

LOUIS DE BOURRIENNE

MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON
BONAPARTE — VOLUME
09

Louis Antoine Fauvelet Bourrienne
Memoirs of Napoleon
Bonaparte — Volume 09

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Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte — Volume 09

CHAPTER I

1805.

Abolition of the Republican calendar—Warlike preparations in Austria—Plan for re-organizing the National Guard—Napoleon in Strasburg—General Mack—Proclamation—Captain Bernard's reconnoitering mission—The Emperor's pretended anger and real satisfaction—Information respecting Ragusa communicated by Bernard —Rapid and deserved promotion—General Bernard's retirement to the United States of America.

I had been three months at Hamburg when I learned that the Emperor had at last resolved to abolish the only remaining memorial of the Republic, namely, the revolutionary calendar. That calendar was indeed an absurd innovation, for the new denominations of the months were not applicable in all places,

even in France; the corn of Provence did not wait to be opened by the sun of the month of Messidor. On the 9th of September a 'Senates-consulte' decreed that on the 1st of January following the months and days should resume their own names. I read with much interest Laplace's report to the Senate, and must confess I was very glad to see the Gregorian calendar again acknowledged by law, as it had already been acknowledged in fact. Frenchmen in foreign countries experienced particular inconvenience from the adoption of a system different from all the rest of the world.

A few days after the revival of the old calendar the Emperor departed for the army. When at Hamburg it may well be supposed that I was anxious to obtain news, and I received plenty from the interior of Germany and from some friends in Paris. This correspondence enables me to present to my readers a comprehensive and accurate picture of the state of public affairs up to the time when Napoleon took the field. I have already mentioned how artfully he always made it appear that he was anxious for peace, and that he was always the party attacked; his conduct previous to the first conquest of Vienna affords a striking example of this artifice. It was pretty evident that the transformation of the Cisalpine Republic into the kingdom of Italy, and the union of Genoa to France were infractions of treaties; yet the Emperor, nevertheless, pretended that all the infractions were committed by Austria. The truth is, that Austria was raising levies as secretly as possible, and collecting her troops on the frontiers of Bavaria. An Austrian corps even penetrated

into some provinces of the Electorate; all this afforded Napoleon a pretext for going to the aid of his allies.

In the memorable sitting preceding his departure the Emperor presented a project of a 'Senatus-consulte' relative to the re-organisation of the National Guard. The Minister for Foreign Affairs read an explanation of the reciprocal conduct of France and Austria since the peace of Luneville, in which the offences of France were concealed with wonderful skill. Before the sitting broke up the Emperor addressed the members, stating that he was about to leave the capital to place himself at the head of the army to afford prompt succour to his allies, and defend the dearest interests of his people. He boasted of his wish to preserve peace, which Austria and Russia, as he alleged, had, through the influence of England, been induced to disturb.

This address produced a very powerful impression in Hamburg. For my part, I recognised in it Napoleon's usual boasting strain; but on this occasion events seemed bent on justifying it. The Emperor may certainly have performed more scientific campaigns than that of Austerlitz, but never any more glorious in results. Everything seemed to partake of the marvellous, and I have often thought of the secret joy which Bonaparte must have felt on seeing himself at last at the point of commencing a great war in Germany, for which he had so often expressed an ardent desire. He proceeded first to Strasburg, whither Josephine accompanied him.

All the reports that I received agreed with the statements

of my private correspondence in describing the incredible enthusiasm which prevailed in the army on learning that it was to march into Germany. For the first time Napoleon had recourse to an expeditious mode of transport, and 20,000 carriages conveyed his army, as if by enchantment, from the shores of the Channel to the banks of the Rhine. The idea of an active campaign fired the ambition of the junior part of the army. All dreamed of glory, and of speedy promotion, and all hoped to distinguish themselves before the eyes of a chief who was idolised by his troops. Thus during his short stay at Strasburg the Emperor might with reason prophesy the success which crowned his efforts under the walls of Vienna.

Rapp, who accompanied him, informed me that on leaving Strasburg he observed, in the presence of several persons, "It will be said that I made Mack's plan of campaign for him. The Caudine Forks are at Ulm."

—[This allusion to the Caudine Forks was always in Napoleon's mouth when he saw an enemy's army concentrated on a point, and foresaw its defeat—*Bourrienne.*]—

Experience proved that Bonaparte was not deceived; but I ought on this occasion to contradict a calumnious report circulated at that time, and since maliciously repeated. It has been said that there existed an understanding between Mack and Bonaparte, and that the general was bought over to deliver up the gates of Ulm. I have received positive proof that this assertion is a

scandalous falsehood; and the only thing that could give it weight was Napoleon's intercession after the campaign that Mack might not be put on his trial. In this intercession Napoleon was actuated only by humanity.

