Walter Scott

Life of Napoleon Bonaparte. Volume III

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Scott W.

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Содержание

Sir Walter Scott
Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, Volume III

CHAPTER XXV

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These advances towards universal empire, made during the very period when the pacific measures adopted by the preliminaries, and afterwards confirmed by the treaty of Amiens, were in the act of being carried into execution, excited the natural jealousy of the people of Britain. They had not been accustomed to rely much on the sincerity of the French nation; nor did the character of its present chief, so full of ambition, and so bold and successful in his enterprises, incline them to feelings of greater security. On the other hand, Buonaparte seems to have felt as matter of personal offence the jealousy which the British entertained; and instead of soothing it, as policy dictated, by concessions and confidence, he showed a disposition to repress, or at least to punish it, by measures which indicated anger and irritation. There ceased to be any cordiality of intercourse betwixt the two nations, and they began to look into the conduct of each other for causes of offence, rather than for the means of removing it.

The English had several subjects of complaint against France, besides the general encroachments which she had continued to make on the liberties of Europe. A law had been made during the times of the wildest Jacobinism, which condemned to forfeiture every vessel under a hundred tons burden, carrying British merchandise, and approaching within four leagues of France. It was now thought proper, that the enforcing a regulation of so hostile a character, made during a war of unexampled bitterness, should be the first fruits of returning peace. Several British vessels were stopped, their captains imprisoned, their cargoes confiscated, and all restitution refused. Some of these had been driven on the French coast unwillingly, and by stress of weather; but the necessity of the case created no exemption. An instance there was of a British vessel in ballast, which entered Charente, in order to load with a cargo of brandy. The plates, knives, forks, &c., used by the captain, being found to be of British manufacture, the circumstance was thought a sufficient apology for seizing the vessel. These aggressions, repeatedly made, were not, so far as appears, remedied on the most urgent remonstrances, and seemed to argue that the French were already acting on the vexatious and irritating principle which often precedes a war, but very seldom immediately follows a peace. The conduct of France was felt to be the more unreasonable and ungracious, as all restrictions on her commerce, imposed during the war, had been withdrawn on the part of Great Britain, so soon as the peace was concluded. In like manner, a stipulation of the treaty of Amiens, providing that all sequestrations imposed on the property of French or of English, in the two contending countries, should be removed, was instantly complied with in Britain, but postponed and dallied with on the part of France.

COMMERCIAL AGENTS.

The above were vexatious and offensive measures, intimating little respect for the Government of England, and no desire to cultivate her good will. They were perhaps adopted by the chief consul,

in hopes of inducing Britain to make some sacrifices in order to obtain from his favour a commercial treaty, the advantages of which, according to his opinion of the English nation, was a boon calculated to make them quickly forgive the humiliating restrictions from which it would emancipate their trade. If this were any part of his policy, he was ignorant of the nature of the people to whom it was applied. It is the sluggish ox alone that is governed by a goad. But what gave the deepest offence and most lively alarm to Britain, was, that while Buonaparte declined affording the ordinary facilities for English commerce, it was his purpose, nevertheless, to establish a commercial agent in every part of the British dominions, whose ostensible duty was to watch over that very trade which the first consul showed so little desire to encourage, but whose real business resembled that of an accredited and privileged spy. These official persons were not only, by their instructions, directed to collect every possible information on commercial points, but also to furnish a plan of the ports of each district, with all the soundings, and to point out with what wind vessels could go out and enter with most ease, and at what draught of water the harbour might be entered by ships of burden. To add to the alarming character of such a set of agents, it was found that those invested with the office were military men and engineers.

Consuls thus nominated had reached Britain, but had not, in general, occupied the posts assigned to them, when the British Government, becoming informed of the duties they were expected to perform, announced to them, that any one who might repair to a British seaport under such a character, should be instantly ordered to quit the island. The secrecy with which these agents had been instructed to conduct themselves was so great, that one Fauvelet, to whom the office of commercial agent at Dublin had been assigned, and who had reached the place of his destination before the nature of the appointment was discovered, could not be found out by some persons who desired to make an affidavit before him as consul of France. It can be no wonder that the very worst impression was made on the public mind of Britain respecting the further projects of her late enemies, when it was evident that they availed themselves of the first moments of returning peace to procure, by an indirect and most suspicious course of proceeding, that species of information, which would be most useful to France, and most dangerous to Britain, in the event of a renewed war.

While these grievances and circumstances of suspicion agitated the English nation, the daily press, which alternately acts upon public opinion, and is reacted upon by it, was loud and vehement. The personal character of the chief consul was severely treated; his measures of self-aggrandisement arraigned, his aggressions on the liberty of France, of Italy, and especially of Switzerland, held up to open day; while every instance of petty vexation and oppression practised upon British commerce or British subjects, was quoted as expressing his deep resentment against the only country which possessed the will and the power to counteract his acquiring the universal dominion of Europe.

