

LOUIS DE BOURRIENNE

MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON
BONAPARTE — VOLUME
03

Louis Bourrienne

**Memoirs of Napoleon
Bonaparte — Volume 03**

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Содержание

CHAPTER XV	5
CHAPTER XVI	9
CHAPTER XVII	17
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	23

Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne

Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte — Volume 03

CHAPTER XV

1798.

Establishment of a divan in each Egyptian province—Desaix in Upper Egypt—Ibrahim Bey beaten by Bonaparte at Salehye'h—Sulkowsky wounded—Disaster at Aboukir—Dissatisfaction and murmurs of the army—Dejection of the General-in-Chief—His plan respecting Egypt —Meditated descent upon England —Bonaparte's censure of the Directory—Intercepted correspondence.

From the details I have already given respecting Bonaparte's plans for colonising Egypt, it will be seen that his energy of mind urged him to adopt anticipatory measures for the accomplishment of objects which were never realised. During the short interval in which he sheathed his sword he planned provisional governments for the towns and provinces occupied by the French troops, and he adroitly contrived to serve the interests of his army without appearing to violate those of the country. After he had been four days at Cairo, during which time he employed himself in examining everything, and consulting every individual from whom he could obtain useful information, he published the following order:

HEADQUARTERS, CAIRO,

9th Thermidor, year VI

BONAPARTE, MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE, AND GENERAL-IN-CHIEF, ORDERS:

Art. 1. There shall be in each province of Egypt a divan, composed of seven individuals, whose duty will be to superintend the interests of the province; to communicate to me any complaints that may be made; to prevent warfare among the different villages; to apprehend and punish criminals (for which purpose they may demand assistance from the French commandant); and to take every opportunity of enlightening the people.

Art. 2. There shall be in each province an aga of the Janizaries, maintaining constant communication with the French commandant. He shall have with him a company of sixty armed natives, whom he may take wherever he pleases, for the maintenance of good order, subordination, and tranquillity.

Art. 3. There shall be in each province an intendant, whose business will be to levy the miri, the feddam, and the other contributions which formerly belonged to the Mamelukes, but which now belong to the French Republic. The intendants shall have as many agents as may be necessary.

Art. 4. The said intendant shall have a French agent to correspond with the Finance Department, and to execute all the orders he may receive.

(Signed) BONAPARTE.

While Bonaparte was thus actively taking measures for the organization of the country[1], General Desaix had marched into Upper Egypt in pursuit of Mourad Bey. We learned that Ibrahim, who, next to Mourad, was the most influential of the beys, had proceeded towards Syria, by the way of Belbeis and Salehye'h. The General-in-Chief immediately determined to march in person against that formidable enemy, and he left Cairo about fifteen days after he had entered it. It is unnecessary to describe the well-known engagement in which Bonaparte drove Ibrahim back upon El-Arish; besides, I do not enter minutely into the details of battles, my chief object being to record events which I personally witnessed.

[1]—[Far more thoroughly and actively than those taken by the English Government in 1882-3-4]—

At the battle of Salehye'h Bonaparte thought he had lost one of his 'aides de camp', Sulkowsky, to whom he was much attached, and who had been with us during the whole of the campaign of Italy. On the field of battle one object of regret cannot long engross the mind; yet, on his return to Cairo, Bonaparte frequently spoke to me of Sulkowsky in terms of unfeigned sorrow.

"I cannot," said he one day, "sufficiently admire the noble spirit and determined courage of poor Sulkowsky." He often said that Sulkowsky would have been a valuable aid to whoever might undertake the resuscitation of Poland. Fortunately that brave officer was not killed on that occasion, though seriously wounded. He was, however, killed shortly after.

The destruction of the French squadron in the roads of Aboukir occurred during the absence of the General-in-Chief. This event happened on the 1st of August. The details are generally known; but there is one circumstance to which I cannot refrain from alluding, and which excited deep interest at the time. This was the heroic courage of the son of Casablanca, the captain of the 'Orient'. Casablanca was among the wounded, and when the vessel was blown up his son, a lad of ten years of age, preferred perishing with him rather than saving himself, when one of the seamen had secured him the means of escape. I told the 'aide de camp', sent by General Kléber, who had the command of Alexandria, that the General-in-Chief was near Salehye'h. He proceeded thither immediately, and Bonaparte hastened back to Cairo, a distance of about thirty-three leagues.

In spite of any assertions that may have been made to the contrary, the fact is, that as soon as the French troops set foot in Egypt, they were filled with dissatisfaction, and ardently longed to return home[2]. The illusion of the expedition had disappeared, and only its reality remained. What bitter murmuring have I not heard from Murat, Lannes, Berthier, Bessières, and others! Their complaints were, indeed, often so unmeasured as almost to amount to sedition. This greatly vexed Bonaparte, and drew from him severe reproaches and violent language[3]. When the news arrived of the loss of the fleet, discontent increased. All who had acquired fortunes under Napoleon now began to fear that they would never enjoy them. All turned their thoughts to Paris, and its amusements, and were utterly disheartened at the idea of being separated from their homes and their friends for a period, the termination of which it was impossible to foresee.

[2]—['Erreurs' objects to this description of the complaints of the army, but Savary (tome i. pp. 66, 67, and tome i. p. 89) fully confirms it, giving the reason that the army was not a homogeneous body, but a mixed force taken from Rome, Florence, Milan, Venice, Genoa, and Marseilles; see also Thiers, tome v. p. 283. But the fact is not singular. For a striking instance, in the days of the Empire, of the soldiers in 1809, in Spain, actually threatening Napoleon in his own hearing, see De Gonville (tome i. pp. 190-193): "The soldiers of Lapisse's division gave loud expression to the most sinister designs against the Emperor's person, stirring up each other to fire a shot at him, and bandying accusations of cowardice for not doing it." He heard it all as plainly as we did, and seemed as if he did not care a bit for it, but "sent the division into good quarters, when the men were as enthusiastic as they

were formerly mutinous." In 1796 d'Entraigues, the Bourbon spy, reports, "As a general rule, the French soldier grumbles and is discontented. He accuses Bonaparte of being a thief and a rascal. But to-morrow the very same soldier will obey him blindly" (Iung's Bonaparte, tome iii. p. 152).]—

[3]—[Napoleon related at St. Helena that in a fit of irritation he rushed among a group of dissatisfied generals, and said to one of them, who was remarkable for his stature, "you have held seditious language; but take care I do not perform my duty. Though you are five feet ten inches high, that shall not save you from being shot."—Bourrienne.]—

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 companions in arms was now added the irreparable misfortune of the burning of 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. And at what a time did this disaster befall him? At the very moment when he was about to apply for the aid of the mother-country.

