

LOUIS DE BOURRIENNE

MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON
BONAPARTE — VOLUME
07

Louis Antoine Fauvelet Bourrienne
Memoirs of Napoleon
Bonaparte — Volume 07

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Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte — Volume 07:*

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Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte — Volume 07

CHAPTER XIX

1803.

Mr. Pitt—Motive of his going out of office—Error of the English Government—Pretended regard for the Bourbons—Violation of the treaty of Amiens—Reciprocal accusations—Malta—Lord Whitworth's departure—Rome and Carthage—Secret satisfaction of Bonaparte—Message to the Senate, the Legislative Body, and the Tribunate—The King of England's renunciation of the title of King of France—Complaints of the English Government—French agents in British ports—Views of France upon Turkey—Observation made by Bonaparte to the Legislative Body—Its false interpretation—Conquest of Hanover—The Duke of Cambridge caricatured—The King of England and the Elector of Hanover—First address to the clergy—Use of the word "Monsieur"—The Republican weeks and months.

One of the circumstances which foretold the brief duration

of the peace of Amiens was, that Mr. Pitt was out of office at the time of its conclusion. I mentioned this to Bonaparte, and I immediately perceived by his hasty "What do you say?" that my observation had been heard—but not liked. It did not, however, require any extraordinary shrewdness to see the true motive of Mr. Pitt's retirement. That distinguished statesman conceived that a truce under the name of a peace was indispensable for England; but, intending to resume the war with France more fiercely than ever, he for a while retired from office, and left to others the task of arranging the peace; but his intention was to mark his return to the ministry by the renewal of the implacable hatred he had vowed against France. Still, I have always thought that the conclusion of peace, however necessary to England, was an error of the Cabinet of London. England alone had never before acknowledged any of the governments which had risen up in France since the Revolution; and as the past could not be blotted out, a future war, however successful to England, could not take from Bonaparte's Government the immense weight it had acquired by an interval of peace. Besides, by the mere fact of the conclusion of the treaty England proved to all Europe that the restoration of the Bourbons was merely a pretext, and she defaced that page of her history which might have shown that she was actuated by nobler and more generous sentiments than mere hatred of France. It is very certain that the condescension of England in treating with the First Consul had the effect of rallying round him a great many partisans of the

Bourbons, whose hopes entirely depended on the continuance of war between Great Britain and France. This opened the eyes of the greater number, namely, those who could not see below the surface, and were not previously aware that the demonstrations of friendship so liberally made to the Bourbons by the European Cabinets, and especially by England, were merely false pretences, assumed for the purpose of disguising, beneath the semblance of honourable motives, their wish to injure France, and to oppose her rapidly increasing power.

When the misunderstanding took place, France and England might have mutually reproached each other, but justice was apparently on the side of France. It was evident that England, by refusing to evacuate Malta, was guilty of a palpable infraction of the treaty of Amiens, while England could only institute against France what in the French law language is called a suit or process of tendency. But it must be confessed that this tendency on the part of France to augment her territory was very evident, for the Consular decrees made conquests more promptly than the sword. The union of Piedmont with France had changed the state of Europe. This union, it is true, was effected previously to the treaty of Amiens; but it was not so with the states of Parma and Piacenza, Bonaparte having by his sole authority constituted himself the heir of the Grand Duke, recently deceased. It may therefore be easily imagined how great was England's uneasiness at the internal prosperity of France and the insatiable ambition of her ruler; but it is no less certain that, with respect to

Malta, England acted with decidedly bad faith; and this bad faith appeared in its worst light from the following circumstance:— It had been stipulated that England should withdraw her troops from Malta three months after the signing of the treaty, yet more than a year had elapsed, and the troops were still there. The order of Malta was to be restored as it formerly was; that is to say, it was to be a sovereign and independent order, under the protection of the Holy See. The three Cabinets of Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg were to guarantee the execution of the treaty of Amiens. The English Ambassador, to excuse the evasions of his Government, pretended that the Russian Cabinet concurred with England in the delayed fulfilment of the conditions of the treaty; but at the very moment he was making that excuse a courier arrived from the Cabinet of St. Petersburg bearing despatches completely, at variance with the assertion of Lord Whitworth. His lordship left Paris on the night of the 12th May 1803, and the English Government, unsolicited, sent passports to the French embassy in London. The news of this sudden rupture made the English console fall four per cent., but did not immediately produce such a retrograde effect on the French funds, which were then quoted at fifty-five francs;—a very high point, when it is recollected that they were at seven or eight francs on the eve of the 18th Brumaire.

