

JOHN ASHTON

ENGLISH CARICATURE
AND SATIRE ON
NAPOLEON I. VOLUME I
(OF 2)

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PREFACE

This book is not intended to be a History of Napoleon the First, but simply to reproduce the bulk of the Caricatures and Satires published in England on our great enemy, with as much of history as may help to elucidate them.

The majority of the caricatures are humorous; others are silly, or spiteful – as will occasionally happen nowadays; and some are too coarse for reproduction – so that a careful selection has had to be made. Gillray and Rowlandson generally signed their names to the work of their hands; but, wherever a caricature occurs unsigned by the artist, I have attributed it, on the authority of the late Edward Hawkins, Esq., some time Keeper of the Prints at the British Museum, to whatever artist he has assigned it. I have personally inspected every engraving herein described, and the description is entirely my own.

Should there, by chance, be an occasional discrepancy as to a date, it has been occasioned by the inconceivable contradictions which occur in different histories and newspapers. To cite an

instance: in three different books are given three different dates of Napoleon leaving Elba, and it was only by the knowledge that it occurred on a Sunday, and by consulting an almanac for the year 1815, that I was able absolutely to determine it.

The frontispiece is taken from a very rare print, and gives a novel view of Napoleon to us, who are always accustomed to see him represented in military uniform.

That my readers may find some instruction, mingled with the amusement I have provided for them, is the earnest wish of

JOHN ASHTON.

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND GENEALOGY – HIS OWN ACCOUNT – MAJORCAN OR GREEK EXTRACTION – ENGLISH BIOGRAPHIES

Curiously enough, it has never been practically settled whence the ancestors of Napoleon Bonaparte came. He, himself, cared little for the pride of birth, and when, during his Consulate, they manufactured for him a genealogy descending from a line of kings, he laughed at it, and said that his patent of nobility dated from the battle of Montenotte.

But, still, one would think he ought to know, for family tradition is strong; and if it can be trusted, this is his own account. ‘One day Napoleon questioned Canova about Alfieri, and Canova found an opportunity to render an important service to Florence, &c. “Sire,” said he, “authorise the President of the Academy of Florence to take care of the frescoes and pictures. I heartily wish it. That will reflect great honour on your Majesty, who, I am assured, is of a noble Florentine family.” At these words the Empress (Maria Louisa) turned towards her husband and said: – “What! are you not Corsican?” “Yes,” replied Napoleon, “but of Florentine origin.” Canova then said: – “The President of the

Academy of Florence, the Senator Alessandria, is of one of the most illustrious houses in the country, which has had one of its ladies married to a Bonaparte, thus you are Italian, and we boast of it.” “I am, certainly,” added Napoleon.¹

Prince Napoleon Louis Bonaparte (brother to the Emperor) published in 1830, at Florence, a French translation of an old book² about the sack of Rome, 1527, which gives an account of the family of the writer. But Majorca also puts in a claim to the older Bonapartes; and in 1852, Don Antonio Furio, a learned man, Member of the Royal Academies of Belles Lettres of Barcelona and Majorca, &c., made a declaration as to ‘the rank, dignity, and extinction of the noble family of Bonapart in the island of Majorca;’ and quotes from a book kept in the archives of Palma, in which are preserved the armorial escutcheons of the noble families of the Island, the arms of Bonapart – which were Dexter, on a field Azure, six stars, Or, placed two by two, Sinister, on a field gules, a lion rampant, Or; and the Chief Or, bears a scared eagle, sable. He says the family came from Genoa to Majorca, in which island its members were considered noblemen, and they filled several distinguished offices. In a register of burials relating to knights and gentlemen, written in 1559, the antiquity and nobility of the Bonaparts

¹ Chevalier Artand’s *Italy*, p. 377; ‘L’Univers pittoresque, Europe,’ tome 2, Paris, 1857, ed. Didot.

² ‘Ragguaglio Storico di tutto l’occorso, giorno per giorno, nel Sacco di Roma dell’anno 1527, scritto da Jacopo Bonoparte, gentiluomo Samminiatiere’ (from San Miniato, near Florence) ‘che vi se trovò presente.’

are clearly authenticated; and it would seem from Don Furio's account (for all of which he gives chapter and verse) that the learned jurisconsult Don Hugo Bonapart left Majorca and went to Corsica, where, in 1411, he was made Regent of the Chancery of that place; and, as he settled there, his name was inscribed in the Golden Book of France.

This seems pretty circumstantial, until another theory appears – namely, his Greek extraction. Sir J. Emerson Tennent says:³ ‘There is a story relative to the family name of the Bonapartes, that somewhat excites curiosity as to the amount of truth which it may contain. In 1798, when Napoleon was secretly preparing for his descent upon Egypt, among other expedients for distracting and weakening the Porte, French emissaries were clandestinely employed in exciting the Greeks in Epirus, and the Morea, to revolt. In Maina especially (the ancient Sparta), these agents were received with marked enthusiasm, on the ground that Bonaparte was born in Corsica, where numbers of Greeks from that part of the Morea had found an asylum after the conquest of Candia, in 1669, but they were eventually expelled by the Genoese.

‘One of the persons so employed by Napoleon to rouse the Greeks in 1798 was named Stephanopoli; and one of the arguments which he used was, that Napoleon himself was a Greek in blood, and a Mainote by birth, being descended from one of the exiles who took refuge at Ajaccio in 1673. The name

³ *Notes and Queries*, 3rd series, vol. xi. p. 307.

of this family, he said, was Calomeri, Καλόμερις,⁴ which the Corsicans accommodated to their own dialect by translating it into *Buonaparte*.’

Another writer, signing himself *Rhodocanakis*, in the same periodical,⁵ says: ‘I am happy to be able to assert with confidence, and on the authority of General Kallergis, the intimate friend of the present Emperor, of Prince Pitzipios, and others, that the story devised by Nicholas Stepanapoulos, and mentioned by his niece, the Duchesse d’Abrantes, in her *Memoirs*, that Napoleon was a Greek in blood, and a Mainote by birth, being descended from the family of Calomeri, who took refuge at Ajaccio, Corsica, was never authoritatively denied. On the contrary, both the first and third Napoleon appeared pleased at the story, whenever it was alluded to in their presence; probably because they thought it good policy not to deny what they might in future wish to turn to their advantage. As regards the name of Καλομέρης or Καλόμερος, there are still many families of that name in Greece.’

Now let us hear what Madame Junot, the aforesaid Duchesse d’Abrantes, the intimate friend of Napoleon, whose families were the closest of neighbours at Ajaccio, says on this subject.⁶ ‘When Constantine Comnenus landed at Corsica in 1676, at the

⁴ From Καλός, good, and Μερίς, part or share – Buona-parte.

⁵ *Notes and Queries*, 3rd series, vol. xi. p. 507.

⁶ *Memoirs of Madame Junot, Duchesse d’Abrantes*, Bentley, London, 1883. When quoting from her memoirs I always use this translation.

head of a Greek colony, he had with him several sons, one of whom was named Calomeros. This son he sent to Florence, on a mission to the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Constantine dying before the return of his son, the Grand Duke prevailed on the young Greek to renounce Corsica, and fix his abode in Tuscany. After some interval of time, an individual came from Italy – indeed from Tuscany – and fixed his abode in Corsica, where his descendants formed the family of Buonaparte; for the name *Calomeros*, literally Italianised, signified *buona parte* or *bella parte*.⁷

‘The only question is, whether the Calomeros who left Corsica, and the Calomeros who came there, have a direct filiation. Two facts, however, are certain – namely, the departure of the one, and the arrival of the other. It is a singular thing that the Comneni,⁸ in speaking of the Bonaparte family, always designate them by the names *Calomeros*, *Calomeri*, or *Calomeriani*, according as they allude to one individual, or several collectively. Both families were united by the most intimate friendship.

‘When the Greeks were obliged to abandon Paomia to escape the persecutions of the insurgent Corsicans, they established themselves temporarily in towns which remained faithful to the Republic of Genoa. When, at a subsequent period, Cargesa

⁷ Napoleon omitted the ‘u’ in Buonaparte while general-in-chief in May 1796.

⁸ Madam Junot was very proud of her descent from Constantine Comnenus, the tenth Protogeras of Maina, who quitted Greece in 1675, landed at Genoa Jan. 1, 1676, and arrived at Corsica March 14, 1676.

was granted to the Greeks for the purpose of forming a new establishment, a few Greek families continued to reside at Ajaccio.’

I have been thus diffuse on his ancestry, because English satirists could not tell the truth on the subject – they were too swayed by the passion of the moment, and had to pander to the cravings of the mob. Take an example, from a broad sheet published in 1803, when our island was in deadly fear of invasion, a ‘History of Buonaparte.’ ‘Napoleon Buonaparte is the son of a poor lawyer of Ajaccio, in Corsica, in which city he was born on the 15th of August, 1769. His grandfather, Joseph, originally a butcher of the same place, was ennobled by Count Nieuhoff, some time King of Corsica. He was the son of Carlos Buona, who once kept a liquor shop, or tavern, but who, being convicted of robbery and murder, was condemned to the Gallies, where he died in 1724. His wife, La Birba, the mother of Joseph, died in the House of Correction at Geneva (? Genoa). On the 3rd May, 1736, when Porto Vecchio was attacked, Joseph Buona brought to the assistance of King Theodore a band of vagabonds which, during the civil war, had chosen him for its leader. In return, Theodore, on the following day, created him a noble, and added to his name *Buona* the termination *Parté*. Joseph Buonaparte’s wife *Histria*, was the daughter of a journeyman tanner of Bastia, also in Corsica.’

And yet one more, from another equally veracious ‘life.’ ‘Buonaparte’s great-grandfather kept a wine-house for factors

(like our gin shops), and, being convicted of murder and robbery, he died a galley slave at Genoa, in 1724: his wife was likewise an accomplice, and she died in the House of Correction at Genoa in 1734. His grandfather was a butcher of Ajaccio, and his grandmother daughter of a journeyman tanner at Bastia. His father was a low petty-fogging lawyer, who served and betrayed his country by turns, during the Civil Wars. After France conquered Corsica, he was a spy to the French Government, and his mother their trull. What is bred in the bone will not come out of the flesh.'

CHAPTER II

DESCENT FROM THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK – ANAGRAMS, ETC., ON HIS NAME – THE BEAST OF THE APOCALYPSE – HIS MOTHER’S ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH

The foregoing was the sort of stuff given to our grandfathers for history; nothing could be bad enough for Boney, *the Corsican Ogre*— nay, they even tortured his name to suit political purposes. It was hinted that the keeper of ‘the Man with the Iron Mask,’ who was said to be no other than the twin (and elder) brother of Louis XIV., was named *Bon part*; that the said keeper had a daughter, with whom the Man in the Mask fell in love, and to whom he was privately married; that their children received their mother’s name, and were secretly conveyed to Corsica, where the name was converted into *Bonaparte*, or *Buonaparte*; and that one of these children was the ancestor of Napoleon Bonaparte, who was thus entitled to be recognised, not only as of French origin, but as the direct descendant of the rightful heir to the throne of France.

They put his name into Greek, and tortured it thus: —

Napoleon, Apoleon, Poleon, Oleon, Leon, Eon, On,

Ναπολεων, Απολεων, Πολεων, Ολεων, Λεων, Εων,
Ων,

which sentence will translate, ‘Napoleon, being the lion of the nations, went about destroying cities.’