From what General Bonaparte communicated to me previously to the 1st of August, his object was, having once secured the possession of Egypt; to return to Toulon with the fleet; then to send troops and provisions of every kind to Egypt; and next to combine with the fleet all the forces that could be supplied, not only by France, but by her allies, for the purpose of attacking England. It is certain that previously to his departure for Egypt he had laid before the Directory a note relative to his plans. He always regarded a descent upon England as possible, though in its result fatal, so long as we should be inferior in naval strength; but he hoped by various manoeuvres to secure a superiority on one point.

His intention was to return to France. Availing himself of the departure of the English fleet for the Mediterranean, the alarm excited by his Egyptian expedition, the panic that would be inspired by his sudden appearance at Boulogne, and his preparations against England, he hoped to oblige that power to withdraw her naval force from the Mediterranean, and to prevent her sending out troops to Egypt. This project was often in his head. He would have thought it sublime to date an order of the day from the ruins of Memphis, and three months later, one from London. The loss of the fleet converted all these bold conceptions into mere romantic visions.

When alone with me he gave free vent to his emotion. I observed to him that the disaster was doubtless great, but that it would have been infinitely more irreparable had Nelson fallen in with us at Malta, or had he waited for us four-and-twenty hours before Alexandria, or in the open sea. "Any one of these events," said I, "which were not only possible but probable, would have deprived us of every resource. We are blockaded here, but we have provisions and money. Let us then wait patiently to see what the Directory will do for us."—"The Directory!" exclaimed he angrily, "the Directory is composed of a set of scoundrels! they envy and hate me, and would gladly let me perish here. Besides, you see how dissatisfied the whole army is: not a man is willing to stay."

The pleasing illusions which were cherished at the outset of the expedition vanished long before our arrival in Cairo. Egypt was no longer the empire of the Ptolemies, covered with populous and wealthy cities; it now presented one unvaried scene of devastation and misery. Instead of being aided by the inhabitants, whom we had ruined, for the sake of delivering them from the yoke of the beys, we found all against us: Mamelukes, Arabs, and fellahs. No Frenchman was secure of his life who happened to stray half a mile from any inhabited place, or the corps to which he belonged. The hostility which prevailed against us and the discontent of the army were clearly developed in the numerous letters which were written to France at the time, and intercepted.

The gloomy reflections which at first assailed Bonaparte, were speedily banished; and he soon recovered the fortitude and presence of mind which had been for a moment shaken by the overwhelming news from Aboukir. He, however, sometimes repeated, in a tone which it would be difficult to describe, "Unfortunate Brueys, what have you done!"

I have remarked that in some chance observations which escaped Napoleon at St. Helena he endeavoured to throw all the blame of the affair on Admiral Brueys. Persons who are determined to make Bonaparte an exception to human nature have unjustly reproached the Admiral for the loss of the fleet.

CHAPTER XVI

1798.

The Egyptian Institute—Festival of the birth of Mahomet—Bonaparte's prudent respect for the Mahometan religion—His Turkish dress— Djezzar, the Pasha of Acre—Thoughts of a campaign in Germany—Want of news from France—Bonaparte and Madame Fourés—The Egyptian fortune-teller, M. Berthollet, and the Sheik El Bekri—The air "Marlbrook"—Insurrection in Cairo—Death of General Dupuis—Death of Sulkowsky—The insurrection quelled—Nocturnal executions— Destruction of a tribe of Arabs—Convoy of sick and wounded—Massacre of the French in Sicily—projected expedition to Syria— Letter to Tippoo Saib.

The loss of the fleet convinced General Bonaparte of the necessity of speedily and effectively organising Egypt, where everything denoted that we should stay for a considerable time, excepting the event of a forced evacuation, which the General was far from foreseeing or fearing. The distance of Ibrahim Bey and Mourad Bey now left him a little at rest. War, fortifications, taxation, government, the organization of the divans, trade, art, and science, all occupied his attention. Orders and instructions were immediately despatched, if not to repair the defeat, at least to avert the first danger that might ensue from it. On the 21st of August Bonaparte established at Cairo an institute of the arts and sciences, of which he subsequently appointed me a member in the room of M. de Sucy, who was obliged to return to France, in consequence of the wound he received on board the flotilla in the Nile[4].

[4]—[The Institute of Egypt was composed of members of the French Institute, and of the men of science and artists of the commission who did not belong to that body. They assembled and added to their number several officers of the artillery and staff, and others who had cultivated the sciences and literature.

The Institute was established in one of the palaces of the bey's. A great number of machines, and physical, chemical, and astronomical instruments had been brought from France. They were distributed in the different rooms, which were also successively filled with all the curiosities of the country, whether of the animal, vegetable, or mineral kingdom.

The garden of the palace became a botanical garden. A chemical laboratory was formed at headquarters; Berthollet performed experiments there several times every week, which Napoleon and a great number of officers attended ('Memoirs of Napoleon')—

In founding this Institute, Bonaparte wished to afford an example of his ideas of civilisation. The minutes of the sittings of that learned body, which have been printed, bear evidence of its utility, and of Napoleon's extended views. The objects of the Institute were the advancement and propagation of information in Egypt, and the study and publication of all facts relating to the natural history, trade, and antiquities of that ancient country.

On the 18th Bonaparte was present at the ceremony of opening the dyke of the canal of Cairo, which receives the water of the Nile when it reaches the height fired by the Mequyas.

Two days after came the anniversary festival of the birth of Mahomet. At this Napoleon was also present, in company with the sheik El Bekri[5], who at his request gave him two young Mamelukes, Ibrahim, and Roustan[6].

[5]—[The General-in-Chief went to celebrate the feast of the Prophet at the house of the sheik El Bekri. The ceremony was begun by the recital of a kind of litany, containing the life of Mahomet from his birth to his death. About a hundred sheiks, sitting in a circle, on carpets, with their legs crossed, recited all the verses, swinging their bodies violently backwards and forwards, and altogether.