On taking the field Napoleon placed himself at the head of the Bavarians, with whom he opposed the enemy's army before the arrival of his own troops. As soon as they were assembled he published the following proclamation, which still further excited the ardour of the troops.

SOLDIERS—The war of the third coalition is commenced. The Austrian army has passed the Inn, violated treaties, attacked and driven our ally from his capital. You yourselves have been obliged to hasten, by forced marches, to the defence of our frontiers. But you have now passed the Rhine; and we will not stop till we have secured the independence of the Germanic body, succoured our allies, and humbled the pride of our unjust assailants. We will not again make peace without a sufficient guarantee! Our generosity shall not again wrong our policy. Soldiers, your Emperor is among you! You are but the advanced guard of the great people. If it be necessary they will all rise at my call to confound and dissolve this new league, which has been created by the malice and the gold of England. But, soldiers, we shall have forced marches to make, fatigues and privations of every kind to endure. Still, whatever obstacles may be opposed to us, we will conquer them; and we will never rest until we

have planted our eagles on the territory of our enemies!

In the confidential notes of his diplomatic agents, in his speeches, and in his proclamations, Napoleon always described himself as the attacked party, and perhaps his very earnestness in so doing sufficed to reveal the truth to all those who had learned to read his thoughts differently from what his words expressed them.

At the commencement of the campaign of Austerlitz a circumstance occurred from which is to be dated the fortune of a very meritorious man. While the Emperor was at Strasburg he asked General Marescot, the commander-in-chief of the engineers, whether he could recommend from his corps a brave, prudent, and intelligent young officer, capable of being entrusted with an important reconnoitering mission. The officer selected by General Marescot was a captain in the engineers, named Bernard, who had been educated in the Polytechnic School. He set off on his mission, advanced almost to Vienna, and returned to the headquarters of the Emperor at the capitulation of Ulm.

Bonaparte interrogated him himself, and was well satisfied with his replies; but, not content with answering verbally the questions put by Napoleon, Captain Bernard had drawn up a report of what he observed, and the different routes which might be taken. Among other things he observed that it would be a great advantage to direct the whole army upon Vienna, without regard to the fortified places; for that, once master of the capital of Austria, the Emperor might dictate laws to all the Austrian

monarchy. "I was present," said Rapp to me, "at this young officer's interview with the Emperor. After reading the report, would you believe that the Emperor flew into a furious passion? 'How!' cried he, 'you are very bold, very presumptuous! A young officer to take the liberty of tracing out a plan of campaign for me! Begone, and await my orders.'"

This, and some other circumstances which I shall have to add respecting Captain Bernard, completely reveal Napoleon's character. Rapp told me that as soon as the young officer had left the Emperor all at once changed his tone. "That," said he, "is a clever young man; he has taken a proper view of things. I shall not expose him to the chance of being shot. Perhaps I shall sometime want his services. Tell Berthier to despatch an order for his departure for Elyria."

This order was despatched, and Captain Bernard, who, like his comrades, was ardently looking forward to the approaching campaign, regarded as a punishment what was, on the Emperor's part, a precaution to preserve a young man whose merit he appreciated. At the close of the campaign, when the Emperor promoted those officers who had distinguished themselves, Bernard, who was thought to be in disgrace, was not included in Berthier's list among the captains of engineers whom he recommended to the rank of chef de bataillon; but Napoleon himself inscribed Bernard's name before all the rest. However, the Emperor forgot him for some time; and it was only an accidental circumstance that brought him to his recollection. I

never had any personal acquaintance with Bernard, but I learned from Rapp, how he afterwards became his colleague as aide de camp to the Emperor; a circumstance which I shall now relate, though it refers to a later period.

Before the Emperor left Paris for the campaign of 1812 he wished to gain precise information respecting Ragusa and Elyria. He sent for Marmont, but was not satisfied with his answers. He then interrogated several other generals, but the result of his inquiries always was, "This is all very well; but it is not what I want. I do not know Ragusa." He then sent for General Dejean, who had succeeded M. de Marescot as first inspector of the Engineers.

"Have you any one among your officers," he asked, "who is well acquainted with Ragusa?" Dejean, after a little reflection, replied, "Sire, there is a chef de bataillon who has been a long time forgotten, but who knows Elyria perfectly."—"What's his name?"—"Bernard."—"Ah! stop . . . Bernard! I remember that name. Where is he?"—"At Antwerp, Sire, employed on the fortifications."—"Let a telegraphic despatch be immediately, transmitted,—[by semaphore arms.]—desiring him to mount his horse and come with all speed to Paris."