In this state of things France proposed to the English Government to admit of the mediation of Russia; but as England had declared war in order to repair the error she committed in

concluding peace, the proposition was of course rejected. Thus the public gave the First Consul credit for great moderation and a sincere wish for peace. Thus arose between England and France a contest resembling those furious wars which marked the reigns of King John and Charles VII. Our beaux esprits drew splendid comparisons between the existing state of things and the ancient rivalry of Carthage and Rome, and sapiently concluded that, as Carthage fell, England must do so likewise.

Bonaparte was at St. Cloud when Lord Whitworth left Paris. A fortnight was spent in useless attempts to renew negotiations. War, therefore, was the only alternative. Before he made his final preparations the First Consul addressed a message to the Senate, the Legislative Body, and the Tribunate. In this message he mentioned the recall of the English Ambassador, the breaking out of hostilities, the unexpected message of the King of England to his Parliament, and the armaments which immediately ensued in the British ports. "In vain," he said, "had France tried every means to induce England to abide by the treaty. She had repelled every overture, and increased the insolence of her demands. France," he added, "will not submit to menaces, but will combat for the faith of treaties, and the honour of the French name, confidently trusting that the result of the contest will be such as she has a right to expect from the justice of her cause and the courage of her people."

This message was dignified, and free from that vein of boasting in which Bonaparte so frequently indulged. The reply

of the Senate was accompanied by a vote of a ship of the line, to be paid for out of the Senatorial salaries. With his usual address Bonaparte, in acting for himself, spoke in the name of the people, just as he did in the question of the Consulate for life. But what he then did for his own interests turned to the future interests of the Bourbons. The very treaty which had just been broken off gave rise to a curious observation. Bonaparte, though not yet a sovereign, peremptorily required the King of England to renounce the empty title of King of France, which was kept up as if to imply that old pretensions were not yet renounced. The proposition was acceded to, and to this circumstance was owing the disappearance of the title of King of France from among the titles of the King of England, when the treaty of Paris was concluded on the return of the Bourbons.

The first grievance complained of by England was the prohibition of English merchandise, which had been more rigid since the peace than during the war. The avowal of Great Britain on this point might well have enabled her to dispense with any other subject of complaint; for the truth is, she was alarmed at the aspect of our internal prosperity, and at the impulse given to our manufactures. The English Government had hoped to obtain from the First Consul such a commercial treaty as would have proved a death-blow to our rising trade; but Bonaparte opposed this, and from the very circumstance of his refusal he might easily have foreseen the rupture at which he affected to be surprised. What I state I felt at the time, when I read with great interest

all the documents relative to this great dispute between the two rival nations, which eleven years afterwards was decided before the walls of Paris.

It was evidently disappointment in regard to a commercial treaty which created the animosity of the English Government, as that circumstance was alluded to, by way of reproach, in the King of England's declaration. In that document it was complained that France had sent a number of persona into the ports of Great Britain and Ireland in the character of commercial agents, which character, and the privileges belonging to it, they could only have acquired by a commercial treaty. Such was, in my opinion, the real cause of the complaints of England; but as it would have seemed too absurd to make it the ground of a declaration of war, she enumerated other grievances, viz., the union of Piedmont and of the states of Parma and Piacenza with France, and the continuance of the French troops in Holland. A great deal was said about the views and projects of France with respect to Turkey, and this complaint originated in General Sebastiani's mission to Egypt. On that point I can take upon me to say that the English Government was not misinformed. Bonaparte too frequently spoke to are of his ideas respecting the East, and his project of attacking the English power in India, to leave any doubt of his ever having renounced them. The result of all the reproaches which the two Governments addressed to each other was, that neither acted with good faith.

The First Consul, in a communication to the Legislative

Body on the state of France and on her foreign relations; had said, "England, single-handed, cannot cope with France." This sufficed to irritate the susceptibility of English pride, and the British Cabinet affected to regard it as a threat. However, it was no such thing. When Bonaparte threatened, his words were infinitely more energetic. The passage above cited was merely an assurance to France; and if we only look at the past efforts and sacrifices made by England to stir up enemies to France on the Continent, we may be justified in supposing that her anger at Bonaparte's declaration arose from a conviction of its truth. Singly opposed to France, England could doubtless have done her much harm, especially by assailing the scattered remnants of her navy; but she could have done nothing against France on the Continent. The two powers, unaided by allies, might have continued long at war without any considerable acts of hostility.