A grand dinner was afterwards served up, at which the guests sat on carpets, with their legs across. There were twenty tables, and five or six people at each table. That of the General-in-Chief and the sheik El Bekri was in the middle; a little slab of a precious kind of wood ornamented with mosaic work was placed eighteen inches above the floor and covered with a great number of dishes in succession. They were pillaws of rice, a particular kind of roast, entrees, and pastry, all very highly spiced. The sheiks picked everything with their fingers. Accordingly water was brought to wash the hands three times during dinner. Gooseberry-water, lemonade, and other sorts of sherbets were served to drink, and abundance of preserves and confectionery with the dessert. On the whole, the dinner was not disagreeable; it was only the manner of eating it that seemed strange to us.

In the evening the whole city was illuminated. After dinner the party went into the square of El Bekri, the illumination of which, in coloured lamps, was very beautiful. An immense concourse of people attended. They were all placed in order, in ranks of from twenty to a hundred persons, who, standing close together, recited the prayers and litanies of the Prophet with movements which kept increasing, until at length they seemed to be convulsive, and some of the most zealous fainted away ('Memoirs of Napoleon').]—

[6]—[Roustan or Rustan, a Mameluke, was always with Napoleon from the time of the return from Egypt till 1814, when he abandoned his master. He slept at or near the door of Napoleon. See Rémusat, tome i, p. 209, for an amusing description of the alarm of Josephine, and the precipitate flight of Madame de Rémusat, at the idea of being met and killed by this man in one of Josephine's nocturnal attacks on the privacy of her husband when closeted with his mistress.]—

It has been alleged that Bonaparte, when in Egypt, took part in the religious ceremonies and worship of the Mussulmans; but it cannot be said that he celebrated the festivals of the overflowing of the Nile and the anniversary of the Prophet. The Turks invited him to these merely as a spectator; and the presence of their new master was gratifying to the people. But he never committed the folly of ordering any solemnity. He neither learned nor repeated any prayer of the Koran, as many persons have asserted; neither did he advocate fatalism, polygamy, or any other doctrine of the Koran. Bonaparte employed himself better than in discussing with the Imaums the theology of the children of Ismael. The ceremonies, at which policy induced him to be present, were to him, and to all who accompanied him, mere matters of curiosity. He never set foot in a mosque; and only on one occasion, which I shall hereafter mention, dressed himself in the Mahometan costume. He attended the festivals to which the green turbans invited him[7]. His religious tolerance was the natural consequence of his philosophic spirit.

[7]—[From this Sir Walter Scott infers that he did not scruple to join the Musselmans in the external ceremonies of their religion. He embellishes his romance with the ridiculous farce of the sepulchral chamber of the grand pyramid, and the speeches which were addressed to the General as well as to the muftis and Imaums; and he adds that Bonaparte was on the point of embracing Islamism. All that Sir Walter says on this subject is the height of absurdity, and does not even deserve to be seriously refuted. Bonaparte never entered a mosque except from

motives of curiosity,(see contradiction in previous paragraph. D.W.) and he never for one moment afforded any ground for supposing that he believed to the mission of Mahomet.— Bourrienne.]—

Doubtless Bonaparte did, as he was bound to do, show respect for the religion of the country; and he found it necessary to act more like a Mussulman than a Catholic. A wise conqueror supports his triumphs by protecting and even elevating the religion of the conquered people. Bonaparte's principle was, as he himself has often told me, to look upon religions as the work of men, but to respect them everywhere as a powerful engine of government. However, I will not go so far as to say that he would not have changed his religion had the conquest of the East been the price of that change. All that he said about Mahomet, Islamism, and the Koran to the great men of the country he laughed at himself. He enjoyed the gratification of having all his fine sayings on the subject of religion translated into Arabic poetry, and repeated from mouth to mouth. This of course tended to conciliate the people.

I confess that Bonaparte frequently conversed with the chiefs of the Mussulman religion on the subject of his conversion; but only for the sake of amusement. The priests of the Koran, who would probably have been delighted to convert us, offered us the most ample concessions. But these conversations were merely started by way of entertainment, and never could have warranted a supposition of their leading to any serious result. If Bonaparte spoke as a Mussulman, it was merely in his character of a military and political chief in a Mussulman country. To do so was essential to his success, to the safety of his army, and, consequently, to his glory. In every country he would have drawn up proclamations and delivered addresses on the same principle. In India he would have been for Ali, at Thibet for the Dalai-lama, and in China for Confucius[8].

[8]—[On the subject of his alleged conversion to Mahometanism Bonaparte expressed himself at St. Helena as follows:

"I never followed any of the tenets of that religion. I never prayed in the mosques. I never abstained from wine, or was circumcised, neither did I ever profess it. I said merely that we were the friends of the Mussulmans, and that I respected Mahomet their prophet, which was true; I respect him now. I wanted to make the Imaums cause prayers to be offered up in the mosques for me, in order to make the people respect me still more than they actually did, and obey me more readily. The Imaums replied that there was a great obstacle, because their Prophet in the Koran had inculcated to them that they were not to obey, respect, or hold faith with infidels, and that I came under that denomination. I then desired them to hold a consultation, and see what was necessary to be done in order to become a Mussulman, as some of their tenets could not be practised by us. That, as to circumcision, God had made us unfit for that. That, with respect to drinking wine, we were poor cold people, inhabitants of the north, who could not exist without it. They consulted together accordingly, and in about three weeks issued a fetham, declaring that circumcision might be omitted, because it was merely a profession; that as to drinking wine, it might be drunk by Mussulmans, but that those who drank it would not go to paradise, but to hell. I replied that this would not do; that we had no occasion to make ourselves Mussulmans in order to go to hell, that there were many ways of getting there without coming to Egypt, and desired them to hold another consultation. After deliberating and battling together for I believe three months, they finally decided that a man might become a Mussulman, and neither circumcise nor abstain from wine; but that, in proportion to the wine drunk, some good works must be done. I then told them that we were all Mussulmans and friends of the Prophet, which they really believed, as the French soldiers never went to church, and had no priests with them. For you must know that during the Revolution there was no religion whatever in the

French army. Menou," continued Napoleon, "really turned Mahometan, which was the reason I left him behind." —(Voices from St. Helena.)—

The General-in-Chief had a Turkish dress made, which he once put on, merely in joke. One day he desired me to go to breakfast without waiting for him, and that he would follow me. In about a quarter of an hour he made his appearance in his new costume. As soon as he was recognised he was received with a loud burst of laughter. He sat down very coolly; but he found himself so encumbered and ill at ease in his turban and Oriental robe that he speedily threw them off, and was never tempted to a second performance of the masquerade.