There was at this period in Britain a large party of French Royalists, who, declining to return to France, or falling under the exceptions to the amnesty, regarded Buonaparte as their personal enemy, as well as the main obstacle to the restoration of the Bourbons, to which, but for him only, the people of France seemed otherwise more disposed than at any time since the commencement of the Revolution. These gentlemen found an able and active advocate of their cause in Monsieur Peltier, an emigrant, a determined royalist, and a man of that ready wit and vivacity of talent which is peculiarly calculated for periodical writing. He had opposed the democrats during the early days of the Revolution, by a publication termed the "Acts of the Apostles;"[1] in which he held up to ridicule and execration the actions, pretensions, and principles of their leaders, with such success as induced Brissot to assert, that he had done more harm to the Republican cause than all the allied armies. At the present crisis, he commenced the publication of a weekly paper in London, in the French language, called *L'Ambigu*. The decoration at the top of the sheet was a head of Buonaparte, placed on the

[1] The "Actes des Apôtres," which appeared in 1790, and in the editing of which Peltier was assisted by Riverol, Champcenetz, and the Viscount Mirabeau, was principally directed against the measures of the Constituent Assembly.

body of a Sphinx. This ornament being objected to after the first two or three numbers, the Sphinx appeared with the neck truncated; but, being still decked with the consular emblems, continued to intimate emblematically the allusion at once to Egypt, and to the ambiguous character of the first consul. The columns of this paper were dedicated to the most severe attacks upon Buonaparte and the French Government; and as it was highly popular, from the general feelings of the English nation towards both, it was widely dispersed and generally read.

The torrent of satire and abuse poured forth from the English and Anglo-Gallican periodical press, was calculated deeply to annoy and irritate the person against whom it was chiefly aimed. In England we are so much accustomed to see characters the most unimpeachable, nay, the most venerable, assailed by the daily press, that we account the individual guilty of folly, who, if he be innocent of giving cause for the scandal, takes it to heart more than a passenger would mind the barking of a dog, that yelps at every passing sound. But this is a sentiment acquired partly by habit, partly by our knowledge, that unsubstantiated scandal of this sort makes no impression on the public mind. Such indifference cannot be expected on the part of foreigners, who, in this particular, resemble horses introduced from neighbouring counties into the precincts of forest districts, where they are liable to be stung into madness by a peculiar species of gadfly, to which the race bred in the country are from habit almost totally indifferent.

If it be thus with foreigners in general, it must be supposed that from natural impatience of censure, as well as rendered susceptible and irritable by his course of uninterrupted success, Napoleon Buonaparte must have winced under the animated and sustained attacks upon his person and government, which appeared in the English newspapers, and Peltier's *Ambigu*. He attached at all times, as we have already had occasion to remark, much importance to the influence of the press, which in Paris he had taken under his own especial superintendence, and for which he himself often condescended to compose or correct paragraphs. To be assailed, therefore, by the whole body of British newspapers, almost as numerous as their navy, seems to have provoked him to the extremity of his patience; and resentment of these attacks aggravated the same hostile sentiments against England, which, from causes of suspicion already mentioned, had begun to be engendered in the British public against France and her ruler.

Napoleon, in the meantime, endeavoured to answer in kind, and the columns of the *Moniteur* had many an angry and violent passage directed against England.[2] Answers, replies, and rejoinders passed rapidly across the Channel, inflaming and augmenting the hostile spirit, reciprocally entertained by the two countries against each other. But there was this great disadvantage on Buonaparte's side, that while the English might justly throw the blame of this scandalous warfare on the license of a free press, the chief consul could not transfer the responsibility of the attack on his side; because it was universally known that the French periodical publications being under the most severe regulations, nothing could appear in them except what had received the previous sanction of the government. Every attack upon England, therefore, which was published in the French papers, was held to express the personal sentiments of the chief consul, who thus, by destroying the freedom of the French press, had rendered himself answerable for every such license as it was permitted to take.

NOTE BY M. OTTO.
July 25.

It became speedily plain, that Buonaparte could reap no advantage from a contest in which he was to be the defendant in his own person, and to maintain a literary warfare with anonymous

[2] "I made the *Moniteur* the soul and life-blood of my government; it was the intermediate instrument of my communications with public opinion, both at home and abroad. Did any question arise respecting certain grand political combinations, or some delicate points of diplomacy? the objects were indirectly hinted at in the *Moniteur*. They instantly attracted universal attention, and became the topics of general investigation. The *Moniteur* has been reproached for the acrimony and virulence of its notes against the enemy: but before we condemn them, we are bound to take into consideration the benefits they may have produced, the anxiety with which they occasionally perplexed the enemy, the terror with which they struck a hesitating cabinet." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iv., p. 186.

antagonists. He had recourse, therefore, to a demand upon the British Government, and after various representations of milder import, caused his envoy, Monsieur Otto, to state in an official note the following distinct grievances: – First, the existence of a deep and continued system to injure the character of the first consul, and prejudice the effect of his public measures, through the medium of the press: Secondly, the permission of a part of the Princes of the House of Bourbon, and their adherents, to remain in England for the purpose, (it was alleged,) that they might hatch and encourage schemes against the life and government of the chief consul. It was therefore categorically demanded, 1st, That the British Government do put a stop to the publication of the abuse complained of, as affecting the head of the French Government. 2d, That the emigrants residing in Jersey be dismissed from England – that the bishops who had declined to resign their sees be also sent out of the country – that George Cadoudal be transported to Canada – that the Princes of the House of Bourbon be advised to repair to Warsaw, where the head of their family now resided – and, finally, that such emigrants who continued to wear the ancient badges and decorations of the French court, be also compelled to leave England. Lest the British ministers should plead, that the constitution of their country precluded them from gratifying the first consul in any of these demands, Monsieur Otto forestalled the objection, by reminding them that the Alien Act gave them full power to exclude any foreigners from Great Britain at their pleasure.[3]

