 14th of October) on which Napoleon overthrew the Prince of Hohenloe in front of Jena, Davoust and Bernadotte, in pursuance of their instructions, marched from Naumburg by the Weimar road, on which the Prussian army under the command of the King was advancing. Davoust was in a great measure ignorant of the position of the enemy, but he had no sooner reached the summit of the hill, which it is necessary to ascend after passing the stone-bridge over the Saale, about a league from Naumburg, than he descried the Prussian army below. He immediately dispatched a messenger to Bernadotte who was close behind him, and requested he would support him. Bernadotte insisted on taking the lead; and this not being



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acceded to by the other, contrived not to act at all, pretending to be in search of a passage somewhere higher up the river. Marshal Davoust attacked with an inferiority in numbers of one to four. Scarcely was his line formed when he was assailed by a cannonade and discharge of musquetry, which were the more furiously maintained, as the enemy thought they were sure of destroying him : had it not been for his great courage and firmness under fire, his troops must have been completely disheartened. By three o'clock in the afternoon he had lost one-third of his force. He could only retain his men in the field by shewing himself everywhere. In vain his aide-de-camps hurried to and fro to Bernadotte to urge him to move : he spent the whole day in seeking a passage where none was to be found, and would thus have allowed Davoust to be crushed. He also contrived to keep back the cavalry, over which he had no right of controul. Davoust was indebted to his great valour and to the confidence placed in him by his troops, for the glory he won on this day, which was to him the most honourable that could be. Notwithstanding the loss which he sustained, he took from the enemy seventy pieces of cannon, and compelled him to a retreat. Had he been supported by a body of cavalry, he might have taken a great number of prisoners ; but that he had been able to keep the field under such disadvantages, obtained him the admiration of the whole army. The loss of the Prussians was considerable. The Duke of Brunswick who was wounded, hastily retired to Altona, where he soon after died. The King, on learning what had befallen the Duke, made a movement to regain the Oder ; nor could Davoust from the want of cavalry, obstruct the monarch's retreat. Adjutant-General Romœuf, who brought the report of the affair to the Emperor at Jena, said nothing of the absence of the cavalry nor of Bernadotte's refusal to participate in the action. When he had done, Buonaparte asked him what those troops had been doing during the conflict. Receiving no explanation, he bit his lips, and was at no loss to understand that something was amiss. Yet after this he made this man a sovereign. It would seem that as the world goes, magnanimity contains the seeds of its destruction in its own bosom !

Prisoners poured into Jena the whole of the night ; and among them was almost the whole of the Saxon infantry with several generals. The Emperor had the officers assembled in a hall of the University, and thus addressed them by his interpreter : ' Saxons ! I am not your enemy, nor the enemy of your Elector. I know that he has been obliged to aid the design of Prussia. You have fought ; and ill fortune has deprived you of your liberty. If you have sincerely espoused the interests of Prussia, you must share her fate ; but if you can assure me that your sovereign has been constrained to take up arms against me,

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and that he will seize his opportunity of resuming his natural policy, I will overlook the past, and will henceforth live on friendly terms with him.' M. Pfuhl, a Saxon officer, undertook to go to Dresden with this proposal, and to bring an answer in two days; and on receiving an assurance that it would be favourable, Buonaparte gave the Saxon prisoners their liberty, who immediately set out home by way of Leipsic. The Emperor then departed in an open carriage for Weimar; and at the top of the mountain, called the Snail, met a Prussian officer bearing a letter from the King with a proposal for an armistice. This offer was not complied with, because its only object was to remove the war from his dominions into those of the allies of the French. Either from the date of the King's letter, or by some other means, the French general learned the situation of the Prussian army, and directly ordered Bernadotte to force the passage of the Essen defended by the Prince of Wurtemberg, and made Lannes march upon Erfurt where the Prince of Orange commanded, which shortly after capitulated with a garrison of eighteen thousand men. This town was also of importance, as it was a thoroughfare from the army to Mentz. While at Weimar, the Emperor had an interview with the Prussian general, Schmettau, an old aide-de-camp of Frederic II. who had been wounded in the late battle, and died in consequence soon after.

At Naumburg Buonaparte learned from Davoust (with whom he expressed his high satisfaction) the whole extent of Bernadotte's misconduct just before. He said, 'If I were to bring him to a court-martial, it would be equivalent to ordering him to be shot. The best way is to overlook it. I do not think him so devoid of honour as not to feel the shamefulness of his behaviour, respecting which I shall not fail to let him know my mind.' Buonaparte could hardly have been a physiognomist to trust Bernadotte twice; for he must have seen him with stealthy eyes looking over his high-arched nose, watching his own opportunities, and equally indifferent to principle or sentiment! On the road between Naumburg and Halle, the Emperor passed over the field of Rosbach. He knew the ground so well that on approaching Rosbach, he said to one of his aide-de-camps, pointing with his hand, 'Gallop on in that direction, and half a league off you will see the column which the Prussians erected in commemoration of their victory over us.' When the whole of Europe was spread out in this manner before Napoleon as in a map, it is not surprising he thought he could lay his hands on it so easily. The column was where he had pointed it out, but no higher than a common-sized door-post; and the next thing was to order up some of Suchet's sappers to have it conveyed on carriages to Paris. The whole army was now approaching the Elbe. The bridge at Dessau had been burnt by the Prince of Wurtemberg,

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whom Bernadotte was pursuing. The Emperor thought it possible to repair it; but finding it would be a work of time, preferred crossing at Wittenberg, by which a day was lost.

Half-way between Dessau and Wittenberg, Duroc, who had been sent on a secret mission to the King of Prussia, came to meet the Emperor. The latter remained at Wittenberg two days, while the French effected the passage of the Elbe; which they did before the Prussians. Ney was charged with the blockade of Magdeburg. Napoleon with the rest of the army advanced towards Berlin by the Potsdam road, in order to dispute the passage of the Spree with the enemy, who were one or two marches behind. It was about one in the afternoon when the army left Wittenberg; and in passing through the suburbs, a storm of hail came on. The Emperor alighted to obtain shelter, and entered a house belonging to the keeper of the forests. He thought he was not known; and regarded merely as ordinary civility the respectful manner in which he was received by two young women in the apartment where he was. They appeared much surprised and embarrassed, and one of them exclaimed aside, 'Heavens! it is the Emperor.' On inquiry, it turned out that she was the widow of an officer who had been killed in Egypt, and that she recollected Buonaparte perfectly well, as he was not much altered, as well as General Savary and General Berthier, who were with him. She had been left with one son; and in answer to a question put to her on the subject, she ran upstairs and brought down her marriage-contract. The Emperor was much pleased, and exclaimed, '*Par Dieu!* this is a curious meeting.' He then ordered Berthier to take down the names both of the mother and the son. The storm being now over and the Emperor about to depart, he said, 'Well, Madam, as a memorial of this day, I grant you an annual pension of 1200 francs, with the reversion to your son.' He then mounted his horse and set off; and in the evening signed the order for the widow's pension.

Napoleon passed the night within a short march of Potsdam. He here learned that the Prussians had re-crossed the Elbe and were making every exertion to regain the Oder towards Stettin. He ordered Soult and Bernadotte to give them no rest. Ney remained on the left bank of the Elbe to watch Magdeburg, and to see that the enemy, pressed hard by Soult and Bernadotte, did not turn short that way. Spandau surrendered to Marshal Lannes at the first summons; so that his corps, being left disposable, was sent forward to the other side of the Spree. The Emperor arrived at Potsdam in broad day, and went immediately to visit the two palaces of Sans-Souci. He admired the beauty of the larger palace and made some remarks on the site chosen for it, which is so bleak and ungenial that the growth of

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every thing is stunted. The little palace of Sans-Souci greatly interested him. He examined the apartment of Frederic the Great, which is kept with religious care. None of the furniture had been displaced; and certainly splendour constituted no part of its value. The writing-table resembled those which may yet be seen in the offices of the old French notaries: the inkstand and pens were still upon it. Buonaparte opened several of the books which Frederic was fond of reading, and which contained marginal notes in the king's own hand, apparently written in no very good humour. He ordered the door to be opened by which Frederic used to go down to the terrace in the garden; and also that which he passed through, when he went to review his troops on the great sandy plain near the palace. Every thing about this monarch appears to have been dry and arid. He returned to Potsdam for the night, where he forbade any one to occupy the private apartments belonging to the Queen. At Charlottenburg they found in a drawer in one of her dressing-rooms a memorial drawn up by Dumouriez for subduing the power of France. Certainly, there is no containing the mercurial vivacity of the French character within bounds, except by mixing it up with the *caput mortuum* of legitimacy!

On the 21st of October, a month after his departure from Paris, Buonaparte entered Berlin. He was on horseback, accompanied by the guard and the whole of Davoust's corps, whom he chose to be the first to enter the Prussian capital. The weather was fine. Almost all the inhabitants of the city seemed to be out of doors; and the windows were filled with ladies, who, though they evinced considerable curiosity on the occasion, yet expressed the profoundest grief in their countenances, and many were bathed in tears. Pride, passion, patriotism, loyalty, all are human, and have tears for their dearest loss: truth and freedom alone see theirs with dry eyes! The Emperor alighted at the King's palace, where he took up his abode. The troops were stationed on the Custrin and Stettin roads, with the exception of the guard which was quartered in Berlin. Buonaparte was up at four in the morning, sending out scouts and parties of skirmishers in every direction. One of these parties captured a flag of truce, from whom it was discovered that he had left Prince Hohenloe at New-Rupin preparing to depart for Prentzlau, on which the Emperor directed the dragoons and the corps of Lannes to proceed thither by forced marches up the Havel. They reached the bridge at Prentzlau a few hours before the head of the Prussian column appeared on the opposite bank of the river. Both sides being very much fatigued, a parley ensued. The Prussian troop which was most in advance was a regiment belonging to the King's-guard, which supposing all lost, was very glad to return to



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Berlin. An arrangement was proposed and concluded on the spot. Prince Hohenloe surrendered with all the troops that were with him, transferring to General Blucher the command of those which were too distant to be included in the capitulation. The others were sent back to Berlin. Prince Charles of Mecklenburg, a younger brother of the Queen, having been taken prisoner at Strelitz, was dismissed on his parole. Blucher had rallied the wrecks of the Prince of Hohenloe's corps, and added them to what remained of the army that fought against Davoust. The King had withdrawn from this army, as soon as the armistice had been refused. He took Magdeburg in his way to Berlin, and thence directed his course to the Oder and afterwards to Graudentz, where he ordered the bridge of boats over the Vistula to be removed. He here learnt the surrender of his army at Lubeck. Blucher had manœuvred so as to draw Soult and Bernadotte from Berlin; and afterwards succeeded in giving them the slip from the field of Wharen. He escaped from them so completely that they did not reach till evening the positions he had quitted in the morning. He passed through Schwerin and gained Lubeck. He would have defended the bridge of that place, but was overpowered. Driven to the last extremity and destitute of ammunition, he at last capitulated and surrendered his troops prisoners of war.

On the arrival of the French at Berlin, possession was immediately taken of the post-office. The examination of the intercepted correspondence was so skilfully managed that at first no suspicion was entertained of the circumstance. In this way, a letter forwarded to the care of the postmaster and addressed to the King, was stopped. This letter was written and signed by the Prince of Hatzfield, who had remained at Berlin. It contained a detailed account of every thing which had occurred in the capital since the King's departure, with a minute description of the French force, corps by corps. As the letter was written by a prince, it was laid before the Emperor, who appointed a court-martial to be held to try the writer on a charge of giving secret information to the Prussian government. On the order for the court-martial being issued, the Prince was arrested. The court-martial met; but as the Emperor had not returned the original letter, the only document on which the charge was founded, an application was made for it through the major-general in the usual way. It so happened that the Emperor had gone to some distance from Berlin to review one of Davoust's divisions. It was another fortunate circumstance that on his return he stopped to pay a visit to the old Prince Ferdinand, brother to Frederic II., so that it was late before he got home. These lucky incidents afforded the Princess of Hatzfield time to see Marshal Duroc, whom she had known during his former visits to Berlin. The

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Marshal knew nothing of the business ; and not being able to leave the palace, sent General Savary to learn the particulars. He hastened back to inform Marshal Duroc, that the life of the Prince was at stake, and that it was necessary to procure the Princess an immediate audience of the Emperor. He had just then returned, and meeting Duroc at the top of the stair-case with the Princess (who had never quitted the spot) holding by his arm, he said, 'What, has something new occurred, Grand-Marshal?'—'Yes Sire,' said Duroc, and followed the Emperor into his cabinet. He soon came out, and introduced the Princess. She knew not why her husband had been arrested ; and in the simplicity of her disposition demanded justice of the Emperor for the wrong which she supposed was done him. When she had finished, he handed her the letter written by her husband. Having run it over, she stood motionless, and looked as if she had lost all sensation, but uttered not a word. The Emperor said, 'Well, Madam, is this a calumny? I leave you to judge.' The Princess, more dead than alive, was going to answer with her tears, when Buonaparte took the letter from her and said, 'Were it not for this letter, there would be no proof against your husband.'—'That is very true,' she replied, 'but I cannot deny that it is his writing.'—'Well,' said the Emperor, 'there is nothing to be done but to burn it ;' and threw the letter into the fire. The Princess of Hatzfield knew not what to do or say ; but she spoke more feelingly by her silence than the most eloquent orator could have done. She retired quite happy, and soon saw her husband who was set at liberty. The Emperor, say those who knew him best, was on this day as happy as the Princess of Hatzfield. Such was the man, whose character venal writers laboured to cover with the slime and poison of their pens, in order to sink a cause which he upheld by the sword, and which in itself was unassailable.

Prince Paul of Wurtemberg had joined the Prussians without his father's consent ; and was made a general and a prisoner almost at the same instant. Buonaparte took no other revenge of him than not to receive him, and to send him back to Stuttgart. Custring and Stettin surrendered, as if they had fallen down before a name ; and at the same time Magdeburg with a garrison of twenty-three thousand men, commanded by General Kleist, surrendered to Ney, whose force was not much larger. It was only in Silesia that a Prussian corps kept the field, where it was opposed by Prince Jerome, to whom Buonaparte having been lately reconciled with him had given the command of an army-corps of Bavarians, Wurtemburghers, and other Confederate troops. The diplomatic body now flocked to Berlin, in the train of victory ; but did little to bring about a peace. M. Talleyrand in particular by a note which he presented (in which he took a lively

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bird's-eye view of the whole political horizon) offended the King of Prussia by requiring him to do what was not in his power, namely, to compel England and Russia to make peace. As men often grow desperate in desperate circumstances, the more imperious the necessity became for coming to terms with Napoleon, the more he seemed to shrink from it; and when Duroc found him at Osterode on the other side of the Vistula, he rejected the idea of an armistice altogether, alleging that 'it was now too late, and that he had thrown himself into the arms of the Emperor of Russia, who had offered him his support.' Buonaparte gave up all further attempts at negociation, and forthwith put himself into a condition to seek peace wherever he could find the Russians. While at Berlin, the Emperor received a deputation from the French Senate, complimenting him on his astonishing success, but recommending him to put a period to his victories by a peace. This vexed him: and he returned for answer that before they recommended him to make peace, they might at least have inquired on which side the obstacles to it lay, or have sent the means along with the flattering hope of forcing the Prussians or the Russians, with whom the former had now leagued, to conclude it with him. This was the first manifestation of that spirit of idle cavilling or of what Buonaparte afterwards denounced as the spirit of *ideology*, which began to take a surfeit of success in which it did not play a principal part, and which was looking at abstract principles when it should have been attending to circumstances, and at circumstances when it should have been guided by abstract principles. The Emperor had sent to Italy for the Polish general Dombrowski to join him at Potsdam. It was not till after the refusal of Prussia to sign the armistice, that he thought seriously of creating a diversion in his favour in Poland. Fresh troops arrived from France, with which Marshal Mortier marched against the Hanse-towns; and was master of the shores of the Baltic before the Emperor was ready to commence operations in Lithuania. The two remaining fortresses of Hameln and Nieuburg also fell into the hands of the French by a kind of giddiness or vertigo, by which strong-places at this time took it into their heads to surrender almost at discretion, and without striking a single blow. The commanders have been accused of treachery and collusion, without attending to the effect which a general panic and course of disaster has on the mind. A great authority has said, 'Men's judgments are a parcel of their fortunes;' and the example of cities surrendering, armies beaten, and kings flying from their capitals, might relax the sinews of war into a very ague-fit, even in a veteran soldier, without the imputation of bribery, indifference, or premeditated treachery. Cowardice is epidemic as well as courage; and the spark of patriotism is either kindled or extinguished by common

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consent. In Hameln were found fifteen stand of colours embroidered by the fairest hands that Prussia could boast, adorned with martial emblems, and presented to their lovers in the hope of a different fate. Have the women in France no embroidering frames? Neither lovers nor a country?

Buonaparte was on this occasion longer absent from Paris than on any other since his return from Egypt (being detained by the two campaigns, first with Prussia in 1806 and then with Russia in 1807)—and it may not be an improper place to describe his manner of life when with the army. It was simple and without show. Every individual, of whatever rank, had permission to approach and speak to him of his affairs. He listened, questioned, and gave an answer on the spot: if it was a refusal, there was a reason assigned for it, and it was done in a way to soften the pain of a denial. It was a spectacle to excite the highest admiration to see the common soldier quit the ranks, when his regiment was drawn out before the Emperor, and advancing with a grave, measured step, and presenting arms, come close up to him. Napoleon never failed to take his petition, read it through, and grant its just demands. This noble privilege which he afforded to fidelity and courage gave each soldier a strong sense of his rights and of his duties, while it served as a curb to check the humours of the superior officers who might be tempted to abuse their trust. The simplicity of the manners and character of the Emperor was chiefly remarkable on these marching-days when the cannon were for a short time silent. Constantly on horseback in the midst of his generals and of his aide-de-camps, of the officers of his household, or of the youthful and valiant *élite* of the officers of artillery, his gaiety and good-humour had an influence on all around him. Often he gave directions to halt, and would seat himself under a tree by the road-side with the Prince of Neufchâtel. The provisions for the march were spread out before him; and every one, from the page to the highest officers, found by one means or other what was necessary for his refreshment. It was a sort of *fête* for the whole party. Napoleon by banishing from his private concerns any shadow of intrigue, and by judging always for himself, had inspired all those belonging to him with sentiments of affection, of union, and zeal in his service which rendered their intercourse extremely agreeable. Such was the frugality of Napoleon that he gave the preference by choice to the simplest viands and to those which were least highly seasoned—as for example: eggs *au miroir*, beans dressed as a sallad. Either of these two dishes, with a small quantity of Parmesan cheese, was what his breakfast generally consisted of. At dinner he ate little, seldom tasting made-dishes, and always choosing the wholesomest. He used to repeat that ‘however small a quantity



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of food we took, we always took more than enough.' By this means, his head was always clear, and his work easy to him, even after rising from table. Gifted by nature with a sound and excellent stomach, his nights were calm as those of an infant ; and his constitution agreed so well with his situation, that a single hour of sleep repaired the exhaustion occasioned by four-and-twenty hours of fatigue. In the midst of emergencies the most critical and urgent, he had the power of going to sleep voluntarily ; and his mind recovered the most perfect calm, from the instant that the measures which the actual circumstances required were determined on. All the hours of the day were devoted to employment, even when he was with the army. Did he cease for a moment to consult his maps, to meditate the plan of his battles, and to study the immense combinations which it was necessary to arrange in order to put in motion (with mathematical precision) masses of four or five hundred thousand men, then he busied himself with the interior administration of the Empire. Several times in the week an auditor from the Council of State arrived at head-quarters, charged with the portfolios of the different Ministers : never was the labour deferred till the morrow ; in the course of the same day the whole was examined, signed, and sent off : every thing marched abreast. The days that followed a battle were devoted to receiving the reports of the different corps of the army, connecting together the detached circumstances, allotting to every one the share of glory to which he was entitled, and drawing up those masterly bulletins which are a model of military eloquence. It was singular enough that these bulletins, sent to Paris to be published, were read and admired by all France, before they reached the army, who knew nothing of their contents till the arrival of the newspapers from the capital. They have been accused of exaggeration : but events sufficiently proved their truth. Armies do not fly nor cities fall down before the columns of a gazette. The personalities against the Queen of Prussia have been complained of as showing a want of gallantry ; but the provocation was extreme, and the opportunity not to be missed for paying off the abuse and contumely of which Buonaparte was himself the unceasing butt for twenty years. Still it would have been better, had he abstained from recriminating, in a moment of victory, on a woman and a queen—a handsome and spirited one too ; but perhaps the air of the palaces of Potsdam and Berlin was not very favourable to sentiments of gallantry.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### BATTLES OF EYLAU AND FRIEDLAND, AND PEACE OF TILSIT

It was from Berlin that Buonaparte dated the famous decrees of the 21st of November, 1806, interdicting all commerce between Great Britain and the rest of Europe, which was the commencement of the well-known Continental System, which he resorted to as the only means of crushing the power and hostility of England, and the attempt to enforce which (almost as it were against the nature of things) in the end proved fatal to himself. Buonaparte reasoned in this manner with himself—that it was incumbent on him to destroy the power and influence of Great Britain—that there was no other way of doing it but by excluding her completely from the ports of the Continent—and that therefore this was the means to which it was necessary to have recourse in order to arrive at the indispensable object. But nothing is necessary in human affairs, that is not possible; and to attempt a remedy for that which is placed out of our reach by fortune, is only to *make bad worse*. Nothing could alter the moral condition of England but the striking at her physical resources; and these from her insular situation were invulnerable in the ordinary course of events. *There*, however, England was in the map; and there let her remain to do all the mischief she could! If his armies could not march across the sea, neither could her fleets come upon the land. This was enough; any thing beyond was will, not reason. If he could get all the states of Europe to come into his system, and only one held out, that would be sufficient to defeat it; if they all could be prevailed on to come into it (which would be difficult considering the privations and losses it must occasion) would they all keep to it? Even if this were the case with the governments, no advance would be made towards the grand object: a single harbour, a smuggler's cave, a creek, a crevice would serve to let in so subtle a thing as commerce, just as the smallest leak lets the water into the hold of a vessel. The means were disproportioned to the end. The whole power and resources of France must be strained to their utmost pitch, and called forth not against an imposing mass and once for all, but must be brought to bear at every moment, and in every point of the compass, against the most petty, harassing, and evanescent opposition. After throwing the net of his policy and the ramifications of his vast system of restraint and exclusion over the Lion of British commerce, a mouse, a Norway rat would bite the cords in two. It was only his immense influence, his prodigious energy, and a resolution

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steeled against remonstrance or disappointment, that could have made his scheme at all feasible or formidable to others : yet, in spite of these, it failed. Nothing short of absolute power could have carried it into practical effect ; and with respect to moral or political causes, absolute power is a mere name. As to the complaints urged by the French ruler against the encroachments, the insolence, and rapacity of England as a maritime power, nothing could be more just ; but they need not have excited any surprise, except in contrast with the high character which we give of ourselves, and which makes others a little sore and impatient when they find out the truth. On the other hand, with respect to the inconsistencies between the maritime and military codes of warfare, though glaring and revolting, they seem in a great measure to arise out of the nature of the service itself (the one having to do with fixed masses, the other with floating fragments) though not altogether so. Thus there seems no reason why a merchant-vessel in an enemy's harbour should be confiscated the instant war is declared, while a convoy of merchandise by land is suffered to go free and return to enrich that very enemy. The property here is not fixed and at any time accessible, but moveable, as in the other case. Again, if the property of the private citizen at sea is made lawful spoil, as the only means which the stronger party has of gaining an advantage over the weaker, yet there is no reason why the unarmed citizen should be made prisoner in his own person, which can only be prejudicial to himself, except under the idea of his being held to ransom, according to the obsolete custom of barbarous warfare. If it be with a view to exchange the peaceful prisoner with the soldier taken in battle, then there is the same ground for detaining travellers in a country, or others whom we have in our power, to increase the number of hostages. There is no doubt that the state of the maritime code (which either for good or bad reasons approaches nearer the usages of barbarous times than the military) might admit of revision and amelioration in many respects ; and if Buonaparte may be supposed from circumstances or peculiar irritation to have taken a prejudiced view of the subject, we can hardly set ourselves up as impartial judges of the question.