About the end of August Bonaparte wished to open negotiations with the Pasha of Acre, nicknamed the Butcher. He offered Djezzar his friendship, sought his in return, and gave him the most consolatory assurances of the safety of his dominions. He promised to support him against the Grand Seignior, at the very moment when he was assuring the Egyptians that he would support the Grand Seignior against the beys. But Djezzar, confiding in his own strength and in the protection of the English, who had anticipated Bonaparte, was deaf to every overture, and would not even receive Beauvoisin, who was sent to him on the 22d of August. A second envoy was beheaded at Acre. The occupations of Bonaparte and the necessity of obtaining a more solid footing in Egypt retarded for the moment the invasion of that pashalic, which provoked vengeance by its barbarities, besides being a dangerous neighbour.

From the time he received the accounts of the disaster of Aboukir until the revolt of Cairo on the 22d of October, Bonaparte sometimes found the time hang heavily on his hands. Though he devoted attention to everything, yet there was not sufficient occupation for his singularly active mind. When the heat was not too great he rode on horseback; and on his return, if he found no despatches to read (which often happened), no orders to send off; or no letters to answer, he was immediately absorbed in reverie, and would sometimes converse very strangely. One day, after a long pause, he said to me:

"Do you know what I am thinking of?"—"Upon my word, that would be very difficult; you think of such extraordinary things."—"I don't know," continued he, "that I shall ever see France again; but if I do, my only ambition is to make a glorious campaign in Germany—in the plains of Bavaria; there to gain a great battle, and to avenge France for the defeat of Hochstadt. After that I would retire into the country, and live quietly."

He then entered upon a long dissertation on the preference he would give to Germany as the theatre of war[9]; the fine character of the people, and the prosperity and wealth of the country, and its power of supporting an army. His conversations were sometimes very long; but always replete with interest.

[9]—[So early as 1794 Napoleon had suggested that Austria should always be attacked in Germany, not in Italy. "It is Germany that should be overwhelmed; that done, Italy and Spain fall of themselves. Germany should be attacked, not Spain or Italy. If we obtain great success, advantage should never be taken of it to penetrate into Italy while Germany, unweakened, offers a formidable front" (Iung's Bonaparte, tome ii. p. 936). He was always opposed to the wild plans which had ruined so many French armies in Italy, and which the Directory tried to force on him, of marching on Rome and Naples after every success in the north.]—

In these intervals of leisure Bonaparte was accustomed to retire to bed early. I used to read to him every evening. When I read poetry he would fall asleep; but when he asked for the Life of Cromwell I counted on sitting up pretty late. In the course of the day he used to read and make notes. He often expressed regret at not receiving news from France; for correspondence was rendered impracticable by the numerous English and Turkish cruisers. Many letters were intercepted and

scandalously published. Not even family secrets and communications of the most confidential nature were respected.

About the middle of September in this year (1798), Bonaparte ordered to be brought to the house of Elfy Bey half a dozen Asiatic women whose beauty he had heard highly extolled. But their ungraceful obesity displeased him, and they were immediately dismissed. A few days after he fell violently in love with Madame Fourés, the wife of a lieutenant of infantry. She was very pretty, and her charms were enhanced by the rarity of seeing a woman in Egypt who was calculated to please the eye of a European. Bonaparte engaged for her a house adjoining the palace of Elfy Bey, which we occupied. He frequently ordered dinner to be prepared there, and I used to go there with him at seven o'clock, and leave him at nine.

This connection soon became the general subject of gossip at head-quarters. Through a feeling of delicacy to M. Fourés, the General-in-Chief gave him a mission to the Directory. He embarked at Alexandria, and the ship was captured by the English, who, being informed of the cause of his mission, were malicious enough to send him back to Egypt, instead of keeping him prisoner. Bonaparte wished to have a child by Madame Fourés, but this wish was not realised.

A celebrated soothsayer was recommended to Bonaparte by the inhabitants of Cairo, who confidentially vouched for the accuracy with which he could foretell future events. He was sent for, and when he arrived, I, Venture, and a sheik were with the General. The prophet wished first to exercise his skill upon Bonaparte, who, however, proposed that I should have my fortune told first, to which I acceded without hesitation. To afford an idea of his prophetic skill I must mention that since my arrival in Cairo I had been in a very weak state. The passage of the Nile and the bad food we had had for twelve days had greatly reduced me, so that I was miserably pale and thin.

After examining my hands, feeling my pulse, my forehead, and the nape of my neck, the fortune-teller shrugged his shoulders, and, in a melancholy tone, told Venture that he did not think it right to inform me of my fate. I gave him to understand that he might say what he pleased, as it was a matter of indifference to me. After considerable hesitation on his part and pressing on mine, he announced to me that the earth of Egypt would receive me in two months.

I thanked him, and he was dismissed. When we were alone the General said to me, "Well, what do you think of that?" I observed that the fortune-teller did not run any great risk in foretelling my death, which was a very probable circumstance in the state in which I was; "but," added I, "if I procure the wines which I have ordered from France, you will soon see me get round again."

The art of imposing on mankind has at all times been an important part of the art of governing; and it was not that portion of the science of government which Bonaparte was the least acquainted with. He neglected no opportunity of showing off to the Egyptians the superiority of France in arts and sciences; but it happened, oftener than once, that the simple instinct of the Egyptians thwarted his endeavours in this way. Some days after the visit of the pretended fortune-teller he wished, if I may so express myself, to oppose conjurer to conjurer. For this purpose he invited the principal sheiks to be present at some chemical experiments performed by M. Berthollet. The General expected to be much amused at their astonishment; but the miracles of the transformation of liquids, electrical commotions and galvanism, did not elicit from them any symptom of surprise. They witnessed the operations of our able chemist with the most imperturbable indifference. When they were ended, the sheik El Bekri desired the interpreter to tell M. Berthollet that it was all very fine; "but," said he, "ask him whether he can make me be in Morocco and here at one and the same moment?" M. Berthollet replied in the negative, with a shrug of his shoulders. "Oh! then," said the sheik, "he is not half a sorcerer."

Our music produced no greater effect upon them. They listened with insensibility to all the airs that were played to them, with the exception of "Marlbrook." When that was played they became animated, and were all in motion, as if ready to dance.