To this peremptory mandate, Lord Hawkesbury,[4] then minister for foreign affairs, instructed the British agent, Mr. Merry, to make a reply, at once firm and conciliatory; avoiding the tone of pique and ill temper which is plainly to be traced in the French note, yet maintaining the dignity of the nation he represented. It was observed, that, if the French Government had reason to complain of the license of the English journals, the British Government had no less right to be dissatisfied with the retorts and recriminations which had been poured out from those of Paris; and that there was this remarkable feature of difference betwixt them, that the English Ministry neither had, could have, nor wished to have, any control over the freedom of the British press; whereas the *Moniteur*, in which the abuse of England had appeared, was the official organ of the French Government. But, finally, upon this point, the British Monarch, it was said, would make no concession to any foreign power, at the expense of the freedom of the press.[5] If what was published was libellous or actionable, the printers and publishers were open to punishment, and all reasonable facilities would be afforded for prosecuting them. To the demands so peremptorily urged, respecting the emigrants, Lord Hawkesbury replied, by special answers applying to the different classes, but summed up in the general argument, that his Majesty neither encouraged them in any scheme against the French Government, nor did he believe there were any such in existence; and that while these unfortunate princes and their followers lived in conformity to the laws of Great Britain, and without affording nations with whom she was at peace any valid or sufficient cause of complaint, his Majesty would feel it inconsistent with his dignity, his honour, and the common laws of hospitality, to deprive them of that protection, which individuals resident within the British dominions could only forfeit by their own misconduct.[6]

TRIAL OF PELTIER.

[3] Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 659.

[4] Afterwards Earl of Liverpool, and Prime Minister of England – who died early in 1827.

[5] "His Majesty cannot, and never will, in consequence of any representation or menace from a foreign power, make any concession which can be, in the smallest degree, dangerous to the liberty of the press, as secured by the constitution of the country – a liberty justly dear to every British subject." —*Annual Register*, vol. xlv., p. 664.

[6] "The French Government must have formed a most erroneous judgment of the disposition of the British nation, and of the character of its Government, if they have been taught to expect that any representation of a foreign power will ever induce them to a violation of those rights on which the liberties of the people of this country are founded." —*Ibid.*, p. 666.

To render these answers, being the only reply which an English Minister could have made to the demands of France, in some degree acceptable to Buonaparte, Peltier was brought to trial[7] for a libel against the first consul, at the instance of the Attorney-General. He was defended by Mr. Mackintosh, (now Sir James,)[8] in one of the most brilliant speeches ever made at bar or in forum, in which the jury were reminded, that every press on the continent was enslaved, from Palermo to Hamburgh, and that they were now to vindicate the right we had ever asserted, to speak of men both at home and abroad, not according to their greatness, but their crimes.

The defendant was found guilty; but his cause might be considered as triumphant.[9] Accordingly, every part of the proceedings gave offence to Buonaparte. He had not desired to be righted by the English law, but by a vigour beyond the law. The publicity of the trial, the wit and eloquence of the advocate, were ill calculated to soothe the feelings of Buonaparte, who knew human nature, and the character of his usurped power, too well, to suppose that public discussion could be of service to him.[10] He had demanded darkness, the English Government had answered by giving him light; he had wished, like those who are conscious of flaws in their conduct, to suppress all censure of his measures, and by Peltier's trial, the British ministers had made the investigation of them a point of legal necessity. The first consul felt the consciousness that he himself, rather than Peltier,[11] was tried before the British public, with a publicity which could not fail to blaze abroad the discussion. Far from conceiving himself obliged by the species of atonement which had been offered him, he deemed the offence of the original publication was greatly aggravated, and placed it now directly to the account of the English ministers, of whom he could never be made to understand, that they had afforded him the only remedy in their power.

The paragraphs hostile to England in the *Moniteur* were continued; an English paper called the *Argus*, conducted by Irish refugees, was printed at Paris, under permission of the Government, for the purpose of assailing Britain with additional abuse, while the fire was returned from the English side of the Channel, with double vehemence and tenfold success. These were ominous precursors to a state of peace, and more grounds of misunderstanding were daily added.

The new discussions related chiefly to the execution of the treaty of Amiens, in which the English Government showed no promptitude. Most of the French colonies, it is true, had been restored; but the Cape, and the other Batavian settlements, above all, the island of Malta, were still possessed by the British forces. At common law, if the expression may be used, England was bound instantly to redeem her engagement, by ceding these possessions, and thus fulfilling the articles of the treaty. In equity, she had a good defence; since in policy for herself and Europe, she was bound to decline the cession at all risks.

The recent acquisitions of France on the continent, afforded the plea of equity to which we have alluded. It was founded on the principle adopted at the treaty of Amiens, that Great Britain should, out of her conquests over the enemy's foreign settlements, retain so much as to counterbalance, in some measure, the power which France had acquired in Europe. This principle being once established, it followed that the compact at Amiens had reference to the then existing state of things; and since, after that period, France had extended her sway over Italy and Piedmont, England became thereby entitled to retain an additional compensation, in consequence of France's additional acquisitions.

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[7] The trial took place in the Court of King's Bench, Feb. 21, before Lord Ellenborough and a special jury.

[8] The Right Hon. Sir James Mackintosh, died May 30, 1832.

[9] He was never brought up to receive sentence, our quarrel with the French having soon afterwards come to an absolute rupture. [Peltier was a native of Nantes. On the restoration of the Bourbons, he returned to Paris, where he died in 1825.]