The first effect of the declaration of war by England was the invasion of Hanover by the French troops under General Mortier. The telegraphic despatch by which this news was communicated to Paris was as laconic as correct, and contained, in a few words, the complete history of the expedition. It ran as follows: "The French are masters of the Electorate of Hanover, and the enemy's army are made prisoners of war." A day or two after the shop windows of the print-sellers were filled with caricatures on the English, and particularly on the Duke of Cambridge. I recollect seeing one in which the Duke was represented reviewing his troops mounted on a crab. I mention these trifles because, as

I was then living entirely at leisure, in the Rue Hauteville, I used frequently to take a stroll on the Boulevards, where I was sometimes much amused with these prints; and I could not help remarking, that in large cities such trifles have more influence on the public mind than is usually supposed.

The First Consul thought the taking of the prisoners in Hanover a good opportunity to exchange them for those taken from us by the English navy. A proposition to this effect was accordingly made; but the English Cabinet was of opinion that, though the King of England was also Elector of Hanover, yet there was no identity between the two Governments, of both which George III. was the head. In consequence of this subtle distinction the proposition for the exchange of prisoners fell to the ground. At this period nothing could exceed the animosity of the two Governments towards each other, and Bonaparte, on the declaration of war, marked his indignation by an act which no consideration can justify; I allude to the order for the arrest of all the English in France—a truly barbarous measure; for, can anything be more cruel and unjust than to visit individuals with the vengeance due to the Government whose subjects they may happen to be? But Bonaparte, when under the influence of anger, was never troubled by scruples.

I must here notice the fulfilment of a remark Bonaparte often made, use of to me during the Consulate. "You shall see, Bourrienne," he would say, "what use I will make of the priests."

War being declared, the First Consul, in imitation of the most

Christian kings of olden times, recommended the success of his arms to the prayers of the faithful through the medium of the clergy. To this end he addressed a circular letter, written in royal style, to the Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops of France.

It was as follows:

MONSIEUR—The motives of the present war are known throughout Europe. The bad faith of the King of England, who has violated his treaties by refusing to restore Malta to the order of St. John of Jerusalem, and attacked our merchant vessels without a previous declaration of war, together with the necessity of a just defence, forced us to have recourse to arms. I therefore wish you to order prayers to be offered up, in order to obtain the benediction of Heaven on our enterprises. The proofs I have received of your zeal for the public service give me an assurance of your readiness to conform with my wishes.

Given at St. Cloud, 18 Prairial, an XI. (7th June 1803).
(Signed) *BONAPARTE*.

This letter was remarkable in more than one respect. It astonished most of his old brothers-in-arms, who turned it into ridicule; observing that Bonaparte needed no praying to enable him to conquer Italy twice over. The First Consul, however, let them laugh on, and steadily followed the line he had traced out. His letter was admirably calculated to please the Court of Rome, which he wished should consider him in the light of another elder son of the Church. The letter was, moreover, remarkable for the use of the word "Monsieur," which the First Consul

now employed for the first time in an act destined for publicity. This circumstance would seem to indicate that he considered Republican designations incompatible with the forms due to the clergy: the clergy were especially interested in the restoration of monarchy. It may, perhaps, be thought that I dwell too much on trifles; but I lived long enough in Bonaparte's confidence to know the importance he attached to trifles. The First Consul restored the old names of the days of the week, while he allowed the names of the months, as set down in the Republican calendar, to remain. He commenced by ordering the *Moniteur* to be dated "Saturday," such a day of "Messidor." "See," said he one day, "was there ever such an inconsistency? We shall be laughed at! But I will do away with the Messidor. I will efface all the inventions of the Jacobins."

The clergy did not disappoint the expectations of the First Consul. They owed him much already, and hoped for still more from him. The letter to the Bishops, etc., was the signal for a number of circulars full of eulogies on Bonaparte.

These compliments were far from displeasing to the First Consul, who had no objection to flattery though he despised those who meanly made themselves the medium of conveying it to him. Duroc once told me that they had all great difficulty in preserving their gravity when the cure of a parish in Abbeville addressed Bonaparte one day while he was on his journey to the coast. "Religion," said the worthy cure, with pompous solemnity, "owes to you all that it is, we owe to you all that we are; and I,

too, owe to you all that I am."

—[Not so fulsome as some of the terms used a year later when Napoleon was made Emperor. "I am what I am," was placed over a seat prepared for the Emperor. One phrase, "God made Napoleon and then rested," drew from Narbonne the sneer that it would have been better if the Deity had rested sooner. "Bonaparte," says Joseph de Maistre, "has had himself described in his papers as the 'Messenger of God.' Nothing more true. Bonaparte comes straight from heaven, like a thunderbolt." (Saints-Benve, Caureries, tome iv. p. 203.)]

CHAPTER XX

1803.