The promptitude with which the Emperor's orders were always executed is well known. A few days after Captain Bernard was in the Emperor's cabinet in Paris. Napoleon received him very graciously. The first thing he said was, "Talk to me about Ragusa." This was a favourite mode of interrogation with

him in similar cases, and I have heard him say that it was a sure way of drawing out all that a man had observed in any country that he had visited. Be that as it may, he was perfectly satisfied with M. Bernard's information respecting Elyria; and when the chef de bataillon had finished speaking Napoleon said, "Colonel Bernard, I am now acquainted with Ragusa." The Emperor afterwards conversed familiarly with him, entered into details respecting the system of fortification adopted at Antwerp, referred to the plan of the works, criticised it, and showed how he would, if he besieged the town, render the means of defence unavailing. The new Colonel explained so well how he would defend the town against the Emperor's attack that Bonaparte was delighted, and immediately bestowed upon, the young officer a mark of distinction which, as far as I know, he never granted but upon that single occasion. The Emperor was going to preside at the Council of State, and desired Colonel Bernard to accompany him, and many times during the sittings he asked him for his opinion upon the points which were under discussion. On leaving the Council Napoleon said, "Bernard, you are in future my aide de camp." After the campaign he was made General of Brigade, soon after General of Division, and now he is acknowledged to be one of the ablest engineer officers in existence. Clarke's silly conduct deprived France of this distinguished man, who refused the brilliant offers of several sovereigns of Europe for the sake of retiring to the United States of America, where he commands the Engineers, and has constructed fortifications on the coast of the

Floridas which are considered by engineers to be masterpieces of military art.

CHAPTER II

1805.

Rapidity of Napoleon's victories—Murat at Wertingen—Conquest of Ney's duchy—The French army before Ulm—The Prince of Liechtenstein at the Imperial headquarters—His interview with Napoleon described by Rapp—Capitulation of Ulm signed by Berthier and Mack—Napoleon before and after a victory—His address to the captive generals—The Emperor's proclamation—Ten thousand prisoners taken by Murat—Battle of Caldiero in Italy—Letter from Duroc—Attempts to retard the Emperor's progress—Fruitless mission of M. de Giulay—The first French eagles taken by the Russians—Bold adventure of Lannes and Murat—The French enter Vienna—Savary's mission to the Emperor Alexander.

To convey an idea of the brilliant campaign of 1805 from an abstract of the reports and letters I received at Hamburg I should, like the almanac-makers, be obliged to note down a victory for every day. Was not the rapidity of the Emperor's first operations a thing hitherto unprecedented? He departed from Paris on the 24th of September, and hostilities commenced on the 2d of October. On the 6th and 7th the French passed the Danube, and turned the enemy's army. On the 8th Murat, at the battle of Wertingen, on the Danube, took 2000 Austrian

prisoners, amongst whom, besides other general officers, was Count Auffemberg. Next day the Austrians fell back upon Gunsburg, retreating before our victorious legions, who, pursuing their triumphal course, entered Augsburg on the 10th, and Munich on the 12th. When I received my despatches I could have fancied I was reading a fabulous narrative. Two days after the French entered Munich—that is to say, on the 14th—an Austrian corps of 6000 men surrendered to Marshal Soult at Memingen, whilst Ney conquered, sword in hand, his future Duchy of Elchingen. Finally, on the 17th of October, came the famous capitulation of General Mack at Ulm,' and on the same day hostilities commenced in Italy between the French and Austrians, the former commanded by Massena and the latter by Prince Charles.

—[Prince Maurice Liechtenstein was sent by General Mack as a flag of truce to the Imperial headquarters before Ulm. He was, according to custom, led blindfold on horseback. Rapp, who was present, together with several of Napoleon's aides de camp, afterwards spoke to me of the Prince's interview with the Emperor. I think he told me that Berthier was present likewise. "Picture to yourself," said Rapp, "the astonishment, or rather confusion, of the poor Prince when the bandage was removed from his eyes. He knew nothing of what had been going on, and did not even suspect that the Emperor had yet joined the army. When he understood that he was in the presence of Napoleon he could not suppress an exclamation of surprise, which did not