Hamburgh was the first place that felt by anticipation the blow that was about to be aimed at British commerce. Marshal Mortier, towards the middle of November, formally re-occupied Hanover ; and marching upon Hamburgh, took possession of that ancient free-town, so long the emporium of the commerce of the north of Europe. The strictest search was made for British commodities and property, which were declared the lawful subject of confiscation—with what success it is difficult to make out between the outcries of the English merchants at the meditated injury (as if they were the most aggrieved

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set of people upon earth) and their subsequent boastings of having outwitted their adversaries. Hesse-Cassel was taken from the Elector, who was known to be decidedly hostile to France; and with various provinces of Prussia and the conquered territories of the Duke of Brunswick was erected into the kingdom of Westphalia, and given to Jerome Buonaparte. Much has been said of Buonaparte's treatment of the Duke of Brunswick, who died about this time at Altona; and it seems to have been agreed by certain writers that the French bullets ought to have spared him; first, because he was the father-in-law of the heir-apparent of the British crown; and secondly, as being the author of the memorable Manifesto against the French nation in the year 1792. On the contrary, if there was any one reproach, any one indignity more galling than another that could be heaped upon his tomb or on his death-bed, that one ought to have been heaped upon it. Oh no! let not the outrage and contumely be all on one side—the forgiveness and forbearance all on the other. What! we are to be treated with the cold, defecated malice of fiends, and we are to return it with nothing but the milk of human kindness and the pitying smiles of angels. Those who have cherished but one feeling all their lives, that of hunting down the liberties and happiness of mankind, cannot come with their latest breath to beg a little charity and mercy. To give no quarter to human nature is to expect none from it. But his son never forgave his father's death, and revenged it by the Black Brunswickers in 1815. But *his* father was not the only one by many millions who fell victims in that ruthless struggle which the Duke of Brunswick's Manifesto proclaimed to the world, and to the spirit that animated it. Buonaparte is blamed for having alluded to this. He would have been a dastard if he had not. So! 1806 was to be paid home, but 1792 forgotten. There is no equality in that. Let the circle of revenge go round: only let it be understood that the hatred is reciprocal, deadly, and implacable on both sides!

Buonaparte had a fine opportunity at this time of rebutting the odium and cavils to which he exposed himself by his treatment of the petty princes of Germany, and of establishing his popularity, had he made common cause with Poland. That name 'pleaded trumpet-tongued' against the iniquity of the old governments of Europe, and laughed to scorn all their affected appeals to moderation and justice. A light went before it, a flame followed after it; from which Buonaparte shrunk, as the one pointed out and the other embraced consequences of which he could hardly controul the issues. He hesitated to lay his hands on that engine of power which was contained in the degradation and oppression of Poland, and to give it full scope, because though it was a means to crush his antagonists, it might in the end



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recoil upon himself. Honesty would probably here, as in so many cases, have been the best policy; and the broad principles of liberty and justice the safest ground for him to tread upon. But Buonaparte was fonder of organizing than of emancipating; and even if he had restored to Poland the inheritance of freedom, would have liked to retain the management of it in his own hands. His lukewarmness or circumspection cost him dear; but it was not his most prominent characteristic to trust with implicit faith to those moral tendencies which act by their own spontaneous and expansive force; or in other words, the greatness of his capacity consisted rather in combining numberless positive means to the same end than in wielding the simplest elements to the production of the most widely-extended results. Besides, he was implicated with Austria on one side, and averse to provoke the lasting enmity of Russia on the other; and all he did was to erect Prussian Poland into a sort of independence under the title of the Duchy of Warsaw with the newly-created King of Saxony at its head, and to talk from time to time of the liberation of the Poles.

‘The partition of this fine kingdom by its powerful neighbours’ (says a great and admired writer, whose testimony in behalf of liberty is the more to be valued as it is rare) ‘was the first open and audacious transgression of the law of nations which disgraced the annals of civilized Europe. It was executed by a combination of three of the most powerful states of Europe against one too unhappy in the nature of its constitution, and too much divided by factions, to offer any effectual resistance. The kingdom subjected to this aggression had appealed in vain to the code of nations for protection against an outrage, to which, after a desultory and uncombined and therefore a vain defence, she saw herself under a necessity of submitting. The Poles retained too a secret sense of their fruitless attempt to recover freedom in 1791, and an animated recollection of the violence by which it had been suppressed by the Russian arms. They waited with hope and exultation the approach of the French armies; and candour must allow, that unlawfully subjected as they had been to a foreign yoke, they had a right to avail themselves of the assistance not only of Napoleon, but of Mahomet or of Satan himself, had he proposed to aid them in regaining the independence of which they had been oppressively and unjustly deprived.’ This, if not elegant, is full and plain, and goes to prove that if the Poles had a right to call in Buonaparte for the recovery or maintenance of their independence, the French must at all times have had a still greater right to do so.

Buonaparte had obtained by a decree of the Senate, in the month of October 1806, a new levy of eighty thousand men; and was in a

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condition to push the war with vigour, and to a decisive termination. The French, having made themselves masters of the Prussian provinces to the east of the Oder, had laid siege to the fortresses of Glogau, Breslau, and Graudentz, and were advancing to occupy Poland. The Russian General, Benigsen, had on his side come as far as Warsaw in the hope of aiding the Prussians; but finding that they had scarcely the remnant of an army to bring into the field, he had recrossed the Vistula, leaving the capital of Poland to be entered on the 28th of November by Murat at the head of the French vanguard. About the same time, Napoleon leaving Berlin had fixed his head-quarters at Posen, a central town in Poland, which country was beginning to manifest considerable agitation. The Poles in many instances resumed their ancient national dress and manners, and sent deputies to urge the decision of Buonaparte in their favour. The language in which they entreated his interposition, resembled that of Oriental idolatry. 'The Polish nation,' said Count Radyiminski, the Palatine of Gnesna, 'presents itself before your Majesty, groaning still under the German yoke, and hails with the purest joy the regenerator of their beloved country, the legislator of the universe. Full of submission to your will, they offer you their homage, and repose on you with confidence all their hopes, as upon him who has the power of raising empires and of destroying them and of humbling the proud.' The address of the President of the Council-Chamber of the Regency of Poland was equally sanguine and high-flown. 'Already,' he said, 'we see our dear country saved; for in your person we revere the most just and most profound Solon. We commit our fate and our hopes into your hands; and we implore the mighty protection of the most august Cæsar.' Napoleon received these hyperbolical compliments, which Freedom poured forth in its anguish and in its abject state, with complacency; but they drew from him no direct or explicit declaration of his final intentions. For my own part, his equivocal and calculating policy with regard to Poland gives me a worse opinion of him than all he did to Spain. The one indicated a want of virtue or of any love for freedom; the other only showed a contempt for vice and for the dotage of slavery and superstition. The last might be pardonable in the philosopher and the politician; the first was neither consistent with the character of the philanthropist nor the sage.

Meanwhile, Warsaw was put into a state of defence; and the auxiliary troops of Saxony and the new confederates of the Rhine were brought up by regular marches, while repeated reinforcements from France repaired the losses of the former part of the campaign. The French army at length advanced in full strength, and crossed successively the Vistula and the Bug. Benigsen, whose object it was not to

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give battle to numbers superior to his own, retreated behind the Wkra, where he was joined by the troops of Generals Buxhowden and Kaminskoi, the latter of whom, a contemporary of Suwarrow, assumed the chief command. On the 25th of December, 1806, the army of Benigsen took up a position behind Pultusk; their left, commanded by Count Ostermann, resting upon the town which stands on the river Narew, the bridge of which was well defended. The right, under Barclay de Tolly, was strongly posted in a wood; the centre was under the orders of General Zachen. A plain between the town of Pultusk and the wood was filled with cavalry. On the 26th, the Russian position was attacked by the divisions of Lannes and Davoust, together with all the French guards. After skirmishing for some time, the French assembling in great force on their left made a determined effort to overwhelm the Russians by turning their right wing. Barclay de Tolly was obliged to fall back on his reserve, while the French seized upon the wood and took several guns. Benigsen, however, in spite of Kaminskoi's order to retreat, resolved to abide the brunt of the battle; for which purpose, desiring Barclay de Tolly to continue his retreat, he suffered the French to advance in pursuit, till the cavalry, who had covered the manœuvre, suddenly withdrawing, a battery of a hundred and twenty guns, extending along the whole Russian front, played on the advancing columns of the French. The Russian line now coming forward occupied the ground from which they had been before driven. The approach of night ended the combat, which was both obstinate and bloody. Great numbers were killed on both sides: Marshal Lannes was wounded in the action.

The battle of Pultusk raised the reputation of Benigsen and the spirits of the Russians, who thought it a great thing to have checked the advance of the French. Both Benigsen, however, and Prince Galitzin, who had fought the same day at Golymin, were compelled to unite their forces and fall back on Ostrolenka, for fear of being surrounded. Kaminskoi, whose conduct had for some time been capricious and unaccountable, now shewed evident signs of derangement, and was superseded by Benigsen. This general made a demonstration towards Graudentz and Königsberg, where the King of Prussia was cooped up and menaced with the gradual approaches of Ney and Bernadotte. He succeeded so far by this diversion as to enable the Prussian general L'Estocq to throw reinforcements and provisions into the former place. On the 25th of January, 1807, Buonaparte left his winter-quarters at Warsaw, and collected his army at Willenburg, in the rear of Benigsen's corps, who was then at Mohringen, watched by Bernadotte on the other side, to whom Buonaparte had sent orders to bring him to action and draw him on to the Vistula, thus intending to

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turn the Russians here as he had done the Austrians at Ulm and the Prussians at Jena. Napoleon was advancing close upon the Russian rear, when a dispatch intercepted by a troop of Cossacks betrayed his design; and Benigsen, alarmed in time, fell back precipitately upon Allenstein, which place he evacuated at night to avoid a battle. He then proceeded by Deppen and Landsberg to Preuss-Eylau, where he arrived after various skirmishes on the evening of the 7th of February, and where he waited on the outside of the town to give the French army battle the next day. It was intended by the Russian general to leave a guard to occupy the town; but this having been neglected, it was resolved to send a detachment to drive the French from it who were come up by this time, and in whose possession after a severe and doubtful conflict it remained for the night. Barclay de Tolly was wounded while leading his troops to the assault.

The position of the two armies the next day may be described as follows:—The Russian troops occupied a space of uneven ground, about two miles in length and a mile in depth, with the village of Serpallen on their left: they were in front of the town of Preuss-Eylau, situated in a hollow and in possession of the French. Napoleon had fixed his head-quarters here. Davoust with the third corps had proceeded three leagues to the right to engage a Russian column which was on the Alle, and to turn the left of the enemy's line. The fourth corps bivouacked in advance to the right and left of the town:—the Guard in the second line, the seventh corps under Augereau and the reserves of heavy cavalry in the third line. The space between the two armies was open and flat, and intersected with frozen lakes, on which the watch-lights threw their pale gleams the whole of the preceding night. On the following day (the 8th) at day-break, the Russians commenced the attack on the French centre, by endeavouring to carry Eylau; but were repulsed with a dreadful carnage on both sides. The Guard maintained its position and kept up an unabated firing during the day. About noon, a heavy storm of snow began to fall, which the wind drove right in the faces of the Russians, and which added to the obscurity caused by the smoke of the burning village of Serpallen. Buonaparte was on the top of the church of Eylau; and amidst a shower of grape and balls that fell on every side, ordered Augereau to advance with the seventh corps, which it did by taking a diverging direction, and was close upon the enemy before it was perceived, owing to the thickness of the atmosphere. Benigsen brought up his reserves in person to oppose it, when a sanguinary conflict ensued, in which Augereau's troops suffered more that day than all the rest of the army. At this time the third corps, commanded by Davoust, came up (following a Russian column that had retreated



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fighting all the way from the Alle) and formed nearly at right angles with Benigsen's troops. On the arrival of Davoust, that general commenced his retreat, though in good order, and abandoned the field of battle, which the third corps occupied about five in the evening. Ney was not in the engagement, but about two leagues off, at the village of Sloditten, on the road to Königsberg. Both he and Bernadotte came up in the course of the night, and were ready to have taken part in the battle, had the Russian General been disposed to renew it the next day. A council of war was held to deliberate on the point without dismounting from their horses; the more sanguine among the leaders, Tolstoy and the Prussian L'Estocq who had come up with reinforcements towards the close of the day, were for attacking the French again on the morrow: but Benigsen did not think himself warranted in risking a second action with an army diminished by twenty thousand men in killed or wounded, short of ammunition and totally destitute of provisions. The Russians accordingly that very night commenced their retreat on Königsberg, where the King of Prussia was. Buonaparte did not move after them: his own loss was enough to give him pause, which he estimates at eighteen thousand men. The Russians had certainly made the utmost resistance that unshrinking hardihood could oppose to skill and valour united. It was a new kind of warfare, and they had shewn that they were only to be beaten, by being hewn in pieces like logs of wood. The victor had triumphed over the civilized part of Europe: he had now to consider what obstacles barbarism had in store for him. An army that had the power of inflicting all the mischiefs of war on others, but was utterly insensible to them itself, regarding neither suffering, danger, nor death, must be very formidable; and to this description the Russian troops approached as nearly as could well be desired. This first encounter with them might have taught greater caution: but the reasons for caution, as they thwart the will, are often only motives to temerity. To shew that Buonaparte was aware of the new difficulties he had to grapple with, in his next battle (that of Friedland) he used all his resources of art and stratagem to secure the advantage to himself before he commenced it.

The battle of Preuss-Eylau was claimed as a victory by both parties, though it was only comparatively that it was not a defeat to the Russians. Buonaparte remained for eight days on the field of battle, in the course of which he dispatched a messenger to the King of Prussia, proposing an armistice on terms more favourable than had been offered after the battle of Jena. But favourable terms were not those to which the sovereigns of Europe were disposed to accede: they could only be compelled to sign the most desperate ones, in circumstances the most desperate. The King therefore remained firm to his

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ally, the Emperor of Russia; and refusing to listen to any offers of a separate peace, determined once more to try his fortune to the utmost. On the 19th of February, Napoleon evacuated Preuss-Eylau, and retired upon the Vistula. The first thing he did, preparatory to a new campaign, was to order the siege of Dantzic, from whence very dangerous operations might take place in his rear, should he again advance into Poland without reducing it. The siege was therefore formed without delay. The place was defended by General Kalkreuth to the last extremity. After many unsuccessful attempts to relieve it, Dantzic finally surrendered towards the end of May, 1807, trenches having been opened before it for fifty-two days. This event enabled Buonaparte to unite the besieging troops, twenty-five thousand strong, to his main army, and to prepare, as summer advanced, to resume offensive operations. He also raised the siege of Colberg, drew the greater part of his forces out of Silesia, ordered a new levy in Switzerland, urged the march of bodies of troops from Italy; and to complete his means, demanded a new conscription for the year 1808, which was instantly complied with by the Senate. A large levy of Poles was made at the same time; and they, with other light troops of the French, were employed in making bold excursions, often exchanging blows with straggling parties of Cossacks. The Russian army had, in the mean time, received reinforcements, though they were still deficient in numerical force, their whole strength not amounting to more than ninety thousand men; while Buonaparte, by unparalleled exertions, had assembled upwards of two hundred thousand between the Vistula and Memel. This negligence on the part of the Russian government to recruit its force is said to have been owing to the poverty of its finances; and (what is still more remarkable) to the refusal of the British Ministry to negotiate a loan of six millions, and advance one million to account, thereby giving great offence to the Emperor Alexander.

The Russians were the assailants, making a combined movement on Ney's division, which was stationed near Gustadt. They pursued him as far as Deppen; but upon the 8th of June, Napoleon advanced in person to extricate his Marshal, and Benigsen was obliged to retreat in his turn. As to the share which the Cossacks had in these skirmishes it was as yet very trifling. The Russian army fell back upon Heilsberg, where concentrating their force, they made a very desperate stand. A very hard-fought action here took place, the battle continuing till the approach of midnight; and when the morning dawned, the space of ground between the Russian and French lines was not merely strewed, but literally choked up, with the bodies of the dead and wounded. The Russians retired unmolested after the battle of Heilsberg; and

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crossing the river Aller, placed the barrier between them and the army of Buonaparte, which though it had suffered considerable losses, had been less affected by them than the Russian army. On the 13th Benigsen with his Russians arrived opposite Friedland, a large town on the west side of the Aller, communicating with the eastern or right bank of the river by a long wooden bridge. It was the object of Napoleon to induce the Russian general to pass by this narrow bridge to the left bank, and then to draw him into a general action, in a position where the difficulty of defiling through the town and over the bridge must render retreat almost impracticable. For this purpose he shewed such a proportion only of his forces as induced General Benigsen to believe that the French troops consisted chiefly of Oudinot's division, which had been severely handled in the battle of Heilsberg, and which he now hoped altogether to destroy. Under this deception he ordered a Russian division to pass the bridge, defile through the town, and march to the assault. The French took care to offer no such resistance as should intimate their real strength. Benigsen was thus led to reinforce the first division with another—the battle thickened, and the Russian general at length transported all his army, one division excepted, to the left bank of the Aller, by means of the wooden bridge and three pontoons, and drew them up in front of the town of Friedland, to overwhelm, as he supposed, the crippled division of the French, to which alone he conceived himself opposed.

But no sooner had he taken this irretrievable step than the mask was dropped. The French skirmishers advanced in force, heavy columns of infantry began to shew themselves from a wood that had hitherto concealed them; batteries of cannon were got into position; and all circumstances concurred, with the report of prisoners, to assure Benigsen that he with his enfeebled troops was in presence of the whole French army. His position, a sort of plain, surrounded by woods and rising grounds, was difficult to defend: with the town and a large river in the rear, it was dangerous to attempt a retreat, and to advance was out of the question from the inferiority of his force. Benigsen now became anxious to resume his communication with Wehlau, a town on the Pregel, which was his original point of retreat, and where he hoped to join the Prussians under General L'Estocq. To secure this object, he found himself obliged to diminish his forces still more by sending six thousand men to defend the bridge at Allerberg, some miles lower down the river; and with what he had left, resolved as well as he could to maintain his position till night. The French advanced to the attack about ten in the forenoon. The broken and woody country which they occupied, enabled them to continue or renew their efforts at pleasure, while the Russians, in their confined situation, could not

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make the slightest movement without being observed. Yet they fought with the most determined bravery, insomuch that towards noon the French seemed sickening of the combat and about to retire. But this was only a feint, to repose such of their troops as had been most warmly engaged and to bring up fresh succours. The cannonade continued till about half-past four, when Buonaparte brought up his full force in person for the purpose of one of those desperate and overwhelming efforts to which he was wont to trust the decision of a doubtful day. Columns of enormous power and extensive depth appeared partly visible among the openings of the wooded country; and seen from the town of Friedland, the hapless Russian army looked as if surrounded by a deep semi-circle of glittering steel. The attack upon the whole line, with cavalry, infantry, and artillery, was general and simultaneous, the French moving on with shouts of assured victory; while the Russians, weakened by the loss of not less than twelve thousand killed and wounded, were obliged to attempt that most dispiriting and hazardous of all movements—a retreat through encumbered defiles in front of a victorious army. The principal attack was directed on the left wing, where the Russian position was again forced. The troops which composed it streamed into the town, and crowded the bridge and pontoons; the enemy thundered on their rear; and it was only the desperation with which the soldiers of the Russian Imperial Guard turned and charged at the point of the bayonet the corps of Ney, which led the French vanguard, that prevented the total destruction of the left wing.

At the same time, the bridge and pontoons were set on fire to prevent the French who had made their way into the town from taking possession of them. The smoke rolling over the combatants increased the horror and confusion of the scene; yet a considerable part of the Russian infantry escaped by a ford close to the town, which was discovered at the moment of defeat. The Russian centre and right, which remained on the west bank of the Aller, effected a retreat by a circuitous route, leaving the town of Friedland on their right, and passing the Aller by a ford a good way lower down the river. The two divisions of the Russian army which had been separated were thus enabled to unite once more on the right of the Aller, and pursue their disastrous flight towards Wehlau. Either the destruction of the bridge or perhaps motives of policy prevented Buonaparte from pursuing the remains of the Russian army.

The most important consequences resulted from this victory, not less decisive in the event than admirable in its conception. Königsberg was evacuated by the King of Prussia and his forces, as it was evidently no longer tenable. Benigsen retreated to Tilsit on the



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Russian frontier. But what was the object most desired by Napoleon, it had the effect of disposing the Emperor Alexander to peace. A door to reconciliation had been studiously kept open by Napoleon between the Czar and himself, towards whom he abstained from every kind of indiscreet personality, throwing out more than one hint that a peace which should divide the world between them, was at any time at Alexander's option. The time had at last arrived when the latter seemed inclined to listen to terms of accommodation with France. He had been previously dissatisfied with his allies, who were either feeble or unfortunate. Unlike most monarchs too, he was not without some compunction for the extreme sufferings of his subjects. His army had been a favourite object of his attention; and he was shocked to see his fine regiment of guards (proud as he had been of them) retain scarcely a vestige of their former numbers or appearance. The influence of Napoleon's name, coupled with corresponding deeds, might also have had its effect on the youthful imagination of the Russian Emperor, who was not himself without pretensions to the heroic character, and therefore might be supposed to esteem it in others; and who might feel his pride soothed to find that the predestined victor who had subdued so many princes was willing to acknowledge an equality with him.

The Emperor of Russia's wish for an armistice was first hinted at by Benigsen on the 21st of June, was acceded to on the 23d, and was soon after followed not only by peace with Russia and Prussia on a basis which bid fair to preclude the possibility of future misunderstanding, but by the formation of a personal intimacy and apparent friendship between Napoleon and the only sovereign of Europe who had the power necessary to treat with him upon a proper footing. The armistice was no sooner agreed upon than preparations were made for an interview between the two sovereigns. It took place upon a raft moored in the middle of the river Niemen, and on which was fixed a large tent or pavilion fitted up for the occasion. At half-past nine, 25th of June 1807, the two Emperors, in the midst of thousands of spectators, embarked at the same moment from the opposite banks of the river. Buonaparte was attended by Murat, Berthier, Bessieres, Duroc, and Caulaincourt; Alexander by his brother the Archduke Constantine, Generals Benigsen and Suwarrow, with the Count de Lieven, one of his aide-de-camps. Arriving at the raft, they disembarked and embraced amidst the shouts and acclamations of both armies; and entering the pavilion which had been prepared, held a private conference of two hours. Their officers, who remained at some distance during the interview, were then reciprocally introduced; and the fullest good understanding seemed to be established between the

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sovereigns who had at their disposal so large a portion of the universe. It is not to be doubted that on this momentous occasion Napoleon exerted all those powers of personal attraction for which he was so remarkably distinguished, and which never failed to throw a spell (when he chose it) on all around him. If the courtly writers dwell with a certain complacency on this scene, caught by the glare and parade of royalty, I cannot say that I (with feelings totally opposite) either shrink from or grudge it. If Buonaparte here rose to a height imperial, and thought it no robbery to be equal with Kings and Cæsars, neither should he: he rose to that height from the level of the people, and thus proved that there was no natural inferiority in the one case, no natural superiority in the other. He confounded and annulled the distinction between the two classes of men, which it has been wished to keep sacred, making unsparing war upon and arrogating to himself with a high hand their proudest claims and prerogatives. It was a satisfactory and noble demonstration that greatness was not the inheritance of a privileged few, and that kings and conquerors sprung from the earth, instead of being let down from Heaven to it. What showed Buonaparte in the most imposing light was the borrowed lustre that he reflected on Alexander, who merely served as a foil to him: he seemed to raise him up as an antagonist power necessary (in the absence of every other) to poise his own, and to impart vitality and interest to his remote and barren dominions. The frozen regions of the north might be said once more to stir and rouse themselves, 'as life were in them.' Russia hung suspended over and ready to fall upon the rest of Europe; and Buonaparte (looking at the map which they held trembling between them) might think it politic to add Spain to his end of the beam, to make the balance steady or even. The artificial mediums of knowledge, which spread out the universe of things to our curiosity or cupidity, while they extend the limits, do not always give just proportions to our ideas: the human Brobdignagian, standing over the mimic globe reduced to a nutshell, retains its own dimensions and importance, and thinks it easy to bestride the world like a Colossus. Ambition and self-interest ever draw rash and unwarrantable conclusions. In like manner, 'our *king* and *country*' are two words that sound as well the one as the other; and hence are made use of to imply equal things. This is false arithmetic, politics, morality, though it is nearly as inseparable from the nature and imperfection of language, which suits well enough with the purposes of sophists and declaimers, and falls in with the grossness of mankind, who seem incapable for the most part, and in what concerns them most, of counting beyond units.

The town of Tilsit was now declared neutral. Entertainments of every kind followed each other in close succession; and the French

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and Russian and even the Prussian officers seemed so delighted with each other's society, that it was difficult to conceive that men so courteous and amiable had been for so many months drenching trampled snows or sandy wastes with their blood. The two Emperors were constantly together in public and in private; and their intimacy approached to that of two young men of rank, who are companions in frolic and in sport as well as accustomed to be associates in affairs and upon occasions of graver import. On the more public occasions, there were guests of the imperial festivities, for whom they contained small mirth. On the 28th of June, the King of Prussia arrived at Tilsit, and was presented to his formidable rival. Buonaparte did not admit him to the same footing of familiarity with which he treated the Emperor Alexander; and intimated that it would only be to oblige the latter, that he should consent to relax his grasp on the Prussian territories. Those in the King's own possession were reduced to the petty territory of Memel, with the fortresses of Colberg and Graudenz; and it was soon plain that Prussia would obtain peace only by resigning nearly all the acquisitions she had made by fraud or violence since 1773. The Queen, who had in a great measure provoked the war, was anxious to diminish the calamities of the peace. As the quarrel had been personal to herself, she felt the mortification of her present situation the more deeply, yet submitted with the best grace she could to the ascendancy of the conqueror. 'Forgive us,' she said, 'this fatal war—the memory of the Great Frederic deceived us—we thought ourselves his equals, because we are his descendants—alas! we have not proved such!' Desirous also to pay his court, Napoleon on one occasion offered her a rose of great beauty. The Queen who at first seemed to decline the courtesy, at length accepted it, adding, 'At least, with Magdeburg.' Buonaparte answered, 'Your Majesty will be pleased to recollect that it is I who offer, and that your Majesty has only the task of accepting.' This reply, it must be confessed, was by no means well-turned. The disastrous consequences of the war with France, and the little influence she was able to exert in softening their severity, are said to have hastened her death.