Presentation of Prince Borghese to Bonaparte—Departure for Belgium Revival of a royal custom—The swans of Amiens—Change of formula in the acts of Government—Company of performers in Bonaparte's suite—Revival of old customs—Division of the institute into four classes—Science and literature—Bonaparte's hatred of literary men—Ducis—Bernardin de Saint-Pierre—Chenier and Lemercier—Explanation of Bonaparte's aversion to literature—Lalande and his dictionary—Education in the hands of Government—M. de Roquelaure, Archbishop of Malines.

In the month of April 1803 Prince Borghese, who was destined one day to become Bonaparte's brother-in-law by marrying the widow of Leclerc, was introduced to the First Consul by Cardinal Caprara.

About the end of June Bonaparte proceeded, with Josephine, on his journey to Belgium and the seaboard departments. Many curious circumstances were connected with this journey, of which I was informed by Duroc after the First Consul's return. Bonaparte left Paris on the 24th of June, and although it was not for upwards of a year afterwards that his brow was encircled with the imperial-diadem, everything connected with the journey

had an imperial air. It was formerly the custom, when the Kings of France entered the ancient capital of Picardy, for the town of Amiens to offer them in homage some beautiful swans. Care was taken to revive this custom, which pleased Bonaparte greatly, because it was treating him like a King. The swans were accepted, and sent to Paris to be placed in the basin of the Tuileries, in order to show the Parisians the royal homage which the First Consul received when absent from the capital.

It was also during this journey that Bonaparte began to date his decrees from the places through which he passed. He had hitherto left a great number of signatures in Paris, in order that he might be present, as it were, even during his absence, by the acts of his Government. Hitherto public acts had been signed in the name of the Consuls of the Republic. Instead of this formula, he substituted the name of the Government of the Republic. By means of this variation, unimportant as it might appear, the Government was always in the place where the First Consul happened to be. The two other Consuls were now mere nullities, even in appearance. The decrees of the Government, which Cambaceres signed during the campaign of Marengo, were now issued from all the towns of France and Belgium which the First Consul visited during his six weeks' journey. Having thus centred the sole authority of the Republic in himself, the performers of the theatre of the Republic became, by a natural consequence, his; and it was quite natural that they should travel in his suite, to entertain the inhabitants of the towns in which he stopped

by their performances. But this was not all. He encouraged the renewal of a host of ancient customs. He sanctioned the revival of the festival of Joan of Arc at Orleans, and he divided the Institute into four classes, with the intention of recalling the recollection of the old academies, the names of which, however, he rejected, in spite of the wishes and intrigues of Suard and the Abby Morellet, who had gained over Lucien upon this point.

However, the First Consul did not give to the classes of the Institute the rank which they formerly possessed as academies. He placed the class of sciences in the first rank, and the old French Academy in the second rank. It must be acknowledged that, considering the state of literature and science at that period, the First Consul did not make a wrong estimate of their importance.

Although the literature of France could boast of many men of great talent, such as La Harpe, who died during the Consulate, Ducis, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Chenier, and Lemercier, yet they could not be compared with Lagrange, Laplace, Monge, Fourcroy, Berthollet, and Cuvier, whose labours have so prodigiously extended the limits of human knowledge. No one, therefore, could murmur at seeing the class of sciences in the Institute take precedence of its elder sister. Besides, the First Consul was not sorry to show, by this arrangement, the slight estimation in which he held literary men. When he spoke to me respecting them he called them mere manufacturers of phrases. He could not pardon them for excelling him in a pursuit

in which he had no claim to distinction. I never knew a man more insensible than Bonaparte to the beauties of poetry or prose. A certain degree of vagueness, which was combined with his energy of mind, led him to admire the dreams of Ossian, and his decided character found itself, as it were, represented in the elevated thoughts of Corneille. Hence his almost exclusive predilection for these two authors. With this exception, the finest works in our literature were in his opinion merely arrangements of sonorous words, void of sense, and calculated only for the ear.

Bonaparte's contempt, or, more properly speaking, his dislike of literature, displayed itself particularly in the feeling he cherished towards some men of distinguished literary talent. He hated Chenier, and Ducis still more. He could not forgive Chenier for the Republican principles which pervaded his tragedies; and Ducis excited in him; as if instinctively, an involuntary hatred. Ducis, on his part, was not backward in returning the Consul's animosity, and I remember his writing some verses which were inexcusably violent, and overstepped all the bounds of truth. Bonaparte was so singular a composition of good and bad that to describe him as he was under one or other of these aspects would serve for panegyric or satire without any departure from truth. Bonaparte was very fond of Bernardin Saint-Pierre's romance of 'Paul and Virginia', which he had read in his boyhood. I remember that he one day tried to read 'Les études de la Nature', but at the expiration of a quarter of an hour he threw down the book, exclaiming, "How can any one read

such silly stuffy. It is insipid and vapid; there is nothing in it. These are the dreams of a visionary! What is nature? The thing is vague and unmeaning. Men and passions are the subjects to write about—there is something there for study. These fellows are good for nothing under any government. I will, however, give them pensions, because I ought to do so, as Head of the State. They occupy and amuse the idle. I will make Lagrange a Senator—he has a head."