escape the Emperor, and he ingenuously acknowledged that General Mack had no idea he was before the walls of Ulm." Prince Liechtenstein proposed to capitulate on condition that the garrison of Ulm should be allowed to return into Austria. This proposal, in the situation in which the garrison stood, Rapp said, made the Emperor smile. "How can you expect," said Napoleon, "that I can accede to such a proposition? What shall I gain by it? Eight days. In eight days you will be in my power without any condition. Do you suppose I am not acquainted with everything? . . . You expect the Russians? . . . At the nearest they are in Bohemia. Were I to allow you to march out, what security can I have that you will not join them, and afterwards fight against me? Your generals have deceived me often enough, and I will no longer be duped. At Marengo I was weak enough to allow the troops of Melas to march out of Alessandria. He promised to treat for peace. What happened? Two months after Moreau had to fight with the garrison of Alessandria. Besides, this war is not an ordinary war. After the conduct of your Government I am not bound to keep any terms with it. I have no faith in its promises. You have attacked me. If I should agree to what you ask, Mack would pledge his word, I know. But, even relying on his good faith, would he be able to keep his promise? As far as regards himself—yes; but as regards his army—no. If the Archduke Ferdinand were still with you I could rely upon his word, because he would be responsible for the conditions, and he would not disgrace himself; but I know he has quitted Ulm and passed the Danube. I know how to reach him, however."

Rapp said it was impossible to imagine the embarrassment of Prince Liechtenstein whilst the Emperor was speaking. He, however, somewhat regained his self-possession, and observed that, unless the conditions which he proposed were granted the army would not capitulate. "If that be the case," said Napoleon. "you may as well go back to Mack, for I will never grant such conditions. Are you jesting with me? Stay; here is the capitulation of Memingen—show it to your General—let him surrender on the same conditions—I will consent to no others. Your officers may return to Austria, but the soldiers must be prisoners. Tell him to be speedy, for I have no time to lose. The more he delays the worse he will render his own condition and yours. To-morrow I shall have here the corps to which Memingen capitulated, and then we shall see what is to be done. Make Mack clearly understand that he has no alternative but to conform to my will."

The imperious tones which Napoleon employed towards his enemies almost always succeeded, and it produced the accustomed effect upon Mack. On the same day that Prince Liechtenstein had been at our headquarters Mack wrote to the Emperor, stating that he would not have treated with any other on such terms; but that he yielded to the ascendancy of Napoleon's fortune; and on the following day Berthier was sent into Ulm, from whence he returned with the capitulation signed. Thus Napoleon was not mistaken respecting the Caudine Forks of the Austrian army. The garrison of Ulm marched out with what are called the honours of war, and were led prisoners into France.—

Napoleon, who was so violently irritated by any obstacle which opposed him, and who treated with so much hauteur everybody who ventured to resist his inflexible will, was no longer the same man when, as a conqueror, he received the vanquished generals at Ulm. He condoled with them on their misfortune; and this, I can affirm, was not the result of a feeling of pride concealed beneath a feigned generosity. Although he profited by their defeat he pitied them sincerely. How frequently has he observed to me, "How much to be pitied is a general on the day after a lost battle." He had himself experienced this misfortune when he was obliged to raise the siege of St. Jean d'Acre. At that moment he would, I believe, have strangled Djezzar; but if Djezzar had surrendered, he would have treated him with the same attention which he showed to Mack and the other generals of the garrison of Ulm. These generals were seventeen in number, and among them was Prince Liechtenstein. There were also General Klenau (Baron de Giulay), who had acquired considerable military reputation in the preceding wars, and General Fresnel, who stood in a more critical situation than his companions in misfortune, for he was a Frenchman, and an emigrant.

Rapp told me that it was really painful to see these generals. They bowed respectfully to the Emperor, having Mack at their head. They preserved a mournful silence, and Napoleon was the first to speak, which he did in the following terms: "Gentlemen,

I feel sorry that such brave men as you are should be the victims of the follies of a Cabinet which cherishes insane projects, and which does not hesitate to commit the dignity of the Austrian nation by trafficking with the services of its generals. Your names are known to me—they are honourably known wherever you have fought. Examine the conduct of those who have committed you. What could be more iniquitous than to attack me without a declaration of war? Is it not criminal to bring foreign invasion upon a country? Is it not betraying Europe to introduce Asiatic barbarities into her disputes? If good policy had been followed the Aulic Council, instead of attacking me, would have sought my alliance in order to drive back the Russians to the north. The alliance which your Cabinet has formed will appear monstrous in history. It is the alliance of dogs, shepherds, and wolves against sheep—such a scheme could never have been planned in the mind of a statesman. It is fortunate for you that I have not been defeated in the unjust struggle to which I have been provoked; if I had, the Cabinet of Vienna would have soon perceived its error, for which, perhaps, it will yet one day pay dearly."