The part of Poland acquired by Prussia in the partition of 1772 was disunited from that kingdom, and erected, as has been already stated, into a separate government or Grand-Duchy, with the King of Saxony at its head, and a military road across Silesia leading to it. By the new Constitution of the Grand-Duchy slavery was abolished, and the equality of rights established among all ranks of citizens. The Grand-Duke held the executive power; and a Senate of eighteen members with a Lower House of Deputies, amounting to a hundred, passed into laws or rejected at pleasure such propositions as he laid before them.

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But the Poles were disappointed in the hopes either of the restoration of some of their ancient privileges or of the establishment of their independence as a nation. Dantzic was recognised as a free city under the protection of Prussia and Saxony. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia ratified as a matter of course the changes which Napoleon had wrought in Europe and acknowledged the thrones he had set up, while out of deference to Alexander, he consented that the Dukes of Saxe-Coburg, Oldenburgh, and Mecklenburg-Swerin, German princes allied to the Czar, should retain possession of their territories, France keeping the seaports till a peace with England. By the treaty of Tilsit also, Russia offered her mediation between France and England, but it was understood that in case of a refusal by the latter, Russia would lend herself to enforce the Continental System, and shut her ports against British commerce. It is also believed that Buonaparte was at this time apprised of the war shortly after waged against Sweden, by which Alexander deprived that kingdom of her frontier province of Finland, and thereby obtained a covering territory of the utmost importance to his own capital. This violent seizure never appears to have troubled the amicable relations or to have caused the interchange of an angry word between the cabinets of St. James's and St. Petersburg. The boasted flame of justice and morality which rages with such vehemence in the breast of the English nation seems to light on wet or dry straw, as legitimacy or illegitimacy is concerned. The treaty of Tilsit ended all appearance of opposition to France upon the Continent. The British armament which had been sent to Pomerania too late in the campaign, was re-embarked; and the King of Sweden, evacuating Stralsund, retired to the dominions which he was not very long destined to call his own. After remaining together for a fortnight, during which they daily maintained the most friendly intercourse and held long and secret conferences together, the two Emperors parted with demonstrations of the highest personal esteem, and each heaping on the other all the honours which it was in his power to bestow. The peace between France and Russia was signed on the 7th—that between France and Prussia on the 9th of July. The Congress broke up on the same day; and Napoleon on his return to France passing through Saxony (where he received a visit from the King) arrived on the 29th of the same month at the palace of St. Cloud, where he was greeted with the homage of the Senate and of the other official and constituted bodies, couched in language less proper to be addressed to a man than to a God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was during Buonaparte's absence in the campaign of Poland that the son of Hortense Queen of Holland died at the age of six or seven years. Buonaparte was thus disappointed of an heir in that quarter, (on whom he had fixed great hopes) and



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## CHAPTER XXXIX

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BUONAPARTE in his behaviour with regard to Spain, it must be confessed, 'sounded the very base-string' of a Machiavellian policy. I know of nothing that can be pleaded in his excuse, but the natural contempt that he must have felt for the reigning family who were ready to tear one another to pieces for the possession of the sovereign power and were eager to resign it to him sooner than let one another have it, and a correspondent want of respect for a nation that seemed to be in love with its chains. From the exposure which the domestic quarrels between the father and son made of their imbecility and profligacy, he must have seen more clearly than ever what sort of stuff the old and legitimate monarchies of Europe were composed of, with some slight inclination to retort the feeling of cheapness and rancour with which they beheld him; at the same time that viewing their subjects through the diminished perspective which a copartnery with thrones lent him, as they looked up to these poor creatures as the Gods of their idolatry and their only refuge, was not the way to increase his deference for or his sympathy with the people. He saw a crown torn from the brow of the wearer by the immediate heir to it; and (imitating the treachery and usurpation) tried to seize and keep it in his own grasp with as little dignity as success; he saw a people worn out and debased under a long course of absolute government, and wished to renovate their institutions by infusing into them some of the principles of modern legislation and improvement; but they strove with the courage of heroes and the patience of martyrs for what was then called freedom and independence, but has since received an interpretation (written in the blood of its mistaken champions) into the more legitimate language of bigotry and despotism.

Farther, Buonaparte's attack upon Spain was not quite so gratuitous or unprovoked as it has been usually considered. She had given him cause to distrust the sincerity of her friendship (any farther than it was compulsory) and to guard against the ill effects of her half-smothered

this is supposed to have first given rise to the settled idea of a divorce from Josephine, which took place two years after. It was whispered among the courtiers on their return to Fontainebleau in the summer of 1807; and it is imagined to have had its share in some of the compliances of Napoleon with Alexander's designs (particularly in regard to Turkey) in the hope of obtaining the hand of one of the Russian Arch-duchesses in marriage.

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and ill-disguised enmity, by taking the reins of her government into his own hands when the temptation offered. The secret of her lurking ill-will transpired in a proclamation by the Prince of Peace at the time of the campaign of Jena. No notice was taken of it at the time, but it was doubtless remembered afterwards. This curious and enigmatical document was as follows :

### *' Proclamation of the Prince of Peace.*

' In circumstances less dangerous than those in which we are at present placed, good and loyal subjects have been forward to aid their sovereigns by voluntary contributions and succours proportioned to the wants of the state. It is then in the actual circumstances that it becomes necessary to show ourselves generous in behalf of our country. The kingdom of Andalusia, favoured by nature in the breeding of horses proper for light cavalry, the province of Estremadura which rendered in the same way services so important to King Philip the Fifth, can they with indifference behold the royal cavalry reduced and incomplete for want of horses ? No ! I do not believe it ; I trust, on the contrary, that after the example of the illustrious progenitors of the present generation, who aided the predecessor of the reigning sovereign with levies of men and horses, the descendants of these brave patriots will also hasten to furnish regiments or companies of men dexterous in the management of the horse, to be employed in the service and defence of the country, as long as the impending danger shall last. This once over, they will return full of glory to the bosom of their families, each disputing with his neighbour the honour of the victory : one shall attribute to the valour of his arm the safety of a family, another that of his chief, his kinsman, or his friend ; all, in fine, shall boast of the preservation of the state. Come, then, dear fellow-countrymen, come and range yourselves under the banners of the best of kings. Come ; I offer you in advance the assurance of my gratitude and welcome, if it please God to grant us a fortunate and durable peace, the only object of our vows. Come ; you will not yield to the suggestions either of fear or perfidy ; your hearts will be closed against every species of foreign seduction ; come, and if we are forced to cross our arms with those of our enemies, you will not at least incur the danger of being marked as suspected persons, nor will you strengthen a false imputation on your honour or loyalty by refusing to answer the appeal which I make to you.

' But if my voice is too feeble to awaken in you the sentiments of true glory, be your own prompters, become the fathers of the people, in whose name I address you : let what you owe to them make you

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remember what you owe to yourselves, to your honour, and to the religion which you profess.

(Signed)

‘THE PRINCE OF THE PEACE.

‘The Royal Palace of St. Laurence, Oct. 5, 1806.’

This proclamation was followed up by a circular, addressed by the Prince Generalissimo to the governors of provinces and to the corregidors of all the cities in the kingdom. Its tenor ran thus :

‘SIR,—The King commands me to say, that under the existing circumstances he expects of you an effort of zeal and activity in his service; and I myself in his name recommend to you the greatest vigilance in the drawing of the lots which must soon take place, wishing you to observe that we shall not be satisfied, neither his Majesty nor myself, with those ephemeral exertions which it is customary to make in ordinary cases. You may notify to the curates, in the name of the King, that they will be seconded by the bishops in urging the people to enlist under our standards, and exhorting the rich to make the necessary sacrifices towards defraying the expences of a war which we shall perhaps be compelled to support for the good of all; and as it will exact great efforts, the magistrates ought to be sensible that it is more particularly their duty to employ all likely means to excite the national enthusiasm in order to enter the lists that are about to be opened. His Majesty feels confident that you will neglect none of those that may call forth the greatest number of soldiers in your province or excite the generous ardour of the nobility (for their privileges as well as those of the crown are at stake) and that you will do all that lies in your power to attain both these important ends.

(Signed)

‘THE PRINCE OF THE PEACE.’

By a singular coincidence enough, this circular was dated from Madrid, the 14th of October, the same day as the battle of Jena. But for the turn which that battle took, and which put a sudden stop to all this raising of cavalry and marching of troops, we should have had Spain unsheathing the sword in the good old cause, England paying the price, and a world of blood shed to attain a durable peace, long before Buonaparte's unprincipled and unprovoked aggression on Spain had roused the dormant loyalty and fiery patriotism of that old cradle of romance and chivalry. Europe reeled and heaved with war like an earthquake under Buonaparte's feet, and he was accused of not standing still: no state made peace with him as long as it could help it, and broke it as soon as it could; those that were sorely against their will at peace and disarmed time after time, kept up a secret understanding and

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yearning sympathy with those that were at open and irreconcilable war. Spain was one of those that had longest gnawed the bridle, and that if he had failed at Jena would have been at his heels to unfurl the banners and once more awaken the war-cry of religion and social order in the passes of the Pyrenees; and it was in part to preclude such contingencies and put an end to similar proclamations and circulars in future, that he stepped in between the scandalous dissensions of the father and son to take the power of peace and war in that country into his own hands—in an evil hour and with fatal results, it must be owned, but not without grounds (both in the letter and the spirit of her counsels) to qualify what there was of barefaced violence or meanness in the attempt.

Portugal, which kept up a close correspondence with the English Government, refused to acquiesce in the Continental blockade, which was thus defeated of its object. Angry discussions arose, and the French ambassador was ordered to quit Lisbon. The Spanish ambassador did so the same day; and the French and Spanish troops marched in concert against Portugal. War was formally declared: the Prince Regent did not wait to have his capital invaded; he embarked for the Brazils, and left his kingdom to General Junot, who commanded the French army, and who without striking a blow in the quarrel obtained for himself the Dukedom of Abrantes. The intelligence of the flight of the royal family from Lisbon was hawked about the streets of London as ‘glorious news;’ and the disappointment of Buonaparte’s design of getting them into his power was hailed as a master-stroke of state-policy. So low were the hopes of the Allies fallen (how changed since!) and so little did they look for any better result than the indulgence of their own rage and obstinacy, that it is not impossible if George III. had been compelled to take refuge in Canada in prosecution of the same just quarrel, it would have been trumpeted forth as ‘a glorious event,’ if the Courier-office had been left standing, and purchasers could have been found for a third edition of that loyal paper! *Chacun à son tour*. It was about this period that the same writers, despairing of seeing any good likely to come of the war, began to maintain boldly and lustily that it was a great good in itself; that war was the natural state of mankind, ‘lively, audible, and full of vent,’ while peace was altogether ‘flat, stale, and unprofitable:’ that war was the sinews of commerce, the prop of the altar and the throne, that it filled the pockets of the rich and carried off the superfluous population from among the poor, that it was a wise and salutary dispensation of Providence, that the taxes were merely a circulating medium, that the debt served as ballast to the state; and that the war-system, bequeathed as a legacy to the country by the late ‘heaven-born’ Minister, was the



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only one under which it could maintain its existence, and independence, or dignity. All this pompous and hollow declamation was to be understood, however, only *under the rose*, as applying to war when carried on by ourselves or our Allies : but if it was made by Buonaparte upon us or others, then this gentle, harmless creature (the darling plaything of King, Parliament, and People—so wanton, so dazzling, so beautiful with its crimson spots and warm glossy fur) was instantly transformed into a hideous, hateful monster, with all its old terrors restored and caricatured if possible, and we were called upon to make one more combined and arduous effort in order (this was the usual butt-end of a speech from the throne) to put an end to the calamities of war by securing the blessings of a solid and durable peace. Such was the state of fearful self-delusion and notable inconsistency to which the public mind was at one time reduced by insidious counsels and by venal pens. The tone was changed with circumstances soon after—the objects remained and remain the same, as every day makes more apparent.

Buonaparte was at Fontainebleau in October 1807, when a M. Izquierdo, counsellor to the King of Spain and a creature of Don Manuel Godoi, arrived there to conclude a treaty between the Emperor and his Catholic Majesty relating to the partition of the kingdom of Portugal, which General Junot had just conquered. The first article gave to the King of Etruria in exchange for Tuscany (which Napoleon took to himself and added to the kingdom of Italy) the Portuguese territory lying between the Minho and the Douro ; and the second article erected the kingdom of Algarves, including the province of the Alentejo, into a principality in favour of Manuel Godoi, Prince of the Peace. This transferring of sovereignties implies the transferring of subjects ; and surely, either one or the other must be wrong, if it can possibly be avoided. Nearly at the same epoch and date as the treaty of Fontainebleau (October 27th) Charles IV. published a royal edict against the Prince of the Asturias (since Ferdinand VII.) and had him arrested and kept close prisoner in his apartments in the Escorial, as being at the head of a conspiracy to deprive his father of his throne and life. On his begging pardon, however, and disclaiming all intention of violence beyond that of removing the favourite Godoi, he was forgiven and restored to liberty. The first act of his inglorious career was to betray his late advisers and accomplices. Just before the discovery of the plot and by way of insinuating himself into favour, he had written by stealth to Napoleon to request one of his nieces in marriage. There is no proof either for or against the ulterior designs of the conspiracy, farther than his own disclaimer which is absolutely worthless ; but as he actually carried his usurpation into effect in the spring following, there

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can be little doubt that it was meditated in the first instance. Nor is there any difficulty in crediting both parts of his father's accusation against his rebellious son. Unnatural sentiments are the familiar growth of unnatural situations. His education had been neglected; and he had had no adviser but the canon Excoiquitz, armed with fanatic fury and plenary indulgences. His understanding seems never to have reached beyond that low cunning, which answers to the instinct of self-preservation in animals. He was, besides, hated by both his parents, to please their mutual favourite Godoi; for it is not the least striking part of this characteristic episode of royalty that both the King and Queen appeared to have lavished all their tenderness and anxiety on a person who was neither entitled to admiration nor esteem, to the exclusion of every common obligation and even the forgetfulness of themselves, thus showing that the mind in all cases requires an object to fix its entire affection upon, and that those who are raised to the most exalted situations, and whose pride and caprice are their ruling passion, naturally chuse an object that owes all to themselves, and whereas the preference is without a motive, so it may know no bounds of reason, decency, or common sense. Feeling no extraordinary virtues or talents in themselves to excite the homage and obedience of their subjects, they bestow their goodwill equally at random, and think it hard if they cannot be as absurd as the rest of mankind or even distinguish themselves in the unaccountableness of their attachments. Princes generally chuse their favourites among the meanest or the most mischievous of the species—those who oppose the least resistance to their will or who are the most dangerous instruments in executing it. In the present instance, however, Godoi seems to have been the master rather than the obsequious tool, and to have taken the affairs of government completely off the indolent and incapable shoulders of Charles IV.

The Emperor did not send any answer to Ferdinand's letter respecting the marriage, but set off for Italy, where he visited Venice, of which he had become the sovereign by the treaty of Presburgh; carried into effect the article in the treaty of Fontainebleau which added Tuscany to his dominions; and in case of his death without issue, declared Eugene Beauharnais his heir and successor to the crown of Italy. In the mean time, the French troops on their march to Portugal occupied the fortresses of St. Sebastian, Pampeluna, Barcelona, and Figueres on the frontiers of Spain, and advanced as far as Vittoria. Godoi by his connivance opened all these places to them, regardless of the defenceless state of the country, and intent only on screening himself from the public hatred and on securing possession of his principality of Algarves. Murat approached Madrid by the route of Sommo-Sierra, Buitrago,

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and St. Augustin : but he stopped at the latter place. The greatest alarm and agitation prevailed as to the result of all these measures, and the nation fixed its eyes with anxiety and expectation on the Prince of the Asturias. On the 18th of March, 1808, an order came from the Prince of Peace to the council of Castile to send the Walloon guards, the light regiments of carbineers and the whole of the garrison of Madrid to the palace of Aranjuez, where the royal family then were. The pretext for this removal was to prevent any quarrels between the garrison and the French troops on their arrival ; but its real object seemed to be to deliver the capital into the hands of the French. The Council sent a remonstrance, and deliberated all day without coming to a conclusion. In the night, the troops were marched off ; while a large part of the population of Madrid accompanied them. On the way they made no secret of their intentions, vowing vengeance on the obnoxious favourite. Their approach to Aranjuez alarmed the poor old king, who agreed to dismiss Godoi from all his functions, but this concession was not sufficient. Ferdinand who had hitherto appeared to take no notice of what was passing, now came forward, put himself at the head of his party, and Charles was compelled to abdicate on the 19th in favour of his son, in the midst of bayonets and the threatening cries of the populace. The only condition that he demanded was the life of his minister. Godoi was discovered concealed in a hay-loft belonging to the palace of Villa-Viciosa, was snatched from the mob who were maltreating him by Ferdinand, and conveyed under an escort to prison, and the next day all his goods were declared to be confiscated, and an order issued for his trial. The Prince then gave notice that he should proceed forthwith to Madrid to be proclaimed King. He arrived here on the 24th of March : the Grand-Duke of Berg had entered with his troops the preceding day ; but this occasioned no disturbance for the present, the people being entirely taken up and intoxicated with their recent triumph. Ferdinand appointed the Duke de l'Infanatado colonel of the Guards, and recalled his former partisans who had been exiled ; at the same time that the old King, being freed from immediate danger, retracted his abdication as forced from him, and applied to Napoleon for his interposition to dispose of his crown as he pleased, and to extend his protection to the Prince of Peace. The Queen wrote to the Grand-Duke of Berg to the same effect, who promised his good offices, and who had ordered detachments on Segovia and Toledo, thus drawing a circle of troops round the capital. Buonaparte, when he heard it, did not approve of this step. Murat had sent him word what he had done, with an account of the events of Aranjuez, and received from him the following admirable letter in answer, which would almost show that he was precipitated into his

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subsequent measures by the strength of sudden temptation or by the baseness and inefficiency of those he had to deal with.

‘ March 29th, 1808.

‘ MONSIEUR THE GRAND-DUKE OF BERG—I am afraid lest you should deceive me with respect to the situation of Spain, and lest you should also deceive yourself. Events have been singularly complicated by the transaction of the 20th of March. I find myself very much perplexed.

‘ Do not believe that you are about to attack a disarmed people, or that you can by merely showing your troops subjugate Spain. The revolution of the 20th of March proves that the Spaniards still possess energy. You have to do with a new people. It has all the courage and will display all the enthusiasm shown by men, who are not worn out by political passions.

‘ The aristocracy and the clergy are the masters of Spain. If they are alarmed for their privileges and existence, they will bring into the field against us levies in mass, which might eternise the war. I am not without partisans: if I present myself as a conqueror, I shall have them no longer.

‘ The Prince of the Peace is detested, because he is accused of having betrayed Spain to France. This is the grievance which has assisted Ferdinand’s usurpation. The popular is the weakest party.

‘ The Prince of the Asturias does not possess a single quality requisite for the head of a nation. That will not prevent his being ranked as a hero, in order that he may be opposed to us. I will have no violence employed against the personages of this family. It can never answer any purpose to make one’s-self odious and inflame animosity. Spain has a hundred thousand men under arms, more than are necessary to carry on an internal war with advantage. Scattered over different parts of the country, they may serve as rallying points for a total insurrection of the monarchy.

‘ I lay before you all the obstacles which must inevitably arise. There are others of which you must be aware. England will not let the opportunity escape her of multiplying our embarrassments. She daily sends advice to the forces which she maintains on the coast of Portugal and in the Mediterranean, and enlists into her service numbers of Sicilians and Portuguese.

‘ The Royal Family not having left Spain to establish itself in the Indies, the state of the country can only be changed by a Revolution. It is perhaps, of all others in Europe, that which is the least prepared for one. Those who perceive the monstrous vices of the government and the anarchy which has taken place of the lawful authority, are the



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fewest in number. The greater number profit by those vices and that anarchy.

‘I can, consistently with the interests of my Empire, do a great deal of good to Spain. What are the best means to be adopted?’

‘Shall I go to Madrid? Shall I take upon myself the office of Grand Protector in pronouncing between the father and the son? It seems to me a matter of difficulty to support Charles IV. on the throne. His government and his favourite are so very unpopular that they could not stand their ground for three months.

‘Ferdinand is the enemy of France: it is for this he has been made King. To place him on the throne would be to serve the factions which for twenty years have longed for the destruction of France. A family-alliance would be but a feeble tie: the Queen Elizabeth and other French princesses have perished miserably, whenever they could be immolated with impunity to the atrocious spirit of vengeance. My opinion is that nothing should be hurried forward, and that we should take counsel of events as they occur. It will be necessary to strengthen the bodies of troops which are to be stationed on the frontiers of Portugal, and wait.

‘I do not approve of the step which your Imperial Highness has taken in so precipitately making yourself master of Madrid. The army ought to have been kept ten leagues from the capital. You had no assurance that the people and the magistracy were about to recognize Ferdinand without a struggle. The Prince of the Peace must of course have partisans among those employed in the public service: there is also an habitual attachment to the old King, which might lead to certain consequences. Your entrance into Madrid, by alarming the Spaniards, has powerfully assisted Ferdinand. I have ordered Savary to wait on the old King and see what passes. He will concert measures with your Imperial Highness. I shall hereafter decide on what is finally necessary to be done. In the meantime, the following is the line of conduct I judge fit to prescribe to you.

‘You will not pledge me to an interview in Spain with Ferdinand, unless you consider the state of things to be such that I ought to acknowledge him as King of Spain. You will behave with attention and respect to the King, the Queen, and Prince Godoi. You will exact for them and yourself pay them the same honours as formerly. You will manage so that the Spaniards shall have no suspicion which part I mean to take: you will find the less difficulty in this, as I do not know myself.

‘You will make the nobility and clergy understand that if the interference of France be requisite in the affairs of Spain, their privileges and immunities will be respected. You will assure them that the

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Emperor wishes for the improvement of the political institutions of Spain, in order to put her on a footing with the advanced state of civilization in Europe, and to free her from the yoke of favourites. You will tell the magistrates and the inhabitants of towns and the well-informed classes, that Spain stands in need of having the machine of her government re-organised, and that she requires a system of laws to protect the people against the tyranny and encroachments of feudality, with institutions that may revive industry, agriculture, and the arts. You will describe to them the state of tranquillity and plenty enjoyed by France, notwithstanding the wars in which she has been constantly engaged, and the splendour of religion, which owes its establishment to the Concordat which I have signed with the Pope. You will explain to them the advantages they may derive from political regeneration; order and peace at home, respect and influence abroad. Such should be the spirit of your conversation and your writings. Do not hazard any thing hastily. I can wait at Bayonne; I can cross the Pyrenees, and strengthening myself towards Portugal, I can go and carry on the war in that quarter.

‘I shall take care of your particular interests; do not think of them yourself. Portugal will be at my disposal. Let no personal object engage you or influence your conduct: that would be injurious to me and would be still more hurtful to yourself.

‘You are too hasty in your instructions of the 14th; the movement you order General Dupont to make is too sudden, on account of the event of the 19th of March. They must be altered; you will make new arrangements: you will receive instructions from my Minister for Foreign Affairs.

‘I enjoin the strictest maintenance of discipline: the slightest faults must not go unpunished. The inhabitants must be treated with the greatest attention. Above all, churches and convents must be respected.

‘The army must avoid all misunderstanding with the bodies and detachments of the Spanish army; a single flash in the pan must not be permitted on either side.

‘Let Solano march beyond Badajoz; but watch his movements. Do you yourself trace out the routes of my army, that it may always be kept at a distance of several leagues from the Spanish corps. If war is once kindled, all would be lost.

‘The fate of Spain can alone be decided by political views and by negotiation. I charge you to avoid all explanation with Solano, as well as with the other Spanish generals and governors. You will send me two expresses daily. In case of events of superior interest, you will dispatch officers of ordonnance. You will immediately send back

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the Chamberlain de Tournon, the bearer of this dispatch, and give him a detailed report.

(Signed)

‘NAPOLEON.’