In the ‘Journal des Débats,’ 8 Avril, 1814, although not an English satire on his name, it is gravely stated that he was baptised by the name of Nicholas, and that he assumed the name of Napoleon as an uncommon one; but this name, Nicholas, which was applied to him so freely in France, was but a cant term for a stupid blockhead. Whilst on this subject, however, I cannot refrain from quoting a passage from a French book: ‘I do not know what fellow has held that *Napolione* was a demon, who in bygone times, amused himself by tormenting a poor imbecile. The fellow can not have read the life of the Saints: he would then have learned that St. Napolione, whose name is given at length in the legend, is as good a patron as any other; that he performed seven miracles during his life, and twenty-two and a half after his death – for he had not time to finish the twenty-third; it was an unfortunate tiler who, in falling from a roof, broke both his legs. St. Napoleon had already set one, when an unlucky doctor prescribed some medicine to the sick man which carried him off to the other world.’⁹

There is an extremely forcible acrostic in Latin on his name, which deserves reproduction: —

⁹ *Buonaparte et la famille, ou Confidences d'un de leurs anciens amis*, Paris 1816.

N ationibus¹⁰
A uctoritatem
P rincipibus
O bedientiam
L ibertatem
E cclesiæ
O mni modo
N egans
B ona
U surpavit
O mnum
N eutralium
A urum
P opulorum
A nimas
R evera
T yrannus
E xecrandus.

But not only was his name thus made a vehicle for political purposes, but the expounders of prophecy got hold of it, and found out, to their great delight, that at last they had got that theological bugbear, *the Apocalyptic beast*. Nothing could be clearer. It could be proved to demonstration, most simply and clearly. Every one had been in error about the Church of Rome;

¹⁰ Denying by every means the authority of nations, obedience to princes, or liberty to the Church. He usurped the goods of all, the treasure of neutrals, the souls of nations: in very truth he was an execrable tyrant.

at last there could be no doubt about it, it was Napoleon. Take the following handbill as a sample of one out of many: —

A Prophecy

(From the 13th Chapter of Revelations)

ALLUDING TO

BUONAPARTE

Verse 1st

‘And a Beast rose out of the Sea, having ten crowns on his head,’ &c.

This Beast is supposed to mean Buonaparte, he being born in *Corsica*, which is an island, and having conquered ten kingdoms.

Verse 5th

‘And a mouth was given him speaking blasphemies; and power given him upon the earth, forty and two months.’

Buonaparte was crowned in December, 1804; it is therefore supposed the *extent* of his assumed power upon earth will now be limited, this present month (*June*) 1808, being exactly the forty-second month of his reign.

Verse 16th

‘And he caused all to receive a mark in their hands, and no one could buy or sell, save those that had the mark of the Beast.’

To persons conversant in commercial affairs, these verses need no comment. There are, at present, some of *these marks* to be seen in this country; they had the Crown of Italy, &c., at top, and are signed ‘Buonaparte,’ ‘Talleyrand’; and all of them are numbered.

Verse 18th

‘Let him that hath understanding, count the number of the Beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is Six hundred, Sixty and Six.’

This verse is curious, and should be read attentively. The method of using letters for figures at the time the Revelations were written is proved by many monuments of Roman antiquity now extant.

The Ancient Alphabet of Figures	Buonaparte's name with the Figures		Ten Kingdoms conquered	
A	1	N	40	France
B	2	A	1	Prussia
C	3	P	60	Austria
D	4	O	60	Sardinia
E	5	L	70	Naples
F	6	E	5	Rome
G	7	A	1	Tuscany
H	8	N	40	Hungary
I	9			Portugal
K	10	B	2	Spain
L	20	U	110	
M	30	O	50	
N	40	N	40	
O	50	A	1	
P	60	P	60	
Q	70	A	1	
R	80	R	80	
S	90	T	100	
T	100	E	5	
U	110			
V	120	The Number of the Beast	666	
X	130			
Y	140			
Z	150			
Napole	an Buon		aparte	
6	6		6	

The above verses are not the only parts of the chapter which have reference to Buonaparte, but the *most prominent ones*; the connection throughout has been clearly ascertained.

In a curious little book called *The Corsican's Downfall*, by a Royal Arch Mason, published at Mansfield in 1814, at p. 6, it says, with reference to the numeration, 'The oldest treatise on the theory of arithmetic is comprised in the seventh, eighth, and ninth books of Euclid's *Elements*, about two hundred and eighty years before the Christian era. The first author of any consequence who used the modern way of computing by figures, instead of letters of the alphabet, was Jordanus of Namur, who flourished about 1200; and his arithmetic was afterwards published and demonstrated by Johannis Faber Stapulensis, in the fifteenth century. The name, then, and number of the Beast must be discovered (if at all) by the ancient method of computation in use at the time when the prophecies were written.'

But Bonaparte ungratefully refused to fulfil prophecy by being destroyed at the end of forty-two months, *i. e.* in June 1808, which must have put the expositors on their mettle. They were, however, fully equal to the occasion, and ingeniously solved the quotation this way.¹¹ 'Power was given unto him to continue forty-and-two months: now it is well known that he was self created, or crowned Emperor of France, on the 2nd day of December 1804, and that he reigned in full power and authority over the prostrate States upon the Continent until the 2nd day of May 1808, the very day on which the gallant Patriots of Spain made so noble and glorious a struggle to throw off the abominable yoke that he had imposed upon them, which is

¹¹ *The Corsican's Downfall*, p. 9.

exactly a period of three years and a half, or forty two months.’

An ingenious lunatic, named L. Mayer, found out another way of fathering the Mark of the Beast upon Napoleon. He took the number of sovereigns who had reigned in Europe until Napoleon’s arrival – some he has left out to suit his convenience, but that is a trivial matter – the case had to be made out against the unfortunate Emperor.

Sovereigns included in the Number of the Beast. ¹²

Roman Emperors	77
Popes	126
Kings of France	40
Kings of Spain	78
Kings of Portugal	76
Emperors of Germany	67
Kings of Bohemia	31
Kings of Hungary	34
Kings of Poland	35
Kings of Denmark	35
Kings of Naples and Sicily	30
Kings of Sardinia	36
Bonaparte	1

The Society of Antiquaries have, among their handbills, one published in 1808, as follows: —

¹² *Buonaparte the Emperor of the French considered as the Lucifer and Gog of Isiah and Ezekiel, &c.*, by L. Mayer, Lond. 1806, p. 86.

Mr. Urban, — The following singular coincidences may furnish matter for reflection to the curious. It has been generally admitted that the Roman Empire, after passing under *seven* different forms of government (or *seven* heads), was divided into *ten* kingdoms in Europe (the ten horns of Daniel and John); and that, notwithstanding the various changes Europe has undergone, the number of kingdoms was generally about ten.

It is not a little surprising that the *Heads of the Family of Napoleon*, who has effected such a change in the same Empire, are *exactly seven*, viz.: —

1. Napoleon.
2. Joseph, King of Italy.
3. Louis, King of Holland.
4. Jerome.
5. Murat, Duke of Berg and Cleves.
6. Cardinal Fesch.
7. Beauharnais, the adopted son of Napoleon.

And also that *the Members of the New Federation are just ten*, viz.: —

1. Bavaria.
2. Wirtemberg.
3. Baden.
4. Darmstadt.
5. Nassau.
6. Ysembourg.
7. Hohenzollern.
8. Aremberg.

9. Salm.

10. Leyen.

It is also remarkable that in the *man's name*, Napoleon Buonaparte, there are precisely three times six letters: —

Napole	on Buon	aparte	
6	6	6	= 666

And in his name is contained the name given by John to the King of the Locusts, who is called ‘Apoleon,’ or ‘the Destroyer.’

Even the date of his birth was disputed, for some said he was born on February 5, 1768 – in his marriage registry it is the same, and he used to tell De Bourrienne, his school-fellow, that he was born on August 15, 1769, and it is so noted in the registry of his entrance into the military school at Brienne in 1779, and the Ecole Militaire in 1784, besides being the date used in all documents necessary to his promotion. But probably his mother knew somewhat about it, and Madame Junot says,¹³ speaking of Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, ‘I recollect she this day told us that, being at Mass on the day of the fête of Notre Dame of August, she was overtaken by the pains of childbirth, and she had hardly reached home when she was delivered of *Napoleon*, on a wretched rug... I know not why,’ said she, ‘it has been reported that Paoli was Napoleon’s godfather. It is not

¹³ *Memoirs*, p. 269.

true; Laurent Jiubéga¹⁴ was his godfather. He held him over the baptismal font, along with another of our relations, Celtruda Buonaparte.’¹⁵

¹⁴ His nephew was afterwards prefect in Corsica. He was a relation of Napoleon.

¹⁵ Daughter of Charles Bonaparte, the Emperor’s uncle, and wife of Paravicini, a cousin, also, of Napoleon.

CHAPTER III

COUNT MARBŒUF, HIS PUTATIVE FATHER – POVERTY OF THE BONAPARTE FAMILY – EARLY PERSONAL DESCRIPTION OF NAPOLEON – HIS OWN ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF – SATIRISTS’ NARRATION OF HIS SCHOOL-DAYS

In after life, when Napoleon was successful, and had made a position, reports were spread that his real father was Count Marbœuf, who had been in Corsica, and in after life, or at all events at his entrance into it, acted as his benefactor and patron. Lætitia Ramolini, afterwards Madame Lætitia Bonaparte, was very graceful and pretty, indeed Madame Junot says of her,¹⁶ ‘Lætitia was indeed a lovely woman. Those who knew her in advanced life thought her countenance somewhat harsh; but that expression instead of being caused by any austerity of disposition, seemed, on the contrary, to have been produced by timidity.’ Indeed, no one can look at any portrait of Madame Mère, and not be struck with her lofty beauty.

This scandal about Count Marbœuf, it must be remembered,

¹⁶ *Memoirs*, p. 7.

is of French origin, and was well known, and recognised, probably, at its value. To give one illustration,¹⁷ ‘La malignité a fait honneur de sa naissance au Comte de Marbœuf, gouverneur de l’isle, qui rendait des soins assidus à Madame Buonaparte, jeune femme, belle et interessante alors.’

All our English squibs repeat the tale, and the subjoined is certainly the cleverest of them.¹⁸

About his parentage indeed,
Biographers have disagreed;
Some say his father was a farmer,
His mother, too, a *Cyprian* charmer:
That his dad Carlo was quite poor,
Letitia a French General’s – ;
If, faithless to her marriage vows,
She made a cuckold of her spouse,
Then Nap (some characters are rotten)
Has been a *merrily begotten*.
But other writers, with civility,
Insist he’s sprung from *old Nobility*,
And therefore to his father’s name
Attach the highest rank and fame:
Nay, furthermore, they add as true,
Nap was Paoli’s godson too.
But what to this said great Paoli?

¹⁷ *Buonapartiana, ou Choix d’Anecdotes curieuses*, Paris, 1814.

¹⁸ *The Life of Napoleon, a Hudibrastic Poem in Fifteen Cantos, by Doctor Syntax* (William Combe). London, 1815.

'I stood for one, but 'pon my soul, I
At present do not rightly know
Whether it was for Nap or Joe.'
It was for Joe, if he'd have said it,
But Joe has done him little credit.
Now let the honest muse despise
All adulation, barefaced lies,
And own the truth – Then Boney's father
Was member of the law, or rather,
A pettifogger, which his friends,
To serve their own politic ends,
Would keep a secret, knowing well
That pettifoggers go to Hell.
When France occasioned some alarms,
And Corsica was up in arms,
This Carlo Bonaparte thought fit,
His parchments for the sword to quit.
He fought, they say, with some applause,
Tho' unsuccessful in the cause:
Meanwhile, with battle's din and fright,
His wife was in a dismal plight;
From town to town Letitia fled,
To shun the French, *as it is said*;
Tho' others whisper that the fair
Was under a French Gen'ral's care,
And that to keep secure her charms
She fondly trusted to his *arms*.
Be this however as it might,
After incessant fear and flight,

Letitia ('fore her time, mayhap)
Was brought to bed of Master Nap:
The Cause, we think, of his ambition,
And of his restless disposition.