What a change fifteen days of success, crowned by the capture of Ulm, had made in affairs! At Hamburg I knew through my agents to what a degree of folly the hopes of Napoleon's enemies had risen before he began the campaign. The security of the Cabinet of Vienna was really inexplicable; not only did they not dream of the series of victories which made Napoleon master of all the Austrian monarchy, but the assistants of Drake and all

the intriguers of that sort treated France already as a conquered country, and disposed of some of our provinces. In the excess of their folly, to only give one instance, they promised the town of Lyons to the King of Sardinia, to recompense him for the temporary occupation of Piedmont.

—[In the treaties and declarations (see Martens and Thiers, tome v. p. 355) there is rather a tendency to sell the skin of the bear before killing him.]—

While Napoleon flattered his prisoners at the expense of their Government he wished to express satisfaction at the conduct of his own army, and with this view he published a remarkable proclamation, which in some measure presented an abstract of all that had taken place since the opening of the campaign.

This proclamation was as follows:—

SOLDIERS OF THE GRAND ARMY—In a fortnight we have finished an entire campaign. What we proposed to do has been done. We have driven the Austrian troops from Bavaria, and restored our ally to the sovereignty of his dominions.

That army, which, with equal presumption and imprudence, marched upon our frontiers, is annihilated.

But what does this signify to England? She has gained her object. We are no longer at Boulogne, and her subsidy will be neither more nor less.

Of a hundred thousand men who composed that army, sixty thousand are prisoners. They will replace our conscripts in the labours of agriculture.

Two hundred pieces of cannon, the whole park of artillery, ninety flags, and all their generals are in our power. Fifteen thousand men only have escaped.

Soldiers! I announced to you the result of a great battle; but, thanks to the ill-devised schemes of the enemy, I was enabled to secure the wished-for result without incurring any danger, and, what is unexampled in the history of nations, that result has been gained at the sacrifice of scarcely fifteen hundred men killed and wounded.

Soldiers! this success is due to your unlimited confidence in your Emperor, to your patience in enduring fatigues and privations of every kind, and to your singular courage and intrepidity.

But we will not stop here. You are impatient to commence another campaign!

The Russian army, which English gold has brought from the extremities of the universe, shall experience the same fate as that which we have just defeated.

In the conflict in which we are about to engage the honour of the French infantry is especially concerned. We shall now see another decision of the question which has already been determined in Switzerland and Holland; namely, whether the French infantry is the first or the second in Europe.

Among the Russians there are no generals in contending against whom I can acquire any glory. All I wish is to obtain the victory with the least possible bloodshed. My soldiers are, my children.

This proclamation always appeared to me a masterpiece of

military eloquence. While he lavished praises on his troops, he excited their emulation by hinting that the Russians were capable of disputing with them the first rank among the infantry of Europe, and he concluded his address by calling them his children.

The second campaign, to which Napoleon alleged they so eagerly looked forward, speedily ensued, and hostilities were carried on with a degree of vigour which fired the enthusiasm of the army. Heaven knows what accounts were circulated of the Russians, who, as Bonaparte solemnly stated in his proclamation, had come from the extremity of the world. They were represented as half-naked savages, pillaging, destroying and burning wherever they went. It was even asserted that they were cannibals, and had been seen to eat children. In short, at that period was introduced the denomination of northern barbarians which has since been so generally applied to the Russians. Two days after the capitulation of Ulm Murat obtained the capitulation of Trochtelfingen from General Yarneck, and made 10,000 prisoners, so that, without counting killed and wounded, the Austrian army had sustained a diminution of 50,000 men after a campaign of twenty days. On the 27th of October the French army crossed the Inn, and thus penetrated into the Austrian territory. Salzburg and Brannan were immediately taken. The army of Italy, under the command of Massena, was also obtaining great advantages. On the 30th of October, that is to say, the very day on which the Grand Army took the

above-mentioned fortresses, the army of Italy, having crossed the Adige, fought a sanguinary battle at Caldiero, and took 5000 Austrian prisoners.

In the extraordinary campaign, which has been distinguished by the name of "the Campaign of Austerlitz," the exploits of our troops succeeded each other with the rapidity of thought. I confess I was equally astonished and delighted when I received a note from Duroc, sent by an extraordinary courier, and commencing laconically with the words, "We are in Vienna; the Emperor is well."

Duroc's letter was dated the 13th November, and the words, "We are in Vienna," seemed to me the result of a dream. The capital of Austria, which from time immemorial had not been occupied by foreigners—the city which Sobieski had saved from Ottoman violence, had become the prey of the Imperial eagle of France, which, after a lapse of three centuries, avenged the humiliations formerly imposed upon Francis I. by the 'Aquila Grifagna' of Charles V. Duroc had left the Emperor before the camp of Boulogne was raised; his mission to Berlin being terminated, he rejoined the Emperor at Lintz.