In this letter (and it no doubt expressed his genuine and deliberate sentiments) Buonaparte seems feelingly alive to the difficulties of his situation, to the nature of the struggle in which he might be involved, and the dormant character of the people; to be aware of the disadvantages under which Spain laboured, and the excessive caution and delicacy that must be employed in removing them. It would be too much to suppose that his views and purposes were changed by his nearer acquaintance with the Spanish Princes, and that as he himself says, ‘when he found what poor creatures they were, he felt compassion for a great nation, over whom they were placed;’ for his joy at the approach of Ferdinand and his astonishment at his trusting himself in his hands, show too clearly the use he intended or thought it possible to make of the circumstance. But it is probable that the previous design he had formed was fixed and rendered palatable to himself by being let into the infirmities of this royal group, the besotted King, the changeling son, the mother proclaiming herself a strumpet to prove her son a bastard<sup>1</sup>; and that these repeated scenes of indecency and folly took away not only all compassion for the performers in them, but piqued the pride which he felt in his conscious superiority over these legitimate sovereigns to set aside their preposterous pretensions and treat them as their inherent qualities deserved. He beheld an immense engine of power within his reach, and conceived a strong desire to snatch it from the baby-hands that knew not how to wield it. In this there was, it is true, a sort of natural justice, which gave an indirect warrant to the dictates of his ambition and self-will. Under his guidance he foresaw a brilliant prosperity and growing strength in reserve for Spain, and he did not think it right that a couple of royal marmozets should stand in the way of the prospect. He wanted to new-colour the map of Europe, and for this purpose the old boundaries must be effaced. He felt in himself the ability to infuse new life and vigour into ‘the vast dominions of Charles V. on which the sun never sets,’ and to raise up the Spanish monarchy from its tomb; and made light (to attain so important an object) of *kidnapping* its reigning princes and leading a whole nation to its good, blindfolded and against its will.

Two things suggest themselves here from Napoleon’s failure on this occasion. The first is the necessity of justice on the liberal side of the question. Others may do and have done, since the world began, very

<sup>1</sup> This *trait* rests on the authority of Don Pedro Cavallos; Buonaparte denies it.

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well without it : but *we* cannot. We have not custom, prejudice, fashion, and a thousand things to eke out our imperfections : we have nothing but our good cause and our good name to carry us through, and we cannot afford to have them fairly called in question. We appeal to justice ; and by that we must abide. Our adversaries pay us the compliment to criticise us severely, and with reason, for we challenge the comparison. They who set up no other pretension than the right of the strongest or of prescription, can never be in the wrong while they are uppermost, or while the person, if not the act, is legitimate. On the other hand, our smallest fault ‘ shows ugly ’ by the side of the abstract standard of public good which we have fondly erected ; and our most casual departure from this shocks public opinion and alienates numbers. This is seen remarkably in the present instance. Buonaparte, by seizing on a crown that did not belong to him, raised an universal hubbub of indignation against him from one end of Europe to the other, which has not subsided to this hour. The reason is, he had no traditional right or privilege to plead, and stood or fell by his own act or deed. That very crown that Buonaparte wrested from Ferdinand, the latter had torn with insolence and perfidy from his father’s brow, though no more notice was taken of this circumstance than if it had descended to him in the course of nature—he has since been the parricide of liberty and of his country—no one is surprised or shocked at it, it produces no effect, because he does not profess to be accountable to any law but his own will, and is absolved by his birth from every tie of humanity and justice. That which by a received *formula* sets itself above the law is also raised above opinion.

Again, if any one could pretend to govern by dint of mere ability and skill, it was Buonaparte : no one ever devised or carried into effect greater or more beneficial designs for his own or other countries : yet all his schemes at last recoiled upon himself, from his not allowing the popular voice and wish to act as an habitual counterpoise and corrective to the deductions of reason or the glosses of ambition. No one individual is as wise as the whole put together ; or if he were ten times wiser, his wisdom is not adapted to their ignorance. The more lofty and extensive his views, the less approbation and the more obstacles they will meet with ; and no man can stamp the seal of his understanding on the public weal, unless it is first melted by the warmth of attachment and sympathy. It is not enough that things are good in themselves : they require time and custom to make them desirable ; and these will make the worst endurable. If the people are enlightened and judges of the good intended for them, then they have a right to be consulted : if they are ignorant and incompetent, then they will spit our improvements back in our face. Truth indeed will prevail in the end with fair



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play, but not by a *fiat* of the will; and all that force can do, is to neutralise the force opposed to its diffusion. Buonaparte viewed the matter in too literal and mechanical a light; and thought that nations were to be drilled like armies. His system savoured too much of his school-studies. Had he been a metaphysician instead of a mathematician, he would not have fallen into this error; but then he would not have gained battles nor raised himself to the height he did. There is nothing that people resent more than having benefits thrust upon them: it is adding insult, as they think, to injury. Our attack on Copenhagen the year before was bad enough, and was loudly exclaimed against: but it was nothing (in the vulgar estimation) to this affair of Spain. We went as open and declared enemies, determined to do the Danes all the mischief we could, for our own sakes. We took their ships from them; we did not pretend to give them any thing in exchange. This was honest and *above-board*. Mankind above all things hate to be made the dupes of doubtful professions of wisdom and benevolence.

There is another letter of Buonaparte's of nearly the same date with the one above quoted, addressed to Ferdinand, which, if meant to cajole the Prince, is bad enough: if serious, is still worse. There are expressions in it about Kings and the People, truly worthy of his correspondent; and which could never be forgiven in him, but that he afterwards met with enough to cure him of this delusion, and that his attempts to pass beyond his proper sphere and character were as unavailing as those of the child to leap over its own shadow. The factitious elevation from which he here pretends to look down upon the people will account for the little resistance he might be supposed to expect from them and the thoughtless provocation he gave them much better than his grave and manly advice to Murat, so as to produce a direct contradiction in terms. His disposition to screen Godoi and to check every spontaneous impulse of popular feeling are also very bad symptoms. But if the intoxication of supreme power so soon turns the head of the individual (as it were in spite of himself) what must it do in the course of generations and when the poison is infused into the very blood? But to proceed.—Ferdinand, uneasy at not being recognised as King by Murat, and anxious to pay his court to Buonaparte, set out for Bayonne, whither the latter had come on his way to Madrid.<sup>1</sup> This resolution was taken without the advice of the Council, and by no means pleased the people. He left the capital on the 10th of April, having appointed a regency with the infant Don Antonio at its head, and reached Vittoria on the 16th. His progress

<sup>1</sup> He was induced to proceed by an expression in Buonaparte's letter (which he received on the way) that 'he felt a desire to converse with him on certain points.'

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was signalised the whole way with every demonstration of attachment and triumph. Some of the inhabitants in the excess of their zeal strewed their garments on the road where the wheels of the royal carriage were to pass, that they might preserve the marks of the joyful event ever after. Sovereigns so beloved can only improve on this homage and testimony of devotedness by riding over the necks of their subjects! On the day that Ferdinand arrived at Vittoria, the commission appointed to try Godoi received an order from the Regency to stop proceedings against him; and he was soon afterwards released and conducted to the frontier by Buonaparte's desire—whether it was that the Emperor wished to oblige King Charles by saving the life of his favourite, or that he thought he might learn important state-secrets from a man who had ruled Spain by a nod for twenty years; or that he resolved to hold in his own hands all the twisted threads of policy; or to check and mortify the impatience of the people for vengeance; or finally, to show favour to an old *protégé* and tolerably faithful ally. Ferdinand had some difficulty to escape from the loyalty of the citizens of Vittoria, who were disposed to detain him by force among them, till he assured them of the perfect good understanding between himself and the French Emperor. On the 18th he received Napoleon's letter; and still, in spite of the remonstrances of his most judicious friends, determined to proceed. He left Vittoria on the 19th, and from Irun sent forward an aide-de-camp of the Emperor's with a letter to say that he should be at Bayonne the next day, *if agreeable to his Majesty*. Buonaparte, when he received the news from his aide-de-camp, could hardly believe it. 'How?' he exclaimed—'Is he coming? No! it is not possible!' These words have been quoted to show that Buonaparte had no malice prepense, no ill intentions in the business. They appear to me to show the contrary. What! was France become a robber's cave, that it was dangerous for a foreign Prince to trust himself in it? Every man who comes into your house puts himself in your power; but that alone does not give you the right to seize upon his purse or person. It is true, it does not appear that Buonaparte either decoyed or invited the Spanish princes into his territory: he merely *let them come upon* an understanding of good faith, and all that he had to do was to *let them go back again*. Would that he had! It would have had a much less injurious effect if he had gained possession of their persons by main force, than under a mask of hospitality and friendship.

The Prince of the Asturias arrived at Bayonne on the 20th. The Emperor had sent no one to the frontiers to receive him; but Berthier, Duroc, and the Count d'Angosse went to meet him a little way out of the town. An hour after, Napoleon went to pay him a visit, which

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lasted only a short time ; and the Grand-Marshal was then sent to invite the Prince to dinner, together with Don Carlos, the Duke de l'Infantado, M. de Cevallos, the Abbé Excoquitiz, and others. Napoleon descended to the bottom of the steps, where the carriage of the Prince drew up ; which was the only time he paid him any of the marks of attention usual towards crowned heads. At dinner he avoided with great care calling him either by the title of your Majesty or your Highness. He however made up for this omission by great courtesy to him and his suite ; all of whom went away apparently well pleased with their reception. An hour after Ferdinand had returned home, he is said to have received a message to announce that he would be treated only as a Prince of the Asturias, till the King should arrive at Bayonne, when the dispute might be cleared up between them.

The negociations began the day after the arrival of Ferdinand, but made little progress. On the 27th, Josephine arrived at the Château de Marrac, and preparations were made for the reception of the old court of Spain. The Spanish Princes were closely watched, and all their letters seized and opened at the frontier. Even the market-women were roughly handled by the Custom-house officers, as they had often dispatches found on them for Spanish emissaries who were waiting on the other side of the Bidassoa. Early on the morning of the 29th the Emperor had his Prefect of the Palace (who was acquainted with Spanish) called up, and made him translate the following letter word for word from the original.

‘ *To Don Antonio.*

‘ Bayonne, April 28th, 1808.

‘ DEAR FRIEND,—I have received thy letter of the 24th, and have read the copies of two others which it encloses, the one from Murat and thy answer : I am satisfied with it ; I have never doubted thy discretion nor thy friendship for me. I know not how to thank you for it.

‘ The Empress arrived here yesterday in the evening at seven o’clock : there were only some little children who cried *Long live the Empress !* Besides, even these cries were very feeble ; she passed without stopping, and went immediately to Marrac, where I shall go to visit her to-day.

‘ Cevallos yesterday had a warm dispute with the Emperor, who called him traitor, because having been minister under my father, he had attached himself to me, and that this was the cause of the contempt he had for him. I don’t know how Cevallos contained himself, for he is easily irritated, particularly in hearing such reproaches. I had not till to-day so well known Cevallos : I see that he is a man of probity,

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who regulates his sentiments according to the true interests of his country, and that he is of a firm and vigorous character; such as we need in circumstances like the present.

‘I apprise thee that Maria-Louisa (Queen of Etruria) has written to the Emperor, that she was witness of the abdication of my father, and that she can state that it was far from voluntary.

‘Govern well, and take care lest these cursed French should play thee false. Receive the assurances of my most tender attachment.

‘FERDINAND.’

The Emperor while reading this letter appeared hurt at what concerned the Empress, but still more indignant at the expression ‘*these cursed French*.’ ‘Are you quite sure that that is the exact word?’ he said to his interpreter; who showed him the word in Spanish—*Maldittos*. ‘That is it, sure enough,’ said Napoleon, ‘this word is almost Italian.’ This letter cost both parties dear; and is an argument to point out the danger of such clandestine modes of getting at information: for if we might else remain in the dark as to the real intentions of our adversaries, we are thus led to draw false and overstrained conclusions.<sup>1</sup> The seeming duplicity provokes us, and does not leave us at leisure to make allowance for the difference between a casual expression of spleen or impatience, and a deliberate avowal that the parties would act upon. Ferdinand could hardly be expected to like the French as well as the Spaniards, or to forget that Josephine was not born a princess: yet it does not follow that he would have gone to war with the one or would not have been glad to marry a niece of the other. Napoleon, however, took him at his word, without his knowing it: the real sentiments and hatred of Ferdinand were, as he thought, thus revealed to him, and he proceeded to treat him accordingly. That same evening the official Gazette of Bayonne published the letter of Charles IV. to Napoleon with the protest against his abdication, which was a thunder-stroke to the Prince and his party, and the next day the old King and Queen of Spain reached Bayonne.

The Emperor had sent Duke Charles of Placentia and the Prince of Neufchâtel to Irun and the borders of the Bidassoa to compliment their Catholic Majesties, who on their entrance into France found a numerous detachment of troops ready to escort them. They were received at Bayonne with the greatest honours: the garrison was under arms, the vessels in the harbour had their colours flying, the cannon of the

<sup>1</sup> Buonaparte remarks that when the Count de Narbonne was sent to Vienna in 1813, by his superior sagacity in worming out the secrets of the Austrian Cabinet, he compelled Austria prematurely to declare herself, which otherwise she might not have done at all. So doubtful are the advantages of superior *finesse* and cunning!



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citadel and of the port were fired, and the whole population poured out to welcome them with repeated acclamations as friendly and powerful sovereigns. The Grand-Marshal Duroc received them at the government-palace and presented to them General Count Reille, Count du Manoir, and Count Audenarde, three of the most accomplished of Buonaparte's couriers, who were appointed to attend them. The grandees of Spain who were at Bayonne followed the Prince of the Asturias, who went to meet his royal parents on the outside of the city. On their return, the ceremony of kissing hands took place, and the king then dismissed the assembly of nobles. Ferdinand considerably at a loss offered to follow the King, when the latter extended his arms to prevent him, asking in a tone of bitterness, 'If he had not already sufficiently outraged his father's grey hairs?' and the Prince, overwhelmed by the reproach, withdrew in the utmost confusion. Napoleon went to visit the old King and Queen soon after, and stayed a long time with them; but did not invite them to dinner till the next day, leaving them the whole day to enjoy the satisfaction of being restored to their beloved Godoi.

The escort which accompanied their Majesties was not numerous, but loaded with baggage and valuables. The carriages of the King, made after the model of those of the time of Louis XIV. which had conveyed Philip V. into Spain, presented a singular contrast to the elegance and lightness of the French equipages. It will scarcely be believed that the etiquette of the court condemned four huge lackeys, in grand liveries, to remain standing close together behind the King's carriage the whole way from Madrid to Bayonne, exposed to all weathers and to the clouds of dust on the high roads! These good folks took a journey just as if they were going to pay a visit in the neighbourhood. The next morning, when the Emperor's carriage came to fetch the King and Queen, who had expressed a desire to pay the first visit to the Empress Josephine, the King, who had a slight attack of the gout, and besides was encumbered with his sword, could hardly get into it, and was afraid of trusting his weight to the steps. He laughed at his own embarrassment. These high personages were received by Josephine with all the grace and courtesy which were inseparable from her. After the first compliments were over, something was said about the toilette, and the Queen gladly accepted the offer of Josephine to send Duplan to give her women a lesson in the modern art of head-dressing. The Queen looked altered indeed by submitting to the fashion, but not for the better. They brought the Prince of Peace with them to dinner, though he had not been invited. In going to the dining-room, Napoleon gave his hand to the Queen; and walking faster than usual, he perceived it and checked himself,

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saying, '*Your Majesty perhaps finds that I proceed rather fast?*' 'Sire,' replied the Queen smiling, 'it is your usual habit.' Buonaparte answered awkwardly enough, as if he had stumbled over something, that 'from his gallantry to the ladies he made it a point to conform in all things to their tastes.' On sitting down to table, King Charles perceived that his favourite was not there: 'But Manuel,—but Godoi?' he said: and the Emperor smiling made a sign that he should be admitted. The conversation turned on the etiquette and customs of the two courts; and Charles IV. spoke of his passion for hunting, to which he attributed in a great measure his gout and rheumatisms. 'Every day,' said he, 'whatever the weather might be, winter and summer, I set off after breakfast and after having heard mass: I hunted till one o'clock, and returned to it again immediately after dinner till the close of day. In the evening Manuel took the pains to let me know if affairs went well or ill; and I retired to bed to begin the same round on the morrow, at least unless some important ceremony required me at home.' Ever since his accession to the crown, the King had led no other life.

In the midst of these proceedings, advices came from Murat and Don Antonio that troubles had broken out at Toledo and Burgos. Murat in a letter to the President of the Council took upon himself (in direct opposition to Buonaparte's instructions) to quell these tumults, if the Regent could not; and sent pressing and almost menacing applications to him to appoint an extraordinary junta of the principal nobles to repair to Bayonne to determine on the present state of Spanish affairs. In this as on so many other occasions, the zeal of the Grand-Duke outran his discretion. He was a mere swaggering upstart; and Napoleon ought never to have trusted him with the smallest responsibility beyond that of heading a charge of cavalry. But it was his foible to suppose that all those connected with him were capable of great things as well as himself, or that he could supply their deficiencies out of his own superabundance. In the night of the 29th of April, a secret council was held at Bayonne, in which the Duke de l'Infantado gave and signed his opinion that Ferdinand had not the right either for himself or his heirs to exchange the crown of Spain for that of Etruria, according to a proposition that had been made the preceding day. At Madrid, the fermentation began to be extreme. The people, mad at seeing the Prince whom they fondly idolised and the favourite who had been given up to their vengeance snatched from them, grew impatient to know the fate of each; nothing transpired through the regular channels, as the couriers and dispatches were stopped at the frontier, so that the most exaggerated and absurd reports prevailed. In this state of irritation and painful suspense, a French

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soldier was killed by a Spanish peasant in the streets of Madrid on the 1st of May ; preparations were making for the departure of the Queen of Etruria and of the Infant Don Antonio ; an aide-de-camp of the Grand Duke narrowly escaped being assassinated ; another French officer was severely wounded in attempting to disperse a mob. Such was the prelude to an insurrection which had been so well foreseen that the Spanish nobles at Bayonne wrote to their wives to quit Madrid before the approaching catastrophe. The French writers mention this to prove that they were not the assailants in this business, and so far they are right : but it was the natural consequence of treating a whole nation as having no will of their own, because it was an absurd one, and of assuming the airs of a second Providence over them, without the privilege of invisibility.

### CHAPTER XL

#### THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED

ON the 2d of May early in the morning, the assemblages in the streets of Madrid became more numerous and threatening. A great number of peasants had been let into the city the day before. The Grand-Duke made the drums beat to arms, and stationed a strong detachment of the guard, with two pieces of artillery, in front of the palace. These preparations for defence did not intimidate the people, who continued to provoke and insult the French troops : the outrages were carried to such a pitch, that orders were given to draw up the men in form of battle, and to reply by a fire from the first two ranks. The grape-shot had the effect of dispersing the mob. The same thing took place at the several posts occupied by the French. The populace were obliged to take shelter in the houses, whence they contrived to fire from the windows and to kill a great number of the soldiery. The conflict in the streets and in the houses was thus kept up with sanguinary obstinacy the whole day. Towards evening, the Government, protected by the French and Spanish troops (the latter of whom endeavoured to appease the tumult) published a proclamation which for some hours suspended hostilities. But the information which the rioters obtained of the approach of fresh troops, instead of quieting, only made them more furious than ever. The night was dreadful : the French were obliged to force open the doors of houses, whence musquet-shots were discharged at them : the rage was equal

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on either side. In the street of St. Victor, the mob <sup>1</sup> got possession of a loaded cannon, pointed it against a column of French cavalry, and brought down a great number of them. The cannon was re-taken, because the peasants who had seized upon it had no ammunition to charge it again : they were taken prisoners and slaughtered without mercy. The following day (the 3d) was tranquil and silent as the tomb : the fermentation had subsided ; the insurgents had used all their ammunition, had suffered great loss ; and it was by cart-loads that the wounded were conveyed to the hospitals.

The Grand-Duke of Berg (who after the departure of Don Antonio was chosen president of the council) published a proclamation and a letter to General Dupont in which he talked big of the *canaille* of Madrid, and distributed pardons with a munificent hand. Notwithstanding which, a military commission was appointed to try the insurgents, and some hundreds of peasants were shot. This piece of unnecessary barbarity and the carrying off of Don Manuel Godoi were the two things which the Spaniards never forgave. The Emperor having read the dispatches which brought him an account of the events of the 2nd of May went in search of the King, and his countenance, over which he had ordinarily great command, betrayed the strongest emotion. Both the King and Queen were in the room ; and twice during the interview Charles left the apartment to go and give Godoi an account of what was passing. Such was the sort of infatuation, from which all this train of calamity arose ! It was agreed to send for the Prince. It has been pretended that when Ferdinand entered the room, the three sovereigns remained seated ; and that during the whole of this singular interview the Prince was kept standing. If so, it must have been with the marked intention to humble him and render him tractable to good advice, as it was contrary to Napoleon's habit to remain seated long together ; and when any thing interested him, he usually walked up and down the room, while venting his opinions or feelings. King Charles presenting the report to his son with a menacing air, said, ' Read, read ; ' and when the Prince had done so, ' Behold, ' said the King, ' the horrible results of the infamous counsels that have been given you by perfidious friends, and to which you have yielded with a culpable eagerness, thus forgetting the respect which was due to me, your father and your king ; you have excited the revolt : but though it is easy to kindle a popular conflagration, it requires other hands than yours to extinguish

<sup>1</sup> Do not the *mob* always come into play, whenever there is a general and *thorough* feeling of resistance excited in the community ? Their stirring is the last decisive indication, unless merely when they are set on by their superiors. Why then, when they appear on the popular side, should they cast a slur upon it ?



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it.' The King added other opprobrious epithets to these reproaches, and declared that 'if he did not instantly sign the abdication of the crown he had usurped, he and all his adherents should be seized as traitors and punished as such.' Ferdinand, without offering either expostulation or resistance, merely replied that 'he had never offended his father intentionally; and that if his happiness or that of the nation required it, he was ready to tender his resignation,' showing the meekness of the lamb when he felt himself in the power of others, no less than the cruelty of the tiger when he had got them in his. 'Go and do so, then,' said his father; and the next day (the 6th of May) after having consulted with his party, he signed his abdication of the crown. Charles IV. was no sooner in formal possession of this document than he hastened to avail himself of it by concluding a treaty with Napoleon, by which he transferred to him all his rights to the throne of Spain, stipulating only the independence and integrity of the kingdom and the maintenance of the Catholic Religion *not only as dominant, but as the only one tolerated*. He addressed a proclamation to the Councils of Castile and of the Inquisition, informing them of the circumstance, and hoping for their approbation; and Ferdinand himself, with the other princes of the blood, at the same time testified their acquiescence in the measure, which brought the affairs of Spain within a small compass. The King and Queen of Spain with Godoi set off a few days after for Fontainebleau; and Ferdinand with Don Carlos and his uncle was escorted without parade or seeming repugnance to Valençay, where he was received on his arrival by the Prince of Benevento, the proprietor of the mansion, and where he remained for some years, amusing himself with embroidering petticoats for the Virgin and from time to time writing letters to Buonaparte, demanding one of his nieces in marriage.—While Napoleon was making this extraordinary acquisition to his dominions, Alexander had robbed Sweden of Finland: but that country submitted with a good grace to the gentle violence of a legitimate monarch, making none of those outcries or convulsive struggles that Spain did, and soon after making common cause with the despoiler and ravisher, to put a stop to the encroachments and ambition of France. The *bue-and-cry* of liberty is never raised under certain auspices, but to cover the designs of slavery.

It may seem strange that Charles IV. should be so easily prevailed upon to make over not only his own right and title to the throne, but those of his son and of his heirs and successors to all posterity. But there is a degree of incapacity so low that it even unfits men for being kings or aspiring to be so. It should be recollected that it is only a fine distinction that necessarily separates the tiara from the slabbering-

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bib; and that many of those who in modern times have sat upon thrones might but for this elevation have been doomed to wander as objects of pity and scorn about some village in their own dominions. This weakness of understanding when joined with good-nature has a tendency to make the possessors indifferent to power, which is only an encumbrance to them, as they see no use they can make of it; the same want of understanding combined with malice and pride makes them proportionably tenacious of authority, for mischief finds its objects better than good-nature; and the poorest creature (if trusted with power) can torment and worry a whole nation, which thenceforward becomes his delight and ruling passion. Such seems to have been the difference between the father and son in the present instance. Charles IV. could hardly be said himself to quit a throne which he had only nominally ascended: he had no farther satisfaction in a country from which Godoi had been banished, and could still exercise his sovereign pleasure in playing duetts on the fiddle without waiting for the person who was to accompany him. In a word, few kings have the sense to recollect that they are men: Charles had not enough to conceive how he could be any thing more than a private gentleman: and was contented with chasing the forest-deer, instead of hunting down his subjects to teach some future King of England how to rule over slaves and deal with traitors!