The Bonaparte family was not rich, their sole means of living being from the father's professional exertions, and the family was very large, and many mouths to feed; in fact, they were in somewhat straitened circumstances, but not in such squalid poverty as Gillray depicts them, in the accompanying illustration, where our hero may be seen, with his brothers and sisters, gnawing the *bony part* of a shin of beef.

Madame Junot¹⁹ says, 'Saveria told me that Napoleon was never a pretty boy, as Joseph had been; his head always appeared too large for his body, a defect common to the Bonaparte family. When Napoleon grew up, the peculiar charm of his countenance lay in his eye, especially in the mild expression it assumed in his moments of kindness. His anger, to be sure, was frightful, and though I am no coward, I never could look at him in his fits of rage without shuddering. Though his smile was captivating, yet the expression of his mouth when disdainful, or angry, could scarcely be seen without terror. But that forehead which seemed formed to bear the crowns of a whole world; those hands, of which the most coquettish woman might have been vain, and whose white skin covered muscles of iron; in short, of all that

¹⁹ *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 10.

personal beauty which distinguished Napoleon as a young man, no traces were discernible in the boy.’

Napoleon said of himself: ‘I was an obstinate and inquisitive child. I was extremely headstrong; nothing overawed me, nothing disconcerted me. I made myself formidable to the whole family. My brother Joseph was the one with whom I was oftenest embroiled; he was bitten, beaten, abused: I went to complain before he had time to recover his confusion.’

At ten years of age, through the medium of his patron, Count Marbœuf, he was sent to the military school at Brienne, which he entered on April 23, 1779. Here he was shy and reserved, and not at all liked by his schoolfellows, who twitted him with his poverty, the country whence he came, his name, and made reflections on his mother; the last particularly exasperating him. His veracious Hudibrastic historian says: —

When he two years at school had been,
He proved more violent and mean:
Unlike his sprightly fellow boys,
Amused with playthings and with toys;
At shuttlecock he'd never stop,
Nor deign to whip the bounding top.
His garden was his sole delight,
Which ne'er improv'd his mental sight;
But thus in childhood serv'd to show
He was to all mankind a foe.
His schoolfellows, in keen sedateness,

He robb'd to prove his urchin greatness:
Deluded by his wheedling art,
Some cheerfully resign'd a part
Of their possessions, and to these }
He added what he chose to seize; }
Then, planting it with num'rous trees }
And putting palisades all round,
He strutted monarch of the ground;

* * * * *

* * * * *

'Twas on a welcome festive morn,
For some great saint divinely born.
No matter why, it was a jolly day,
Boys must be merry on a holiday;
And now behold their bulging pockets,
Enrich'd with pistols, squibs, and rockets —
When some, but humbly begg'd his pardon
Threw fireworks into Boney's garden;
'Twas chiefly manag'd by the breeze
Which sent them 'mong his plants and trees;
Bursting, the cracks were oft repeated,
Nap's ears were with the thunder greeted;

Th' explosions discomposed, I wot,
Th' arrangement of the lovely spot.
Nap saw it with corroding spite,
And now began his lips to bite;
But strove his anger to restrain,
Until revenge he could obtain.
For weeks he plann'd what he should do,
And in about a month or two
Contrived his infamous design,
By having made a kind of mine
Beside the garden; where, in haste,
Long trains of gunpowder he plac'd;
Deliberately now, as stated,
He for the little fellows waited;
And just as they were passing through it,
A lighted bit of stick put to it;
The boys were suddenly alarm'd,
And some were miserably harm'd,
While all, with fright and consternation,
Were in a state of perturbation.
Th' *heroic* Boney, with a club,
Now came the sufferers to drub;
But soon the master was in sight,
Which put the Conqueror to flight.

CHAPTER IV

NAPOLEON AT THE ECOLE MILITAIRE – PERSONAL DESCRIPTION —*PUSS IN BOOTS*– VISIT TO CORSICA – SOLICITS SERVICE IN ENGLAND – REPORTED VISIT TO LONDON – SIEGE OF TOULON

On October 14 or 17, 1784, he left Brienne for the Ecole Militaire at Paris.

Gillray, when he drew the picture (on next page) of the abject, ragged, servile-looking Napoleon, could hardly have realised the fact that Napoleon was then over fifteen years of age, and that, having been already five years at a military school, he must necessarily have carried himself in a more soldierly manner. He stayed at the Ecole Militaire till August 1875, when he obtained his brevet of second lieutenant of Artillery in the regiment of La Fère. Madame Junot²⁰ tells an amusing anecdote of him at this period, which I must be pardoned introducing here, as it helps us to imagine his personal appearance. ‘I well recollect that on the day when he first put on his uniform, he was as vain as young men usually are on such an occasion. There was one part of his

²⁰ *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 33.

dress which had a very droll appearance – that was his boots. They were so high and wide, that his little thin legs seemed buried in their amplitude. Young people are always ready to observe anything ridiculous; and, as soon as my sister and I saw Napoleon enter the drawing-room, we burst into a loud fit of laughter. At that early age, as well as in after life, Bonaparte could not relish a joke; and when he found himself the object of merriment, he grew angry.

‘My sister, who was some years older than I, told him that since he wore a sword he ought to be gallant to ladies; and, instead of being angry, should be happy that they joked with him. “You are nothing but a child – a little *pensionnaire*,” said Napoleon, in a tone of contempt. Cecile, who was twelve or thirteen years of age, was highly indignant at being called a child, and she hastily resented the affront by replying to Bonaparte, “And you are nothing but a *puss in boots*.” This excited a general laugh among all present, except Napoleon, whose rage I will not attempt to describe. Though not much accustomed to society, he had too much tact not to perceive that he ought to be silent when personalities were introduced, and his adversary was a woman.

‘Though deeply mortified at the unfortunate nickname which my sister had given him, yet he affected to forget it; and to prove that he cherished no malice on the subject, he got a little toy made, and gave it to me. This toy consisted of a cat in boots, in the character of a footman running before the carriage of the Marquis de Carabas. It was very well made, and must have been

rather expensive to him considering his straitened finances. He brought along with it a pretty little edition of the popular tale of *Puss in Boots*, which he presented to my sister, begging her to keep it as a *token of his remembrance*.’

Napoleon afterwards frequently called Junot, *Marquis de Carabas*, and, on one occasion, Madame Junot, in badinage, reminded Napoleon of his present to her, at which he got very angry.

During his sub-lieutenancy he was very poor, yet he managed to go to Corsica for six months, whilst Paoli, who had been living in England, was there. There is a curious idea that, about this time (mentioned in more places than one²¹), he applied for service under the British Government.

At this time Bonaparte scarce knew
What for his maintenance to do —
So he sat down, and quickly wrote
A very condescending note,
(Altho’ a wretched scrawl when written),
Which to a Chieftain of Great Britain,
He, soon as possible, dispatch’d,
In which he swore he was attach’d
Unto the British Constitution,
And therefore form’d the resolution
Of fighting in that country’s cause,
For George the Third, and for his laws,

²¹ For instance, see *Notes and Queries*, 3rd series, vol. vii. p. 364.

If that his services were needed,
And to his wishes they acceded.
It seems that Bonaparte could trade well,
He'd fight for any one that paid well;
But he a disappointment got,
Because his services were not
By Britain's chief Commander tried;
The rank he sought for was denied.
This was the cause of great displeasure,
It mortified him above measure,
And he gave England now as many a
Curse, as before he e'er gave Genoa.

Nay, more extraordinary than all, it was even pretended that he lived some time in England. The *Birmingham Journal* of April 21, 1855, affirms, on the authority of Mr. J. Coleman of the Strand, who is now 104 years of age, and whose portrait and biographical sketch appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, Feb. 1850, and who knew perfectly well M. Bonaparte, who, while he lived in London, which was for five weeks, in 1791 or 1792, lodged in a house in George Street, Strand, and whose chief occupation appeared to be taking pedestrian exercise in the streets of London. Hence his marvellous knowledge of the great metropolis, which used to astonish any Englishmen of distinction, who were not aware of the visit. I have also heard Mr. Matthews, the grandfather of the celebrated comedian, Mr. Thomas Goldsmith of the Strand, Mr. Graves, Mr. Drury, and

my father, all of whom were tradesmen in the Strand, in the immediate vicinity of George Street, speak of this visit. He occasionally took his cup of chocolate at the Northumberland, occupying himself in reading, and preserving a provoking taciturnity to the gentlemen in the room; though his manner was stern, his deportment was that of a gentleman.’

Timbs²² endorses this statement, in identically the same words of a portion of the above, which he fathers on old Mr. Matthews, the bookseller in the Strand, but we must recollect that Mr. Timbs was writing the ‘*Romance of London.*’

A personal description of Napoleon in 1793 may be interesting, especially as it comes from a trustworthy pen.²³ ‘At that period of his life Bonaparte was decidedly ugly; he afterwards underwent a total change. I do not speak of the illusive charm which his glory spread around him, but I mean to say that a gradual physical change took place in him in the space of seven years. His emaciated thinness was converted into a fulness of face, and his complexion, which had been yellow, and apparently unhealthy, became clear and comparatively fresh; his features, which were angular and sharp, became round and filled out. As to his smile, it was always agreeable. The mode of dressing his hair, which has such a droll appearance as we see it in the prints of the bridge of Arcola, was then comparatively simple, for young men of fashion (the *Muscadins*), whom he used to rail at so loudly

²² *Romance of London*, vol. iii. p. 172, ed. 1865.

²³ *Memoirs of Madame Junot*, vol. i. p. 73.

at that time, wore their hair very long. But he was very careless of his personal appearance; and his hair, which was ill-combed and ill-powdered, gave him the look of a sloven. His little hands, too, underwent a great metamorphosis: when I first saw him, they were thin, long, and dark; but he was subsequently vain of the beauty of them, and with good reason.

‘In short, when I recollect Napoleon entering the courtyard of the Hotel de la Tranquillité in 1793, with a shabby round hat drawn over his forehead, and his ill-powdered hair hanging over the collar of his great-coat, which afterwards became as celebrated as the white plume of Henry IV., without gloves, because he used to say they were an useless luxury, with boots ill-made and ill-blackened, with his thinness and his sallow complexion; in fine, when I recollect him at that time, and think what he was afterwards, I do not see the same man in the two pictures.’

He was fortunate in obtaining a higher rank in the army, being promoted to be commandant of artillery, and he joined the army besieging Toulon on September 12, 1793. He found his chief, General Cartaux, incompetent, and, from representations made to Paris, Cartaux was superseded. There was very hard fighting at Toulon before it was taken, Admiral Hood, and General O’Hara, commanding the British forces. The latter being taken prisoner, much disheartened the English, but, at the final assault, when the town was retaken by the French, the English and Spanish gunners died fighting at their posts.

Our metrical History of Napoleon says, —

The first shell 'gainst Toulon, 'tis said,
The hand of Bonaparte had sped.

The vengeance of the French, on entering the town, was terrible; but many thousands had taken shelter on board the British ships, leaving only a few hundreds to be executed 'according to law.' Our poem somewhat exaggerates.

One of the Jacobins, whom Hood
Had sent to prison for no good —
A noted character indeed —
By the republicans was freed.
As vengeance he on all design'd
Who to the English had been kind,
Or in their dreadful situation
Promoted the Capitulation,
This miscreant selected then
One thousand and four hundred men,
Whom they determin'd to assassinate —
A testimony of surpassing hate;
And Boney was, with general voice,
For executioner their choice.
Indeed the choice was very good,
For Boney was a man for blood.
In sets, it was these wretches' lot,
To be brought forward to be shot:

Nap gave the order with composure,
The loaded guns were pointed so sure
A dreadful carnage soon ensued —
A carnage – horrible when view'd.
Yet, *gallant* Boney, with delight,
Remain'd spectator of the sight.
Nay, more, himself vers'd in hypocrisy,
He thought he might perhaps some mock'ry see:
So 'Pardon! pardon!' loud he said,
To know if they were really dead;
Some, who had counterfeited death,
Rose up, and were deprived of breath!
Poor souls! they knew not when he said it
His word was not deserving credit.
However two there were more wise, }
Who, having put on death's disguise, }
Could not be tempted thus to rise, }
But tarried till the wolves were gone,
And then – a father found his son!