—[As soon as Bonaparte became Emperor he constituted himself the avenger of all the insults given to the sovereigns, whom he styled his predecessors. All that related to the honour of France was sacred to him. Thus he removed the column of Rosbach from the Prussian territory. —Bourrienne.]—

Before I noticed the singular mission of M. Haugwitz to the Emperor Napoleon, and the result of that mission, which circumstances rendered diametrically the reverse of its object, I will relate what came to my knowledge respecting some other negotiations on the part of Austria, the evident intent of which was to retard Napoleon's progress, and thereby to dupe him. M. de Giulay, one of the generals included in the capitulation of Ulm, had returned home to acquaint his sovereign with the disastrous event. He did not conceal, either from the Emperor Francis or the Cabinet of Vienna, the destruction of the Austrian army, and the impossibility of arresting the rapid advance of the French. M. de Giulay was sent with a flag of truce to the headquarters of Napoleon, to assure him of the pacific intentions of the Emperor of Austria, and to solicit an armistice. The snare was too clumsy not to be immediately discovered by so crafty a man as Napoleon.

—[Metternich (tome ii. p. 346, compare French edition, tome ii. p. 287) says, "Let us hold always the sword in one hand and the olive branch in the other; always ready to negotiate, but only negotiating while advancing." Here is Napoleons system.]—

He had always pretended a love for peace, though he was overjoyed at the idea of continuing a war so successfully commenced, and he directed General Giulay to assure the Emperor of Austria that he was not less anxious for peace than he, and that he was ready to treat for it, but without suspending

the course of his operations. Bonaparte, indeed, could not, without a degree of imprudence of which he was incapable, consent to an armistice; for M. de Giulay, though entrusted with powers from Austria, had received none from Russia. Russia, therefore, might disavow the armistice and arrive in time to defend Vienna, the occupation of which was so important to the French army. The Russians, indeed, were advancing to oppose us, and the corps of our army, commanded by Mortier on the left bank of the Danube, experienced in the first engagement a check at Dirnstein, which not a little vexed the Emperor. This was the first reverse of fortune we had sustained throughout the campaign. It was trivial, to be sure, but the capture by the Russians of three French eagles, the first that had fallen into the hands of the enemy, was very mortifying to Napoleon, and caused him to prolong for some days his staff at St. Folten, where he then was.

The rapid occupation of Vienna was due to the successful temerity of Lannes and Murat, two men alike distinguished for courage and daring spirit. A bold artifice of these generals prevented the destruction of the Thabor bridge at Vienna, without which our army would have experienced considerable difficulty in penetrating into the Austrian capital. This act of courage and presence of mind, which had so great an influence on the events of the campaign, was described to me by Lannes, who told the story with an air of gaiety, unaccompanied by any self-complacency, and seemed rather pleased with the trick

played upon the Austrians than proud of the brilliant action which had been performed. Bold enterprises were so natural to Lannes that he was frequently the only person who saw nothing extraordinary in his own exploits. Alas! what men were sacrificed to Napoleon's ambition!

The following is the story of the Bridge of Thabor as I heard it from Lannes:—

—[I was one day walking with Murat, on the right bank of the Danube, and we observed on the left bank, which was occupied by the Austrians, some works going on, the evident object of which was to blow up the bridge on the approach of our troops. The fools had the impudence to make these preparations under our very noses; but we gave them a good lesson. Having arranged our plan, we returned to give orders, and I entrusted the command of my column of grenadiers to an officer on whose courage and intelligence I could rely. I then returned to the bridge, accompanied by Murat and two or three other officers. We advanced, unconcernedly, and entered into conversation with the commander of a post in the middle of the bridge. We spoke to him about an armistice which was to be speedily concluded: While conversing with the Austrian officers we contrived to make them turn their eyes towards the left bank, and then, agreeably to the orders we had given, my column of grenadiers advanced on the bridge. The Austrian cannoneers, on the left bank, seeing their officers in the midst of us, did not dare to fire, and my column advanced at a quick step. Murat and I, at the head

of it, gained the left bank. All the combustibles prepared for blowing up the bridge were thrown into the river, and my men took possession of the batteries erected for the defence of the bridge head. The poor devils of Austrian officers were perfectly astounded when I told them they were my prisoners.]—

Such, as well as I can recollect, was the account given by Lannes, who laughed immoderately in describing the consternation of the Austrian officers when they discovered the trick that had been played upon them. When Lannes performed this exploit he had little idea of the, important consequences which would attend, it. He had not only secured to the remainder of the French army a sure and easy entrance to Vienna, but, without being aware of it, he created an insurmountable impediment to the junction of the Russian army with the Austrian corps, commanded by Prince Charles, who, being pressed by Massena, hastily advanced into the heart of the Hereditary States, where he fully expected a great battle would take place.