If Buonaparte had placed the crown of Spain on his own head and had seemed proud of it, 'as he had titles manifold' to power and sovereignty, there is no saying what might have happened: but as if it had not already been bandied about enough and trifled with, he chose to transfer it once more (to show how light and worthless it was) and placed it on his brother Joseph's head. This appears to have exhausted the patience of the Spaniards. Their disgust and hatred broke out in the most furious and unqualified terms of abuse; they called their new king 'that barbarian, Joseph Buonaparte,' 'a monster;' <sup>1</sup> and the juntas of the different towns had the 'Constitutional Act' which was sent them, burnt by the common hangman. There was certainly nothing surprising in this. Custom is the God of ignorance: and there will always be the greatest horror of innovation in the most barbarous and uninformed minds, that is, where there is the greatest need of it. Those who read and reflect know what changes have taken place or may yet take place in the world: those who know only the object before them, what their

<sup>1</sup> This 'monster and barbarian' had done more while king of Naples for a short time before to civilize and reform that wretched country than would have been done by a *ménagerie* of Bourbons in a million of years. See MEMOIRS OF THE DUKE OF ROVIGO.

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senses or their blind guides teach them, have no conception of any thing else as possible or enduring; and look upon every change as a violence done to nature. The strongest antipathies often exist with the least reason for them; nor is this to be remedied, since the passions are the only safe-guard of those who have no means of guarding against injustice or imposture by knowledge and principle. Even the presence of Buonaparte and of the new king himself could not extort any cordial or unqualified expressions of allegiance from the nobles assembled at Bayonne (7th of June) to offer their congratulations. The Duke de l'Infantado in particular stopt short in the midst of a complimentary address by saying that he could promise no more till the nation had confirmed the choice, and drew upon himself on the spot one of Napoleon's most vehement and pointed rebukes. 'You are a gentleman, sir; behave like one: and instead of disputing on the terms of an oath which you mean to break the first opportunity, go and put yourself at the head of your party in Spain, fight openly and loyally. I will have your passport delivered to you, and I give you my word of honour that the advanced posts of my army shall let you pass freely, without molesting you. This is the course becoming a man of honour.' The Duke stammered out a number of excuses and professions of fidelity: 'You are wrong,' said the Emperor; 'this is more serious than you think for: you will forget your oath, and will render yourself liable to be shot—perhaps eight days hence.'

Notwithstanding these heats and the coldness which manifested itself on this occasion, the Junta met, and after some discussion adopted unanimously the Constitution proposed to them. It was much the same as that afterwards established by the Cortes, so cried up at one time by our patriots and so utterly forgotten since—it abolished the Inquisition, set aside feudal services, annulled many oppressive imposts, and provided a check on the arbitrary power of the crown, by restoring the Cortes or national representatives. Joseph formed an administration, among whom were the Duke de l'Infantado and Don Pedro Cevallos, and set out on the 10th of July for Madrid. The officers of state, the *grandees* of Spain, the entire Junta, formed his escort on the road. By the time that he had entered Spain, almost all the provinces were in open revolt; the harbours were covered with the English fleets; Biscay, Catalonia, Navarre, Valencia, Murcia, Andalusia, Estremadura, Galicia, the kingdom of Leon, the Asturias, with part of the two Castiles, fired with enthusiasm and revenge, were up in arms; and Saragossa, already besieged ever since the beginning of June, and defended by the gallant-minded Palafox, was firmly resolved to bury itself under its ruins rather than open its gates to the besiegers. His answer to a summons from the French

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General to capitulate after a most sanguinary conflict will at once explain the tone and spirit that animated this new war.

‘SIR,—If your master sends you to restore the tranquillity which this country has never lost, it is needless that he should take the trouble. If I am bound to repay the confidence which this valiant people have shown in drawing me from the retirement in which I lived, to place their interests and their glory in my hands, it is plain I should be wanting to my duty, were I to abandon them on the mere profession of a friendship in which I do not believe.

‘My sword guards the gates of their capital, and my honour is pledged for its security. The troops must take some repose, because they are exhausted with the exertions of the 15th and 16th, though otherwise they are indefatigable, as I hope to be myself.

‘So far is the flame caused by the indignation of Spaniards at the view of so many acts of injustice from being appeased, that it is thereby the more increased. It is easy to see that the spies whom you keep in pay send you false reports. A great part of Catalonia has acknowledged my command, as well as a considerable portion of Castile. The captains-general of Valencia and Murcia have joined me. Galicia, Estremadura, the Asturias, and the four kingdoms of Andalusia are resolved to avenge our wrongs. The troops give themselves up to the most violent excesses; they plunder, insult, and massacre with impunity the peaceable inhabitants who have given them no sort of provocation.

‘Neither that nor the tone which your Excellency observes since the 15th and 16th are at all proper to satisfy a brave people.

‘Let your Excellency do what it pleases; I shall know my duty.

‘The General of the troops of Arragon,  
‘PALAFOX.’

‘In my head-quarters at Saragossa,  
the 18th of June, 1808.’

Such were the lofty port and words which at this period accompanied the most daring feats of arms. These undaunted expressions did not however prevent the fall of Saragossa, though defended by women also with more than masculine courage and self-devotedness. It was twice taken and retaken with dreadful loss and carnage. Through such a formidable array of hostility did the new King reach Madrid on the 20th of July; and after remaining there eight days was forced in consequence of the capitulation of Baylen to fly to Vittoria, to which a timely passage was opened to him by the success of Marshal



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Bessieres at Medina del Rio Seco.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor heard the news of this event and of the disastrous affair of Andujar at Bourdeaux on his way back to Paris. On the 12th of August, the Council of Spain published a decree rejecting and declaring null and void the abdication of Charles IV. and Ferdinand, and the treaties concluded in consequence between France and Spain.

This may be considered as the conclusion of the first act of the drama of the Spanish Revolution. But in order to explain this result, it will be necessary to go somewhat more into detail. The Spanish Juntas, which were established in every province, recommended it to the troops to avoid general actions as much as possible, to make the contest one of partisan-warfare, and to avail themselves of the advantages which the nature of the country and habits of the people held out in a protracted and desultory conflict, instead of coming in contact in large masses and regular combat with disciplined and veteran troops. But it was easier to give this advice than to follow it. The contest was one of passion and vengeance; and the impatience of the armed peasantry, with their confidence in their own numbers and courage, induced them to suspect treachery, and even to put to death those generals who would not lead them on to give immediate battle to the French. Solano and Filangieri had both been sacrificed in this manner. Blake succeeded the latter in the command of the Galician army, which was in this state of insubordination. Having managed to form a junction with the levies of Castile and Leon under Cuesta, they proceeded together towards Burgos; Cuesta, though he had already been beaten by the French near Caberon (with the obstinacy and touchiness of an old soldier) wishing to hazard the event of a battle, while Blake, dreading the superiority of the French discipline, deprecated the risk of a general action. Bessieres, who had lately defeated the insurgents in Biscay and Navarre in several partial actions, left them however no choice on the subject. He came upon them suddenly near Medina del Rio Seco, where, on the 14th of July, the combined armies of Galicia and Castile suffered the most calamitous defeat which the Spaniards had yet sustained. The insurgents fought with extreme bravery—more than twenty thousand slain were said to have been buried on the field of battle. The news of this victory at so critical a point of time was a great relief to Buonaparte. ‘It is,’ he said, ‘the battle of Villa-Viciosa. Bessieres has put the crown on Joseph’s head. The Spaniards have now perhaps fifteen thousand men left, with some old blockhead at their head: the resistance of the Peninsula is ended.’ The victory of Medina del Rio Seco did in fact

<sup>1</sup> Joseph in the hurry of his flight left behind him, among other things, David’s picture of Napoleon crossing the Alps.

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enable the new King to advance from Vittoria to Madrid, as well as to retire from it eight days after without molestation. He had been received formally, but without any of the usual demonstrations of joy on such occasions; nor did the inhabitants even repair to the theatres, though they were thrown open at the public expense.

Hard upon the heels of this victory, however, followed intelligence of a different stamp and of a more serious import. Duhesme (with the troops that had taken possession of Barcelona and Figueras) was in hope not only of maintaining himself in Catalonia, but of advancing to assist in the subjugation of Valencia and Arragon. He was notwithstanding repulsed by the natives, who made good the mountain-pass of Bruck against him, and compelled him to return to Barcelona. Marshal Moncey met with no better fortune in an expedition undertaken against Valencia. He was opposed by all the phrenzy of popular feeling: the inhabitants rushed to man the walls—monks, women mingled in the fray—and unable to penetrate into the city, and disappointed of the reinforcement which he expected from Duhesme, he was glad to retreat towards the main French army, which occupied Old and New Castile. A worse fate attended the division of Dupont, which, after the entrance of Murat into Madrid, had been sent on towards Cadiz; but this attempt to secure that commercial city, and to protect its harbour, seems to have been judged premature by Napoleon, who might perhaps wish to leave the passage open for Charles IV. to have made his escape to South America, in case he had been so minded. Dupont's march was therefore countermanded; and he proceeded no farther than Toledo, till the disposition of the Andalusians and of the inhabitants of Cadiz shewing itself more and more hostile, he was ordered forward to preserve that important seaport and the French fleet which was lying there. He accordingly advanced southward, traversed the Sierra Morena (where Don Quixote performed such wonders) forced the passage of the Gaudalquiver, and gained possession of the ancient town of Cordova. But Cadiz had already embraced the national cause; the French squadron was in the hands of the Spaniards; and Seville and its Junta were organising large levies to be added to a regular body of ten thousand men under Castanos at the camp of St. Rocque near Gibraltar. Dupont in this situation could neither advance nor retreat. The passes of the Sierra Morena were by this time occupied with the insurgent mountaineers. He solicited reinforcements from Portugal and Madrid; but Junot had at present too much on his hands with the insurrection of the natives and the threatened descent of the English to afford him assistance, and he was only joined by two brigades under General Vedel and Gobert, detached from the army in Castile. With this addition,

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which made his force amount to twenty thousand men, he thought himself strong enough to attack; and accordingly proceeded to occupy Baylen, and took the old Moorish town of Jaen by storm. Here they were presently encountered by Castanos who had watched their movements; and after a severe contest, were compelled to fall back upon Baylen. Having learnt by an intercepted dispatch to Savary (who had succeeded Murat in the command of the army of Madrid) the straits to which the enemy was reduced, the Spanish general followed up his advantage, and on the 16th of July by an attack on various points drove the French back on Andujar; General Gobert was killed in the action. On the night of the 18th and through the greater part of the following day, the French made a desperate attempt to recover the village of Baylen, which was stoutly defended against them; and after a last effort to redeem the victory by a daring charge at the head of his troops, General Dupont found himself enclosed on all sides by a superior force, and obliged to surrender with the troops under his immediate command, amounting to fourteen or fifteen thousand men. The division of Vedel, which had not been engaged, was excepted from this stipulation, but was afterwards included in it by a breach of faith on the part of the Spaniards.

The event of this battle freed the south of Spain, with the rich cities of Seville and Cadiz, from the dread of the invading armies; and the news of it shortly after reaching Madrid hastened Joseph's departure from that city. Saragossa still held out with the courage of a martyr behind her old Moorish battlements, till the convent of Santa Engracia falling into the hands of the besiegers enabled them to push their posts into the town. The French general (Lefebvre Desnouettes) announced this success in a triumphant summons:— 'Santa Engracia—Capitulation.' 'Saragossa—War to the knife's blade,' was the equally determined answer. The threat was made good; the citizens fought from street to street, from house to house, from chamber to chamber; the combatants often occupied different apartments of the same house; and the passages which connected them were choked up with the dead. After this dreadful struggle had continued for several weeks, the gallant defence of Saragossa excited at once the courage and sympathy of those who had at first looked on only with fear and distrust; and a considerable reinforcement was thrown into the place in the beginning of August. The news of Dupont's surrender became known soon after; and on the 13th of August, Lefebvre Desnouettes evacuated the quarter of the city in his possession. He blew up the church of Santa Engracia and other buildings, and finally retreated from a city which had so valiantly resisted his arms.

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Buonaparte was at Bourdeaux (as we have seen) when the account of the defeats of Andujar and Baylen reached him. He bit his lips; but it does not follow that he saw in it the overthrow of all his fortunes and Europe crumbling beneath his feet, as some prophesiers after the event are fain to imagine. It did not cloud the *éclat* of the rest of his progress to the capital: he was welcomed all the way by triumphal arches and the most unbounded expressions of adulation as having revived the miracle of the age of Louis XIV., by uniting the dynasties of France and Spain once more in his own person. The splendour of the achievement was too dazzling and too flattering to the national vanity to suffer the French to look narrowly into the means. It was not till a reverse of fortune that their eyes were opened to detect some flaws in the title-deed to so much glory, and to see the measure (stripped of success and without any of the beneficial consequences that were intended to flow from it) in all its abstract deformity. This would have been the time (if at all) for them to have shown themselves men, and to have remonstrated against an act of injustice and meanness; and not when their manhood was put on only to escape a castigation. As for Great-Britain, that noted bully and scold, aided by that hardened prostitute, the hireling press, and that more hardened prostitute, a MINISTERIAL MAJORITY—hawking about her contraband wares and spurious bales of iniquity, scouring the seas and infesting the land with her officious alliance and shabby diplomacy, wheedling, bribing, raving, vomiting out defiance and death on all who would not come into her nefarious projects, winking at the seizure of Finland (in hopes the Russian autocrat might in time fall into her views, seeing his father's end before his eyes) standing and dancing with her arms a-kimbo on the smoking ruins of Copenhagen, and snapping her fingers with barefaced contempt at the distinctions of right and wrong like the Dutchman in *Candide*, '*car enfin je suis matelôt*'—passing up and down the Dardanelles in her frantic importunity to make the Grand Turk embrace the cause of that old hag Legitimacy (whom hardly the houris of Paradise could rouse from his apathy) making common cause with Calabrian banditti and hunting down the Guavas of Buenos Ayres on the plea of driving a thriving trade in philanthropy—I would not believe a word that she said, though she had blown a blast as loud as Orlando's horn at the pass of Roncesvalles, calling on Europe to rise in behalf of Spanish patriotism, liberty, and independence; or that the popular cause was any thing more than a stalking-horse made use of to destroy the popular cause, either then when men could only judge from the past, or now that it is proved by the sequel.

The Spanish insurgents were at first treated as rebels, which very



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properly gave rise to reprisals; and this sore cured itself. The troops also enforced military law against the peasants who took up arms, a practice for which a precedent is said to have been found in Buonaparte's suppression of the revolt of Pavia, as if that precedent was itself quite new to the principles and usages of regular warfare. The peasants in their turn retaliated, and fell upon the wounded, the sick, and the stragglers of the French army, without mercy. In the temper and circumstances of the time, it is quite as likely that they did not wait for any such provocation to fall upon their enemies when they had them in their power. In this manifestation of the national spirit, the lowest classes took the lead, as in other great public commotions. Women, priests, all classes joined in the quarrel, for it touched all classes. The excesses to which it led, the grotesqueness of appearance it assumed are not here ascribed (nor ought they to be so) to the madness or folly of the people, but to natural feeling and strong aggravation. Blood was also shed. At Valencia, a priest named Calvo incited the rabble to massacre upwards of two hundred French residing in that city, on no other ground than their being French. The Governor of Cadiz, Solano, falling under popular suspicion, was immediately put to death, and many such instances occurred. The Juntas called on the rich for patriotic contributions; on the priests to send the church-plate to the mint; on the poor to serve in the ranks or work on the fortifications. Mr. Southey's pen in tracing these events with the spirit and fidelity peculiar to him, may be said to run on in a well-known track; and almost to parody an exploded original. The subject seems to inspire him with a sparkling felicity, and 'redolent of joy and youth, to breathe a second spring.' There is in the style a freshness and a fervour of feeling as in his earlier productions, which he never fails to temper with an admirable decorum and even sanctity of sentiment. There are only two striking features of distinction in the pictures of the two Revolutions—the want of a monk urging it on with a crucifix in the first, and of a king to be cashiered in the last! No doubt the difference is a very material one. While these events were passing in Spain, Sir Arthur Wellesley, who had done much to extend the British empire in India, and had recently distinguished himself by his active share in violating the neutrality of Denmark, landed with an army at Lisbon to assert the independence of Portugal. He gained the battle of Vimeira over Junot on the 21st of August 1808, which however was rendered in a great measure abortive by the indecision and changes among the British commanders, three of them actually succeeding each other in one day; and the affair ended in what at the time was considered as the disgraceful Convention of Cintra. Probably the actual advantages we had gained

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might be overrated in the uneasy enthusiasm of the moment, as they were the first we had gained; and for any thing we knew at the time, might be the last. So near the brink of the precipice had we come in the desperate attempt to push others over!

It was in the interval between his return to Paris and his march into Spain at the end of the year 1808, that Napoleon proceeded to Erfurt to renew his intimacy and strengthen the connection he had formed with the Emperor Alexander in the preceding autumn. It is needless to speak of the long acclamations and festive rejoicings which attended Buonaparte the whole way from St. Cloud to Erfurt, where he arrived the 27th of September early in the morning. The Emperor Alexander left Petersburg on the 14th, and on the 18th had an interview with the King and Queen of Prussia who came to Königsberg to meet him. He was received at Bromberg by the Duke of Montebello, who had been sent forward for that purpose; and where the division of Nansonty paid him military honours. Alexander said, 'he was pleased to find himself among so many brave men and such fine soldiers.' He arrived at Weimar on the 26th, accompanied by Marshal Lannes and escorted by the troops of Marshal Soult, having passed through Leipsic and Frankfort-on-the-Oder. Napoleon on his arrival at Erfurt was welcomed with the most lively congratulations of the people. The King of Saxony was already there to meet him. After giving an audience to the Regency and the municipality of Erfurt, the Emperor mounted on horseback; and having returned the visit of the King of Saxony, rode out of the city by the gate of Weimar. At a short distance he found the grenadiers of the guard, the seventeenth regiment of infantry, the first of the hussars, and the sixth of the cuirassiers drawn up in order of battle: after passing along the ranks, he ordered the cavalry forward on the road to Weimar, where presently after (about a league and a half from the city) he met the Emperor Alexander. As soon as this prince saw Napoleon, he got out of his carriage, and the Emperor alighted from his horse. The two sovereigns then embraced with the greatest cordiality. They then got on horseback as well as the Archduke Constantine, and galloped along in front of the troops, who presented arms. The drums beat the charge. Numerous salvos of artillery mingled with the sound of bells and with the shouts of a vast concourse of spectators whom so extraordinary an event had drawn together from all quarters. During the whole of the time that the interview at Erfurt lasted, Alexander wore the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, and Napoleon that of St. Andrew of Russia. The latter being *at home*, constantly gave the right hand to the Emperor Alexander. On the first day the two Emperors proceeded to the Russian palace and remained together an hour. At

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half after three the Emperor Alexander went to return Napoleon's visit, who descended to the bottom of the staircase to receive him; and when Alexander withdrew, he accompanied him to the entrance-door of the hall of the Guards. The sentinels who lined the way, presented arms, and the drums beat the charge. At six o'clock, the Emperor of Russia came to dine with Napoleon. He did so on all the following days. The precedence among the other sovereigns was determined by the order of their adhesion to the Confederation of the Rhine. The King of Saxony and the Archduke Constantine were present the first day. At nine o'clock the Emperor conducted his guest back to his palace, where they remained together *tête-à-tête* for an hour and a half. The Emperor Alexander attended the Emperor Napoleon to the top of the stair-case. The city was illuminated. The Prince of Weimar, and of Reuss, and the Princess of Tour and Taxis arrived in the evening.

The same routine was repeated almost every day with little variation. The two Emperors breakfasted alone, called on each other in the course of the morning, and were together all the rest of the day, either in public or by themselves. Napoleon had been desirous to give the Emperor of Russia an opportunity of enjoying the representation of the well-known *chef-d'œuvres* of the French stage, and for this purpose had brought with him the principal performers of the *Théâtre Français*—Talma, St. Prix, Damas, Lafond, Després, Lacave, Varennes, with Madame Raucourt, Duchesnois, Bourgoing, Rose Dupuis, Gros, and Patrat. The first representation given was that of *Cinna*: the second was the tragedy of *Andromache*. The Emperor of Russia and the other illustrious strangers who were present seemed to relish more and more the master-pieces of the French drama, and to be particularly delighted with the admirable acting of Talma. At the representation of *Cinna*, the box of the two Emperors was in the centre of the first tier facing the stage. Napoleon thought he perceived that at this distance the Emperor Alexander did not hear sufficiently well, on account of a defect in that organ. He in consequence gave orders to Count Remusat, his chamberlain, to have a platform raised on the site of the orchestra, with two elbow chairs for the two Emperors and seats to the right and left for the King of Saxony and the other sovereigns. They were thus placed in view of the whole theatre. On the evening of the performance of *Œdipus*, the two courts were assembled as usual. In the first scene of the play, Philoctetes addresses Dimas, his friend and counsellor:—

'L'amitié d'un grand homme est un bienfait des Dieux.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The friendship of a great man is a benefit from the Gods.'

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At this line, the Emperor Alexander turning towards Napoleon gave him his hand in a very graceful manner, as much as to say, that he considered his friendship in that light. This was the application made by all those present. Napoleon bowed, but with the air of one who declined so embarrassing a compliment. M. de Talleyrand did not fail to be at the Emperor's levee that evening to know precisely what had passed. On another occasion, as he was about to enter the dining-room, the Emperor of Russia who was going to lay aside his sword, found he had forgotten it. Napoleon approached, and begged him to accept of his. Alexander took it eagerly, saying, 'I accept it as a mark of your friendship. Your Majesty is well assured that I shall never draw it against you'—a protestation which would admit of an opposite construction.

On the 6th of October, the visitors at Erfurt accepted an invitation from the reigning Duke of Weimar to pass a day or two with him. On the way a hunting pavilion had been erected in the forest of Ettersburg, where the Emperor Alexander, who was not fond of the pleasures of the chase from the shortness of his sight, brought down (as his *coup d'essai*) a fine stag that passed within eight paces of him. At night, the *Death of Cæsar* was performed by the French actors at the theatre of Weimar; and after the play there was a ball, in which Alexander danced or rather walked a minuet with the Queen of Westphalia, the orchestra playing a Polish march. During the ball, Buonaparte had a long conversation with two celebrated Germans, Wieland and Goëthe, the author of Werter. While here, the Emperor showed the most marked attention to the Duchess of Weimar, who after the battle of Jena had saved Weimar from being given up to the pillage of the French soldiers who had entered it at the point of the bayonet, by the noble appeal she made to the generosity of the victor. The next day, the Emperors went over the field of the battle of Jena. In a tent erected on the spot where he had bivouacked on the night before that celebrated battle, Napoleon received a deputation of the city and university of Jena; and after numberless inquiries and details on the subject, distributed 300,000 francs to repair the damages done by fire and other consequences of the long abode of his military hospitals in that city.

The party returned to Erfurt to dinner about five o'clock. This evening there was no play, as the actors had not had time to get back; for which reason the company sat longer than usual at dinner. A question was started respecting the *Golden Bull* which, before the establishment of the Confederation of the Rhine, had served as a basis to regulate the election of the Emperors of Germany, the number and quality of the Electors, &c. The Prince-Primate went into some



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particulars concerning this *Golden Bull*, which he said had been promulgated in 1409. The Emperor observed that the date which he assigned to the Bull was not exact, and that it was proclaimed in 1336, under the reign of the Emperor Charles IV. 'That is true, Sire,' replied the Prince-Primate, 'I was mistaken; but how does it happen that your Majesty is so well acquainted with these things?' 'When I was a simple lieutenant in the second artillery,' said Napoleon—at this introduction there was on the part of the august guests a marked expression of surprise. He resumed with a smile—'When I had the honour to be a simple lieutenant in the second company of artillery, I remained three years in garrison at Valence. I was not fond of society and lived very retired. By a lucky chance I happened to lodge at a bookseller's, a well-informed man and very obliging—I read through his library over and over during the three years I was kept in garrison there, and have forgot nothing, even of matters which had nothing to do with my profession. Besides, nature has given me a particular recollection of figures. I am often able, in discussions with my Ministers, to quote to them the details and numerical amount of their accounts of the longest standing.'—There was a just and well-placed pride in thus speaking of himself in the presence of all Europe as it were assembled at a banquet of kings! After a number of magnificent presents and honours lavished on all sides, the two Emperors took leave of each other on the 14th of October, Alexander proceeding to St. Petersburg, and Napoleon returning to Paris, where he arrived on the 18th of the month. An account of Buonaparte's conversation with Wieland is extant, given by Wieland himself; and is in every respect too interesting and characteristic not to be inserted here.

'I had been hardly a few minutes in the room,' says Wieland, 'when Napoleon crossed it to come to us. I was presented by the Duchess of Weimar with the usual ceremonies: he then paid me some compliments in an affable tone, and looking stedfastly at me. Few men have appeared to me to possess in the same degree the art of reading, at the first glance, the thoughts of other men. He saw in an instant that notwithstanding my celebrity I was simple in my manners and void of pretension; and as he seemed desirous of making a favourable impression on me, he assumed the tone most likely to attain his end. I have never beheld any one more calm, more simple, more mild, or less ostentatious in appearance: nothing about him indicated the feeling of power in a great monarch: he spoke to me as an old acquaintance would speak to an equal; and what was more extraordinary on his part, he conversed with me exclusively for an hour and a half, to the great surprise of the whole assembly.