An order which had been issued on our arrival in Cairo for watching the criers of the mosques had for some weeks been neglected. At certain hours of the night these criers address prayers to the Prophet. As it was merely a repetition of the same ceremony over and over again, in a short time no notice was taken of it. The Turks, perceiving this negligence, substituted for their prayers and hymns cries of revolt, and by this sort of verbal telegraph, insurrectionary excitement was transmitted to the northern and southern extremities of Egypt. By this means, and by the aid of secret emissaries, who eluded our feeble police, and circulated real or forged firmans of the Sultan disavowing the concord between France and the Porte, and provoking war, the plan of a revolution was organised throughout the country.

The signal for the execution of this plan was given from the minarets on the night of the 20th of October, and on the morning of the 21st it was announced at headquarters that the city of Cairo was in open insurrection. The General-in-Chief was not, as has been stated, in the isle of Raeuddah: he did not hear the firing of the alarm-guns. He rose when the news arrived; it was then five o'clock. He was informed that all the shops were closed, and that the French were attacked. A moment after he heard of the death of General Dupuis, commandant of the garrison, who was killed by a lance in the street. Bonaparte immediately mounted his horse, and, accompanied by only thirty guides, visited all the threatened points, restored confidence, and, with great presence of mind, adopted measures of defence.

He left me at headquarters with only one sentinel; but he had been accurately informed of the situation of the insurgents; and such was my confidence in his activity and foresight that I had no apprehension, and awaited his return with perfect composure. This composure was not disturbed even when I saw a party of insurgents attack the house of M. Estève, our paymaster-general, which was situated on the opposite side of Ezbekye'h Place. M. Estève was, fortunately, able to resist the attack until troops from Boulac came up to his assistance.

After visiting all the posts, and adopting every precautionary measure, Bonaparte returned to headquarters. Finding me still alone with the sentinel, he asked me, smiling, "whether I had not been frightened?" — "Not at all, General, I assure you," replied I.

—It was about half-past eight in the morning when Bonaparte returned to headquarters, and while at breakfast he was informed that some Bedouin Arabs, on horseback, were trying to force their entrance into Cairo. He ordered his aide de camp, Sulkowsky, to mount his horse, to take with him fifteen guides, and proceed to the point where the assailants were most numerous. This was the Bab-el-Nasser, or the gate of victory. Croisier observed to the General-in-Chief that Sulkowsky had scarcely recovered from the wounds at Salehye'h, and he offered to take his place. He had his motives for this. Bonaparte consented; but Sulkowsky had already set out. Within an hour after, one of the fifteen guides returned, covered with blood, to announce that Sulkowsky and the remainder of his party had been cut to pieces. This was speedy work, for we were still at table when the sad news arrived.

Mortars were planted on Mount Mokatom, which commands Cairo. The populace, expelled from all the principal streets by the troops, assembled in the square of the Great Mosque, and in the little streets running into it, which they barricaded. The firing of the artillery on the heights was kept up with vigour for two days.

About twelve of the principal chiefs of Cairo were arrested and confined in an apartment at headquarters. They awaited with the calmest resignation the death they knew they merited; but Bonaparte merely detained them as hostages. The aga in the service of Bonaparte was astonished that sentence of death was not pronounced upon them; and he said, shrugging his shoulders, and with a gesture apparently intended to provoke severity, "You see they expect it."

On the third the insurrection was at an end, and tranquillity restored. Numerous prisoners were conducted to the citadel. In obedience to an order which I wrote every evening, twelve were put to

death nightly. The bodies were then put into sacks and thrown into the Nile. There were many women included in these nocturnal executions.

I am not aware that the number of victims amounted to thirty per day, as Bonaparte assured General Reynier in a letter which he wrote to him six days after the restoration of tranquillity. "Every night," said he, "we cut off thirty heads. This, I hope, will be an effectual example." I am of opinion that in this instance he exaggerated the extent of his just revenge.

Some time after the revolt of Cairo the necessity of ensuring our own safety forced the commission of a terrible act of cruelty. A tribe of Arabs in the neighbourhood of Cairo had surprised and massacred a party of French. The General-in-Chief ordered his aide de camp Croisier to proceed to the spot, surround the tribe, destroy the huts, kill all the men, and conduct the rest of the population to Cairo. The order was to decapitate the victims, and bring their heads in sacks to Cairo to be exhibited to the people. Eugène Beauharnais accompanied Croisier, who joyfully set out on this horrible expedition, in hope of obliterating all recollection of the affair of Damanhour.

On the following day the party returned. Many of the poor Arab women had been delivered on the road, and the children had perished of hunger, heat, and fatigue. About four o'clock a troop of asses arrived in Ezbekye'h Place, laden with sacks. The sacks were opened and the heads rolled out before the assembled populace. I cannot describe the horror I experienced; but I must nevertheless acknowledge that this butchery ensured for a considerable time the tranquillity and even the existence of the little caravans which were obliged to travel in all directions for the service of the army.

Shortly before the loss of the fleet the General-in Chief had formed the design of visiting Suez, to examine the traces of the ancient canal which united the Nile to the Gulf of Arabia, and also to cross the latter. The revolt at Cairo caused this project to be adjourned until the month of December.

Before his departure for Suez, Bonaparte granted the commissary Sucy leave to return to France. He had received a wound in the right hand, when on board the xebec 'Cerf'. I was conversing with him on deck when he received this wound. At first it had no appearance of being serious; but some time after he could not use his hand. General Bonaparte despatched a vessel with sick and wounded, who were supposed to be incurable, to the number of about eighty. All envied their fate, and were anxious to depart with them, but the privilege was conceded to very few. However, those who were disappointed had no cause for regret. We never know what we wish for. Captain Marengo, who landed at Augusta in Sicily, supposing it to be a friendly land, was required to observe quarantine for twenty-two days, and information was given of the arrival of the vessel to the court, which was at Palermo. On the 25th of January 1799 all on board the French vessel were massacred, with the exception of twenty-one who were saved by a Neapolitan frigate, and conducted to Messing, where they were detained.

Before he conceived the resolution of attacking the Turkish advanced guard in the valleys of Syria, Bonaparte had formed a plan of invading British India from Persia. He had ascertained, through the medium of agents, that the Shah of Persia would, for a sum of money paid in advance, consent to the establishment of military magazines on certain points of his territory. Bonaparte frequently told me that if, after the subjugation of Egypt, he could have left 15,000 men in that country, and have had 30,000 disposable troops, he would have marched on the Euphrates. He was frequently speaking about the deserts which were to be crossed to reach Persia.