[10] "Thence the resentment which Buonaparte felt against England. 'Every wind which blows,' said he, 'from that direction, brings nothing but contempt and hatred against my person.' From that time he concluded that the peace could not benefit him; that it would not leave him sufficient facility to aggrandize his dominion externally, and would impede the extension of his internal power; that, moreover, our daily relations with England modified our political ideas and revived our thoughts of liberty." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 257.

[11] "When Napoleon was shown, at St. Helena, some numbers of *L'Ambigu*, he said, 'Ah! Peltier. He has been libelling me these twenty years: but I am very glad to get them.'" – O'Meara, vol. i., p. 385.

This was the true and simple position of the case; France had innovated upon the state of things which existed when the treaty was made, and England might, therefore, in justice, claim an equitable right to innovate upon the treaty itself, by refusing to make surrender of what had been promised in other and very different circumstances. Perhaps it had been better to fix upon this obvious principle, as the ground of declining to surrender such British conquests as were not yet given up, unless France consented to relinquish the power which she had usurped upon the continent. This, however, would have produced instant war; and the Ministers were naturally loth to abandon the prospect of prolonging the peace which had been so lately established, or to draw their pen through the treaty of Amiens, while the ink with which it was written was still moist. They yielded, therefore, in a great measure. The Cape of Good Hope and the Dutch colonies were restored, Alexandria was evacuated, and the Ministers confined their discussions with France to the island of Malta only; and, condescending still farther, declared themselves ready to concede even this last point of discussion, providing a sufficient guarantee should be obtained for this important citadel of the Mediterranean being retained in neutral hands. The Order itself was in no respect adequate to the purpose; and as to the proposed Neapolitan garrison, (none of the most trustworthy in any case,) France, by her encroachments in Italy, had become so near and so formidable a neighbour to the King of Naples, that, by a threat of invasion of his capital, she might have compelled him to deliver up Malta upon a very brief notice. All this was urged on the part of Britain. The French Ministry, on the other hand, pressed for literal execution of the treaty. After some diplomatic evasions had been resorted to, it appeared as if the cession could be no longer deferred, when a publication appeared in the *Moniteur* [Jan. 30, 1803] which roused to a high pitch the suspicions as well as the indignation of the British nation.

SEBASTIANI'S REPORT.

The publication alluded to was a report of General Sebastiani. This officer had been sent as the emissary of the first consul, to various Mahommedan courts in Asia and Africa, in all of which it seems to have been his object, not only to exalt the greatness of his master, but to misrepresent and degrade the character of England. He had visited Egypt, of which, with its fortresses, and the troops that defended them, he had made a complete survey. He then waited upon Djezzar Pacha, and gives a flattering account of his reception, and of the high esteem in which Djezzar held the first consul, whom he had so many reasons for wishing well to. At the Ionian Islands, he harangued the natives, and assured them of the protection of Buonaparte. The whole report is full of the most hostile expressions towards England, and accuses General Stuart of having encouraged the Turks to assassinate the writer. Wherever Sebastiani went, he states himself to have interfered in the factions and quarrels of the country; he inquired into its forces; renewed old intimacies, or made new ones with leading persons; enhanced his master's power, and was liberal in promises of French aid. He concludes, that a French army of six thousand men would be sufficient to conquer Egypt, and that the Ionian Islands were altogether attached to the French interest.[12]

The publication of this report, which seemed as if Buonaparte were blazoning forth to the world his unaltered determination to persist in his Eastern projects of colonization and conquest, would have rendered it an act of treason in the English Ministers, if, by the cession of Malta, they had put into his hand, or at least placed within his grasp, the readiest means of carrying into execution those gigantic schemes of ambition, which had for their ultimate, perhaps their most desired object, the destruction of the Indian commerce of Britain.

As it were by way of corollary to the gasconading journal of Sebastiani, an elaborate account of the forces, and natural advantages of France, was published at the same period, which, in order that there might be no doubt concerning the purpose of its appearance at this crisis, was summed up by

[12] For a copy of Sebastiani's report to the first consul, see Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 742.

the express conclusion, "that Britain was unable to contend with France single-handed."[13] This tone of defiance, officially adopted at such a moment, added not a little to the resentment of the English nation, not accustomed to decline a challenge or endure an insult.

The Court of Britain on the appearance of this Report on the State of France, together with that of Sebastiani, drawn up and subscribed by an official agent, containing insinuations totally void of foundation, and disclosing intrigues inconsistent with the preservation of peace, and the objects for which peace had been made, declared that the King would enter into no farther discussion on the subject of Malta, until his Majesty had received the most ample satisfaction for this new and singular aggression.[14]

While things were thus rapidly approaching to a rupture, the chief consul adopted the unusual resolution, of himself entering personally into conference with the British ambassador. He probably took this determination upon the same grounds which dictated his contempt of customary forms, in entering, or attempting to enter, into direct correspondence with the princes whom he had occasion to treat with. Such a deviation from the established mode of procedure seemed to mark his elevation above ordinary rules, and would afford him, he might think, an opportunity of bearing down the British ambassador's reasoning, by exhibiting one of those bursts of passion, to which he had been accustomed to see most men give way.