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At length, towards midnight, I began to feel that it was improper to detain him so long, and I took the liberty to demand permission to retire: "Go then," said he in a friendly tone, "good night!"

'The following are the most remarkable features in our conversation. The tragedy which had just been represented<sup>1</sup> having led us to speak of Julius Cæsar, Napoleon said that he was one of the greatest men in history; and that he would have been the greatest of all, but for the folly which he committed. I was going to ask him to what fault he meant to allude, when seeming to read my question in my eyes, he continued: "Cæsar knew the men that wanted to get rid of him; he ought to have got rid of them first." If Napoleon could have seen what was then passing through my mind, he would have read the conviction that no one would ever accuse him of the like folly.<sup>2</sup>

'The Emperor paused an instant, pronounced a few words indistinctly, and went on. From Cæsar the conversation naturally turned to the Romans: he warmly eulogized their military and political system. The Greeks, on the contrary, did not seem to share his esteem. "The eternal squabbles of their petty republics," he said, "were not calculated to give birth to any thing grand: whereas the Romans were always occupied with great things, and it was owing to this they raised up the Colossus which bestrode the world." I pleaded in favour of the arts and literature of the Greeks: he treated them with disdain, and said that they only made use of them to foment their dissensions. He preferred Ossian to Homer. He was fond only of serious poetry, the pathetic and vigorous writers, and above all, the tragic poets. He spoke of Ariosto in the same terms as the Cardinal Hippolito of Este; ignorant no doubt that it was giving me a box on the ear. He appeared to have no relish for any thing gay; and in spite of the prepossessing amenity of his manners, an observation struck me often, he seemed to be of bronze. Nevertheless, the Emperor had put me so much at my ease, that I ventured to ask him how it was that the public worship which he had restored in France was not more philosophical and in harmony with the spirit of the times? "My dear Wieland," he replied, "religion is not meant for philosophers: they have no faith either in me or my priests: as to those who do believe, it would be difficult to give them or to leave them too much of the marvellous. If I had to frame a religion of

<sup>1</sup> La Mort de Cæsar.

<sup>2</sup> This prediction on the part of Wieland was, however, premature. He *was* afterwards in a similar situation where others wanted to get rid of him, and he neglected to strike the first blow as he ought.

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philosophers, it would be just the reverse of that of the credulous part of mankind.”<sup>1</sup>

Scarcely had Buonaparte returned to Paris before he had to set out again for Spain. The campaign this time was little more than a military promenade; there was no great battle fought, nor any extraordinary manœuvre executed. He had not in fact an equal enemy

<sup>1</sup> Müller, the celebrated Swiss historian, has left a still more ample testimony to Buonaparte's character. The following is taken from Müller's Posthumous Works :—

‘On the 19th May, 1807, I was informed by the Minister Secretary of State, Maret, that at seven o'clock in the evening of the following day I must wait on the Emperor Napoleon. I waited accordingly on this Minister at the appointed hour, and was presented. The Emperor sat on a sofa: a few persons whom I did not know stood at some distance in the apartment. The Emperor began to speak of the History of Switzerland; told me that I ought to complete it; that even the more recent times had their interest. He came to the work of mediation, discovered a very good will, if we do not meddle with any thing foreign and remain quietly in the interior. He proceeded from the Swiss to the old Greek Constitutions and History, to the Theory of Constitutions, to the complete diversity of those of Asia (and the causes of this diversity in the climate, polygamy, &c.), the opposite characters of the Arabian (which the Emperor highly extolled), and the Tartar Races (which led to the irruptions that all civilization had always to dread from that quarter, and the necessity of a bulwark) the peculiar value of European culture (never greater freedom, security of property, humanity, and better laws in general, than since the 15th century), then how every thing was linked together, and in the inscrutable guidance of an invisible hand; and how he himself had become great through his enemies: the great confederation of nations, the idea of which Henry IV. never had: the foundation of all religion, and its necessity; that man could not well bear completely clear truth, and required to be kept in order; the possibility, however, of a more happy condition, if the numerous feuds ceased, which were occasioned by too complicated constitutions (such as the German), and the intolerable burden suffered by States from excessive armies. A great deal more besides was said, and indeed we spoke of almost every country and nation. The Emperor spoke at first in his usual manner; but the more interesting our conversation became he spoke in a lower and lower tone, so that I was obliged to bend myself quite down to his face; and no man can have understood what he said (and therefore many things I will not repeat).—I opposed him occasionally, and he entered into discussion. Quite impartially and truly, as before God, I must say that the variety of his knowledge, the acuteness of his observations, the solidity of his understanding (not dazzling wit), his grand and comprehensive views, filled me with astonishment, and his manner of speaking to me, with love for him. A couple of Marshals, and also the Duke of Benevento, had entered in the mean time; he did not break off. After five quarters, or an hour and a half, he allowed the concert to begin; and I know not, whether accidentally or from goodness, he desired pieces, which, one of them especially, had reference to pastoral life and the Swiss (*Rans des Vaches*). After this he bowed in a friendly manner and left the room.—Since the audience with Frederick (1782), I never had a conversation on such a variety of subjects, at least with any prince: if I can judge correctly from recollection, I must give the Emperor the preference in point of solidity and comprehension; Frederick was somewhat Voltairian. Besides, there is in his tone much firmness and vigour, but in his mouth something as attractive and fascinating as in Frederick. It was one of the most remarkable days of my life. By his genius and his disinterested goodness he has also conquered me.’

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to contend with. The only striking feature of the period was the dilatory advance and disastrous retreat of Sir John Moore and the English under his command. Napoleon left Paris on the 29th of October, and reached Bayonne on the 3rd of November. On the 7th he was at Vittoria, where his brother Joseph had remained, and where he found himself in the midst of the army under Marshal Bessieres. The troops now moved forward on Burgos, which place was taken by assault, and treated with severity, the inhabitants firing from their windows on the French troops as they entered. At the same time Marshal Victor marched on the Spanish forces collected under General Blake at Espinosa, attacked and routed them, and drove them back on Reynosa. This disaster included the defeat of the greater part of the troops that had escaped with the Marquis Romana from the isle of Furen in the Baltic, and who, being injudiciously brought into action by single battalions, perished ingloriously among the cliffs at Espinosa. Blake commanded the Spanish army in the north of Spain; Castanos in the centre near Madrid; Palafox in the east towards the Pyrenees. Nothing can exceed the picture which is given of the deplorable state of these armies at the period in question. They were without discipline, concert, stores or ammunition. The soldiers were in a state of open rebellion against their leaders, and slew them on the slightest suspicion or disgust: the generals were at variance alike with one another and with the Supreme Junta. The latter sent commissioners to the army who acted as spies and umpires over the Generals, and urged them forward on sure destruction, at their peril. They seemed to have nothing to sustain their courage but their good opinion of themselves and their hatred of the French, with the love of their king and country—though the last could scarcely be affirmed, for their patriotism was often of so instinctive and merely animal a nature that they fought very well in defence of a particular spot, but could not understand the necessity of a combined system of national defence or of securing the frontiers as an inlet to the whole kingdom. Palafox having effected a junction with Castanos is said to have hurried him by opprobrious insinuations into a general action with the French troops stationed along the Ebro. It took place at Tudela on the 22d of November, with all the results which Castanos had foretold, and left that General no resource but to escape with the broken relics of his army to Calatayud, while Palafox retreated to Saragossa to await a second siege and reap thankless renown. The road now lay open to Madrid except for the pass of Sommo-Sierra, about ten miles from the city, and which was hitherto regarded as impregnable. Buonaparte might indeed have gone round by Valladolid, on which side no such formidable obstacle intervened. But as



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the Spaniards were fond of miracles, he was willing to gratify them ; and to their utter astonishment, took the pass of Sommo-Sierra by a single charge of Polish lancers. After this, not a single Spaniard was to be seen all the way to Madrid, where the army arrived on the 1st of December. Madrid is not fortified ; but some persons thought of defending it piecemeal and man to man. I have no objection that all the capitals in the world should be defended in this manner (if it is so to be understood) but feel no particular regret that Madrid was not more than any other, as I have no particular fancy either for *auto-da-fés* or bull-fights. Some of the streets were however unpaved for this purpose ; and the looks of the citizens spoke daggers. It ended in nothing, as the constituted authorities with Don Thomas Morla at their head were not disposed to second the good citizens of Madrid, which capitulated in the morning of the 4th of December, after a number of parleys. The only attempt at an irregular defence was made in the new barracks belonging to the Guards. The common people and soldiers had collected here to the amount of several thousands, determined to make a last stand : a redoubt situated in the middle of the inner court was garnished with cannon and vomited out death on all who approached. It was not till after the lapse of a couple of hours that the Corregidor and Alcaldes could get near enough to summon them to lay down their arms in consequence of the capitulation having been signed. In their despair, the combatants broke their muskets, spiked the guns, and rushed out of the place frantic with rage and disappointment. The gate of Fuencarral opposite the quarter where Buonaparte was chiefly stationed, continued to fire after all the other points of defence had done firing. The commander of this post was found to be a M. St. Simon, a French emigrant, who had been in the Spanish service ever since the Revolution. He was about to be brought before a military commission and would probably have suffered for his over-forward zeal in the cause of Spanish patriotism, if his daughter had not been advised to present herself before the Emperor, and intercede for her father's life. This sort of appeal he hardly ever was known to resist. Before quitting Madrid, Buonaparte paid a visit privately to the royal palaces, where he found his brother Joseph's picture remaining where it was, and a curious collection of clocks and watches with which the late King used to amuse himself for hours.

Sir John Moore and his army had been expected in Spain towards the end of August, and might in that case have co-operated to advantage with the Spanish troops ; but indecision and a want of vigour in the Administration (which was not prompt in the use of means from having hitherto used them in vain) produced a delay which amounted to a

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virtual abandonment of the project. He himself arrived with sixteen thousand men at Salamanca, entering Spain by the frontiers of Portugal, and had ordered Sir David Baird to advance from Corunna to Astorga with ten thousand more, just in time to hear of the defeat and dispersion of the Spanish armies under Blake, Castanos, and Palafox, whom he was come to join and reinforce. In this situation he was greatly at a loss how to act. He saw the danger of attempting to advance; yet the expectations entertained of him, and the eagerness of the British public to second a cause which had at last brought something like a feeling of liberty and a spirit of independence to bolster up the hypocritical excuses and selfish calculations on which they had so far trafficked in war, made him desirous to do something. He consulted Mr. Frere, the British minister and a sort of itinerant camp-critic and writer of dispatches (of the Canning school) who advised him to proceed by all means and risk every thing for the chance of succouring Madrid. Mr. Frere was a wit, a courtier, and an enthusiast in the cause of Spanish liberty; for he saw with what a different eye courts and cabinets must regard that liberty or will of the people which consisted in their determination to have no will of their own, but to leave all power in the hands of kings and priests, and that other sort of liberty which France had tried to obtain, of having a will of her own and taking some of the supreme power out of the hands of those that held it. One of these two kinds of patriotism or liberty, which was both courtly and popular, was the finest opening and handle in the world for overturning the other which had never been courtly and had ceased to be popular. Sir John Moore, who was not of the Canning school, having some misgivings of the cause and more of the success, declined this challenge of the British Envoy. He notwithstanding resolved to move forward, in the hope of aiding the scattered remains of Romana's army in Biscay, of diverting the attention of the French from advancing farther south, and thinking at all events to keep a retreat open for himself through Galicia. This last step soon became necessary. He had gone on to Mayorga, where, on the 20th of December, he formed a junction with Sir David Baird; and advancing to Sahagun, a smart action took place between the 15th English Hussars and a body of French cavalry, greatly to the advantage of the former. The troops were in the highest spirits and preparing to attack Soult, who had concentrated his forces behind the Carrion, when news was brought that this general had been strongly reinforced; that Buonaparte had set out on the 22nd from Madrid at the head of ten thousand of the Guard; and that the French armies, who had been marching southward, had halted and taken a direction to the northwest, as if to inclose and

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destroy the British army. A retreat became inevitable, with every disadvantage of such a retreat, in the middle of winter, through bad roads, and a country of which our officers at the time did not know how to take advantage, either for the purposes of defence or of furnishing their troops with supplies. The gross deficiency of our commissariat-department at that epoch has been accounted for from our insular situation, which, screening us from the necessity of foreign wars, leaves us ignorant of the means of subsisting large armies by land, and may also bring into question our right to engage in them, since we can hardly feel properly responsible for the evils which we inflict with comparative impunity upon others. The soldiers, besides, not relishing this retrograde movement, grew mutinous, got drunk, and committed all sorts of outrages upon the inhabitants. Nothing brought them to reason or put them in good humour, but the prospect of meeting with the enemy. They then rallied and fought with the greatest bravery and steadiness. On the 29th of December the French, who had pressed upon our rear at Benevente and thrown a large body of the Imperial cavalry across the Exla, were driven back and defeated, and their General Lefebvre Desnouettes was taken prisoner. At Lugo again on the 6th of January, they declined the offer of a similar encounter; and in embarking at Corunna on the 16th, the combat which Soult commenced with great boldness and numbers, proved fatal to many of the assailants and to the English general (Sir John Moore) while encouraging his soldiers to make sure of the victory. He was buried on the ramparts, and 'left alone with his glory'—such as it was!

Buonaparte did not follow the retreating army further than Astorga. He then returned to Valladolid, where he staid some days, and then proceeded in great haste to Paris, his return being hastened by the news of an approaching rupture with Austria. While at Valladolid he had several conferences with the Abbé de Pradt, who made him laugh by comparing the ingratitude of the Spaniards for the benefits he wished to confer upon them to the behaviour of Sganarelle's wife in the farce, who quarrels with a stranger for trying to prevent her husband from beating her. He also suppressed a monastery of Dominicans at Valladolid, where a French officer had been assassinated and his body found in the vaults of the convent. He called these monks before him to the number of forty; harangued and reviled them for their baseness; and at last in his eagerness got alone in the midst of them, some of them in their humility kneeling to kiss the hem of his garments. Had there been one true monk among the group, the scene might have ended differently—though less satisfactorily to some people than it has done!

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## CHAPTER XLI

### CAMPAIGN IN 1809

NAPOLEON returned to Paris on the 23rd of January, 1809. His Prefect of the Palace (whose mule had suffered an accident in fording the Exla) followed him on the 28th. One of the first persons the latter met on going to the Thuilleries was the Count de Montesquieu, who had been appointed Grand-Chamberlain to the Emperor in the place of the Prince of Benevento. This news surprised M. de Bausset the more, as he had just parted with M. Talleyrand, who had come to pay his court, and on whose countenance he had perceived no marks of the change nor of the disagreement that had caused it.

In the course of the preceding year, Austria, seeing the example set by Spain and that liberty was the word, grew patriotic, got tired of the treaty of Presburg (of which she was glad enough at the time) seized and opened the French dispatches in time of peace, raised the *Landwert*, made an appeal to her subjects, and hoped to recover under this new plea of popular enthusiasm and national independence the successive losses she had sustained in so many Coalitions to overturn popular rights and national independence, and bow them to the earth under the yoke of feudal aristocracy with its forty quarterings. The scheme failed this time too. England of course was at hand to encourage her to venture once more in the new lottery which Legitimacy had opened, and offered as usual to pay the expense. The distress and poverty arising from the want of this money at present is attributed to the excessive and unnatural growth of the population. We are too poor now to take part in the struggle of Greece or other states to emancipate themselves from a despotic and hated yoke. There has been no king's head struck off in the quarrel, and it is not to be expected that the king's coin should pay for any thing else. 'But riches fineless were as poor as winter,' without that fillip to warm the icy chill of patriotism and set the sluggish blood in motion.

The Archduke Charles was appointed generalissimo; and early in the month of April published the Emperor's orders to march into Bavaria and treat all that opposed him as enemies. The same declaration was also made with respect to Russia. Accordingly, the Austrian troops entered the Bavarian territory on the 10th and 11th of April, though Prince Metternich was still at Paris without demanding his passports or saying a word on the subject. *It was an understood case.* A telegraphic dispatch gave the first notice of this event. Napoleon set out for Strasburg on the 13th and arrived there on the 16th at



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four in the morning with the Empress Josephine, whom he left there. He crossed the Rhine at the head of his fine troops, and marched with the utmost speed to the succour of Bavaria. Numbers were on the side of the Austrians (who had raised a larger army in this case than they had ever done before) but Buonaparte made up for this inferiority (as was his custom) by the celerity and skill of his movements. He had with him, besides his own troops, those of the Confederation of the Rhine (who proved faithful to their conqueror and ally) and also drew reinforcements from the garrisons he had left in Prussia and in the North of Germany. The Austrians had six *corps d'armée* of thirty thousand each, which constituted their force under the Archduke Charles; one in Galicia under the Archduke Ferdinand ready to oppose the Russians, should they be disposed to advance; and two under the Archduke John, intended to operate a diversion in Italy, by the passes of Carinthia and Carniola—in all two hundred and seventy thousand men. Buonaparte's line had been too much extended (considering the fewness of his numbers) from north to south; and a gap was left in the middle, into which the Austrians (if they had thought of it in time) might have pushed large masses, and have thus cut his army in two. Alarmed at the possibility of this, he hastened to place himself in the centre, the vulnerable point; and turning doubtful hazards and even over-sights to his advantage, sent precise and urgent orders to Massena to advance by a lateral movement from Augsburg to Pfaffenhofen, and to Davoust to come up in the same manner from Ratisbon to Neustadt. The order for this daring operation was given on the night of the 17th and speed and vigilance were recommended. Davoust had to march eight leagues and Massena twelve or thirteen to come up to the appointed place of rendezvous. When the time necessary for executing these movements had elapsed, Buonaparte at the head of the centre of his forces made a sudden and desperate assault on two Austrian divisions, commanded by General Hiller and the Archduke Louis; and Davoust coming up on the right flank of the Austrians in the middle of the engagement, while Massena made his appearance almost at the same instant in the rear of the Archduke Louis, broke and threw their whole line into the utmost disorder. This was the famous manœuvre of Abensberg, of which the Emperor sometimes spoke as the finest of all his conceptions. This victory gained on the 20th of April exposed the defeated army to further misfortunes, the Emperor following up his advantage, and attacking the fugitives next day at Landshut, where they lost thirty pieces of cannon and nine thousand prisoners, besides ammunition and baggage.

On the 22nd the Emperor directed his whole force, meeting from

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different points, against the principal army of the Archduke Charles which was concentrated at Eckmühl. The battle was one of the most splendid which the art of war could display. A hundred thousand men and upwards were dispossessed of all their positions by the combined attacks of their scientific adversary, the divisions appearing on the field, each in its due place and order, as regularly as the movements of the various pieces on a chessboard. All the Austrian wounded, great part of their artillery, fifteen stand of colours, and twenty thousand prisoners remained in the power of the French. The retreat was attended with proportionable loss; and Austria, again baffled in the hope of wreaking her old grudge against France, was once more reduced to contend for her existence, which had been so often lost and given back to her to have the same unfair use made of it again.

On the subsequent day, the Austrians attempted to cover the retreat of their army by defending Ratisbon. A partial breach in the walls having been obstinately defended by a close discharge of musquetry, there was a difficulty in finding volunteers to renew the attack, when the noble-minded Lannes, seizing a ladder and rushing forward to fix himself against the walls, 'I will shew you,' he exclaimed, 'that your general is still a grenadier.' The example prevailed; the wall was surmounted; and the combat was continued in the streets of the town. Here a singular circumstance occurred. A body of French, pressing forward to charge a body of Austrians who still occupied one end of a burning street, were interrupted by some waggons belonging to the enemy's artillery train. 'They are barrels of powder,' cried the Austrian commander to the French: 'if the flames reach them, both sides perish.' The combat ceased; and the two parties joined in averting a danger which must have been fatal to both, and finally saved the ammunition from the flames. At length the Austrians were driven out of Ratisbon, leaving much cannon, baggage, and a great many prisoners in the hands of their enemies.

In the middle of the last *melée*, Buonaparte who was observing the affair at some distance and speaking to Duroc at the time, was struck on the foot by a spent musquet-ball, which occasioned a severe contusion. 'That must have been a Tyrolese,' said the Emperor coolly, 'who has hit me from such a distance: those fellows fire with wonderful precision.' Those around remonstrated with him on his exposing his person: to which he answered, 'What can I do? I must needs see how matters go on.' The soldiers crowded about him, alarmed at the report of his wound; but he would not allow it to be dressed, so eager was he to get on horseback, and put an end to the solicitude of the troops by shewing himself publicly among them.

Thus within five days (the space and almost the very days of the

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month which Buonaparte had assigned for settling the affairs of Germany) the original aspect of the war was entirely changed; and Austria, from the character of an aggressor in which she was proud of appearing, was compelled to submit to one which she hated and to which custom had not reconciled her. At no period of his dazzling career did the genius of Napoleon seem more completely to prostrate all opposition: at no time perhaps did the talents of a single individual exercise such an influence on the fate of the world. The forces which he had in the field had been not only unequal in numbers to those of the enemy; but they were in a military point of view misplaced and imperfectly combined. Napoleon arrived alone; found himself under all these disadvantages; and by his unrivalled genius came in the course of five days in complete triumph out of a struggle which bore to any one else a character so unpromising. It was no wonder that others, nay that he himself should have annexed to his person the degree of superstitious reverence claimed for the chosen instruments of Destiny, whose path must not be crossed, and whose arm cannot be arrested.

While the relics of the Archduke Charles's army were in full retreat to Bohemia, Napoleon employed the 23rd and 24th of April in reviewing his troops and distributing honours and rewards with a liberal hand. It was on occasions like these that he was seen to the utmost advantage: if sometimes too much of the soldier among sovereigns, no one could pretend with so good a right to be a sovereign among soldiers. 'I create you a knight: what is your name?' he said to a soldier, striking him familiarly on the cheek. 'You ought to know it well,' answered the soldier, 'since I am the man who in the deserts of Syria when you were in extremity, relieved you from my flask.' Napoleon instantly recollected the individual and the circumstance: 'I make you a knight,' he said, 'with an annuity of twelve hundred francs—what will you do with so much money?' 'Drink with my comrades to the health of him who is so necessary to us.' The Generals had their share in the Imperial bounty, particularly Davoust, to whose brilliant execution of the manœuvres commanded by Napoleon the victory was in a great measure to be attributed. He was created Duke of Eckmühl. Napoleon by connecting the names of the places where great battles were fought with the titles of those who contributed to gain them, allied the recollection of their merits with his own grateful acknowledgment of them; and made every new title he conferred a powerful spur to fresh exertions in the path of honour and ambition.

The Archduke Charles after the defeat at Eckmühl threw himself into the defiles and mountainous passes of Bohemia, where he could

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have made a protracted defence, had Buonaparte chosen to follow him. But instead of entangling himself in the pursuit, being in possession of the right bank of the Danube and of the high road to that city, he marched straight to Vienna. It is true, General Hiller, who had been repulsed at Landshut, had been joined by a considerable reserve and was placed between him and the capital: the Archduke, should he advance, might hang upon his rear; a strong spirit of discontent loomed like a black cloud over the mountains of the Tyrol; and the north of Germany had begun to manifest a feeling of soreness and resistance to the galling pressure of evils which they had intended for others, but had never meant should come home to themselves. These doubtful considerations, which might have staggered a man of less resolution than Buonaparte, only accelerated his determination to compel Austria to a peace, by descending the Danube and occupying her capital a second time. All was shortly in motion. General Hiller, too weak to attempt the defence of the Inn, retreated to Ebersberg, a village with a castle upon the river Traun, a position which was deemed next to impregnable, and into which the Austrians had thrown thirty thousand men. It was carried by Massena on the 3rd of May in a furious assault, in which the loss was nearly equal to the victors and the vanquished. General Hiller retired to St. Polten and crossed the Danube at Muntern, hoping to effect his junction with the Archduke on the left bank, and leaving the right open to Buonaparte's march on Vienna. This city has no other fortifications than those which defended it against the Turks in 1683. The Archduke Maximilian had the command of the garrison, which was not numerous enough to hold out against the enemy. The Emperor and the greater part of his family had fled to Buda in Hungary; only one remained behind, the Archduchess Maria-Louisa, who was confined by indisposition, and soon after destined to be carried away as a hostage and a bride. The shower of bombs first fell on the palace, but as soon as Buonaparte was apprised of the situation of the Archduchess, the palace was spared, and the storm of missiles directed to other quarters. The intention of defending the capital was not long persisted in; the Archduke with his troops evacuated the city, and the capitulation was signed on the 12th. Buonaparte did not enter Vienna, but fixed his head-quarters at Schönbrunn, a palace of the Emperor's in the vicinity. The Archduke Charles, unable to prevent the fall of Vienna, now thought only of relieving it.