Although Bonaparte spoke so disdainfully of literary men it must not be taken for granted that he treated them ill. On the contrary, all those who visited at Malmaison were the objects of his attention, and even flattery. M. Lemer cier was one of those who came most frequently, and whom Bonaparte received with the greatest pleasure. Bonaparte treated M. Lemer cier with great kindness; but he did not like him. His character as a literary man and poet, joined to a polished frankness, and a mild but inflexible spirit of republicanism, amply sufficed to explain Bonaparte's dislike. He feared M. Lemer cier and his pen; and, as happened more than once, he played the part of a parasite by flattering the writer. M. Lemer cier was the only man I knew who refused the cross of the Legion of Honour.

Bonaparte's general dislike of literary men was less the result of prejudice than circumstances. In order to appreciate or even to read literary works time is requisite, and time was so precious to him that he would have wished, as one may say, to shorten a straight line. He liked only those writers who directed their

attention to positive and precise things, which excluded all thoughts of government and censures on administration. He looked with a jealous eye on political economists and lawyers; in short, as all persons who in any way whatever meddled with legislation and moral improvements. His hatred of discussions on those subjects was strongly displayed on the occasion of the classification of the Institute. Whilst he permitted the reassembling of a literary class, to the number of forty, as formerly, he suppressed the class of moral and political science. Such was his predilection for things of immediate and certain utility that even in the sciences he favoured only such as applied to terrestrial objects. He never treated Lalande with so much distinction as Monge and Lagrange. Astronomical discoveries could not add directly to his own greatness; and, besides, he could never forgive Lalande for having wished to include him in a dictionary of atheists precisely at the moment when he was opening negotiations with the court of Rome.

Bonaparte wished to be the sole centre of a world which he believed he was called to govern. With this view he never relaxed in his constant endeavour to concentrate the whole powers of the State in the hands of its Chief. His conduct upon the subject of the revival of public instruction affords evidence of this fact. He wished to establish 6000 bursaries, to be paid by Government, and to be exclusively at his disposal, so that thus possessing the monopoly of education, he could have parcelled it out only to the children of those who were blindly devoted to him. This was what

the First Consul called the revival of public instruction. During the period of my closest intimacy with him he often spoke to me on this subject, and listened patiently to my observations. I remember that one of his chief arguments was this: "What is it that distinguishes men? Education—is it not? Well, if the children of nobles be admitted into the academies, they will be as well educated as the children of the revolution, who compose the strength of my government. Ultimately they will enter into my regiments as officers, and will naturally come in competition with those whom they regard as the plunderers of their families. I do not wish that!"

My recollections have caused me to wander from the journey of the First Consul and Madame Bonaparte to the seaboard departments and Belgium. I have, however, little to add to what I have already stated on the subject. I merely remember that Bonaparte's military suite, and Lauriston and Rapp in particular, when speaking to me about the journey, could not conceal some marks of discontent on account of the great respect which Bonaparte had shown the clergy, and particularly to M. de Roquelaure, the Archbishop of Malines (or Mechlin). That prelate, who was a shrewd man, and had the reputation of having been in his youth more addicted to the habits of the world than to those of the cloister, had become an ecclesiastical courtier. He went to Antwerp to pay his homage to the First Consul, upon whom he heaped the most extravagant praises. Afterwards, addressing Madame Bonaparte, he told her that she was united

to the First Consul by the sacred bonds of a holy alliance. In this harangue, in which unction was singularly blended with gallantry, surely it was a departure from ecclesiastical propriety to speak of sacred bonds and holy alliance when every one knew that those bonds and that alliance existed only by a civil contract. Perhaps M. de Roquelaure merely had recourse to what casuists call a pious fraud in order to engage the married couple to do that which he congratulated them on having already done. Be this as it may, it is certain that this honeyed language gained M. de Roquelaure the Consul's favour, and in a short time after he was appointed to the second class of the Institute.

CHAPTER XXI

1804.