How many times have I seen him extended on the ground, examining the beautiful maps which he had brought with him, and he would sometimes make me lie down in the same position to trace to me his projected march. This reminded him of the triumphs of his favourite hero, Alexander, with whom he so much desired to associate his name; but, at the same time, he felt that these projects were incompatible with our resources, the weakness of the Government; and the dissatisfaction which the army already evinced. Privation and misery are inseparable from all these remote operations.

This favourite idea still occupied his mind a fortnight before his departure for Syria was determined on, and on the 25th of January 1799 he wrote to Tippoo Saib as follows:—

You are of course already informed of my arrival on the banks of the Red Sea, with a numerous and invincible army. Eager to deliver you from the iron yoke of England, I hasten to request that you will send me, by the way of Mascate or Mocha, an account of the political situation in which you are. I also wish that you could send to Suez, or Grand Cairo, some able man, in your confidence, with whom I may confer[10].

[10]—[It is not true, as has often been stated, that Tippoo Saib wrote to General Bonaparte. He could not reply to a letter written on the 23th of January, owing to the great difficulty of communication, the considerable distance, and the short interval which elapsed between the 25th of January and the fall of the Empire of Mysore, which happened on the 20th of April following. The letter to Tipoo Saib commenced "Citizen-Sultan!"—Bourrienne]—

CHAPTER XVII

1798-1799.

Bonaparte's departure for Suez—Crossing the desert—Passage of the Red Sea—The fountain of Moses—The Cenobites of Mount Sinai—Danger in recrossing the Red Sea—Napoleon's return to Cairo—Money borrowed at Genoa—New designs upon Syria—Dissatisfaction of the Ottoman Porte—Plan for invading Asia—Gigantic schemes—General Berthier's permission to return to France—His romantic love and the adored portrait—He gives up his permission to return home—Louis Bonaparte leaves Egypt—The first Cashmere shawl in France—Intercepted correspondence—Departure for Syria—Fountains of Messoudish—Bonaparte jealous—Discontent of the troops—El-Arish taken—Aspect of Syria—Ramleh—Jerusalem.

On the 24th of December we set out for Suez, where we arrived on the 26th. On the 25th we encamped in the desert some leagues before Ad-Geroth. The heat had been very great during the day; but about eleven at night the cold became so severe as to be precisely in an inverse ratio to the temperature of the day. This desert, which is the route of the caravans from Suez, from Tor and the countries situated on the north of Arabia, is strewed with the bones of the men and animals who, for ages past, have perished in crossing it. As there was no wood to be got, we collected a quantity of these bones for fuel. Monge himself was induced to sacrifice some of the curious skulls of animals which he had picked up on the way and deposited in the Berlin of the General-in-Chief. But no sooner had we kindled our fires than an intolerable effluvium obliged us to raise our camp and advance farther on, for we could procure no water to extinguish the fires.

On the 27th Bonaparte employed himself in inspecting the town and port of Suez, and in giving orders for some naval and military works. He feared—what indeed really occurred after his departure from Egypt—the arrival of some English troops from the East Indies, which he had intended to invade. These regiments contributed to the loss of his conquest[11].

[11]—[Sir David Baird, with a force of about 7000 men sent from India, landed at Cosseir in July 1801.]—

On the morning of the 28th we crossed the Red Sea dry-shod, to go to the Wells of Moses, which are nearly a myriametre from the eastern coast, and a little southeast of Suez. The Gulf of Arabia terminates at about 5,000 metres north of that city. Near the port the Red Sea is not above 1,500 metres wide, and is always fordable at low water. The caravans from Tor and Mount Sinai[12] always pass at that part, either in going to or returning from Egypt. This shortens their journey nearly a myriametre. At high tide the water rises five or six feet at Suez, and when the wind blows fresh it often rises to nine or ten feet.

[12]—[I shall say nothing of the Cenobites of Mount Sinai, as I had not the honour of seeing them. Neither did I see the register containing the names of Ali, Salah-Eddin, Ibrahim or Abraham, on which Bonaparte is said to have inscribed his name. I perceived at a distance some high hills which were said to be Mount Sinai. I conversed, through the medium of an interpreter, with some Arabian chiefs of Tor and its neighbourhood. They had been informed of our excursion to the Wells, and that they might there thank the French General for the protection granted to their caravans and their trade with Egypt. On the 19th of December, before his departure from Suez, Bonaparte signed a sort of safeguard, or exemption from duties, for the convent of Mount Sinai. This had been granted out of respect to Moses and the

Jewish nation, and also because the convent of Mount Sinai is a seat of learning and civilisation amidst the barbarism of the deserts.—Bourrienne.]—

We spent a few hours seated by the largest of the springs called the Wells of Moses, situated on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Arabia. We made coffee with the water from these springs, which, however, gave it such a brackish taste that it was scarcely drinkable.

Though the water of the eight little springs which form the Wells of Moses is not so salt as that of many wells dug in other parts of the deserts, it is, nevertheless, exceedingly brackish, and does not allay thirst so well as fresh water.

Bonaparte returned to Suez that same night. It was very dark when we reached the sea-shore. The tide was coming up, and the water was pretty high. We deviated a little from the way we had taken in the morning; we crossed a little too low down; we were thrown into disorder, but we did not lose ourselves in the marshes as has been stated. There were none.

I have read somewhere, though I did not see the fact, nor did I hear it mentioned at the time, that the tide, which was coming up, would have been the grave of the General-in-Chief had not one of the guides saved him by carrying him on his shoulders. If any such danger had existed, all who had not a similar means of escape must have perished.

This is a fabrication. General Caffarelli was the only person who was really in danger, for his wooden leg prevented his sitting firmly on his horse in the water; but some persons came to his assistance and supported him[13].

[13]—[Bonaparte extricated himself as the others did from the real danger he and his escort had run. At St. Helena he said, "Profiting by the low tide, I crossed the Red Sea dry-shod. On my return I was overtaken by the night and went astray in the middle of the rising tide. I ran the greatest danger. I nearly perished in the same manner as Pharaoh did. This would certainly have furnished all the Christian preachers with a magnificent test against me." —Bourrienne.]—

On his return to Cairo the General-in-Chief wished to discover the site of the canal which in ancient times formed a junction between the Red Sea and the Nile by Belbeis. M. Lepère, who was a member of the Egyptian Institute, and is now inspector-general of bridges and highways, executed on the spot a beautiful plan, which may confidently be consulted by those who wish to form an accurate idea of that ancient communication, and the level of the two seas[14].