He approached the left bank of the Danube, therefore, which had been swoln by the rains and melting of the snow, and over which the bridges had been destroyed to prevent the enemy from passing at their ease, as they had done in 1805. Buonaparte, who was on the



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right bank, anxious to give battle to the Archduke and put an end to the contest, endeavoured to pass over first at Neusdorf about half a league above Vienna (where the stream is narrow and rapid)—but failing in the attempt (five hundred men whom he pushed across having been cut off and taken) he proceeded to a place called Ebersdorf, two leagues below Vienna, where the Danube is divided into five branches, and here had a bridge thrown across the islands which form them, the large Isle of Lobau being the last or next to the left bank of the river. The Archduke did not seem disposed to interrupt the construction of the bridges or the passage of the river. On the 19th Buonaparte hastened the finishing of the last bridge, and on the 20th passed over with about thirty thousand infantry and six thousand horses, occupying a little plain between the villages of Aspern to the left and Essling on the right. Aspern was half a mile, Essling a mile and three quarters from the bridge. These villages with a redoubt hastily constructed to guard the bridge were occupied by the French.

The reports brought in during the night concerning the enemy were contradictory and uncertain. Many lights were seen on the heights of Bisamberg; but nearer to the French and in their front, the horizon exhibited a pale streak of about a league in length, the reflected light of numerous watch-fires, which a rising ground between prevented from being themselves visible. From such indications as could be collected, Lannes was of opinion that they had only a strong rear-guard before them, while Massena maintained that they were in presence of the whole Austrian army. Napoleon was on horseback by break of day on the 21st to judge for himself; but clouds of light troops prevented his getting near enough to reconnoitre accurately. Presently the skirmishers were withdrawn, and the Austrians were seen advancing with their whole force, double in number to the French, and with two hundred and twenty pieces of artillery. Yet with this vast disproportion of odds, they were strangely astonished at the stand which they made on this occasion, as the French were mortified and reproached with having suffered a repulse or made only a drawn battle of it instead of a complete victory. The conflict commenced about four in the afternoon with a furious attack on the village of Aspern, which was taken and retaken several times, and at the close of the day remained (except the church and churchyard) in the possession of Massena, though on fire with the bombs and choked up with the slain. Essling was the object of three general attacks, against all which the French stood their ground. Lannes was at one time on the point of being overpowered, had not Napoleon by a sudden charge of cavalry come to his relief. Night separated the combatants. The next day the battle was renewed, each party having

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received reinforcements. The French retook the church of Aspern; but the fighting was as obstinate and sanguinary as ever. Buonaparte observing that the Austrians bent all their force on the village of Aspern on their right, keeping back their left and centre, concluded that the last were their feeblest points, and came to the immediate resolution of moving forward the whole French centre and right wing, in hopes of overpowering and outflanking them on their weak side. The Austrian line was in danger of being turned and pierced by this movement. The Archduke Charles with equal presence of mind and intrepidity hastened to the spot where the shock was greatest; filled up the chasms which had been made in his line with the reserve; and seizing a standard, himself led the grenadiers to the charge. Thus stood the battle doubtful but fearful to the Austrians, when suddenly the bridge which Buonaparte had established over the Danube was swept away by the flood.

This accident made it necessary for the French General to think of measures for securing or restoring his communications with the right bank. Fortunately for him, that end of the bridge which connected the Isle of Lobau with the left bank on which they were fighting remained uninjured, and was protected by fortifications. This, together with the cannon of Essling and the extraordinary conduct and valour of the troops, enabled Buonaparte to withdraw the remains of his army into the Isle of Lobau and to establish himself there during the night. The loss on both sides had been dreadful, being conjectured at twenty thousand killed and wounded in each army. General St. Hilaire, one of the best French generals, was killed in the action, and Lannes mortally wounded was brought to die in the island. Both his legs had been shattered to pieces in the last assault; yet he refused to die, and insisted that the surgeon ought to be hanged who could not cure a Marshal and Duke of Montebello. He could only be pacified when Buonaparte was near him, clung round him as if even Death had not power to tear him from the God of his idolatry, and called upon his name to the last as if it were a spell to charm anguish and despair. It could not be that he who was called the Roland of the army was afraid of death; but the memory of a hundred victories swelled in his bosom, and he had not yet slaked his thirst of glory! Buonaparte lamented him much; said he had found him a mere swordsman, but that he soon rose to the highest rank in his profession, and would have improved still more had he lived; and (what was the highest praise of all) spoke of him as one of those who, he felt confident, would not have deserted him in his misfortunes!

On the morning of the 23rd, the day after the bloody battle of Aspern, Napoleon found himself cooped up with his wounded and

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diminished forces in the island of Lobau and another smaller one, facing Enzersdorf, separated from the left bank by a channel only forty yards wide. His communication with Davoust and the troops on the right bank was completely cut off by the breaking down of the bridges the day before. Here, had the enemy been as alert in improving their advantages as he was in repairing his disasters, he might have been assailed and overpowered; yet the Archduke in these circumstances did nothing, but remained spell-bound by the recollections of so many former defeats, provoked and sustained. Buonaparte on the other hand set to work with unexampled activity, undismayed by his situation, patient of his repulse, submitting to necessity and mastering it as the horse is tamed by the rider; and on the morning of the second day had re-established his communications with Davoust; had converted the Isle of Lobau into an entrenched camp defended by battering-cannon from surprise or storm; and had constructed three bridges lower down (either unsuspected or unopposed by the Austrians, who still persisted in their first persuasion that he had no other mode of communication with the left bank than the bridge near Aspern) by which he sallied forth a few days after to be once more the assailant and the victor. He might be said to laugh at defeat; and the impediments or stumbling-blocks thrown in his way were only the 'vantage-ground from which he returned to the charge with increased vigour and success.

New and formidable reinforcements were expected to join the combatants. The Archduke John had been successful over the Viceroy in Italy, and had compelled him to retire upon the Adige, till the news of his defeat at Eckmühl made him hasten back through Hungary to his brother's assistance. He was followed by Eugene Beauharnais, who gained the frontiers of Hungary as soon as he did; and the town of Raab surrendering after a siege of eight days opened the road for the Viceroy to join the Emperor; while the Archduke John crossing the Danube at Presburg below Vienna, hastened forward to effect his junction with the Archduke Charles. Napoleon did not allow him time. On the 5th of July, at ten o'clock at night, the French began to cross from the islands in the Danube to the left-hand bank, either in gun-boats which silenced the Austrian batteries or over the new bridges which were out of reach of their fire. At day-light, the Archduke had the unpleasant surprize of finding the whole French army on the left bank of the river, after having turned the fortifications which he had erected to oppose their passage. Essling and Enzersdorf were taken, and the French line of battle was formed on the extremity of the Archduke's left wing. He endeavoured to outflank their right in turn, while the French made a push to break the Austrian centre

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stationed at Wagram, of which village only one house remained standing, and which was occupied by the Archduke Charles, when night closed the battle. Courier upon courier was sent to the Archduke John to hasten his march. On the next day, the 6th of July, was fought the famous battle of Wagram, in which the Archduke committed the error of extending his line too much. The enemy perceived this advantage, and Lauriston with a hundred pieces of cannon having broken through the centre, and Davoust turning the whole left wing at the same time, decided the victory. Napoleon was everywhere in the hottest of the fight, though the appearance of his retinue drew on him a shower of grape by which he was constantly endangered. He rode along in front of the line upon a horse as white as snow called the Euphrates, and which had been a present from the Sophi of Persia. The shots were flying in every direction; and one of them hit Marshal Bessieres, who fell from his horse as if struck by a thunderbolt. Buonaparte seeing it, and thinking he was killed, turned away and said, 'Let us avoid another scene,' in allusion to Marshal Lannes. He complained that the cavalry towards the close of the action did not do their duty, and had deprived him of the fruits of his victory. Murat's absence was felt, who instead of brandishing a sword was at this time wielding his new Neapolitan sceptre. The French took twenty thousand prisoners, and so complete was the discomfiture that when the Archduke John came up with a part of his army before the battle was quite over, he was glad to retire from the field unnoticed by the enemy. All hope of further resistance was now abandoned by the Austrian generals and government; and they concluded an armistice with Buonaparte at Znaim, by which they agreed to evacuate the Tyrol, and put the citadels of Brunn and Gratz into the hands of Napoleon as pledges of their sincerity in demanding peace.

While Buonaparte was striking these body-blows at the Coalition, its extremities seemed to feel the quivering and convulsive throes of a last expiring agony. The war in the Tyrol assumed a romantic and picturesque character, corresponding with the habits of the natives and the nature of the scenery. The following touching account of the condition of the people is given by one, whom (when he indulges the untrammelled bent of his mind) no one can equal in beauty or in power. 'The extremes of rank and wealth are unknown in those pastoral districts: they have almost no distinction among the inhabitants; neither nobles nor serfs, neither office-bearers nor dependents; in one sense, neither rich nor poor. Their magistrates in peace and leaders in war were no otherwise distinguished from the rest of the nation than by their sagacity and general intelligence. As great a degree of equality as is perhaps consistent with the existence



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of society is to be found in the Tyrol.' And we are to be tantalised with this picture, made studiously mild and amiable, not as a foil, but as a cover to the designs of despotism; and by one whom the same words of liberty and equality, used in any other connection and for any other purpose, would throw into the rage and hysterics of a fine lady who sees a toad or spider near her. The poor Tyrolese did not know that it was the attempt to extend this model of 'the best possible' state of society for the benefit of the common kind, and the determination of their lordly masters to trample on and crush that spark of hope that threatened the downfall of all that is corrupt and odious in governments, again and again thrown back in defeat and dismay on the aggressors' heads, that at length brought the tide of war and conquest into the remote recesses of their mountain-fastnesses (free for that reason) and rudely tore asunder all their previous habits and connections. If there is any thing that could wound the ears of absolute sovereigns, it must be the shrill cry of liberty raised in their defence, when they know it is the fixed purpose to destroy and betray its very name, on which they have staked and are still ready to stake their own existence and that of all belonging to them. The lords of the earth must be sunk low indeed when they are obliged to appeal to the people to raise them from the dust. No wonder they so soon resent the interposition of their subjects as an impertinence or dangerous freedom at best. The Austrian government felt so little sympathy with the Tyrolese that at the peace they were given up without any reluctance to their fate; and Hoffer with thirty others of these plebeian volunteers in the cause of Legitimacy expiated their mistake in not knowing their own side of the question, as rebels and traitors on the scaffold. While the Archduke John proceeded into Italy to awaken the loyalty of the inhabitants in favour of their old masters, the Archduke Ferdinand advanced northward to kindle the patriotism of the Poles in favour of their new oppressors. He had over-run the Duchy of Warsaw, and might have made a present of his share of the partition of Poland to the King of Prussia, had not the royal hands been at this time tied up from receiving back that recent and equitable acquisition. At the same time Katt, Schill, and Dornberg raised the standard of revolt in the north of Germany, and were resolved to set the King of Prussia free in spite of himself. After the battle of Eckmuhl, he disavowed their proceedings, and they perished in the adventurous attempt to shake off their new subjection and to return in triumph and as avengers to their old bondage. These irregular and ungovernable ebullitions of loyalty and patriotism are well described as opposed to 'that cold and passive slavery of mind which makes men as patient under a change of masters as the dull

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animal who follows with indifference any person who has the end of the halter in his hand.' It is the change of masters that excites all the resistance and resentment: the attempt to shake off the slavery itself would call for greater indignation and an universal combination to crush it. Man is not the only animal that submits to slavery; but he is the only animal that runs mad for the love of it! The Duke of Brunswick set up to play the antic about the same time, with his banners in mourning and his death's-heads emblazoned on them—'his was a fee-grief due to his single breast'—he had a father slain, as if *he* only had a father slain in that long and bloody contest which his father provoked and announced to Europe. The presumption implied under this mask of filial piety is the best comment on the principles in which he had been brought up. For sovereigns and princes to be in all other respects privileged and unlike other men is an old story; but that they should not be vulnerable to cannon-balls or that they should not die of their wounds, is new and paradoxical. If their being in this nice point liable to the common lot entails revenge and hatred on a whole nation who had dared to meet them in the field, really after this they have nothing more to do but to imitate the example of the Nays, who cry out to the Parias when they hear them coming to get out of their way, lest if they should be contaminated with their sight, they should be obliged to kill them! The Duke of Brunswick in spite of the risks he ran and the desperation of his undertaking, escaped by good fortune to England, 'where the people were as mad as he;' and fell at last on that day which sealed the doom his father had foretold to France and freedom three-and-twenty years before!

We figured at this crisis by our well-known expedition to Antwerp and the island of Walcheren, which cost the lives of several thousand British troops cooped up in an unhealthy swamp; and (more alarming still) might have cost the lives of two of our British statesmen, who fought a duel about their share in the honour of that disastrous enterprise. Fouché (as Minister of the Interior for the time) did himself no good with his master by sending Bernadotte (who was at Paris in a sort of disgrace for claiming the merit of the battle of Wagram to himself) to take the command of forty thousand men hastily collected for the defence of Antwerp; and by boasting in a proclamation, that 'however Napoleon might add by his genius to the glory of France, he was not necessary to enable Frenchmen to repel invaders from her soil.' Russia showed an evident disinclination to join heartily as an ally with France against Austria, though none to complete the annexation of Finland to her empire or to march on the Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia with the connivance of France, which had

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been made the price of her alliance. Buonaparte saw through this conduct and the thin veil of professions which disguised it. 'I must not give way,' he said, 'to a vain illusion. They have all sworn my ruin, but have not the courage to compass it.' The Pope too played his cards with that instinctive cunning and evasive pertinacity with which power clings to its own maintenance or to the shadow of authority. His predecessor had proudly joined his banner to that of Austria and marched against France in 1796: he himself refused to join in any quarrel with the English (though heretics) as universal father of the Christian church. Thus zeal for Holy Church or Christian charity by dictating alternately neutrality or hostility pointed to one and the same end. Pius VII. refused peremptorily to man the fortress of Ancona against the English or to let French troops march from Naples through the Pope's territory to repel the invasion of Upper Italy by the Austrians. He was therefore dispossessed of his temporalities which he made use of to screen the enemies of France; and as he on this excommunicated the Emperor, he was conducted a prisoner first to Savona and afterwards to Fontainebleau, so as to place both the successor of Charlemagne and the successor of St. Peter in no very pleasant or creditable point of view.

By the treaty of Schönbrunn Austria gave up less than from the nature of her aggression and the losses she had sustained there was reason to expect. What she chiefly ceded were some states on the borders of Germany and Italy tending to strengthen the province of Illyria belonging to France, and her only seaport of Trieste, so as to cut off the possibility of her communication with England. The moderation of the terms and the length to which the conferences had run were afterwards supposed to be better understood when the intended marriage of Napoleon with the Archduchess Maria-Louisa came to be known. The conferences were chiefly carried on by Buonaparte in person, who lavished every attention and courtesy on the Austrian commissioners, so that from his manner alone it was conjectured that something more than mere politics or territorial arrangements was on the carpet. This might however be a mere courtly conjecture, conjured up by brains ever on the watch for every turn of fortune. Yet it is certain that the serious steps towards a divorce dated from this period.—Difficulties however sometimes arose, and the course of the negotiation did not run quite smooth; and once in particular, Napoleon coming out of his room with the Prince of Neufchâtel was heard to say, 'If they do not soon put an end to it, I will send for the Grand-Duke of Wurtzburg and place the Imperial crown of Austria on his head.' It was during this delay that he received the news of the battle of Talavera, which vexed him a good

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deal: and it was a month before he learnt the particulars, owing to the interruption of the communications between Bayonne and Madrid. On this occasion he said of the officers commanding in Spain, 'Those men are very self-sufficient. I am allowed to possess some superiority of talent; and yet I never think I can have an army sufficiently numerous to fight a battle even with an enemy I have been accustomed to defeat. I collect about me all the troops I can bring together; they on the contrary advance boldly to attack an enemy with whom they are scarcely acquainted, and yet they only bring one half of their troops to the contest. Is it possible to manœuvre more awkwardly? I cannot be present everywhere. Had the three corps of Soult, Ney, and Mortier been with me, I should have given the Austrians work.' At length, peace was signed; and the same day he sent for M. Champagny, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who had been ostensibly carrying on a similar negociation with Count Metternich at Altenburg. He asked M. Champagny, if he had not been surprised at the little he had had to do at Altenburg and at the turn things had taken? The other replied that 'in his quality of Minister of Foreign Affairs he indeed knew little of what was passing.' The Emperor laughed, and seemed to enjoy the triumph over his Minister. He set off for France two days after (16th of October) and on the 1st of November received the congratulations of the Senate on having fixed the peace and happiness of the world on a solid and lasting basis.

While Buonaparte was at Schönbrunn, his life was in danger from one of those accidents to which persons in his situation are always exposed. It was his custom to review the troops every morning in the court before the palace. He descended to the parade by a flight of steps and generally stopped at the bottom to speak to and receive petitions from different persons. One day, being anxious to review some French prisoners that had been exchanged, and wanting to interrogate them more particularly as to their situation, he did not pause in descending the steps of the palace, but passed on directly towards the troops. An individual, dressed in a plain blue frock and holding a paper in his hand, seeing that Napoleon did not stop, insisted on following him and presenting his petition himself. Berthier, who was in attendance on the Emperor, told him that he might deliver his petition when the review was over: Napoleon, taken up with his prisoners, did not perceive what was passing behind him. In spite of the recommendation of the Prince of Neufchâtel, the stranger continued to follow, pretending that the object of his petition did not admit of delay, and that he must speak with Napoleon himself. General Rapp, the aide-de-camp on duty, seeing that he still persevered and thrust himself in among the general officers who formed the Emperor's



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suite, seized him by the collar of his riding-coat, at the same time loudly telling him to retire: in doing so, Rapp felt the handle of some instrument which this man carried in a side-pocket: he kept fast hold of him, and gave him in charge to two *gendarmes* to secure and take him to the guard-house. On examination a large knife was found upon him, with which he confessed it was his intention to assassinate the Emperor. Napoleon is said to have known nothing of what happened till he returned to the palace, when he ordered the man to be brought before him. He stated that he was the son of a Lutheran clergyman at Erfurt, and that he had left his own country to put in execution the design in which he had just failed, but he considered the attempt as the most glorious action of his life. Napoleon asked, what harm he had done him? He answered, None; but that he was the most cruel enemy of Germany, which he had ruined by the war he had waged against it. Buonaparte interrupted him by saying, 'Why then did you not kill the Emperor, as he was the cause of the war, and not I?' He replied, 'Oh! he is a blockhead; and if he were killed, another like him would be put upon the throne; but if you were dead, it would not be easy to find such another.'<sup>1</sup> 'But were I to pardon you,' resumed Napoleon, 'would you not in gratitude relinquish the idea of assassinating me?' 'I would not advise you,' said this enthusiast, 'for I have sworn your death.' 'Surely this man is mad,' said the Emperor, and he had his physician Corvisart to feel his pulse; but he declared that it was quite steady and regular. The man, whose name was Stubbs, was placed in confinement and kept without food or sleep for twenty-four hours to try if this would have any effect upon him. But he still refused to make any disclosures or to disavow his purpose for the future. Napoleon wished to have spared his life; but the danger of the example and the man's obstinacy were insisted on as doing away the possibility of clemency in his case. He was afterwards tried and shot.

O'Meara gives another instance of the kind, which must have occurred about the same period or shortly after.

'Another time,' proceeded the Emperor, 'a letter was sent to me by the King of Saxony, containing information that a certain person was to leave Stutgard on a particular day for Paris, where he

<sup>1</sup> Popular power when divided among the multitude is destroyed and weakened by discord and factions; when placed in the hands of an individual, it is endangered by aiming at him personally. Monarchical power has all the advantages of unity, and is safe from personal attack by its perpetuity. There is no getting rid of the race, however mischievous; and the only way to keep the peace is by putting down or removing any one as a public nuisance to whom they have taken a dislike as standing in the way either of their momentary caprices or permanent authority. The alternative is no doubt a pleasant one.

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would probably arrive on a day that was pointed out, and that his intentions were to murder me. A minute description of his person was also given. The police took its measures ; and on the day pointed out he arrived. They had him watched. He was seen to enter my chapel, to which I had gone on the celebration of some festival. He was arrested and examined. He confessed his intentions and said that when the people knelt down on the elevation of the host, he saw me gazing at the fine women ; at first he intended to advance and fire at me (in fact he had advanced near to me at the moment) ; but upon a little reflection thought that would not be sure enough, and he determined to stab me with a knife which he had brought for the purpose. I did not like to have him executed, and ordered that he should be kept in prison. When I was no longer at the head of affairs, this man, who had been detained in prison for several months after I had left Paris, and ill-treated, I believe, got his liberty. Soon after, he said that his designs were no longer to kill me ; but that he would murder the King of Prussia for having ill-treated the Saxons and Saxony. On my return from Elba I was to be present at the opening of the Legislative Body, which was to be done with great state and ceremony. When I went to open the Chamber, this same man, who had got in, fell down by some accident, and a parcel, containing some chemical preparation, exploded in his pocket, and wounded him severely. It never has been clearly ascertained what his intentions were at this time. It caused great alarm amongst the Legislative Body, and he was arrested. I have since heard that he threw himself into the Seine.'

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5. *Napoleon observes.* Gourgaud and Montholon, *Mémoires* (1823, II. 231). In this and the two following chapters he is basing himself on their narrative.
16. *I have dwelt on this.* See the introductory note to *Table Talk* (vol. VIII) for an essay 'On French Character' which Hazlitt thought of writing but (apparently) did not write. We have the gist of it here, no doubt, as well as in several other places.
18. *Buonaparte labours hard.* Gourgaud and Montholon, *Mémoires*, II. 193-94.
24. *If Lady Wortley Montague speaks truth.* Cf. her *Letters*, April 1, 1717.
25. *The famous work on Egypt.* *Description de l'Égypte*, 10 vols. folio and atlas of 10 vols., Paris, 1809-22, compiled by Napoleon's scientific commission.
26. *Five in breadth.* In the course of a letter to his publisher (Henry Leigh Hunt) of January 18, 1828, Hazlitt writes: 'Do learn the width of the valley of the Nile from some authentic person (*forsan* Travels in Mesopotamia), and if it be more than five leagues (which I suspect it must be), cancel and change to fifteen, fifty, or whatever be the actual number. It is five in Napoleon's *Memoirs*, followed by Thibaudeau *in vita*.' (Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's text, *The Hazlitts*, I. 486.)  
*The present system of administration.* Which may be regarded as having come to an end in 1848, when, on the death of Mehemet Ali, Egypt passed under Franco-British influence. In 1800 the French estimated the population at 2,460,000; the census of 1846 gave the figures at 4,476,400. In the thirty-five years of British occupation from 1882 to 1917 the population increased from nearly seven to nearly thirteen millions. The figures at the latest census (1927) were 14,168,756.
28. *Lord Byron endeavoured.* 'In Venice, there are only eight horses: four are of brass and stand above the entrance to the Cathedral: the other four are alive and stand in Lord Byron's stable.' Henry Matthews (1789-1828), *Diary of an Invalid, being the Journal of a Tour in pursuit of health in Portugal, Italy, and France, in the years 1817, 1818, and 1819.* London, 1820.  
*Says Voltaire.* Cf. the essay 'On Cant and Hypocrisy.'  
*The divinæ particula auræ.* Horace, *Satires*, II. 2.
30. 'Blown stifling back upon himself!' 'Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth.' *Paradise Lost*, XI. 313.  
*Bacchus scattered god-like gifts.* Cf. this passage with another in 'Mr. Wordsworth' in *The Spirit of the Age*.  
*An English cruiser.* In the letter to Hazlitt's publisher quoted above (note, p. 26) we also read: 'You must give me one cancel at p. 209, vol. II., and alter the word Buccaneer to Cruiser. An Erratum won't do.' The page in the first edition is cancelled accordingly.
38. *Wilson himself, I dare say . . . knows now that he was mistaken.* Sir Robert Wilson (1777-1849), who took part in Abercrombie's expedition, published in 1802 *A History of the British Expedition to Egypt*, in which, with other alleged 'atrocities,' the El-Arish and Jaffa incidents are fully described.
58. 'Unbought grace of life,' etc. 'The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone!' Burke's lament for 'the age of chivalry,' *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 89).