The Temple—The intrigues of Europe—Prelude to the Continental system—Bombardment of Granville—My conversation with the First Consul on the projected invasion of England—Fauche Borel—Moreau and Pichegru—Fouche's manoeuvres—The Abbe David and Lajolais—Fouche's visit to St. Cloud—Regnier outwitted by Fouche—My interview with the First Consul—His indignation at the reports respecting Hortense—Contradiction of these calumnies—The brothers Faucher—Their execution—The First Consul's levee—My conversation with Duroc—Conspiracy of Georges, Moreau, and Pichegru—Moreau averse to the restoration of the Bourbons—Bouvet de Lozier's attempted suicide—Arrest of Moreau—Declaration of MM. de Polignac and de Riviere—Connivance of the police—Arrest of M. Carbonnet and his nephew.

The time was passed when Bonaparte, just raised to the Consulate, only proceeded to the Temple to release the victims of the "Loi des suspects" by his sole and immediate authority. This state prison was now to be filled by the orders of his police. All the intrigues of Europe were in motion. Emissaries came daily from England, who, if they could not penetrate into the interior of France, remained in the towns near the frontiers, where they

established correspondence, and published pamphlets, which they sent to Paris by post, in the form of letters.

The First Consul, on the other hand, gave way, without reserve, to the natural irritation which that power had excited by her declaration of war. He knew that the most effective war he could carry on against England would be a war against her trade.

As a prelude to that piece of madness, known by the name of the Continental system, the First Consul adopted every possible preventive measure against the introduction of English merchandise. Bonaparte's irritation against the English was not without a cause. The intelligence which reached Paris from the north of France was not very consolatory. The English fleets not only blockaded the French ports, but were acting on the offensive, and had bombarded Granville. The mayor of the town did his duty, but his colleagues, more prudent, acted differently. In the height of his displeasure Bonaparte issued a decree, by which he bestowed a scarf of honour on Letourneur, the mayor, and dismissed his colleagues from office as cowards unworthy of trust. The terms of this decree were rather severe, but they were certainly justified by the conduct of those who had abandoned their posts at a critical moment.

I come now to the subject of the invasion of England, and what the First Consul said to me respecting it. I have stated that Bonaparte never had any idea of realising the pretended project of a descent on England. The truth of this assertion will appear from a conversation which I had with him after he returned from

his journey to the north. In this conversation he repeated what he had often before mentioned to me in reference to the projects and possible steps to which fortune might compel him to resort.

The peace of Amiens had been broken about seven months when, on the 15th of December 1803, the First Consul sent for me to the Tuileries. His incomprehensible behaviour to me was fresh in my mind; and as it was upwards of a year since I had seen him, I confess I did not feel quite at ease when I received the summons. He was perfectly aware that I possessed documents and data for writing his history which would describe facts correctly, and destroy the illusions with which his flatterers constantly, entertained the public. I have already stated that at that period I had no intention of the kind; but those who laboured constantly to incense him against me might have suggested apprehensions on the subject. At all events the fact is, that when he sent for me I took the precaution of providing myself with a night-cap, conceiving it to be very likely that I should be sent to sleep at Vincennes. On the day appointed for the interview Rapp was on duty. I did not conceal from him my opinion as to the possible result of my visit. "You need not be afraid," said Rapp; "the First Consul merely wishes to talk with you." He then announced me.

Bonaparte came into the grand salon where I awaited him, and addressing me in the most good-humoured way said, "What do the gossips say of my preparations for the invasion of England?"—"There is a great difference of opinion on the

subject, General," I replied. "Everyone speaks according to his own views. Suchet, for instance, who comes to see me very often, has no doubt that it will take place, and hopes to give you on the occasion fresh proofs of his gratitude and fidelity."—"But Suchet tells me that you do not believe it will be attempted."—"That is true, I certainly do not."—"Why?"—"Because you told me at Antwerp, five years ago, that you would not risk France on the cast of a die—that the adventure was too hazardous—and circumstances have not altered since that time."—"You are right. Those who look forward to the invasion of England are blockheads. They do not see the affair in its true light. I can, doubtless, land in England with 100,000 men. A great battle will be fought, which I shall gain; but I must reckon upon 30,000 men killed, wounded, and prisoners. If I march on London, a second battle must be fought. I will suppose myself again victorious; but what should I do in London with an army diminished three-fourths and without the hope of reinforcements? It would be madness. Until our navy acquires superiority it is useless to think of such a project. The great assemblage of troops in the north has another object. My Government must be the first in the world, or it must fall." Bonaparte then evidently wished it to be supposed that he entertained the design of invading England in order to divert the attention of Europe to that direction.