CHAPTER V

NAPOLEON'S PROMOTION – HIS POVERTY – JUNOT'S KINDNESS – REVOLT OF THE SECTIONS – NAPOLEON'S SHARE THEREIN – MADE GENERAL OF THE INTERIOR – INTRODUCTION TO JOSEPHINE – SKETCH OF HER LIFE

For the capture of Toulon, Bonaparte was speedily promoted; indeed, his superior officer, Dugommier, in his report, said, 'Reward and advance this young man, otherwise he will find means to advance himself.'

He afterwards joined the army at Nice, and was sent on a secret diplomatic mission to Genoa; on his return from which he was arrested and thrown into prison, where he remained a fortnight before he obtained his release. He was without any employment during the remainder of 1794, and till the autumn of 1795. He was then in very poor circumstances financially, and Madame Junot gives a graphic picture of his distress at this time.²⁴ 'Bonaparte's servant informed Mariette that the general was often in want of money;' but, he added, 'he has an aide-de-

²⁴ *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 80.

camp who shares with him all he gets. When he is lucky at play, the largest share of his winnings is always for his general. The aide-de-camp's family sometimes sends him money, and then almost all is given to the general. The general, adds the man, loves this aide-de-camp as dearly as if he were his own brother.' The aide-de-camp was Junot, who got a commission after Toulon.

The wretched Boney, we are told,
Reduced, and shivering with the cold,
To public houses used to rove,
And warm his hands before a stove;
Nay, in Corrozza, it is said,
A large score still remains unpaid.
He in an humble garret slept,
Which never very clean was kept,
Hence got he a disorder, which
The vulgar people call the 'itch.'
Long might have been poor Nap's dejection
But for a pending insurrection;
For now was entertained th' intention
Of overturning the Convention.
The party by Barras were led,
He of the rebels was the head;
But, neither brave nor skilful reckon'd,
He wish'd to have an able second.
This task, by many, as we find,
Was conscientiously declin'd;
For every one of them well knew,

A dreadful slaughter must ensue.
Barras said in a thinking mood,
'I know a rascal fond of blood —
A little Corsican blackguard,
But now to find him may be hard.'
Then, having mentioned Boney's name,
They all agreed upon the same;
And Tallien gladly undertook
For the said Corsican to look.
Soon Boney on their honors waited,
Though all in rags as it is stated;
And, matters being quick concluded,
No 'saucy doubts or fears' intruded;
Nap with a horse was soon provided,
And regimentals he beside had.
This scheme began they to contrive
In seventeen hundred, ninety five.
And of October, we may say,
The fourth was now a fatal day!
For, lo! the insurgents sallied out,
And desolation spread about;
All honest opposition fail'd
And blood-stain'd tyranny prevail'd.
Men, women, children, at a bitter rate
The cries of 'Treason,' did reiterate,
But nothing could their fury quell,
For women, men, and children fell!
Now, owing to this revolution,
Was formed another Constitution;

Nap this assembly went to meet,
And laid his *trophies* at their feet:
These trophies were *eight thousand carcasses*,
Among the wounds, too, many a mark was his.
A *second* victory like this,
Was to Barras extatic bliss.
And Nap, for bravery extoll'd,
No longer a blackguard was called;
But as a hero now regarded,
Was amply by Barras rewarded.
In this life there is many a change,
As unexpected and as strange:
Then let us hope that this day's sorrow
May be tranquillity to-morrow:
For, mark you how our hero rose,
Who wanted money, shoes, and clothes;
All those he had – and, what is more,
His garret chang'd for a first floor;
And such, too, was his happy lot,
That he a place for Lucien got;
Who, after this notorious slaughter,
Had married an innkeeper's daughter.

This is the satirist's account of the revolt of the Sections, and Bonaparte's part therein. When applied to, he accepted the command, but declared that he must act untrammelled, and not like Menon, who failed through having three representatives of the people to counsel him. This was agreed to, and Barras

was chosen chief, with Napoleon under him. The insurgents numbered some 40,000, the troops but 7,000; and such was the moderation of the latter, that when the insurrection was quelled, there were but seventy or eighty of the people killed, and between three and four hundred wounded.

He was then made General of the Interior, and consequently Governor of Paris, and this position led him more into society.

It is now that we come to a great epoch in his life, his meeting with Josephine, which came about in a somewhat singular manner. At one of his levées, a boy of twelve years, or so, called upon him. The lad was Eugène de Beauharnais, son of a general of the Republic, who was executed a few days before the death of Robespierre, and his errand was to petition Napoleon that his father's sword might be given to him. To quote Napoleon's own words, 'I was so touched by this affectionate request, that I ordered it to be given to him. On seeing the sword he burst into tears: I felt so affected by his conduct, that I noticed and praised him much. A few days afterwards, his mother came to return me a visit of thanks; I was struck with her appearance, and still more with her *esprit*.' He was always meeting her in society, especially at Barras's house; and this intimacy, ripening into affection, brought about their marriage. The following series of eight plates, illustrating her life, were drawn by Woodward.

Josephine (Marie Josephine Rose de la Pagerie) was born at Martinique, according to De Bourrienne, on June 23, 1763, but others say it was the same day of the month, only four years

later. She was the daughter of a planter in that island, and was a Creole, *i. e.* one born in a French West Indian settlement. She was fourteen years old when she was brought to France by her father, and being very graceful and pretty, it was not long before she was married, which was to the Vicomte de Beauharnais, on December 13, 1779. The union was not at first a happy one. She went to Martinique, to see her mother, and stayed there about fifteen months. Her husband was a general in the army of the Rhine, but was singled out by Robespierre as a victim of his tyranny, was imprisoned and beheaded. Josephine was also imprisoned, and it was at La Force that she met with Madame Tallien – ‘Nôtre Dame de Thermidor,’ as Arsène Houssaye calls her – who was also in prison. Here, uncertain as to their fate, the female prisoners played at mock trials and executions (for the trials always ended in condemnation), and day by day their numbers grew less, as they were taken away to the real tragedy which they had rehearsed. Scandal (French before it became English) says that Barras, smitten by her charms, had her released on condition that she became his mistress. Here is one French account:²⁵ ‘A cette époque, la jeune veuve du malheureux vicomte de Beauharnais, mort sur l’échafaud, languissait aux Magdelonnettes, où, depuis longtems, elle était détenue comme suspecte. Intimement liée avec Hoche, elle le pria de parler pour elle à Barras, alors tout-puissant. Celui-ci ne connaissait la vicomtesse que de réputation; il voulut la voir, et lui rendit visite

²⁵ *Amours et Aventures du Vicomte de Barras*, Paris, 1817.

dans sa prison... Barras, séduit par la conversation et les charmes personnels de la jeune veuve, devint, à la première visite, et son protecteur, et son ami. Deux jours après, elle fut rendue à la liberté.’

That Josephine gave rise to this scandal, is probably owing to her intimacy with Madame Tallien and Barras. Barras, she was bound to be grateful to, for by his means, a part of her husband’s property was restored to her; but it was Tallien who, at his wife’s entreaty, obtained the liberty, both of Josephine and Duchesse d’Aiguillon. Madame Tallien’s receptions were the most brilliant in Paris, where the prettiest and wittiest women met the men most distinguished in any way, and common gratitude, at least, would have led Josephine to the assemblies of her dear friend, who had shared her imprisonment, and obtained her release.

CHAPTER VI

JOSEPHINE'S DRESS AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE – HER REPUTED CONNECTION WITH BARRAS – MARRIAGE WITH NAPOLEON – HER TASTES AND DISPOSITION

Let us for a moment, as an antidote to the caricaturist's pictures, see what was Josephine's dress at this period.²⁶ 'Here is Madame de Beauharnais, that excellent Josephine, whose heart is not made for coquetry, but who throws a childish joy into her dress. With an air less dramatic and superb than her rivals,²⁷ the joyous and kindly creole is, perhaps, the most French of the three, Madame Tallien is the most Greek, and Madame Viconti the most Roman. Josephine wears a wavy dress, rose and white from top to bottom, with a train trimmed at the bottom with black bugles, a bodice six fingers deep, and wearing no *fichu*; short sleeves of black gauze, long gloves covering the elbow of *noisette* colour, which suits this beautiful violet so well; shoes of yellow morocco; white stockings with green clocks. If her hair is dressed after the Etruscan manner, ornamented with cherry-

²⁶ *Notre Dame de Thermidor*, p. 429.

²⁷ Madame Tallien and Madame Viconti.

coloured ribbons, I am sure it is impossible to approach nearer to the antique. To tempt the fashion is the sole ambition of the pretty Josephine, but it happens that the celebrated Madame de Beauharnais sets it.’

It is impossible to quit this subject without some contemporary quotations, as they help us to realise the truth, or falsehood, of the caricaturist.²⁸ ‘Madame Tallien was kind and obliging, but such is the effect on the multitude of a name that bears a stain, that her cause was never separated from that of her husband. The following is a proof of this. Junot was the bearer of the second flags, which were sent from the army of Italy to the Directory. He was received with all the pomp which attended the reception of Marmont, who was the bearer of the first colours. Madame Bonaparte, who had not yet set out to join Napoleon, wished to witness the ceremony; and, on the day appointed for the reception of Junot she repaired to the Directory, accompanied by Madame Tallien. They lived at that time in great intimacy; the latter was a fraction of the Directorial royalty with which Josephine, when Madame Beauharnais, and, indeed, after she became Madame Bonaparte, was in some degree invested. Madame Bonaparte was still a fine woman; her teeth, it is true, were already frightfully decayed, but when her mouth was closed she looked, especially at a little distance, both young and pretty. As to Madame Tallien, she was then in the full bloom of her beauty. Both were dressed in the antique

²⁸ *Madame Junot's Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 249.

style, which was then the prevailing fashion, and with as much of richness and ornament as were suitable to morning costume. When the reception was ended, and they were about to leave the Directory, it may be presumed that Junot was not a little proud to offer to escort these two charming women. Junot was then a handsome young man of five and twenty, and he had the military look and style for which, indeed, he was always remarkable. A splendid uniform of a colonel of huzzars set off his fine figure to the utmost advantage. When the ceremony was ended, he offered one arm to Madame Bonaparte, who as his general's wife was entitled to the first honour, especially on that solemn day; and offering his other arm to Madame Tallien, he conducted them down the staircase of the Luxembourg. The crowd stepped forward to see them as they passed along. "That is the general's wife," said one. "That is his aide de camp," said another. "He is very young." "She is very pretty. — *Vive le General Bonaparte!* — *Vive la Citoyenne Bonaparte!* She is a good friend to the poor." "Ah!" exclaimed a great fat market woman, "She is *Notre Dame des Victoires!*" "You are right," said another, "and see who is on the other side of the officer; that is *Notre Dame de Septembre!*" This was severe and it was also unjust.'

We must not trust to the caricaturist's portrait of Josephine. She was good looking and graceful then, but, afterwards, she did become very stout. We must never forget in looking over the folios of caricatures of this period, that the idea of caricaturing then was to exaggerate everything, and make it grotesque; it is

only of modern years that the refinement of a Leech, Tenniel, or Proctor, gives us caricature without vulgarity.

After seeing Josephine as she really was, it will be worth while to compare the satirist's idea of her, and her marriage with Napoleon.