It would have been more prudent in Napoleon, to have left the conduct of the negotiation to Talleyrand.[15] A sovereign cannot enter in person upon such conferences, unless with the previous determination of adhering precisely and finally to whatever ultimatum he has to propose. He cannot, without a compromise of dignity, chaffer or capitulate, or even argue, and of course is incapable of wielding any of the usual, and almost indispensable weapons of negotiators. If it was Napoleon's expectation, by one stunning and emphatic declaration of his pleasure, to beat down all arguments, and confound all opposition, he would have done wisely to remember, that he was not now, as in other cases, a general upon a victorious field of battle, dictating terms to a defeated enemy; but was treating upon a footing of equality with Britain, the mistress of the seas, possessing strength as formidable as his own, though of a different character, and whose prince and people were far more likely to be incensed than intimidated by any menaces which his passion might throw out.

LORD WHITWORTH.

The character of the English ambassador was as unfavourable for the chief consul's probable purpose, as that of the nation he represented. Lord Whitworth was possessed of great experience and sagacity.[16] His integrity and honour were undoubted; and, with the highest degree of courage, he had a calm and collected disposition, admirably calculated to give him the advantage in any discussion with an antagonist of a fiery, impatient, and over-bearing temper.

We will make no apology for dwelling at unusual length on the conferences betwixt the first consul and Lord Whitworth, as they are strikingly illustrative of the character of Buonaparte, and were, in their consequences, decisive of his fate, and that of the world.

Their first interview of a political nature took place in the Tuileries, 17th February, 1803. Buonaparte, having announced that this meeting was for the purpose of "making his sentiments known to the King of England in a clear and authentic manner," proceeded to talk incessantly for

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[13] "Whatever success intrigues may experience in London, no other people will be involved in new combinations. The government says, with conscious truth, that England, single-handed, cannot maintain a struggle against France." —*View of the State of the Republic*, Feb. 22, 1803. See Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 760.

[14] See Declaration, dated Westminster, May 18, 1803; Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 742.

[15] "The conference with Lord Whitworth proved for me a lesson which altered my method for ever. From this moment I never treated officially of political affairs, but through the intervention of my minister for foreign affairs. He, at any rate, could give a positive and formal denial, which the sovereign could not do." – Napoleon, tom. iv., p. 156.

[16] Lord Whitworth had been, successively, – in 1786, minister plenipotentiary at Warsaw, – in 1788, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to St. Petersburgh, – and, in 1800, minister plenipotentiary to the court of Denmark.

the space of nearly two hours, not without considerable incoherence, his temper rising as he dwelt on the alleged causes of complaint which he preferred against England, though not so much or so incautiously as to make him drop the usual tone of courtesy to the ambassador.

He complained of the delay of the British in evacuating Alexandria and Malta; cutting short all discussion on the latter subject, by declaring he would as soon agree to Britain's possessing the suburb of St. Antoine as that island. He then referred to the abuse thrown upon him by the English papers, but more especially by those French journals published in London. He affirmed that Georges and other Chouan chiefs, whom he accused of designs against his life, received relief or shelter in England; and that two assassins had been apprehended in Normandy, sent over by the French emigrants to murder him. This, he said, would be publicly proved in a court of justice. From this point he diverged to Egypt, of which he affirmed he could make himself master whenever he had a mind; but that he considered it too paltry a stake to renew the war for. Yet, while on this subject, he suffered it to escape him, that the idea of recovering this favourite colony was only postponed, not abandoned. "Egypt," he said, "must sooner or later belong to France, either by the falling to pieces of the Turkish government, or in consequence of some agreement with the Porte."[17] In evidence of his peaceable intentions, he asked, what he should gain by going to war, since he had no means of acting offensively against England, except by a descent, of which he acknowledged the hazard in the strongest terms. The chances, he said, were a hundred to one against him; and yet he declared that the attempt should be made if he were now obliged to go to war. He extolled the power of both countries. The army of France, he said, should be soon recruited to four hundred and eighty thousand men; and the fleets of England were such as he could not propose to match within the space of ten years at least. United, the two countries might govern the world, would they but understand each other. Had he found, he said, the least cordiality on the part of England, she should have had indemnities assigned her upon the continent, treaties of commerce, all that she could wish or desire. But he confessed that his irritation increased daily, "since every gale that blew from England, brought nothing but enmity and hatred against him."

He then made an excursive digression, in which, taking a review of the nations of Europe, he contended that England could hope for assistance from none of them in a war with France. In the total result, he demanded the instant implement of the treaty of Amiens, and the suppression of the abuse in the English papers. War was the alternative.

During this excursive piece of declamation, which the first consul delivered with great rapidity, Lord Whitworth, notwithstanding the interview lasted two hours, had scarcely time to slide in a few words in reply or explanation. As he endeavoured to state the new grounds of mistrust which induced the King of England to demand more advantageous terms, in consequence of the accession of territory and influence which France had lately made, Napoleon interrupted him – "I suppose you mean Piedmont and Switzerland – they are trifling occurrences, which must have been foreseen while the negotiation was in dependence. You have no right to recur to them at this time of day." To the hint of indemnities which might be allotted to England out of the general spoil of Europe, if she would cultivate the friendship of Buonaparte, Lord Whitworth nobly answered, that the King of Britain's ambition led him to preserve what was his, not to acquire that which belonged to others. They parted with civility, but with a conviction on Lord Whitworth's part, that Buonaparte would never resign his claim to the possession of Malta.[18]

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[17] "If Buonaparte had wished for the maintenance of peace, he would sedulously have avoided giving umbrage and inquietude to England, with regard to its Indian possessions, and would have abstained from applauding the rhodomontades about the mission of Sebastiani into Syria and Turkey. His imprudent conversation with Lord Whitworth accelerated the rupture. I foresaw, from that time, that he would quickly pass from a certain degree of moderation, as chief of the government, to acts of exaggeration, violence, and even rage." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 259.