From Dunkirk the First Consul proceeded to Antwerp, where also he had assembled experienced men to ascertain their opinions respecting the surest way of attempting a landing, the

project of which was merely a pretence. The employment of large ships of was, after rang discussions, abandoned in favour of a flotilla.

—[At this period a caricature (by Gillray) appeared in London. which was sent to Paris, and strictly sought after by the police. One of the copies was shown to the First Consul, who was highly indignant at it. The French fleet was represented by a number of nut-shells. An English sailor, seated on a rock, was quietly smoking his pipe, the whiffs of which were throwing the whole squadron into disorder. —Bourrienne. Gillray's caricatures should be at the reader's side during the perusal of this work, also English Caricature and Satire on Napoleon I., by J. Ashton Chatto: and Windus, 1884.]—

After visiting Belgium, and giving directions there, the First Consul returned from Brussels to Paris by way of Maestricht, Liege, and Soissons.

Before my visit to the Tuileries, and even before the rupture of the peace of Amiens, certain intriguing speculators, whose extravagant zeal was not less fatal to the cause of the Bourbons than was the blind subserviency of his unprincipled adherents to the First Consul, had taken part in some underhand manoeuvres which could have no favourable result. Amongst these great contrivers of petty machinations the well-known Fauche Borel, the bookseller of Neufchatel, had long been conspicuous. Fauche Borel, whose object was to create a stir, and who wished nothing better than to be noticed and paid, failed not to come to France as

soon as the peace of Amiens afforded him the opportunity. I was at that time still with Bonaparte, who was aware of all these little plots, but who felt no personal anxiety on the subject, leaving to his police the care of watching their authors.

The object of Fauche Borel's mission was to bring about a reconciliation between Moreau and Pichegru. The latter general, who was banished on the 18th Fructidor 4th (September 1797), had not obtained the First Consul's permission to return to France. He lived in England, where he awaited a favourable opportunity for putting his old projects into execution. Moreau was in Pains, but no longer appeared at the levees or parties of the First Consul, and the enmity of both generals against Bonaparte, openly avowed on the part of Pichegru; and still disguised by Moreau, was a secret to nobody. But as everything was prosperous with Bonaparte he evinced contempt rather than fear of the two generals. His apprehensions were, indeed, tolerably allayed by the absence of the one and the character of the other. Moreau's name had greater weight with the army than that of Pichegru; and those who were plotting the overthrow of the Consular Government knew that that measure could not be attempted with any chance of success without the assistance of Moreau. The moment was inopportune; but, being initiated in some secrets of the British Cabinet, they knew that the peace was but a truce, and they determined to profit by that truce to effect a reconciliation which might afterwards secure a community of interests. Moreau and Pichegru had not been

friends since Moreau sent to the Directory the papers seized in M. de Klinglin's carriage, which placed Pichegru's treason in so clear a light. Since that period Pichegru's name possessed no influence over the minds of the soldiers, amongst whom he had very few partisans, whilst the name of Moreau was dear to all who had conquered under his command.

Fauche Borel's design was to compromise Moreau without bringing him to any decisive step. Moreau's natural indolence, and perhaps it may be said his good sense, induced him to adopt the maxim that it was necessary to let men and things take their course; for temporizing policy is often as useful in politics as in war. Besides, Moreau was a sincere Republican; and if his habit of indecision had permitted him to adopt any resolution, it is quite certain that he would not then have assisted in the reestablishment of the Bourbons, as Pichegru wished.

What I have stated is an indispensable introduction to the knowledge of plots of more importance which preceded the great event that marked the close of the Consulship: I allude to the conspiracy of Georges, Cadoudal, Moreau, and Pichegru, and that indelible stain on the character of Napoleon,—the death of the Duc d'Enghien. Different opinions have been expressed concerning Georges' conspiracy. I shall not contradict any of them. I will relate what I learned and what I saw, in order to throw some light on that horrible affair. I am far from believing what I have read in many works, that it was planned by the police in order to pave the First Consul's way to the throne. I think that

it was contrived by those who were really interested in it, and encouraged by Fouche in order to prepare his return to office.

To corroborate my opinion respecting Fouche's conduct and his manoeuvres I must remind the reader that about the close of 1803 some persons conceived the project of reconciling Moreau and Pichegru. Fouche, who was then out of the Ministry, caused Moreau to be visited by men of his own party, and who were induced, perhaps unconsciously, by Fouche's art, to influence and irritate the general's mind. It was at first intended that the Abbe David, the mutual friend of Moreau and Pichegru, should undertake to effect their reconciliation; but he, being arrested and confined in the Temple, was succeeded by a man named Lajolais, whom every circumstance proves to have been employed by Fouche. He proceeded to London, and, having prevailed on Pichegru and his friends to return to France, he set off to announce their arrival and arrange everything for their reception and destruction. Moreau's discontent was the sole foundation of this intrigue. I remember that one day, about the end of January 1804, I called on Fouche, who informed me that he had been at St. Cloud, where he had had a long conversation with the First Consul on the situation of affairs. Bonaparte told him that he was satisfied with the existing police, and hinted that it was only to make himself of consequence that he had given a false colouring to the picture. Fouche asked him what he would say if he told him that Georges and Pichegru had been for some time in Paris carrying on the conspiracy of which he had received information.