Nap changed on entering Society,
Obscurity for notoriety;
He to Barras only inferior,
Commands the army of th' interior.
As pride in office is essential,
His manners now were consequential;
Conducting all affairs of weight,
The little man was very great;
And by this sudden rise to dignity,
He gave full weight to his malignity.
Barras, now moved by his persuasions,
Consulted him on all occasions;
A greater compliment, too, paid he,
He got for him, a *cast off* lady:
A widow rich, as they relate,
But how so rich, 'tis hard to state,
Her spouse, for politics reputed,
By Robespierre was executed,
And she was by Barras *protected*,
Till he at length the fair neglected.
However, she procured with great art,
A man of colour for a sweetheart;

By which no fortune's manifested,
For men of colour are detested;
They married would have been, moreover,
But that – in stepped another lover;

* * * * *

* * * * *

There are some writers who pretend,
The lady's virtue to defend;
For, in the character they draw,
She's guilty of but one *faux pas*;
But others, probably censorious,
Declare her lapses were notorious,
And that, devoid of sense and shame,
She even gloried in the same;
So reckoning all things, the amount is,
She was a *condescending* countess.
The lady was, as it appears,
Older than Nap by twenty years;
But, for a man, who scorned to prove
The votary or slave of love —
Whispering soft nonsense, and such stuff —
She certainly was good enough.

Short, like himself, and rather bulky,
But not so insolent and sulky.
As by Barras, too, recommended
(No matter from what stock descended),
It certainly must be allow'd
Of such a wife he should be proud.
So, locked together, soon were seen,
Brave Boney and fair Josephine.

The pictorial caricaturist, Gillray, gives us February 20, 1805, 'Ci-devant occupations, or Madame Tallien, and the Empress Josephine Dancing Naked before Barras, in the Winter of 1797 – a fact.'²⁹

At the foot of this etching, which depicts the sensual *bon viveur*, Barras, looking on at the lascivious dancing of his two mistresses, Madame Tallien and Josephine, it says: 'Barras (then in power), being tired of Josephine, promised Bonaparte a promotion, on condition that he would take her off his hands. Barras had, as usual, drank freely, and placed Bonaparte behind a screen, while he amused himself with these two ladies, who were then his humble dependents. Madame Tallien is a beautiful woman, tall and elegant. Josephine is smaller, and thin, with bad teeth something like cloves. It is needless to add that Bonaparte accepted the promotion, and the lady, now Empress of France!'

²⁹ Gillray, evidently, was not particular as to dates, for Napoleon married Josephine in 1796.

Barre, who notoriously wrote against Napoleon, says:³⁰ ‘And not satisfied by procuring him a splendid appointment, he made him marry his mistress, the Countess de Beauharnais, a rich widow, with several children; and who, although about twenty years older than Bonaparte, was a very valuable acquisition to a young man without any fortune. The reputation of the Countess de Beauharnais was well established, even before the Revolution: but Buonaparte had not the least right to find fault with a woman presented to him by Barras.’

At all events they were married, and here is G. Cruikshank’s idea of the ceremony, and here, also, he depicts the bridesmaids and groomsmen.

Their honeymoon was of the shortest, for De Bourrienne says: ‘He remained in Paris only ten days after his marriage, which took place on the 9th of March, 1796. Madame Bonaparte possessed personal graces and many good qualities. I am convinced that all who were acquainted with her must have felt bound to speak well of her; to few, indeed, did she ever give cause for complaint. Benevolence was natural to her, but she was not always prudent in its exercise. Hence her protection was often extended to persons who did not deserve it. Her taste for splendour and expense was excessive. This proneness to luxury became a habit which seemed constantly indulged without any motive. What scenes have I not witnessed when the moment for

³⁰ *History of the French Consulate under Napoleon Buonaparte, &c.*, by W. Barre, London, 1804.

paying the tradesmen's bills arrived! She always kept back one half of their claims, and the discovery of this exposed her to new reproaches. How many tears did she shed, which might easily have been spared!

We here see the caricaturist's idea of Josephine as a French general's wife.

CHAPTER VII

NAPOLEON MADE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY OF ITALY – HIS SHORT HONEYMOON – HIS FIRST VICTORY – STATE OF THE FRENCH ARMY – THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN – FRENCH DESCENT ON IRELAND – ITS RESULT – STATE OF ENGLAND

Napoleon now waxed great. Through Barras' influence he was made Commander in Chief of the army of Italy, and bade adieu to his wife after the very brief period of conjugal life, as aforesaid, and, on the way to join the army, he visited his mother and family, at Marseilles, writing frequent and affectionate letters to his newly married bride.

Montenotte was his first victory, the precursor of so many; and on April 11, 1796, he there defeated the Austrian general, Beaulieu, who was compelled to retreat, leaving behind him his colours, and cannon, about two thousand prisoners, and about a thousand killed.

The French army then was in a bad state, according to a serious historian.³¹ "The extreme poverty of the treasury may be

³¹ R. H. Horne.

understood from the fact that the sum of two thousand louis was all that could be collected to furnish him (Napoleon) with means for so important a command. By an organised system of pillage, says Lanfrey, the Republican coffers were soon replenished to the amount of several millions!’ Another historian³² says: ‘Scherer, who was at that time commander-in-chief of the army of Italy, had recently urged for money to pay his troops, and for horses to replace those of his cavalry which had perished for want of food; and declared that, if any delay took place in furnishing the requisite supplies, he should be obliged to evacuate the Genoese territory, and repass the Var. The Directory found it easier to remove the General than to comply with his request.’ Our poetic history relates: —

Such was the army’s sad condition,
They had no clothes nor ammunition,
Besides, a scarcity of food,
And even that little, was not good.
They had no money – may be said —
And why? The men were never paid.
But his intentions wisely Nap hid,
Whose methods were as strange as rapid.
He promis’d, when he was appointed,
To get them everything they wanted;
And, what is more, too, their protector be,
Without expense to the Directory.

³² G. M. Bussey.

* * * * *

* * * * *

In his deceptions he succeeded,
And now procur'd all that he needed.
His troops which were with hunger nigh dead,
Were with good victuals soon provided;
They for new clothes exchang'd their rags,
And then with Rhino fill'd their bags;
While Nap, as you may well believe,
These people laughed at in his sleeve.

It is not within the province of this work to follow Napoleon in his victorious career in Italy, except the English caricaturist should notice him, and he had not yet attained to that questionable honour; but a very brief synopsis of his battles in 1796 may be acceptable. Montenotte, April 11; Millesino, April 14; Dégan, April 15; Mondovi, April 21; Lodi, May 10; Lonado, August 3; Castiglione, August 5; Roveredo, September 4; Bassano, September 8; San Giargo, September 13; Arcola, November 15.

Barre says: "The campaign in Italy was extremely brilliant, and

withal revolutionary. Buonaparte attributed all the glory almost exclusively to himself. His secretary, who wrote his despatches, did it so as to flatter the generals and the army, but still as if all the merit belonged to the commander-in-chief. It seems that General Berthier made a bargain with Buonaparte, to whom he sold his talents for the sake of becoming rich without any responsibility. When Buonaparte was raised by the mixed faction, he made Berthier Minister of War; and in that capacity he has shown himself more rapacious than any of his predecessors. Every contractor is obliged to give him *one hundred thousand livres* as a present (*pot de vin*) without which there is no contract.' He tells a story which bears somewhat on the above. 'It happened once, that whilst he was playing at cards, having General Massena for his partner, that general made a mistake; when Buonaparte started, all of a sudden, in a violent passion, and exclaimed, *Sacré Dieu! General, you make me lose*. But General Massena instantly retorted with a happy sarcasm: *Be easy, General, remember that I often make you win*. Buonaparte could never forget nor forgive that *bon mot*.' This story also figures in poetry: —

In numbers being three to one,
A Battle at Monte Notte he won;
The Austrian General he defeated,
And therefore with huzzas was greeted.
But, tho' of this affair Conductor,
Massena had been his instructor.
Yet, when (would you believe it, Bards?)

Nap's partner at a game of Cards,
He scrupled not his friend t' abuse —
'Zounds! general, how you make me lose!
The general, patient all the while,
Thus answer'd with a gracious smile,
'For such a loss don't care a pin,
Remember, Nap, I've made you *win*.'
Tho' nothing but the truth he spoke,
Nap never could forgive the joke.

It is impossible to pass over in silence an event which happened in 1796, in which, although Napoleon was not personally interested, all England was. This was no less than an attempted invasion of Ireland by the French; relying on being supported by the Irish, who were disaffected then, as now. The expedition failed, although it was numerous and well-found, having General Hoche and 25,000 men with it. By defective seamanship, many of the ships were damaged, and a 74 gun ship, the *Seduisant*, was totally lost. Only one division, commanded by Admiral Bouvet, reached Ireland, but anchored in Bantry Bay, where they did nothing, but speedily weighed anchor, and returned to France. The following is an official letter on the subject: —

Dublin Castle, December 29, 1796.

My Lord³³— The last accounts from General Dalrymple

³³ The Lord Mayor of London, Thomas Blackhall.

are by his aide-de-camp, Captain Gordon, who left Bantry at ten o'clock A.M. on Tuesday, and arrived here this morning. Seventeen sail of French ships were at that time at anchor on the lower part of Bear island, but at such a distance that their force could not be ascertained. A lieutenant of a French frigate was driven on shore in his boat, in attempting to quit his vessel, which was dismasted, to the admiral. He confirms the account of the fleet being French, with hostile views to this country, but does not appear to know whether the whole fleet, which consisted of about 17 sail of the line, 15 frigates, and including transports and luggers, amounted to fifty sail, were all to re-assemble off Bantry. General Hoche was on board, commanding a considerable force. I have the honour to be, my lord,

Your lordship's most obedient servant,

T. Pelham.

Just let us glance for one moment at the social position of England at that time. For the first three months of the year the quartern loaf was 1s. 3d.; in April it fell to 10d.: in June it rose to 11d.; in September it fell to 8¼d.; at which it remained all the year. There was a surplus of revenue over expenditure of over twenty-three millions, which must have gratified the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the exports exceeded those in 1795 by 1,781,297*l.*, and the London Brewers brewed 142,700 more barrels of porter than the previous year; 3 per cent. Consols varied from 71 in January (the highest price) to 56-3/8 in December (nearly their lowest).

CHAPTER VIII

NAPOLEON DESPOILS ITALY OF HER WORKS OF ART – THE SIEGE OF MANTUA – WÜRMSER’S SURRENDER – EARLIEST ENGLISH CARICATURE OF NAPOLEON – INVASION OF ENGLAND – LANDING IN PEMBROKESHIRE – NELSON’S RECEIPT TO MAKE AN OLLA PODRIDA – ‘THE ARMY OF ENGLAND.’

Such a subject as the spoliation of Italian works of art was not likely to go a-begging among caricaturists, so George Cruikshank illustrated the poet Combe.

As Nap (for his extortions fam’d),
Of livres twenty millions claim’d;
Which sum, we also understand,
Pope Pius paid upon demand;
And sixteen million more, they say,
Was bound in two months’ time to pay
With these exactions not content,
To further lengths our hero went;
A hundred paintings, and the best,

Were, we are told, his next request.
At his desire, the precious heaps came,
(It was indeed a very deep scheme),
Loretta's statues so pleased Boney,
They instantly packed up *Madona*:
These relics then, without delay,
To Paris Boney sent away;
And there they formed an exhibition
As proof of Papal superstition.

At the siege of Mantua, Würmser sent his aide-de-camp Klenau to Napoleon to treat for terms of peace. G. Cruikshank depicts the scene. Klenau is brought in blindfolded, and Bonaparte, surrounded by his guard, strikes a melodramatic attitude, worthy of a pirate captain at a transpontine theatre.