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58. *Madame de Staël addressed the pathetic appeal.* 'On serait toujours tenté de leur dire, comme mademoiselle de Mancini à Louis xiv : *Vous êtes roi, sire, et vous pleurez !—Vous êtes une nation, et vous pleurez !*' Preface, *De l'Allemagne* (1813).
76. *Falstaff's 'ten men in buckram.'* 1 *Henry IV.*, Act II., Scene 4.
77. *Buonaparte had no such ground of objection.* Cf. this passage with the Preface (vol. XIII).
- '*Discite justitiam moniti,*' etc. Cf. Virgil, *Æneid*, vi. 620.
80. *Human nature, which never changes.* Cf. Hazlitt's axiom (on Fox) in the notes to the *Eloquence of the British Senate* : 'A man in himself is always the same, though he may not always appear to be so.'
84. *Of this subject I have spoken already.* Vol. XIII., footnote p. 131, and pp. 326–28.
86. *The eulogium which Mirabeau passed upon him.* In the tribune. Hazlitt is following Mignet.
87. *Mons parturiens, etc.* Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 138.
90. *Mr. Burke's sarcasm.* *A Letter to a Noble Lord* (ed. Bohn, p. 143).
99. *Gardens of Alcinoüs.* *Odyssey*, vi. xiii.
103. *According to the poet.* Racine, *Britannicus*, Act IV., Scene 4.
104. *A like accident.* When driving the six horses sent him by the Duke of Oldenburg. The episode was celebrated in verse by Denham and by Wither.
- A work of great authenticity.* Comte Thibaudeau's *Mémoires sur le consulat (1799–1804) par un ancien conseiller d'État.* 2 vols. 1826.
114. '*Acquired glory in that which is borrowed.*' Unidentified.
116. *Crescentini the singer.* Girolamo Crescentini (1769–1846), Italian eunuch, sang in London in 1786–87, and in 1805 was attached to the court of Vienna. Napoleon found him there and persuaded him to go to Paris, where he was an immense success.
- Grétry, Paisiello, etc.* André Ernest Modeste Grétry (1741–1813) known to his contemporaries as 'Molière de la musique,' who composed, among many other works, the music for Sedaine's light opera, *Richard Cœur de Lion*; Giovanni Paisiello (1741–1816), Italian composer, invited to Paris by Napoleon from the court of Ferdinand III. of Naples in 1802; Étienne Henri Méhul (1763–1817), composer of forty-two operas; Jean François Lesueur (1760–1837): succeeded Paisiello as *maestro di cappella* to Napoleon.
- David, Gros, etc.* Jacques Louis David (1748–1825), painter and legislator, member of the Institute, 1796; Antoine Jean Gros (1771–1835), pupil of David and recorder of Napoleon's military triumphs; Antoine Charles Horace Vernet (1758–1835), military and landscape painter; Robert Le Fèvre (1756–1830), portrait painter.
- Lagrange, La Place, etc.* Joseph Louis Lagrange (1736–1813), mathematician; Pierre Simon, Marquis de Laplace (1749–1827), mathematician and astronomer; Claude Louis Berthollet (1748–1822), chemist; Gaspard Monge (1746–1818), mathematician; Louis Nicolas Vauquelin (1763–1829), chemist; Jean Antoine Claude Chaptel (1756–1832), chemist and statesman; Baron Louis Bernard Guyton de Morveau (1737–1816), chemist; Victor Joseph Étienne de Jouy (1764–1846), dramatist; Pierre Marie François Louis Baour-Lormian (1770–1854), poet and dramatist; Louis Fontanes (1757–1821) poet and politician; Jean Charles Léonard de Sismondi (1773–1842), Italian historian; Pierre Louis Ginguené (1748–1816), literary critic.
121. '*We see a softness,*' etc. A favourite Hazlitt quotation, in whole or in part, which I have not succeeded in identifying.
- '*A negro has a soul,*' etc. *Tristram Shandy*, Book IX., chap. 6. The quotation is made from memory.
- '*The images of God carved in ebony.*' Fuller, 'The good Sea-captain.'

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122. *Adam Smith has observed.* In his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, published in 1759.
130. *Like one entire chrysolite.* Cf. *Otello*, v. 2. 145.  
*'Like an exhalation of rich-distilled perfumes.'* Cf. *Comus*, 556.  
*'The Ancient of Days.'* *Daniel*, vii. 9, etc.
131. *Baited with the rabble's curse.* Unacknowledged from *Macbeth*, v. 8. 29.
134. *Shooting a bookseller.* The reference is to the trial by court-martial and execution of the bookseller Palm, of Nuremberg, in 1806, for publishing an incitement against the French army. See footnote, *ante*, p. 224.  
 Note. *An irritable poet.* Campbell (*Life and Letters*, ed. Beattie, III. 340). His celebrity at this date was 'great.' He was elected Lord Rector of Edinburgh University three time in succession (1826-29), the third time over Sir Walter Scott, and on his death in 1844 was buried in Westminster Abbey.
137. *Miss Harris's retort on her sister.* Cf. Fielding's *Amelia*, Bk. III., chap. 11.  
*The cypher-hand of Pitt.* Cf. Hazlitt's 'Character of Pitt' in *Political Essays*, and also a footnote on his oratory, *Eloquence of the British Senate*, vol. 1. p. 377.  
*'It is the gibberish and patois of affected legitimacy.'* Cf. 'Their language is in the patois of fraud; in the cant and gibberish of hypocrisy.' Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 123).  
*'The gorge of freedom rises at.'* Cf. *Hamlet*, v. 1. 207.  
*For near half a century.* Cf. Hazlitt on George III in *The English Comic Writers*: 'His present Majesty during almost the whole of his reign has been constantly mounted on a great War-horse'; and *ante*, pp. 199-201.
139. Note. *'Sweet revenge grew barsb.'* *Otello*, v. 2. 116.
148. *How many groan there at present!* Austria was supreme in Italy, of course, following the Holy Alliance of 1815.
154. *The Pillar of Victory still stands.* Erected by the Senate in 1806 in honour of Napoleon. In 1814 the statue by Chaudet was taken down, and at the Restoration it was replaced by a *fleur-de-lis* surmounted by a white flag. A year after Hazlitt's death, Louis Philippe caused a new statue of the emperor to be placed on the summit, and in 1863 Napoleon III. replaced this by one resembling the original figure. The present column dates from 1875, the original having been overthrown during the Commune. Chaudet's bronze of Napoleon, executed at the same time as his large figure, forms the frontispiece to the present volume.  
*'The children of this world,' etc.* *St. Luke*, xvi. 8.  
*'Tis conscience,' etc.* *Hamlet*, III. 1. 83.
156. *'The sovereign'st thing on earth.'* 1 *Henry IV*, I. 3. 57.
159. *To try such offences.* 'Offices' in first and second editions.  
*The suspension of the Habeas Corpus in England.* In May 1794, during Hazlitt's college days in London, when Hardy, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall were tried for high treason.  
 Note. *An elaborate article on tyrannicide.* Coleridge's *The Friend*, No. 23 (Feb. 8, 1810). Southey was similarly moved. In 1811 he writes to Landor: 'Spain two centuries ago produced half a dozen men resolute in a mistaken cause to slay the Prince of Orange at the sacrifice of their own lives, and now she has not found one to aim a dagger at the heart of Bonaparte!' (Forster, *Landor*, I. 355).  
*'The ghost is an honest ghost.'* Cf. *Hamlet*, I. 5. 138.
160. *'J'ai fait des rois, Madame,' etc.* Cf. Voltaire, *Œdipe*, Act II., Scene 4.
161. *Like to a sort of steers,' etc.* *The Faerie Queene*, vi. 6. 28.  
*'Put a girdle round about the earth.'* *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. 1. 175.
164. *'Face-making.'* Cf. 'Leave thy damnable faces and begin.' *Hamlet*, III. 2. 267.
168. *Having refused to read the funeral service.* Hazlitt has a reference to this incident in 'On Actors and Acting' (*The Round Table*, vol. IV., p. 158); or perhaps

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- to a later one of the same kind in 1814, due to the revival of the influence of the clergy at the Bourbon restoration.
169. *A Lord Melville or a Lord Bathurst.* Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville (1742-1811), Secretary for War, 1794-1801. Hazlitt's reference is to the leading part he played in 1775-78 in opposition to proposals for conciliating the American colonists. Henry Bathurst, third Earl Bathurst (1762-1834), Secretary for War and the Colonies in Lord Liverpool's Government, and the Minister responsible for their St. Helena policy, 1815-21.
172. *Mr. Landor . . . owns.* In 'Landor, English Visitor, and Florentine Visitor' in the third volume of *Imaginary Conversations* (1828), which Hazlitt reviewed on publication. See the later volume devoted to his journalism.
176. *This at least to thank him for.* This reiteration of the note struck in the Preface will be remarked.
181. 'Clad all in proof.' Unidentified.  
*Talus, the Iron Man in Spenser. Faerie Queen, Book v.*
182. 'Farthest from them was best.' *Paradise Lost*, I. 247.  
'Deliverance to mankind.' Part of the refrain of Southey's *Carmen Triumpnale*.
183. *The English flocked over in crowds.* Hazlitt's own arrival, as a young art student, was delayed until October. His contemporary impressions may be read in his letters (*Life*, pp. 63-67). On October 20 he 'saw Bonaparte.' Three weeks later he regrets that he has 'not yet seen him near,' and he appears not to have done so before he left (with a certificate from the authorities of the Louvre dated 'le 12 Pluviose an 11,' i.e. February 1, 1803). At all events, he does not venture, either in this book or elsewhere, on any first-hand personal description. His (later) friend Thomas Manning, who, as a mathematician with Chinese leanings, had made straight for Paris in January without waiting for the definitive treaty, was more fortunate. His account to Lamb on April 6 is: 'I had again the satisfaction of seeing the Premier Consul go by, clad in his simple blue uniform. Oh, what a God-like face!' To which Lamb retorts: 'What god does he most resemble? Mars, Bacchus, or Apollo? . . . I envy you your access to this great man.' (*Letters of Manning to Lamb*, ed. Anderson, pp. 69-70.)
184. *We should go to war with our friends.* Cf. 'Speeches in Parliament on the Distresses of the Country' and 'On the Effects of War and Taxes' in *Political Essays*.  
*The real grounds of the war were not the pretended ones.* Cf. Hazlitt's contemporary pamphlet, *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs* (vol. I., pp. 100-2).
185. 'It was a consummation,' etc. *Hamlet*, III. I. 63.  
*A short interval or breathing-space.* Cf. *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs* (vol. I., p. 100).
186. *Sebastiani.* Comte H. F. B. Sébastiani (1772-1851), soldier and diplomat, at this date French 'commercial agent' in the Levant, whose report, published in the *Moniteur* of January 30, 1803, was regarded in England as evidence of Napoleon's further Eastern designs.
187. *A celebrated advocate.* Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832), defended Jean Gabriel Peltier, a French refugee, who was tried in February 1803 at the instance of the French Government for a libel against Napoleon.  
*Bonaparte . . . was uniformly held up as a monster.* See on the pictorial side, J. Ashton's *English Caricature and Satire on Napoleon I.*, 2 vols., 1884, and on the literary, F. J. MacCunn's *The Contemporary English View of Napoleon*, 1914.
188. *As one of our own poets has feigned.* Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, Book II., cantos iv and v.  
*A writer of some note at the time boasted.* Coleridge, in the second of his two 'Letters to Mr. Fox' (*The Morning Post*, Nov. 9, 1802): 'And were you



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- pleased, Sir! to see your sovereign degraded into a mere gentleman usher to this upstart Corsican?' Cf. Hazlitt's 'Peter Pickthank' correspondence in *The Examiner* (1815), in the later volume devoted to his journalism.
188. *Vely*. Paul François Velly (1709-59), historian, whose *Histoire générale de la France* was brought to completion after his death (1785).
- Note. *Letters on England*. Published 1733.
189. *Malta*. Cf. *Free Thoughts*, vol. I., p. 101, and notes. 'It is abundantly clear that the British Ministers, having at last grasped the value of Malta, created all the difficulties in their power, and determined to cancel this article of the treaty.' (*Political History of England*, xi. 20.)
194. *M. de Vergennes*. Charles Gravier, Comte de Vergennes (1717-87). The treaty of commerce with England, in 1786, was his last diplomatic work.
- Colonel Despard*. Edward Marcus Despard (1751-1803), executed for high treason in 1803, after the failure of his 'plot' against the British Government. His address on the scaffold was loudly cheered, and extensively circulated.
197. *Another Iliad of woes*. Unacknowledged from Burke, *Regicide Peace* (ed. Payne, p. 116).
- The true, the constant and sole-moving one*. The reader will not lose sight of Hazlitt's standpoint from any lack of clearness or emphasis on his part. Cf. this passage with that on the First Coalition, vol. XIII., pp. 91-92, and *ante*, p. 208.
200. 'With double darkness bound.' Cf. 'In double night of darkness,' *Comus*, 335.
202. 'Thick and slab.' *Macbeth*, iv. i. 32.
208. *Mr. Cobbett's powerful pen*. Cobbett's pro-war pamphlet, *Important Considerations for the People of the Kingdom* (1803), was distributed broadcast by the Government, who sent a special copy to the officiating minister of every parish in England.
- '*Victorque sinon incendia*,' etc. Virgil, *Æneid*, II. 329-30.
211. *It had been lately united to England*. By the Act of Union, August 1800. The 'breach of faith' referred to was with the Irish Catholics, who were led to expect that union would be followed by emancipation, for which they waited thirty years. The 'mockery of justice' was the purchase of boroughs and 'packing' of the Irish Parliament to secure the passage of the articles of union. (*Political History of England*, x. 449-51.)
- '*Envy of [less] happier lands*.' *Richard II.*, II. i. 49.
212. *Mr. Malibus's celebrated Essay*. Published anonymously, in answer to 'the speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and other writers,' in 1798, and 'very much enlarged' in 1803, in the second edition to which Hazlitt wrote his *Reply*.
- Dr. Bisset*. Robert Bisset, LL.D (1759-1805), biographer of Burke and historian of the reign of George III. Hazlitt alludes to his *Sketch of Democracy* (1796), the aim of which was to show, by a survey of the democratic States of ancient times, that democracy is a vicious form of government.
- Mr. Mitford*. William Mitford's (1744-1827) *History of Greece* was published between 1784 and 1810, and thereafter went into repeated editions.
216. *An illustrious personage*. The Comte d'Artois, presumably, at this date in receipt of our hospitality, and afterwards Charles X.
- Note. 'His other atrocities.' Cf. introductory note, vol. XIII., p. 356.
218. 'Half-faced fellowship.' 1 *Henry IV.*, I. 3. 208.
219. 'Still as you rise,' etc. Waller, *Panegyric to my Lord Protector*.
220. *Not a guenon like Josephine*. 'Ganon' in first and second editions. I am indebted to Professor Weekley for this emendation, 'guenon' meaning literally a female monkey, but being commonly used formerly for a 'femme de mauvaise vie.'

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221. 'Like a devilish engine,' etc. *Paradise Lost*, iv. 17.
224. *Nor do I quail at its mention.* For Hazlitt's earlier expression of his views on the arrest and condemnation of the Duke d'Enghien see his 'Peter Pickthank' correspondence in *The Examiner* for 1815 in the later volume devoted to his journalism.
- Note. *Palm.* See *ante*, p. 134 and note.
225. 'The chase . . . was afoot.' Cf. 'The game's afoot.' *Henry V.*, III. i. 32.
227. *Savary . . . remarks.* In his *Extrait des Mémoires de M. le duc de Rovigo, concernant la catastrophe de M. le duc d'Enghien*, Paris, 1823. Galignani issued an English translation in the same year.
230. 'Make these odds even.' Cf. *Measure for Measure*, III. i. 41.
234. *Talleyrand is at present desirous.* Talleyrand's *Mémoires* were not published until 1891. Hazlitt is giving the contemporary impression, gathered no doubt in Paris.
235. 'Long, obscure and infinite.' Cf. Wordsworth, *The Borderers*, lines 1539-42, and see note under 'Mr. Wordsworth' in *The Spirit of the Age*.
236. 'Entire affection scorneth [hateth] nicer hands.' *Faerie Queene*, I. viii. 40.
- Mr. Landor . . . says.* 'The condemnation of Malesherbes, and the coronation of Buonaparte, are the two most detestable crimes committed by the French in the whole course of their Revolution. How different the destiny of the best and worst man amongst them!' 'Rousseau and Malesherbes,' *Imaginary Conversations*, Third Series. In his very friendly review of the book on publication (for which see the later volume devoted to his journalism) Hazlitt stigmatises this as 'an outrageous note.'
- I have nowhere in anything I may have written.* This declaration of his political faith is the more valuable as we do not get it in precisely the same terms elsewhere.
237. 'Divine and human majesty.' Unidentified.
- 'There's a [such] divinity doth hedge a king.' *Hamlet*, iv. 5. 133.
239. *In contempt of the choice of the people.* Hazlitt is fond of making play with this expression, after Burke (*Reflections on the French Revolution*, ed. Payne, p. 17).
- Detur optimo.* Proverbial.
240. *The meeting of Priam and Achilles.* *Iliad*, xxiv.
241. 'The memory of what has been,' etc. Wordsworth, 'Three Years She Grew,' 41.
- Since a little child I knelt, etc. Cf. the essay 'On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth,' which was written in Paris at this date.
243. *Ite, missa est.* The concluding words of the mass.
245. *The prefect of the palace.* Baron L. F. J. de Bausset's *Mémoires anecdotiques sur l'intérieur du palais impérial et sur quelques événements de l'empire depuis 1805 jusqu'au 1<sup>er</sup> mai 1814, pour servir à l'histoire de Napoléon* were published in two volumes in Paris in 1827.
249. *Her romance of Delphine.* Published in 1802.
251. *The Princess-Royal of England.* Charlotte Augusta (1766-1828), eldest daughter of George III., whose marriage to Frederick, afterwards Duke and King of Württemberg (May 18, 1797) is described in Miss Burney's *Diary*.
258. 'In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.' *Richard III.*, I. i. 4.
269. *A true and amiable light.* The 'circumstance' in question has little significance, of course, compared to the meeting with Countess Walewska in Warsaw the following winter, of which relationship Hazlitt is ignorant. I have not identified his authority for this part of his narrative.
271. 'Made kings his sentinels and thrones his martello towers.' Unidentified.
- 'The horrible shadow.' *Macbeth*, III. 4. 146.
272. Note. *M. Gaudin, Minister of Finance.* The *Mémoires, souvenirs, opinions et*

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- écrits* of M. M. C. Gaudin (1756–1841), created Duc de Gaëte in 1809, were published in Paris in two volumes in 1826.
273. *Mr. Pitt.* Cf. Hazlitt's 'Character of Mr. Pitt,' written in 1806 for *Free Thoughts* (vol. 1., pp. 108 *et seq.*) and reprinted in *The Round Table* and *Political Essays*.  
*Mr. Fox.* Cf. Hazlitt's 'Character of Mr. Fox,' written in 1807 for *The Eloquence of the British Senate*, and printed in this edition in *Political Essays*.
275. 'If he were an artist and could paint,' etc. Fox said this of France's treatment of Holland, not of Prussia. (May 24, 1803, *Speeches*, 1815, vi. 493.) Hazlitt makes the same mistake in a footnote to his *Round Table* paper 'On Gusto' (vol. iv., note to p. 78).
287. 'Men's judgments are a parcel of their fortunes.' *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. 13. 32.
292. 'Pleaded trumpet-tongued.' 'Will plead like angels trumpet-tongu'd,' *Macbeth*, 1. 7. 19.
293. *A great and admired writer.* Scott (*Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, 1827, v. 352).
302. 'As life were in them.' Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 5. 13.
305. 'Sounded the very base-string.' 1 *Henry IV.*, II. 4. 6.
308. *The Courier-office.* The Tory evening paper to which Coleridge contributed after 1809. See Hazlitt's *Edinburgh Review* paper, 'The Periodical Press.'  
*The same writers.* See Coleridge's 'On the Vulgar Errors respecting Taxes and Taxation' (*The Friend*, No. 12, Nov. 9, 1809); and Southey's 'On Parliamentary Reform' in the *Quarterly* for October 1816.
308. 'Lively, audible, and full of vent.' 'Spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent.' *Coriolanus*, iv. 5. 238.
- 'Flat, stale, and unprofitable.' *Hamlet*, 1. 2. 133.
- 'Heaven-born.' The compound is Miltonic.
315. Note. *Don Pedro Cavallos.* P. Cevallos, *An Exposure of the Arts and Machinations of the Emperor Napoleon to usurp the Crown of Spain*, Madrid and London, 1808.
316. 'Shows ugly.' Cf. *King Lear*, 1. 4. 290–91.
326. 'As he bad titles manifold.' Cf.

'In everything we are sprung  
 Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.'  
 Wordsworth's sonnet, *We must be free or die*.

Note. *Memoirs of the Duke of Rovigo.* Of which an English translation appeared in four volumes in 1828, the French edition in eight volumes appearing in Paris the following year.

327. *So cried up at one time by our patriots.* The new Cortes, convened in 1810, established the Constitution of 1812—which Ferdinand VII. swept away on his restoration in 1814, at the same time reviving the Inquisition.
329. Note. *David's picture.* This picture, much engraved during Hazlitt's lifetime and since, is now at Versailles. It was among those shown at an exhibition of David's work in London in 1815, which was reluctantly visited by Crabb Robinson. The unpublished portion of his *Diary* in Dr. Williams's Library has the following entry under June 12 of that year: 'We then drove to David's pictures of Buonaparte, which I refused to see, and to Lefèvre's picture of the same man, which Mrs. Pattison took her boys to see also. I was half displeased with her for such a rage for seeing an object she could have no moral interest in, and I almost reproached her with a vulgar curiosity to look at the copy of a being she ought to entertain an abhorrence of. I was afterwards pleased to find that in my repugnance to pay homage to the shadow of a villain I was supported by Wordsworth.' For Hazlitt, Crabb Robinson, and Wordsworth in Waterloo year see the present editor's *Life* (pp. 186–89).

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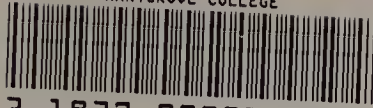
332. *Orlando's horn at the pass of Roncesvalles.* Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*.  
*The Dutchman in Candide.* Chap. v.
333. *Mr. Southey's pen in tracing these events.* In his *History of the Peninsular War* (1823-32).  
'Redolent of joy and youth,' etc. Gray, *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, 19.  
*What at the time was considered.* Southey wrote to Landor: 'The hand of Sir Hew Dalrymple should be nailed upon the pillory at Lisbon, and that of Sir Arthur Wellesley for a like exposition at Madrid.' (Forster, *Landor*, i. 355.)  
And Wordsworth wrote his pamphlet.
335. *Principal performers of the Théâtre Français.* François Joseph Talma (1763-1826), who made his début at the Comédie Française in 1787. Hazlitt saw him in Paris in 1802 and in London in 1817. Damas (d. 1834), one of the most brilliant of French actors to his retirement in 1825, when Hazlitt saw him in *Le Misanthrope*. Catherine-Joseph Ruftin, otherwise Duchesnois (1777-1835), classical tragédienne, whom Hazlitt missed seeing in Paris in 1825.
337. *An account of Buonaparte's conversation with Wieland.* Christoph Martin Wieland (1733-1813). His *Life* was published in four volumes in Leipzig in 1827.
338. *La Mort de Cæsar.* Voltaire's tragedy.
339. Note. *Muller, the celebrated Swiss historian.* Johann von Müller (1752-1809), the eight volumes of whose *Histoire de la Confédération Suisse* appeared between 1780 and his death.
342. *Mr. Frere.* John Hookham Frere (1769-1846). Hazlitt knew him as the fellow-spirit with Canning in *The Anti-Jacobin*, as diplomatist (he was recalled after the episode alluded to, and retired shortly afterwards), but not as the translator of Aristophanes (1839 *et seq.*).  
*In embarking at Corunna.* 'Disembarking' in first and second editions. The sentence is still oddly constructed.
343. 'Left alone with his glory.' Wolfe, *The Burial of Sir John Moore*.  
*Spanarelle's wife in the farce.* *Le Médecin malgré lui*.
344. *We are too poor now.* Hazlitt's reference is to the reactionary foreign policy of Wellington in general, and in particular to the King's Speech of January 29, 1828, which repudiated the English share in the Battle of Navarino. Greek independence was delayed, but followed in 1830.  
'But riches fineness,' etc. *Othello*, III. 3. 173.
352. *The following touching account.* Scott's. (*Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*, 1827, vol. VI., p. 312.) Hazlitt's further references are to Scott's assertion that 'The Austrians had always governed them with a singular mildness and respect for their customs; and had thus gained the affection of their Tyrolese subjects, who could not, therefore, understand how an allegiance resembling that of children to a parent should have been transferred without their consent to a stranger sovereign, with whom they had no tie of mutual feeling.'
353. 'The best possible.' *Candide*, Chap. I.  
'That cold and passive slavery of mind,' etc. Scott, *Napoleon*, VI. 335.
354. 'His was a fee-grief,' etc. Cf. *Macbeth*, IV. 3. 196-99.  
*The example of the Nayrs.* The aristocracy of the Malabar coast. Burke has a reference: 'Had your nobility and gentry . . . been such as the *Mamalukes* in Egypt, or the *Nayres* on the coast of Malabar, I do admit, that too critical an enquiry might not be advisable into the means of freeing the world from such a nuisance.' *Reflections on the French Revolution* (ed. Payne, p. 158).  
'Where the people were as mad as he.' Cf. *Hamlet*, V. I. 170.  
*Two of our British statesmen.* Canning and Castlereagh—two of Hazlitt's *bêtes noires*. The duel took place on September 21, 1809, and Canning was slightly wounded.





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