The First Consul, apparently delighted at what he conceived to be Fouche's mistake, said, with an air of contempt, "You are well informed, truly! Regnier has just received a letter from London stating that Pichegru dined three days ago at Kingston with one of the King of England's ministers."

As Fouche, however, persisted in his assertion, the First Consul sent to Paris for the Grand Judge, Regnier, who showed Fouche the letter he had received. The First Consul triumphed at first to see Fouche at fault; but the latter so clearly proved that Georges and Pichegru were actually in Paris that Regnier began to fear he had been misled by his agents, whom his rival paid better than he did. The First Consul, convinced that his old minister knew more than his new one, dismissed Regnier, and remained a long time in consultation with Fouche, who on that occasion said nothing about his reinstatement for fear of exciting suspicion. He only requested that the management of the business might be entrusted to Real, with orders to obey whatever instructions he might receive from him. I will return hereafter to the arrest of Moreau and the other persons accused, and will now subjoin the account of a long interview which I had with Bonaparte in the midst of these important events.

On the 8th of March 1804, some time after the arrest but before the trial of General Moreau, I had an audience of the First Consul, which was unsought on my part. Bonaparte, after putting several unimportant questions to me as to what I was doing, what I expected he should do for me, and assuring me that he would

bear me in mind, gave a sudden turn to the conversation, and said, "By the by, the report of my connection with Hortense is still kept up: the most abominable rumours have been spread as to her first child. I thought at the time that these reports had only been admitted by the public in consequence of the great desire that I should not be childless. Since you and I separated have you heard them repeated?"—"Yes, General, oftentimes; and I confess I could not have believed that this calumny would have existed so long."—"It is truly frightful to think of! You know the truth—you have seen all—heard all—nothing could have passed without your knowledge; you were in her full confidence during the time of her attachment to Duroc. I therefore expect, if you should ever write anything about me, that you will clear me from this infamous imputation. I would not have it accompany my name to posterity. I trust in you. You have never given credit to the horrid accusation?"—"No, General, never." Napoleon then entered into a number of details on the previous life of Hortense; on the way in which she conducted herself, and on the turn which her marriage had taken. "It has not turned out," he said, "as I wished: the union has not been a happy one. I am sorry for it, not only because both are dear to me, but because the circumstance countenances the infamous reports that are current among the idle as to my intimacy with her." He concluded the conversation with these words:—"Bourrienne, I sometimes think of recalling you; but as there is no good pretext for so doing, the world would say that I have need of you, and I wish it to be known that I stand

in need of nobody." He again said a few words about Hortense. I answered that it would fully coincide with my conviction of the truth to do what he desired, and that I would do it; but that suppressing the false reports did not depend on me.

Hortense, in fact, while she was Mademoiselle BEAUHARNAIS, regarded Napoleon with respectful awe. She trembled when she spoke to him, and never dared to ask him a favour. When she had anything to solicit she applied to me; and if I experienced any difficulty in obtaining for her what she sought, I mentioned her as the person for whom I pleaded. "The little simpleton!" Napoleon would say, "why does she not ask me herself: is the girl afraid of me?" Napoleon never cherished for her any feeling but paternal tenderness. He loved her after his marriage with her mother as he would have loved his own child. During three years I was a witness to all their most private actions, and I declare that I never saw or heard anything that could furnish the least ground for suspicion, or that afforded the slightest trace of the existence of a culpable intimacy. This calumny must be classed among those with which malice delights to blacken the characters of men more brilliant than their fellows, and which are so readily adopted by the light-minded and unreflecting. I freely declare that did I entertain the smallest doubt with regard to this odious charge, of the existence of which I was well aware before Napoleon spoke to me on the subject, I would candidly avow it. He is no more: and let his memory be accompanied only by that, be it good or bad, which

really belongs to it. Let not this reproach be one of those charged against him by the impartial historian. I must say, in concluding this delicate subject, that the principles of Napoleon on points of this kind were rigid in the utmost degree, and that a connection of the nature of that charged against him was neither in accordance with his morals nor his tastes.

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