The real facts are thus described by Horn. 'Mantua was now without hope of relief. The hospitals were crowded, the provisions exhausted; but Würmser still held out. Napoleon informed him of the rout and dispersion of the Austrian army, and summoned him to surrender. The old soldier proudly replied that "he had provisions for a year;" but a few days afterwards he sent his aide-de-camp, Klenau, to the head-quarters of Serrurier to treat for a surrender.

'At the conference, a French officer sat apart from the two others, wrapped in his cloak, but within hearing of what passed. After the discussion was finished, this officer came forward and wrote marginal answers to the conditions proposed by Würmser;

granting terms far more favourable than those which might have been exacted in the extremity to which the veteran was reduced. "These," said the unknown officer, giving back the paper, "are the terms that I grant, if he opens his gates to-morrow; and if he delays a fortnight, a month, or two months, he shall have the same terms. He may hold out to his last morsel of bread; to-morrow I pass the Po and march upon Rome." Klenau, recognising Napoleon, and struck with the generosity of the conditions he had granted, owned that only three days' provisions remained in Mantua.'

The earliest English caricature of Napoleon that I have met with, was published on April 14, 1797, all those hitherto given, being of later date. It is not worth reproducing, as the artist had evidently no knowledge of what manner of man Napoleon was. It is called the 'French Bugabo³⁴ frightening the Royal Commanders.' Bonaparte (a perfectly fanciful, and horrible sketch) is seated on the back of some impossible Saurian – meant, probably, for the devil – who is vomiting armies and cannon. He calls out, 'Egad, they run well. Courez donc Messieurs les Princes!!!' Of the two royal commanders running away, Frederick Duke of York is calling out to his companion, 'I wish I was at York. Come on, Charles, follow me.' Fox, who acts the part of 'the sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,' says, 'Run, Frederick, run Charles, Mack, Wurmsell, Kell; well done D'Alvinzi, now Davidovich.' The poor Pope is being trodden

³⁴ A bogey, a bugbear.

under the beast, and cries out, ‘Oh Lord! this rebel son of mine pays me no homage whatever.’

Of all the attempts of the French to invade England, perhaps the most ludicrous was that which took place in February 1797. On the 22nd of that month, a French corvette, and a lugger, made for the coast of Pembrokeshire, and there landed some 1,200 men. Two days after, they surrendered to Lord Cawdor, and were sent to Haverfordwest: but, before the arrival of the military, the peasants attacked them with rough weapons, such as pikes and scythes. The ships, which brought this invading army over, were captured on their return to Brest. The following is an official letter to the Lord Mayor, respecting the event: —

My Lord, – I have the honour to acquaint your lordship that intelligence has been received that two French Frigates, a Corvette, and a lugger, appeared off the East of Pembrokeshire, on the 22nd instant, and, on the evening of that day, disembarked some troops (reported by deserters to be about 1,200 men, but without any field pieces). Every exertion had been made by the Lord Lieutenant, and gentlemen of that county, and its neighbourhood, for taking the proper steps on this occasion; and the greatest zeal and loyalty has been shewn by all ranks of people. Immediately, on an account having been received at Plymouth, of this force having appeared in the Bristol Channel, frigates were despatched from Plymouth in quest of them.

I have the honour to be, &c.

Portland.

In the 'Times' of March 13, 1797, is the following: —

Commodore Nelson's Receipt to make an Olla-Podrida

Take a Spanish first-rate, and an 80 gun ship and after well *battering* and *basting* them for an hour, keep throwing in your *force balls*, and be sure to let them be *well seasoned*. Your *fire* must never *slacken* for a single moment, but must be kept up as *brisk* as possible during the whole time. So soon as you perceive your Spaniards to be well *stewed* and *blended* together you must then throw your own ship on board of the two-decker. Lash your sprit-sail-yard to her mizen-mast: then jump into her quarter gallery, sword in hand, and let the rest of your boarders follow as they can. The moment you appear on the 80 gun ship's quarter deck, the Spaniards will all throw down their arms and fly: you will then have only to take a hop, step and a jump, from your *stepping stone*, and you will find yourself in the middle of the first-rate's quarter-deck with all the Spaniards at your feet. Your Olla Podrida may now be considered as completely *dished* and fit to be set before his Majesty.
—*Nelson's New Art of Cookery*.

Negotiations for peace with France had been going on during the year, and Lord Malmesbury went over to Lisle to conduct them on the part of the English, but they came to nothing. The French, however, in order to keep us in anxiety, massed large quantities of troops on their coast, which the Directory ordered

should be called the ‘Army of England,’ and they gave Bonaparte the command of it. It was destined to come to nothing. Napoleon had made peace with the Austrians, and was then given the above command.

Among themselves³⁵ they had indeed,
On Nap’s departure all agreed;
For, one of his prodigious sway,
’Twas policy to send away.
So Barras, who had such a wise head,
Albion’s immediate fall advised.
And to send Boney, he thought best,
To head the army in the West,
Which had a pompous appellation,
As ’twas to rouse the English nation;
The ‘Army of England’ it was named,
Though never for an action famed;
They had, indeed, for the occasion,
(We mean of the resolv’d invasion),
Rafts and Balloons, and ships for diving,
And other matters were contriving.
The business settled, Barras wrote
To his *dear* Bonaparte a note.
‘Your loving friend now reinstates you,
Another victory awaits you —
To Albion’s shores conduct your army,
There’s nothing there that can alarm ye;

³⁵ The Directory.

I will each necessary thing lend,
That you may sack the Bank of England;
On London's Tower let them see
The Standard of French Liberty.'
Some of the Ministers it seems
Thought this the maddest of all schemes;
Tho' Barras with fine words embellish'd it —
Not even Mr. Boney relish'd it;
And very soon, it must be own'd
The project wisely was postpon'd.

Thus stood things at the end of 1797, a year which left the public pulse – the Three per Cent. Consols – at 49 (they had, in September, dropped to 47-7/8), and the quartern loaf about eightpence all the year through.

CHAPTER IX

CARICATURES ABOUT THE FRENCH INVASION – FOX’S FRENCH PROCLIVITIES – PATRIOTISM IN THE COUNTRY – EXPEDITION TO EGYPT – NELSON’S BLUNDERS – LANDING IN EGYPT – NAPOLEON AS A MAHOMETAN – HIS PROCLAMATIONS

In 1798 the caricatures with regard to the relations between France and England became more numerous, and in this year the personal entity of Napoleon is confessed, and his likeness, a somewhat rough one, but still recognisable, is established. An early one in this year is, the ‘Storm Rising, or the Republican Flotilla in danger,’ Feb. 1798, by Gillray. Fox, Sheridan, the Duke of Bedford, and Mr. Tierney are represented as working a windlass, which is used to pull over the Flotilla. This is represented by a huge raft bristling with cannon; a large fort is in the centre, and minor ones all around which bear flags inscribed ‘Liberty, Atheism, Blasphemy, Invasion, Requisitions, Plunder, Beggary, Murder, Destruction, Anarchy, and Slavery. It is represented as coming from Brest, where the devil is seen dancing on a guillotine, fiddling, and singing, “Over de

Vater! over de Vater to Charley!” Fox’s coat lies on the ground, together with a paper, a ‘List of the New Republican Ministry. Citizen Volpone (Fox) Premier.’ Their designs, however, are being defeated by Pitt, who as Eolus, is raising a storm, and blowing against the Flotilla, the Admirals Duncan, Curtis, Howe, Gardiner, Trollope, Colpoys, St. Vincent, Seymour, Parker, and Onslow. A somewhat similar idea was worked out in a caricature by Isaac³⁶ Cruikshank, January 28, 1789.

In March Sir John Dalrymple drew, and Gillray etched, a series of four caricatures. The first was called the ‘Consequences of a successful French Invasion,’ and it shows the French clearing out the House of Commons, and the members in fetters. The second engraving is, ‘We explain de Rights of Man to de Noblesse.’ Paine’s doctrines are being carried out in far more than their entirety. A guillotine takes the place of the throne, and the French commander orders, à la Cromwell, one of his men, ‘Here, take away this bauble! but if there be any gold on it take it to my lodging.’

The next one is a slap in the face for Ireland, and is called, ‘We fly on the wings of the wind to save the Irish Catholics from persecution,’ and French sympathy is shown by a priest being stabbed, and the holy vessels trampled on.

The fourth is ‘Me teach de English Republicans to work,’ and

³⁶ He was the father of our great caricaturist, George; but there is little doubt from the internal evidence of the pictures, that George either wholly produced, or materially helped in the execution of many caricatures signed with his father’s name.

the French are represented as cruel taskmasters. Men and women are put to work in the fields, and Republicans, with fearful whips, keep them up to the mark of efficiency. Others are harnessed to a plough, and are kept well to their work by a most cruel lash.

Napoleon gave up all idea of invading England, and in May the expedition to Egypt was formed.

Fox's French proclivities are shown in a caricature (the Shrine of St. Anne's Hill,³⁷ May 26, 1798, Gillray) where he is seen on his knees before an altar, on which are a cap of liberty, and two busts of Robespierre and Buonaparte. The reredos is composed of a guillotine, and the tables of the ten commandments are labelled 'Droit de l'homme. 1. Right to worship whom we please. 2. Right to create and bow down to anything we chuse to set up. 3. Right to use in vain any name we like. 4. Right to work 9 days in the Week and do what we please on the tenth. 5. Right to honor both Father and Mother when we find it necessary. 6. Right to Kill. 7. Right to commit Adultery. 8. Right to Plunder. 9. Right to bear what Witness we please. 10. Right to covet our Neighbour's house and all that is his.' Nichols, Tierney, Lauderdale, Bedford, Lansdowne, and Norfolk, appear in the upper background as Cherubin.

When the invasion panic was abroad, patriotism was rampant, and everybody was very brave – on paper. This was the sort of stuff the people were fed on, of which I will give but two or three

³⁷ Fox's residence.

verses out of the eight.³⁸

While deeds of Hell deface the World,
And Gallia's throne in ruin lies,
While round the Earth revolt is hurl'd,
And Discord's baneful Banner flies —
Loud shall the loyal Briton sing
To arms! to arms! your bucklers bring,
To shield our Country, guard our King,
And George and England save.

Ne'er shall the desolating Woe
That shades with horror Europe o'er,
To us her hideous image shew,
Or steep in blood this happy shore;
Firm as our rock-bound Isle we'll stand,
With watchful eye and iron hand,
To wield the might of Britain's land,
And George and England save.

Oh, happy Isle! wise order'd State!
Well temper'd work of Freedom's hand!
No Shock of Realms can touch thy fate,
If Union bind thy sea-girt Land!
Vainly the storms shall round thee ring,
While Britain's sons in concord sing,
We'll shield our Country, guard our King

³⁸ *The True Briton*, May 11, 1798.

And George and England save.

To give some idea of the commotion caused by the threat of invasion, and yet not to be wearisome on the subject, I will only give the warlike items in the number of the *True Briton*, from which the above verses are taken, and which may be accepted as a fair sample. 'We understand that the Duke of Bedford has received an answer from his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief to his offer of service, that it would be highly acceptable to the Government if he would exert his influence in Devonshire for the defence of the Coast.' 'His Grace the Duke of Grafton has not only offered to furnish his waggons and horses to Government, in case of emergency, but has also expressed his desire to encourage all his neighbours and tenants to assist with their persons and teams as far as may be in their power.' 'Last week there was a respectable Meeting of the Inhabitants of Stowmarket, at which it was unanimously agreed to form a Volunteer Corps of Infantry for the defence of that Town and Hundred.' 'In the county of Bedford, Lord Ongley, Mr. Trevor, and Mr. Whitbread, raise, each of them, a troop of Yeomanry. The town of Bedford raises a troop of Volunteer Cavalry.' 'A Meeting was held at Newmarket on Sunday last, after Divine Service, for aiding Government in case of Invasion, pursuant to the Regulations of Mr. Dundas's Defence Bill; when the Inhabitants all came forward in a very laudable manner for that purpose, and most of the labourers offered their services as pioneers, or in any other capacity

that may be deemed necessary.’ ‘The farmers of the Parish of Tarvin, in Cheshire, have set a noble example to their brethren throughout the Kingdom, in having entered into an agreement that they will, at a moment’s notice, in case of actual invasion, or imminent danger thereof, furnish their respective teams, with able horses and drivers, for the service of Government, free from any payment or gratuity whatever; and the number of each which they bind themselves to furnish, are 39 waggons, 68 carts, 347 horses, and an adequate number of drivers.’