[18] See Extract of a Despatch from Lord Whitworth to Lord Hawkesbury, dated Paris, Feb. 17; Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 685.

March 8.

The British Ministry were of the same opinion; for a Message was sent down by his Majesty to the House of Commons, stating, that he had occasion for additional aid to enable him to defend his dominions, in case of an encroachment on the part of France. A reason was given, which injured the cause of the Ministers, by placing the vindication of their measures upon simulated grounds; – it was stated, that these apprehensions arose from "military preparations carrying on in the ports of France and Holland."[19] No such preparations had been complained of during the intercourse between the ministers of France and England, – in truth, none such existed to any considerable extent, – and in so far, the British ministers gave the advantage to the French, by not resting the cause of their country on the just and true grounds. All, however, were sensible of the real merits of the dispute, which were grounded on the grasping and inordinate ambition of the French ruler, and the sentiments of dislike and irritation with which he seemed to regard Great Britain.

The charge of the pretended naval preparations being triumphantly refuted by France, Talleyrand was next employed to place before Lord Whitworth the means which, in case of a rupture, France possessed of wounding England, not directly indeed, but through the sides of those states of Europe whom she would most wish to see, if not absolutely independent, yet unoppressed by military exactions. "It was *natural*," a note of this statesman asserted, "that Britain being armed in consequence of the King's message, France should arm also – that she should send an army into Holland – form an encampment on the frontiers of Hanover – continue to maintain troops in Switzerland – march others to the south of Italy, and, finally, form encampments upon the coast."[20] All these threats, excepting the last, referred to distant and to neutral nations, who were not alleged to have themselves given any cause of complaint to France; but who were now to be subjected to military occupation and exaction, because Britain desired to see them happy and independent, and because harassing and oppressing them must be in proportion unpleasing to her. It was an entirely new principle of warlike policy, which introduced the oppression of unoffending and neutral neighbours as a legitimate mode of carrying on war against a hostile power, against whom there was little possibility of using measures directly offensive.

Shortly after this note had been lodged, Buonaparte, incensed at the message of the King to Parliament, seems to have formed the scheme of bringing the protracted negotiations betwixt France and England to a point, in a time, place, and manner, equally extraordinary. At a public court held at the Tuileries, on the 13th March, the chief consul came up to Lord Whitworth in considerable agitation, and observed aloud, and within hearing of the circle, – "You are then determined on war?" – and, without attending to the disclamations of the English ambassador, proceeded, – "We have been at war for fifteen years – you are determined on hostility for fifteen years more – and you force me to it."[21] He then addressed Count Marcow and the Chevalier Azara – "The English wish for war; but if they draw the sword first, I will be the last to return it to the scabbard. They do not respect treaties, which henceforth we must cover with black crape."[22] He then again addressed Lord Whitworth – "To what purpose are these armaments? Against whom do you take these measures of precaution? I have not a single ship of the line in any port in France: But if you arm, I too will take up arms – if you fight, I will fight – you may destroy France, but you cannot intimidate her."

"We desire neither the one nor the other," answered Lord Whitworth, calmly: "We desire to live with her on terms of good intelligence."

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[19] Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 646.

[20] Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 697.

[21] "Nous avons," said he, "déjà fait la guerre pendant quinze ans." As he seemed to wait for an answer, I observed only, "C'en est déjà trop." – "Mais," said he, "vous voulez la faire encore quinze années; et vous m'y forcez." – Lord Whitworth to Lord Hawkesbury; see Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 696.

[22] "Ils ne respectent pas les traités: il faut dorénavant les couvrir de crêpe noir."

"You must respect treaties, then," said Buonaparte, sternly. "Woe to those by whom they are not respected! They will be accountable for the consequences to all Europe."

So saying, and repeating his last remark twice over, he retired from the levee, leaving the whole circle surprised at the want of decency and dignity which had given rise to such a scene.[23]

This remarkable explosion may be easily explained, if we refer it entirely to the impatience of a fiery temper, rendered, by the most extraordinary train of success, morbidly sensitive to any obstacle which interfered with a favourite plan; and, doubtless, it is not the least evil of arbitrary power, that he who possesses it is naturally tempted to mix up his own feelings of anger, revenge, or mortification, in affairs which ought to be treated under the most calm and impartial reference to the public good exclusively. But it has been averred by those who had best opportunity to know Buonaparte, that the fits of violent passion which he sometimes displayed, were less the bursts of unrepressed and constitutional irritability, than means previously calculated upon to intimidate and astound those with whom he was treating at the time. There may, therefore, have been policy amid the first consul's indignation, and he may have recollected, that the dashing to pieces Cobentzel's china jar in the violent scene which preceded the signing of the treaty of Campo Formio,[24] was completely successful in its issue. But the condition of Britain was very different from that of Austria, and he might have broken all the porcelain at St. Cloud without making the slightest impression on the equanimity of Lord Whitworth. This "angry parle," therefore, went for nothing, unless in so far as it was considered as cutting off the faint remaining hope of peace, and expressing the violent and obstinate temper of the individual, upon whose pleasure, whether originating in judgment or caprice, the fate of Europe at this important crisis unhappily depended. In England, the interview at the Tuileries, where Britain was held to be insulted in the person of her ambassador, and that in the presence of the representatives of all Europe, greatly augmented the general spirit of resentment.[25]