[14]—[Since accurately ascertained during the progress of the works for the Suez Canal.]—

On his arrival at the capital Bonaparte again devoted all his thoughts to the affairs of the army, which he had not attended to during his short absence. The revenues of Egypt were far from being sufficient to meet the military expenditure. To defray his own expenses Bonaparte raised several considerable loans in Genoa through the medium of M. James. The connection of James with the Bonaparte family takes its date from this period[15].

[15]—[Joseph Bonaparte says that the fathers of Napoleon and of M. James had long known one another, and that Napoleon had met James at Autun. ('Erreurs', tome i, p. 296).]—

Since the month of August the attention of General Bonaparte had been constantly fixed on Syria. The period of the possible landing of an enemy in Egypt had now passed away, and could not return until the month of July in the following year. Bonaparte was fully convinced that that landing would take place, and he was not deceived. The Ottoman Porte had, indeed, been persuaded that the conquest of Egypt was not in her interest. She preferred enduring a rebel whom she hoped one day to subdue to supporting a power which, under the specious pretext of reducing her insurgent beys to obedience, deprived her of one of her finest provinces, and threatened the rest of the empire.

On his return to Cairo the General-in-Chief had no longer any doubt as to the course which the Porte intended to adopt. The numerous class of persons who believed that the Ottoman Porte had consented to our occupation of Egypt were suddenly undeceived. It was then asked how we could, without that consent, have attempted such an enterprise? Nothing, it was said, could justify the temerity of such an expedition, if it should produce a rupture between France, the Ottoman empire, and its allies. However, for the remainder of the year Bonaparte dreaded nothing except an expedition from Gaza and El-Arish, of which the troops of Djeddar had already taken possession. This occupation was justly regarded as a decided act of hostility; war was thus practically declared. "We must adopt anticipatory measures," thought Napoleon; "we must destroy this advanced guard of the Ottoman empire, overthrow the ramparts of Jaffa and Acre, ravage the country, destroy all her resources, so as to render the passage of an army across the desert impracticable." Thus was planned the expedition against Syria.

General Berthier, after repeated entreaties, had obtained permission to return to France. The 'Courageuse' frigate, which was to convey him home, was fitting out at Alexandria; he had received his instructions, and was to leave Cairo on the 29th of January, ten days before Bonaparte's departure for Syria. Bonaparte was sorry to part with him; but he could not endure to see an old friend, and one who had served him well in all his campaigns, dying before his eyes, the victim of nostalgia and romantic love. Besides, Berthier had been for some time past, anything but active in the discharge of his duties. His passion, which amounted almost to madness, impaired the feeble faculties with which nature had endowed him. Some writers have ranked him in the class of sentimental lovers: be this as it may, the homage which Berthier rendered to the portrait of the object of his adoration more frequently excited our merriment than our sensibility.

One day I went with an order from Bonaparte to the chief of his staff, whom I found on his knees before the portrait of Madame Visconti, which was hanging opposite the door. I touched him, to let him know I was there. He grumbled a little, but did not get angry.

The moment was approaching when the two friends were to part, perhaps forever. Bonaparte was sincerely distressed at this separation, and the chief of his staff was informed of the fact. At a moment when it was supposed Berthier was on his way to Alexandria, he presented himself to the General-in-Chief. "You are, then, decidedly going to Asia?" said he.—"You know," replied the General, "that all is ready, and I shall set out in a few days."—"Well, I will not leave you. I voluntarily renounce all idea of returning to France. I could not endure to forsake you at a moment when you are going to encounter new dangers. Here are my instructions and my passport." Bonaparte, highly pleased with this resolution, embraced Berthier; and the coolness which had been excited by his request to return home was succeeded by a sincere reconciliation.

Louis Bonaparte, who was suffering from the effects of the voyage, was still at Alexandria. The General-in-Chief, yielding to the pacific views of his younger brother, who was also beginning to evince some symptoms of nostalgia, consented to his return home. He could not, however, depart until the 11th of March 1799. I felt the absence of Louis very much.

On his return to France Louis passed through Sens, where he dined with Madame de Bourrienne, to whom he presented a beautiful shawl, which General Berthier had given me. This, I believe, was the first Cashmere that had ever been seen in France. Louis was much surprised when Madame de Bourrienne showed him the Egyptian correspondence, which had been seized by the English and printed in London. He found in the collection some letters addressed to himself, and there were others, he said, which were likely to disturb the peace of more than one family on the return of the army.

On the 11th of February 1799 we began our march for Syria, with about 12,000 men. It has been erroneously stated that the army amounted to only 6000: nearly that number was lost in the course of the campaign. However, at the very moment we were on our way to Syria, with 12,000 men, scarcely as many being left in Egypt, the Directory published that, "according to the information

which had been received," we had 60,000 infantry and 10,000 cavalry; that the army had doubled its numbers by battles; and that since our arrival in Egypt, we had lost only 300 men. Is history to be written from such documents?

We arrived, about four o'clock in the afternoon, at Messoudiah, or, "the Fortunate Spot." Here we witnessed a kind of phenomenon, which was not a little agreeable to us. Messoudiah is a place situated on the coast of the Mediterranean, surrounded with little dunes of very fine sand, which the copious rains of winter readily penetrate. The rain remains in the sand, so that on making with the fingers holes of four or five inches in depth at the bottom of these little hills, the water immediately flows out. This water was, indeed, rather thick, but its flavour was agreeable; and it would have become clear if we could have spared time to allow it to rest and deposit the particles of sand it contained.

It was a curious spectacle to behold us all lying prostrate, digging wells in miniature; and displaying a laughable selfishness in our endeavours to obtain the most abundant source. This was a very important discovery to us. We found these sand-wells at the extremity of the desert, and it contributed, in no small degree, to revive the courage of our soldiers; besides, when men are, as was the case with us, subject to privations of every kind, the least benefit which accrues inspires the hope of a new advantage. We were approaching the confines of Syria, and we enjoyed by anticipation, the pleasure we were about to experience, on treading a soil which, by its variety of verdure and vegetation, would remind us of our native land. At Messoudiah we likewise possessed the advantage of bathing in the sea, which was not more than fifty paces from our unexpected water-supply.