This is the voluntary, patriotic side of the question; take next day’s paper, and we see, ‘There was a sharp press from the ships in Yarmouth Roads on Tuesday evening, by which means some good Seamen were procured.’

There is a vast amount of humour in ‘Anticipation, Ways and Means, or Buonaparte really taken’ (I. Cruikshank, August 13, 1798). This represents a booth at a country fair, where a Pierrot in tricolour costume (Fox), is showing to a lot of yokels a highly imaginative show canvas of Napoleon, with huge mouth and teeth, goggle eyes, two daggers, and immense boots and spurs. ‘To be seen here alive, the noted Bony Parte, from Egypt. # An undoubted likeness.’ With tears streaming down his cheeks, he assures his audience that ‘he is certainly taken. I never was so pleased at any event in the whole course of my life.’

Pitt, who, suffering from gout, sits down and acts as trumpeter to the show, addresses the people thus: ‘Believe me, I do not mean to deceive you this time: he is really *taken*, and in this Booth at

this present moment. Out with your pence good people – don't be so shy – Tumble up Mr. Bull – the only booth in the fair! don't be alarm'd – he is perfectly tame I assure you.'

The expedition to Egypt may be said to be the starting-point from which came the numerous caricatures of Napoleon. Before this, he had been known only by his victorious career in Italy, and had never come into active hostility with England; but now that we were to measure our strength with the Chief of the 'Army of England,' he became an important person, and, consequently, the caricaturists, ever feeling the public pulse, took him up, and found it to their benefit.

The occupation of Egypt by the French, if successful, would have led to their attacking our empire in India, and this was Napoleon's design. Why the flotilla was ever allowed to go on its way unmolested, is hard to conceive; but it was so, and on May, 19, 1798, sailed out of Toulon 13 sail of the line, 7 frigates, 62 gunboats, and 400 transport vessels, having 20,000 troops and large quantities of military stores on board. There were also 121 men learned in different branches of science, who accompanied the expedition, and the whole was under the supreme command of Napoleon.

On June 11 they reached Malta, which surrendered without resistance, and then went on their way. Nelson followed them, and got to Malta, where he arrived on the 22nd, only to find that the French had left some days before, on which he sailed for Alexandria, getting there on June 28, but found no news

of the French fleet; so, instead of waiting for them, he steered northward for Caramania, and then went to Sicily; whence, after refitting, he sailed again for Alexandria.

In the meantime the French, of course, took advantage of his (to them) lucky absence; and, on July 2, they disembarked the army, and took possession of Alexandria, but not without some loss on the side of the French; and the bodies of the soldiers thus slain were by Napoleon's orders buried at the foot of Pompey's Pillar, and their names were to be engraved on the Column.

And now, as it will be a frequent article of impeachment against Napoleon in this book, let us examine into the truth of his turning Mahometan, and see, first, what foundation it had in fact from the mouths of his own countrymen. De Bourrienne gives a proclamation made by Napoleon to his soldiers before their arrival in Egypt, from which I extract only those sentences bearing on this subject: —

Head Quarters, on board the 'Orient.'

The 4th Messidor, Year VI. (June 22, 1798.)

Soldiers, — The people amongst whom you are going to live, are Mahometans. The first article of their faith is this: 'There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his Prophet.' Do not contradict this. Behave to them as you have behaved to the Jews — to the Italians. Pay respect to their muftis, and their imams, as you did to the rabbis and the bishops. Extend to the ceremonies prescribed by the Alcoran, and to the Mosques, the same toleration which you showed to the

synagogues, to the religion of Moses, and of Jesus Christ.
The Roman legions protected all religions.

And again, the same author says: ‘On arriving at Alexandria, the General in Chief issued a proclamation to the people of Egypt, which, besides adverting to the insults and extortions experienced by French merchants from the Beys, contained the following passages: —

“People of Egypt, – You will be told that I am come to destroy your religion – do not believe it. Be assured that I come to restore your rights, to punish the usurpers, and that I respect more than the Mamelukes, God, his prophet, and the Alcoran. Tell them that all men are equal in the eye of God; wisdom, talents, and virtue make the only difference.

“Cadis, Sheiks, Imans, Scorbajis, tell the people that we are the friends of the true Mussulmans. Have we not destroyed the Pope, who says that war ought to be made upon Mussulmans? Have we not destroyed the Knights of Malta, because those bigots believed that God required them to raise their swords against the Mussulmans?”

And again (still quoting from the same authority), in a proclamation to the people of Cairo, dated from Ghizeh, 4th Thermidor, year VI. (July 22, 1798): ‘Fear nothing for your families, your houses, or your property; and least of all, for the religion of the prophet, which I respect (*j’aime*).’

In another proclamation to the inhabitants of Cairo, according to ‘Buonapartiana,’ he is made to say: ‘Make known to the people

that since the world has been a world, it was written, that having destroyed the *enemies of Islamism*, the Cross should be thrown down; I have come from the extreme confines of the West, to fulfil the task which has been imposed upon me. Shew your people that in the book of the Koran, in more than twenty passages, that what has happened has been predicted, and that what will happen is equally explained.'

In a French History³⁹ he is described as conversing with the Muftis and Imams in the Pyramid of Cheops. At p. 171 he says, 'Honour to Allah!' at p. 172, 'Glory to Allah! There is no other God but God, Mahomet is his prophet, and I am one of his friends;' and at p. 173, 'Mufti, I thank you, the divine Koran is the joy of my soul, and the occupation of my eyes. I love the prophet; and I am reckoning, before long, to see and honour his tomb in the Holy City.'

It is not worth while to multiply instances. His policy led him to conciliate the people, and, probably, his utterances were rather more in accordance with their religious ideas than would have been conformable in the mouth of a zealous Christian. But to the English caricaturist and satirist they were *bonnes bouches*, and they twisted and distorted them to suit their purposes. It became almost an article of belief with the average Englishman, that Napoleon had embraced the Mahometan religion. Were there not his own proclamations to prove it? Gillray even depicted

³⁹ *Histoire de Bonaparte, Premier Consul, Depuis sa Naissance, jusqu'à la Paix de Lunéville*, Paris, chez Barba, 1801.

him as undergoing a ceremony of reception into the Mahometan religion, surrounded as he is by Muftis, one of whom puts a turban on his head, another sonorously reads from the Koran, whilst a third brandishes a fearful knife for circumcision.

CHAPTER X

CONDUCT OF FRENCH SOLDIERY – NAPOLEON'S HATRED OF ENGLAND – THE EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN – DESTRUCTION OF THE MAMELUKES – BATTLE OF THE NILE – TARDY NEWS THEREOF

After the entry into Alexandria, Napoleon, by several proclamations, imposed the strictest discipline upon his soldiers; and, although it is possible some irregularities may have occurred on the part of the troops, such scenes as were depicted by Cruikshank and Combe, one with his pencil, the other with his pen, were simply impossible.

He took the City by surprise,
For he was always very wise,
And with extreme amaze and dread,
To mosques the people gladly fled.
Regenerators yet annoy'd them,
For they o'ertook and soon destroy'd them;
And horrible indeed to tell,
Both men and women quickly fell;
Nay, even the infants at the breast!

How sad the cries of the distress!
As *trophies* of this *glorious* fight,
The spears held up the babes to sight;
While this unparalleled ferocity
Was call'd *amazing generosity*.

The *avowed* object of Napoleon's expedition was to punish the Beys, of whom there were twenty-four, who kept up a force of some eight thousand Mamelukes, splendid cavalry, recruited from slaves bought in Georgia, the Caucasus, and even in Europe. The pretence against them was injustice and oppression against French merchants; but the *real* reason for it is in the proclamation dated on board the 'Orient,' of 4th Messidor, year VI.: 'Soldiers, you are about to undertake a conquest, the effects of which on civilisation and commerce are incalculable. *The blow you are about to give to England, will be the best aimed, and the most sensibly felt, she can receive, until the time when you can give her her death blow.*⁴⁰ ... The Destinies are with us. The Mameluke Beys who favour exclusively English commerce, whose extortions oppress our merchants, and who tyrannise over the unfortunate inhabitants of the Nile, a few days after our arrival will no longer exist.'

With what intensity Bonaparte hated England! For example, take this little extract from Madame Junot,⁴¹ to whose brother

⁴⁰ The italics are mine. – J. A.

⁴¹ *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 209

Napoleon was speaking: “England!” he then rejoined. “So you think in Paris that we are going to attack it at last? The Parisians are not mistaken; it is indeed to humble that saucy nation that we are arming. England! If my voice has any influence, never shall England have an hour’s truce. Yes, yes, war with England for ever, until its utter destruction.”

Alexandria was taken and garrisoned; but this was only the commencement of the campaign. Cairo must be reached speedily, and at all hazards. Then came that terrible march across the desert, from the 7th to the 10th of July – with generals all but mutinous, with Lannes and Murat dashing their cocked hats on the sands and trampling upon them in sight of the soldiers; the burning sun, the scarcity of water, harassed by enemies, human and insect – what joy could exceed theirs when they reached the Nile at Rahmanié! That wild rush into the water, without even thinking of the depth, and then the welcome shade and the juicy melons in such abundance; it must have been a glimpse of heaven to those poor half-maddened, half-starved soldiers.

After a brief rest they pushed on towards Cairo. On July 19 they sighted the pyramids; on the 21st they had to encounter Mourad Bey, who had a force of 8,000 Mamelukes, forty pieces of cannon, and 20,000 infantry. Then was it that, pointing to those grand historical monuments, Napoleon addressed his soldiers with the ever-memorable and oft-quoted speech: ‘Soldiers! From the summit of those pyramids forty centuries look down upon you.’

We know the issue of that battle – how, out of 8,000 Mamelukes that proudly sat their steeds that morning, 6,000 bit the dust ere night. The French that day drank deep of blood, for 10,000 of the Egyptian troops lay dead on the field; they took 1,000 prisoners, and all their artillery and baggage. They could make no further stand, and the way to Cairo was open. A small force under Dupuy took possession of the city, which they found almost deserted, and on July 24, the *Sultan Kebir*, or *King of Fire*, as the natives had christened Napoleon, made his formal entry into Cairo. A brief rest to tranquillise the place and restore confidence to its returning inhabitants, and then, leaving Desaix in charge of the city, Napoleon went in pursuit of Ibrahim Bey, and drove him into Syria.

But what news was to welcome the conqueror back to Cairo? Sad indeed was the tale he heard – nought less than the destruction and capture of his whole fleet, save two ships, which effected their escape. Nelson had made up for lost time, and on August 1 he fought the ‘Battle of the Nile,’ when ‘L’Orient’ was blown up, and young Casabianca, the son of the captain of the ship, with it. We all know the poem by Mrs. Hemans commencing, ‘The boy stood on the burning deck.’