Talleyrand, to whom Lord Whitworth applied for an explanation of the scene which had occurred, only answered, that the first consul, publicly affronted, as he conceived himself, desired to exculpate himself in presence of the ministers of all the powers of Europe.[26] The question of peace or war came now to turn on the subject of Malta. The retention of this fortress by the English could infer no danger to France; whereas, if parted with by them under an insecure guarantee, the great probability of its falling into the hands of France, was a subject of the most legitimate jealousy to Britain, who must always have regarded the occupation of Malta as a preliminary step to the recapture of Egypt. There seemed policy, therefore, in Napoleon's conceding this point, and obtaining for France that respite, which, while it regained her colonies and recruited her commerce, would have afforded her the means of renewing a navy, which had been almost totally destroyed during the war, and consequently of engaging England, at some future and propitious time, on the element which she called peculiarly her own. It was accordingly supposed to be Talleyrand's opinion, that, by giving way to England on the subject of Malta, Napoleon ought to lull her suspicions to sleep.

Yet there were strong reasons, besides the military character of Buonaparte, which might induce the first consul to break off negotiation. His empire was founded on the general opinion entertained of his inflexibility of purpose, and of his unvaried success, alike in political objects as in the field of battle. Were he to concede the principle which England now contested with him in the face of Europe,

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[23] "The ambassador made a respectful bow, and gave no reply. The first consul left that part of the saloon; but whether he had been a little heated by this explosion of ill-humour, or from some other cause, he ceased his round, and withdrew to his own apartments. Madame Buonaparte followed; and in an instant the saloon was cleared of company." – Savary, tom. i., p. 307.

[24] See *ante*, vol. ii., pp. 175, 176. "It is to be remarked, that all this passed loud enough to be heard by two hundred people who were present; and I am persuaded that there was not a single person who did not feel the impropriety of the first consul's conduct, and the total want of dignity, as well as of decency, on the occasion." – Lord Whitworth.

[25] "It is utterly incorrect, that any thing occurred in the course of our interview which was not in conformity with the common rules of decorum. Lord Whitworth himself, after our conference, being in company with other ambassadors, expressed himself perfectly satisfied, and added, that he had no doubt all things would be satisfactorily settled." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iv., p. 157.

[26] For a copy of Napoleon's Instructions to Talleyrand, see Appendix to this Volume, No. I.

it would have in a certain degree derogated from the pre-eminence of the situation he claimed, as autocrat of the civilized world. In that character he could not recede an inch from pretensions which he had once asserted. To have allowed that his encroachment on Switzerland and Piedmont rendered it necessary that he should grant a compensation to England, by consenting to her retention of Malta, would have been to grant that Britain had still a right to interfere in the affairs of the continent, and to point her out to nations disposed to throw off the French yoke, as a power to whose mediation he still owed some deference. These reasons were not without force in themselves, and, joined to the natural impetuosity of Buonaparte's temper, irritated and stung by the attacks in the English papers, had their weight probably in inducing him to give way to that sally of resentment, by which he endeavoured to cut short the debate, as he would have brought up his guard in person to decide the fate of a long-disputed action.

Some lingering and hopeless attempts were made to carry on negotiations. The English Ministry lowered their claim of retaining Malta in perpetuity to their right of holding it for ten years. Buonaparte, on the other hand, would listen to no modification of the treaty of Amiens, but offered, as the guarantee afforded by the occupation of Neapolitan troops was objected to, that the garrison should consist of Russians or Austrians. To this proposal Britain would not accede. Lord Whitworth left Paris, and, on the 18th May, 1803, Britain declared war against France.

Before we proceed to detail the history of this eventful struggle, we must cast our eyes backwards, and review some events of importance which had happened in France since the conclusion of the treaty of Amiens.

CHAPTER XXVI

St. Domingo – The Negroes split into parties under different Chiefs – Toussaint L'Ouverture the most distinguished of these – Appoints a Consular Government – France sends an Expedition against St. Domingo, under General Leclerc, in December 1801 – Toussaint submits – He is sent to France, where he dies – The French are assaulted by the Negroes – Leclerc is succeeded by Rochambeau – The French finally obliged to capitulate to an English squadron – Buonaparte's scheme to consolidate his power – The Consular Guard augmented – Legion of Honour – Opposition formed against the Consular Government – Application to the Count de Provence (Louis XVIII.)

When the treaty of Amiens appeared to have restored peace to Europe, one of Buonaparte's first enterprises was to attempt the recovery of the French possessions in the large, rich, and valuable colony of St. Domingo, the disasters of which island form a terrible episode in the history of the war.

The convulsions of the French Revolution had reached St. Domingo, and, catching like fire to combustibles, had bred a violent feud between the white people in the island, and the mulattoes, the latter of whom demanded to be admitted into the privileges and immunities of the former; the newly established rights of men, as they alleged, having no reference to the distinction of colour. While the whites and the people of colour were thus engaged in a civil war, the negro slaves, the most oppressed and most numerous class of the population, rose against both parties, and rendered the whole island one scene of bloodshed and conflagration. The few planters who remained invited the support of the British arms, which easily effected a temporary conquest. But the European soldiery perished so fast through the influence of the climate, that, in 1798, the English were glad to abandon an island which had proved the grave of so many of her best and bravest, who had fallen without a wound, and void of renown.