Whilst near the wells of Messoudiah, on the way to El-Arish, I one day saw Bonaparte walking alone with Junot, as he was often in the habit of doing. I stood at a little distance, and my eyes, I know not why, were fixed on him during their conversation. The General's countenance, which was always pale, had, without my being able to divine the cause, become paler than usual. There was something convulsive in his features—a wildness in his look, and he several times struck his head with his hand. After conversing with Junot about a quarter of an hour he quitted him and came towards me. I never saw him exhibit such an air of dissatisfaction, or appear so much under the influence of some prepossession. I advanced towards him, and as soon as we met, he exclaimed in an abrupt and angry tone, "So! I find I cannot depend upon you.—These women!—Josephine! —if you had loved me, you would before now have told me all I have heard from Junot—he is a real friend—Josephine!—and I 600 leagues from her— you ought to have told me.—That she should thus have deceived me!—'Woe to them!—I will exterminate the whole race of fops and puppies!—As to her—divorce!—yes, divorce! a public and open divorce!—I must write! —I know all!—It is your fault—you ought to have told me!"

These energetic and broken exclamations, his disturbed countenance and altered voice informed me but too well of the subject of his conversation with Junot. I saw that Junot had been drawn into a culpable indiscretion; and that, if Josephine had committed any faults, he had cruelly exaggerated them. My situation was one of extreme delicacy. However, I had the good fortune to retain my self-possession, and as soon as some degree of calmness succeeded to this first burst, I replied that I knew nothing of the reports which Junot might have communicated to him; that even if such reports, often the offspring of calumny, had reached my ear, and if I had considered it my duty to inform him of them, I certainly would not have selected for that purpose the moment when he was 600 leagues from France. I also did not conceal how blamable Junot's conduct appeared to me, and how ungenerous I considered it thus rashly to accuse a woman who was not present to justify or defend herself; that it was no great proof of attachment to add domestic uneasiness to the anxiety, already sufficiently great, which the situation of his brothers in arms, at the commencement of a hazardous enterprise, occasioned him.

Notwithstanding these observations, which, however, he listened to with some calmness, the word "divorce" still escaped his lips; and it is necessary to be aware of the degree of irritation to

which he was liable when anything seriously vexed him, to be able to form an idea of what Bonaparte was during this painful scene. However, I kept my ground. I repeated what I had said. I begged of him to consider with what facility tales were fabricated and circulated, and that gossip such as that which had been repeated to him was only the amusement of idle persons; and deserved the contempt of strong minds. I spoke of his glory. "My glory!" cried he. "I know not what I would not give if that which Junot has told me should be untrue; so much do I love Josephine! If she be really guilty a divorce must separate us for ever. I will not submit to be a laughing-stock for all the imbeciles in Paris. I will write to Joseph; he will get the divorce declared."

Although his agitation continued long, intervals occurred in which he was less excited. I seized one of these moments of comparative calm to combat this idea of divorce which seemed to possess his mind. I represented to him especially that it would be imprudent to write to his brother with reference to a communication which was probably false. "The letter might be intercepted; it would betray the feelings of irritation which dictated it. As to a divorce, it would be time to think of that hereafter, but advisedly."

These last words produced an effect on him which I could not have ventured to hope for so speedily. He became tranquil, listened to me as if he had suddenly felt the justice of my observations, dropped the subject, and never returned to it; except that about a fortnight after, when we were before St. Jean d'Acre, he expressed himself greatly dissatisfied with Junot, and complained of the injury he had done him by his indiscreet disclosures, which he began to regard as the inventions of malignity. I perceived afterwards that he never pardoned Junot for this indiscretion; and I can state, almost with certainty, that this was one of the reasons why Junot was not created a marshal of France, like many of his comrades whom Bonaparte had loved less. It may be supposed that Josephine, who was afterwards informed by Bonaparte of Junot's conversation, did not feel particularly interested in his favour[16]. He died insane on the 27th of July 1813.

[16]—[However indiscreet Junot might on this occasion have shown himself in interfering in so delicate a matter, it is pretty certain that his suspicions were breathed to no other ear than that of Bonaparte himself. Madame Junot, in speaking of the ill-suppressed enmity between her husband and Madame Bonaparte, says that he never uttered a word even to her of the subject of his conversation with the General-in-Chief to Egypt. That Junot's testimony, however, notwithstanding the countenance it obtained from Bonaparte's relations, ought to be cautiously received, the following passage from the Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantès, vol. i. p. 250, demonstrative of the feelings of irritation between the parties, will show:

"Junot escorted Madame Bonaparte when she went to join the General-in-Chief in Italy. I am surprised that M. de Bourrienne has omitted mentioning this circumstance in his Memoirs. He must have known it, since he was well acquainted with everything relating to Josephine, and knew many facts of high interest in her life at this period and subsequently. How happens it too that he makes no mention of Mademoiselle Louise, who might be called her 'demoiselle de compagnie' rather than her 'femme de chambre'? At the outset of the journey to Italy she was such a favourite with Josephine that she dressed like her mistress, ate at table with her, and was in all respects her friend and confidante.

"The journey was long, much too long for Junot, though he was very much in love with Mademoiselle Louise. But he was anxious to join the army, for to him his General was always the dearest of mistresses. Junot has often spoken to me, and to me alone, of the vexations he experienced on this journey. He might have added to his circumstantial details relative to Josephine the conversation he is reported to have had with Bonaparte to Egypt; but he never breathed a word on the subject, for his character was always noble and generous. The journey to Italy did not

produce the effect which usually arises from such incidents in common life; namely, a closer friendship and intimacy between the parties. On the contrary, Madame Bonaparte from that moment evinced some degree of ill-humour towards Junot, and complained with singular warmth of the want of respect which he had shown her, in making love to her 'femme de chambre' before her face."

According to 'Erreurs (tome i. pp. 4, 50) Junot was not then in Syria. On 10th February Napoleon was at Messoudiah. Junot only arrived from Egypt at Gaza on the 25th February. Madame d'Abrantès (ii. 32) treats this conversation as apocryphal. "This (an anecdote of her own) is not an imaginary episode like that, for example, of making a person speak at Messoudiah who never was there."]—

Our little army continued its march on El-Arish, where we arrived on the 17th of February. The fatigues experienced in the desert and the scarcity of water excited violent murmurs amongst the soldiers during their march across the isthmus. When any person on horseback passed them they studiously expressed their discontent. The advantage possessed by the horsemen provoked their sarcasms. I never heard the verses which they are said to have repeated, but they indulged in the most violent language against the Republic, the men of science, and those whom they regarded as the authors of the expedition. Nevertheless these brave fellows, from whom it was not astonishing that such great privations should extort complaints, often compensated by their pleasantries for the bitterness of their reproaches.

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