As soon as the corps of Murat and Lannes had taken possession of Vienna the Emperor ordered all the divisions of the army to march upon that capital.

—[The story is told in much the same way in *Theirs* (tome vi, p. 260), *Rupp* (p. 57), and *Savory* (tome ii. p. 162), but as *Erreurs* (tome i. p. 814) points out, *Bourrienne* makes an odd mistake in believing the Thabor Bridge gave the French access to Vienna. The capital is on the right bank,

and was already in their power. The possession of the bridge enabled them to pass over to the left bank, and to advance towards Austerlitz before the Archduke Charles, coming from Italy, could make his junction with the allied army. See plan 48 of Thiers' Atlas, or 58 of Alison's. The immediate result of the success of this rather doubtful artifice would have been the destruction of the corps of Kutusoff; but Murat in his turn was deceived by Bagration into belief in an armistice. In fact, both sides at this time fell into curious errors.]—

Napoleon established his headquarters at Schoenbrunn, where he planned his operations for compelling the corps of Prince Charles to retire to Hungary, and also for advancing his own forces to meet the Russians. Murat and Lannes always commanded the advanced guard during the forced marches ordered by Napoleon, which were executed in a way truly miraculous.

To keep up the appearance of wishing to conclude peace as soon as reasonable propositions should be made to him, Napoleon sent for his Minister for foreign Affairs, who speedily arrived at Vienna, and General Savary was sent on a mission to the Emperor Alexander. The details of this mission I have learned only from the account of it given by the Duc de Rovigo in his apologetic Memoirs. In spite of the Duke's eagerness to induce a belief in Napoleon's pacific disposition, the very facts on which he supports his argument lead to the contrary conclusion. Napoleon wished to dictate his conditions before the

issue of a battle the success of which might appear doubtful to the young Emperor of Russia, and these conditions were such as he might impose when victory should be declared in favour of our eagles. It must be clear to every reflecting person that by always proposing what he knew could not be honourably acceded to, he kept up the appearance of being a pacificator, while at the same time he ensured to himself the pleasure of carrying on the war.

CHAPTER III

1805.

My functions at Hamburg—The King of Sweden at Stralsund— My bulletin describing the situation of the Russian armies—Duroc's recall from Berlin—General Dumouriez—Recruiting of the English in Hanover—The daughter of M. de Marbeof and Napoleon—Treachery of the King of Naples—The Sun of Austerlitz—Prince Dolgiorouki Rapp's account of the battle of Austerlitz—Gerard's picture— Eugene's marriage.

I must now relate how, in conformity with my instructions, I was employed in Hamburg in aiding the success of the French army. I had sent an agent to observe the Russian troops, which were advancing by forced marches to the banks of the Elbe. This agent transmitted to me from Gadbusch an account of the routes taken by the different columns. It was then supposed that they would march upon Holland by the way of Bremen and Oldenburg. On the receipt of thus intelligence the Electorate of Hanover was evacuated by the French, and General Barbou, who had commanded there concentrated his forces in Hamelin.

On the 2d of November 1805 the King of Sweden arrived at Stralsund. I immediately intimated to our Government that this circumstance would probably give a new turn to the operations of the combined army, for hitherto the uncertainty of its movements

and the successive counter- orders afforded no possibility of ascertaining any determined plan. The intention seemed to be, that all the Swedo-Russian troops should cross the Elbe at the same point; viz., Lauenburg, six miles from Hamburg.

There was not on the 5th of November a single Russian on the southern bank of the Elbe.

The first column of the grand Russian army passed through Warsaw on the 1st of November, and on the 2d the Grand-Duke Constantine was expected with the Guards. This column, which amounted to 6000 men, was the first that passed through Prussian Poland.

At this time we momentarily expected to see the Hanoverian army landed on the banks of the Weser or the Elbe, augmented by some thousands of English. Their design apparently was either to attack Holland, or to attempt some operation on the rear of our Grand Army.

The French Government was very anxious to receive accurate accounts of the march of the Swedo-Russian troops through Hanover, and of the Russian army through Poland. My agents at Warsaw and Stralsund, who were exceedingly active and intelligent, enabled me to send off a bulletin describing the state of Hanover, the movements of the Russians and Swedes, together with information of the arrival of English troops in the Elbe, and a statement of the force of the combined army in Hanover, which consisted of 15,000 Russians, 8000 Swedes, and 12,000 English; making in all 35,000 men.