De Bourrienne does not disguise the effect this disaster had upon Napoleon. He says: ‘The catastrophe of Aboukir came like a thunderbolt upon the General-in-Chief. In spite of all his energy and fortitude, he was deeply distressed by the disasters which now assailed him. To the painful feelings excited by the

complaints and dejection of his companion-in-arms, was now added the irreparable misfortune of the burning our fleet. He measured the fatal consequences of this event at a single glance. We were now cut off from all communication with France, and all hope of returning thither, except by a degrading capitulation with an implacable and hated enemy. Bonaparte had lost all chance of preserving his conquest, and to him this was indeed a bitter reflection.'

But with what different feelings was the news received in England! There was no steam, no electricity, then; men did not receive their news red-hot as we do now, but had to wait for it, more or less calmly, according to their temperament. Let us take this battle of the Nile as an example. It was fought on August 1. On September 1 the 'True Briton' (from which the following extracts are taken) gives its readers an 'Extract from a letter from Strasbourg, of the 20th August,' in which a circumstantial account of the total destruction and capture of the French fleet by that of England is given, together with a veracious statement that 'the latter lost their Admiral Nelson, who, nevertheless, two hours before he died of his wounds, received General Buonaparte on board his ship (the 'Culloden') *Prisoner, with all his General Staff.*' This correspondent's veracity is only equalled by his impartiality.

On September 17 we hear of the sailing of the English fleet from Syracuse in quest of her enemy. On September 21 we have a quotation from the 'Redacteur' of September 14: 'The same

Letters inform us, that the Squadron of Admiral Brueys had anchored on the coast of *Bignieres*, and was preparing to return to France, when it was attacked by the English Squadron, which was superior to ours, both in the number and the size of the vessels; that on both sides the action was maintained with a degree of obstinacy, of which History affords no example; that during the action the Vessel of the French Admiral was burnt; that two or three French Ships sunk; and that some others, both French and English, ran aground after having lost all their Masts; and that, finally, some other French ships, quite disabled, remained on the spot where the Battle was fought.’

CHAPTER XI

RECEPTION OF THE NEWS OF THE BATTLE OF THE NILE – NELSON SENDS FRENCH ADMIRAL'S SWORD TO THE CITY OF LONDON – VARIOUS CARICATURES ON THE BATTLE – TYPICAL JOHN BULL

It was not till October 2 that a glimmer of the truth, through rather a roundabout channel, appeared in the papers; and later on that day appeared a 'London Gazette extraordinary,' with Nelson's despatches, which were very brief. Who can wonder at the excessive national rejoicing? People were drunk with joy. Take a few paragraphs from the 'Times' of October 3: —

'Drury Lane. — After the play, the news of Admiral Nelson's glorious victory produced a burst of patriotic exultation that has been rarely witnessed in a theatre. "Rule Britannia" was unanimously called for from every part of the house, and Messrs. Kelly, Dignum, Sedgewick, Miss Leak, and Mrs. Bland, came forward and sung it, accompanied by numbers of the audience. It was called for, and sung, a second time. The acclamations were the loudest and most fervent we have ever witnessed.

'The following lines, written for the occasion, were introduced

by Mr. Dignum and Mr. Sedgewick —

Again the tributary Strain
Of grateful Britons let us raise,
And to the Heroes on the Main,
Triumphant add a Nelson's praise.

Though the *Great Nation* proudly boasts
Herself invincible to be;
Yet our brave Nelson still can prove
Britannia, Mistress of the Sea.

The audience were not satisfied with this repeated mark of exultation, but in the effusion of enthusiastic loyalty, called for "God save the King," which was received with reiterated plaudits.'

'Immediately that the news of the gallant victory obtained by Admiral Nelson was known at Lloyd's, a subscription was opened for the relief of the widows and orphans of the brave men who perished in fighting for their country.'⁴²

'Every man in this country may address Admiral Nelson with Shakespeare,

Horatio, thou art e'en as *brave* a man

⁴² Eleven hundred guineas were collected at once on the first day, besides which, the *Times*, October 4, says, 'The Royal Exchange and London Assurance Companies have subscribed 100 guineas each, and the East India Company have voted 1,000*l.* towards this benevolent and patriotic fund.'

As e'er my understanding cop'd withal.

The Capture of the French Fleet by Nelson, has reduced Buonaparte to the situation of *Macbeth*,

There is no going hence, nor tarrying here.'

'A person last night, in the gallery of Drury Lane house, calling frequently for the tune of Britons strike Home,⁴³ was immediately silenced by the appropriate observation of another at some distance from him, "Why, damn it, they have – have not they?"'

'An affray happened last night opposite to the Admiralty, where the crowd was very great. The mob, as usual, insisted on every person of genteel appearance pulling off their hats; six Officers passing along, were ordered to pay the same compliment to the mobility, and, refusing to do so, the populace attempted to force their hats off. The Officers drew their swords, and it was said that some persons were wounded.'

The next day's 'Times' (October 4) says: 'To shew the zeal for Illumination in honour of our late splendid Victory, a chaise last night passed through the town, in which were three Ladies, with large cockades in their head dresses. The inside of the chaise was lighted up; a postillion was on each horse with flambeaux in their hands, besides two outriders, also carrying flambeaux.'

⁴³ From *Bonduca*, by Henry Purcell, A.D. 1710.

‘It was remarked by a loyal Hibernian, on the official news of Admiral Nelson’s victory, that nothing on *earth* could resist us by *sea*.’

The mob after a day or two became so uproarious that the magistrates were compelled to order the cessation of the illuminations.

On October 3 the Court of Common Council met, two hundred strong, when the Lord Mayor read the subjoined letter from Nelson —

*Vanguard, Mouth of the Nile:
August 8th, 1798.*

My Lord, – Having the honour of being a freeman of the City of London, I take the liberty of sending to your Lordship the sword of the commanding French admiral, Monsieur Blanquet, who survived after the battle of the 1st, off the Nile, and request that the City of London will honour me with the acceptance of it, as a remembrance that Britannia still rules the waves; which that she may for ever do, is the fervent prayer of

*Your lordship’s
Most obedient Servant
Horatio Nelson.*

Right hon. the Lord Mayor of London.

Naturally, this gratifying memorial of this splendid victory was welcomed with enthusiasm, and orders were given to provide a suitable case, with inscription, for it; and the Council voted

Nelson a sword, value 200 guineas; also the freedom of the City in a gold box, value 100 guineas, to Captain Berry, who was captain of the admiral's flagship, the 'Vanguard;' and the thanks of the court to every one concerned.

The caricaturists soon pounced upon the subject, and the way in which the news of the victory was taken by different statesmen is very amusingly shown. (Gillray, October 3, 1798.) Burdett, who is always represented with his crop of hair combed over his eyes, is reading the 'Extraordinary Gazette,' and, in astonishment, exclaims, 'Sure I cannot see clear?' Jekyll is telling Lord Lansdowne how nine French ships of war were captured and two burnt; but his lordship claps his hands to his ears, and calls out, 'I can't hear, I can't hear.' The Duke of Bedford will not believe it, and is tearing up the notification of 'the complete destruction of Buonaparte's Fleet,' exclaiming, 'It's all a damn'd Lye;' whilst poor Erskine, with Republican briefs before him, drops the paper which tells him of the capture of Bonaparte's despatches, and, with a smelling-bottle to his nose, plaintively calls out, 'I shall faint, I, I, I.' The poor Duke of Norfolk, whose many empty bottles of port testify to his inebriate condition, is very ill, and gives his opinion that 'Nelson and the British Fleet' is 'a sickening toast.' Tierney is in despair, and with the 'End of the Irish Rebellion' in his pocket, and on his knees a paper, 'End of the French Navy. Britannia rules the Waves,' calls out, with upturned eyes, 'Ah! our hopes are all lost.'

Moodily, with his head resting on his hands, sits Sheridan,

with a 'List of the Republican Ships taken and destroyed' before him, and his thoughts are of prudence, 'I must lock up my Jaw.' Black-visaged Fox, wearing a Cap of Liberty, has kicked over the stool that hitherto has supported him, and mournfully bidding 'Farewell to the Whig Club,' says, 'and I – end with Éclat.'

This victory of the Nile is very graphically depicted (Gillray, October 6, 1798) in the 'Extirpation of the Plagues of Egypt; – Destruction of Revolutionary Crocodiles; – or – The British Hero cleansing ye Mouth of ye Nile.' Here Nelson has half-a-dozen crocodiles (typical of captured French ships) hooked and in his power, whilst, with a stout cudgel of 'British Oak,' he is spreading deadly blows and consternation into a quantity of tricoloured crocodiles. The blowing up of the 'Orient' is shown by one crocodile which is thus being destroyed.

Another caricature (October 7, 1798) of the victory of the Nile is 'The Gallant Nelson bringing home two uncommon fierce French Crocodiles from the Nile as a present to the King.' The one-armed hero is leading by a chain Fox and Sheridan, who have their jaws muzzled by rings, and Fox's mouth is also secured by a padlock, 'a mouthpiece for hypocrites.' They are both weeping copiously, after the fabled manner of crocodiles. Nelson is saying, 'Come along you Hypocritical dogs, I dare say your Dam'd sorry now for what you've done. No, no, I shall bring you to my Master;' whilst John Bull, habited as a countryman, exclaims, 'Aye, aye, what! Horatio has got 'em at *last*. Why, these be the Old Cock Deviles. I thought as how he would not go so

far for nothing.’ This goes well with that of October 3.

A very curious caricature is (Ansell, October 24, 1798) Bonaparte in Egypt, ‘A terrible Turk preparing a Mummy for a *present* to the Grand Nation.’ A Turk, terrible indeed, has Napoleon by the throat, and, with sword in hand, is going to despatch him, saying, ‘As for you, you Dog of no Religion, I’ll sacrifice you at the tomb of the Prophet, whose name you have prophaned for the purposes of Murder, Rapine, and Plunder.’

Napoleon, whose defenceless state is typified by his swordless scabbard being broken, is endeavouring to mollify the wrath of the Turk. ‘Now, mild and gentle Sir, don’t be so rough: do you think I would cut your throat, ravish your wives, or plunder your house? No, by Mahomet I would not. *Sacrè Dieu*, I would not. Ah, *Diable*, you’ll choak me.’

Fox, Erskine, Sheridan, and the Duke of Norfolk are kneeling down, begging for Napoleon’s life, whilst a Turk, who exclaims, ‘You agree together so well, I think I’ll fix you together for life,’ has a bowstring ready to strangle all four. Pleads Fox, ‘Pray don’t hurt our dear friend, he would not hurt Man, Woman, or Child. He can’t bear the sight of blood; as for plunder or deception, he is the determined enemy to both, by – he is, and we are ready to swear it.’ Sheridan and Erskine say – the one, ‘d – n me if he ayn’t, and we are ready to swear it;’ the other, ‘I’ll swear it, I, I, I, swear it.’

‘John Bull taking a luncheon’ (Gillray, October 24, 1798) is an extremely graphic caricature, and introduces us to the popular

idea of John Bull, who, certainly, is never represented in this period with any of the refinement that Leech, Doyle, Tenniel, or any of our modern caricaturists depict him; tastes and habits were coarser then than now, and John Bull was always shown in the rough. The second portion of the title of the picture helps us to realise the popular fancy, ‘or – British Cooks cramming old *Grumble Gizzard* with *Bonne Chère*.’ All his admirals and captains are bringing him food. Nelson presents him with a *Fricasee à la Nelson*, a huge dish of French ships; others are bearing dishes, such as *Desert à la Warren*, *Fricando à la Howe*, *à la Gardner*, *à la Bridport*, *à la Vincent*, *Dutch Cheese à la Duncan*.

John Bull is seated, devouring these viands, which are to be washed down with mighty draughts of *True British Stout*, exclaiming, ‘What! more Frigasees? why you sons o’ b – s, you, where do you think I shall find room to stow all you bring in?’ Fox and Sheridan are seen through an open window, running away, calling out, ‘Oh curse his Guts, he’ll take a chop at us next.’

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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