It was probably on account of this bulletin that Napoleon expressed to Duroc his satisfaction with my services. The Emperor on recalling Duroc from Berlin did not manifest the least apprehension respecting Prussia. Duroc wrote to me the following letter on the occasion of his recall:

MY DEAR BOURRIENNE—The Emperor having thought my services necessary to the army has recalled me. I yesterday had a farewell audience of the King and Queen, who treated me very graciously. His Majesty presented me with his portrait set in diamonds. The Emperor Alexander will probably depart to-morrow, and the Archduke Anthony very speedily. We cannot but hope that their presence here will facilitate a good understanding.

(Signed) DUROC.

Whenever foreign armies were opposing France the hopes of the emigrants revived. They falsely imagined that the powers coalesced against Napoleon were labouring in their cause; and many of them entered the Russian and Austrian armies. Of this number was General Dumouriez. I received information that he had landed at Stade on the 21st of November; but whither he intended to proceed was not known. A man named St. Martin, whose wife lived with Dumouriez, and who had accompanied the general from England to Stade, came to Hamburg, where he observed great precautions for concealment, and bought two carriages, which were immediately forwarded to Stade. St. Martin himself immediately proceeded to the latter place. I

was blamed for not having arrested this man; but he had a commission attesting that he was in the English service, and, as I have before mentioned; a foreign commission was a safeguard; and the only one which could not be violated in Hamburg.

In December 1805 the English recruiting in Hanover was kept up without interruption, and attended with extraordinary success. Sometimes a hundred men were raised in a day. The misery prevailing in Germany, which had been ravaged by the war, the hatred against the French, and the high bounty that was offered enabled the English to procure as many men as they wished.

The King of Sweden, meditating on the stir he should make in Hanover, took with him a camp printing-press to publish the bulletins of the grand Swedish army.—The first of these bulletins announced to Europe that his Swedish Majesty was about to leave Stralsund; and that his army would take up its position partly between Nelsen and Haarburg, and partly between Domitz and the frontiers of Hamburg.

Among the anecdotes of Napoleon connected with this campaign I find in my notes the following, which was related to me by Rapp. Some days before his entrance into Vienna Napoleon, who was riding on horseback along the road, dressed in his usual uniform of the chasseurs of the Guard, met an open carriage, in which were seated a lady and a priest. The lady was in tears, and Napoleon could not refrain from stopping to ask her what was the cause of her distress. "Sir," she replied, for she did not know the Emperor, "I have been pillaged at my estate, two

leagues from hence, by a party of soldiers, who have murdered my gardener. I am going to seek your Emperor, who knows my family, to whom he was once under great obligations."—"What is your name?" inquired Napoleon.—"De Bunny," replied the lady. "I am the daughter of M de Marbeuf, formerly Governor of Corsica."—"Madame," exclaimed Napoleon, "I am the Emperor. I am delighted to have the opportunity of serving you."—"You cannot conceive," continued Rapp, "the attention which the Emperor showed Madame de Bunny. He consoled her, pitied her, almost apologised for the misfortune she had sustained. 'Will you have the goodness, Madame,' said he, 'to go and wait for me at my head-quarters? I will join you speedily; every member of M. de Marbeuf's family has a claim on my respect.' The Emperor immediately gave her a picquet of chasseurs of his guard to escort her. He saw her again during the day, when he loaded her with attentions, and liberally indemnified her for the losses she had sustained."

For some time previous to the battle of Austerlitz the different corps of the army intersected every part of Germany and Italy, all tending towards Vienna as a central point. At the beginning of November the corps commanded by Marshal Bernadotte arrived at Salzburg at the moment when the Emperor had advanced his headquarters to Braunau, where there were numerous magazines of artillery and a vast quantity of provisions of every kind. The junction of the corps commanded by Bernadotte in Hanover with the Grand Army was a point of such high importance that

Bonaparte had directed the Marshal to come up with him as speedily as possible, and to take the shortest road. This order obliged Bernadotte to pass through the territory of the two Margravates.

At that time we were at peace with Naples. In September the Emperor had concluded with Ferdinand IV. a treaty of neutrality. This treaty enabled Carra St. Cyr, who occupied Naples, to evacuate that city and to join Massena in Upper Italy; both reached the Grand Army on the 28th of November. But no sooner had the troops commanded by Carra St. Cyr quitted the Neapolitan territory than the King of Naples, influenced by his Ministers, and above all by Queen Caroline, broke the treaty of neutrality, ordered hostile preparations against France, opened his ports to the enemies of the Emperor, and received into his States 12,000 Russians and 8000 English. It was on the receipt of this news that Bonaparte, in one of his most violent bulletins, styled the Queen of Naples a second Fredegonda. The victory of Austerlitz having given powerful support to his threats, the fall of Naples was decided, and shortly after his brother Joseph was seated on the Neapolitan throne.

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