TOUSSAINT L'OUVERTURE.

The negroes, left to themselves, divided into different parties, who submitted to the authority of chiefs more or less independent of each other, many of whom displayed considerable talent. Of these, the principal leader was Toussaint L'Ouverture, who, after waging war like a savage, appears to have used the power which victory procured him with much political skill. Although himself a negro, he had the sagacity to perceive how important it was for the civilisation of his subjects, that they should not be deprived of the opportunities of knowledge, and examples of industry, afforded them by the white people. He, therefore, protected and encouraged the latter, and established, as an equitable regulation, that the blacks, now freemen, should nevertheless continue to labour the plantations of the white colonists, while the produce of the estate should be divided in certain proportions betwixt the white proprietor and the sable cultivator.

The least transgressions of these regulations he punished with African ferocity. On one occasion, a white female, the owner of a plantation, had been murdered by the negroes by whom it was laboured, and who had formerly been her slaves. Toussaint marched to the spot at the head of a party of his horse-guards, collected the negroes belonging to the plantation, and surrounded them with his black cavalry, who, after a very brief inquiry, received orders to charge and cut them to pieces; of which order our informant witnessed the execution. His unrelenting rigour, joined to his natural sagacity, soon raised Toussaint to the chief command of the island; and he availed himself of the maritime peace, to consolidate his authority by establishing a constitution on the model most lately approved of in France, which being that of the year Eight, consisted of a consular government. Toussaint failed not, of course, to assume the supreme government to himself, with power to name his

successor. The whole was a parody on the procedure of Buonaparte, which, doubtless, the latter was not highly pleased with;[27] for there are many cases in which an imitation by others, of the conduct we ourselves have held, is a matter not of compliment, but of the most severe satire. The constitution of St. Domingo was instantly put in force, although, with an ostensible deference to France, the sanction of her Government had been ceremoniously required. It was evident that the African, though not unwilling to acknowledge some nominal degree of sovereignty on the part of France, was determined to retain in his own hands the effective government of the colony. But this in no respect consisted with the plans of Buonaparte, who was impatient to restore to France those possessions of which the British naval superiority had so long deprived her – colonies, shipping, and commerce.[28]

A powerful expedition was fitted out at the harbours of Brest, L'Orient, and Rochefort, destined to restore St. Domingo in full subjection to the French empire. The fleet amounted to thirty-four ships bearing forty guns and upwards, with more than twenty frigates and smaller armed vessels. They had on board above twenty thousand men, and General Leclerc, the brother-in-law of the first consul, was named commander-in-chief of the expedition, having a staff composed of officers of acknowledged skill and bravery.

It is said that Buonaparte had the art to employ a considerable proportion of the troops which composed the late army of the Rhine, in this distant expedition to an insalubrious climate.[29] But he would not permit it to be supposed, that there was the least danger; and he exercised an act of family authority on the subject, to prove that such were his real sentiments. His sister, the beautiful Pauline, afterwards the wife of Prince Borghese, showed the utmost reluctance to accompany her present husband, General Leclerc, upon the expedition, and only went on board when actually compelled to do so by the positive orders of the first consul, who, although she was his favourite sister, was yet better contented that she should share the general risk, than, by remaining behind, leave it to be inferred that he himself augured a disastrous conclusion to the expedition.

The armament set sail on the 14th of December, 1801, while an English squadron of observation, uncertain of their purpose, waited upon and watched their progress to the West Indies. The French fleet presented themselves before Cape François, on the 29th of January, 1802.

Toussaint, summoned to surrender, seemed at first inclined to come to an agreement, terrified probably by the great force of the expedition, which time and the climate could alone afford the negroes any chance of resisting. A letter was delivered to him from the first consul, expressing esteem for his person; and General Leclerc offered him the most favourable terms, together with the situation of lieutenant-governor. Ultimately, however, Toussaint could not make up his mind to trust the French, and he determined upon resistance, which he managed with considerable skill. Nevertheless, the well-concerted military operations of the whites soon overpowered for the present the resistance of Toussaint and his followers. Chief after chief surrendered, and submitted themselves to General Leclerc. At length, Toussaint L'Ouverture himself seems to have despaired of being able to make further or more effectual resistance. He made his formal submission, and received and accepted

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[27] "To give an idea of the indignation which the first consul must have felt, it may suffice to mention, that Toussaint not only assumed authority over the colony during his life, but invested himself with the right of naming his successor; and pretended to hold his authority, not from the mother-country, but from a *soi-disant* colonial assembly which he had created." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. i., p. 203.

[28] "The party of the colonists was very powerful in Paris: public opinion required the possession of St. Domingo. On the other hand, the first consul was not sorry to dissipate the apprehensions of the English, by sending 15,000 men to St. Domingo. These 15,000 men would have succeeded, had it not been for the yellow fever. If Toussaint, Dessalines, and Christophe had chosen to submit, they would have secured their liberty, rank, and fortune, as well as those of the people of their colour; the freedom of the blacks would have been securely confirmed." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. ii., p. 218.

[29] "The first consul ardently seized the happy opportunity of sending away a great number of officers, formed in the school of Moreau, whose reputation pained him, and whose influence with the army, if not a subject of alarm, was at least to him one of restraint and inquietude. 'Well,' said Buonaparte to me one day, 'your Jacobins malignantly say, that they are the soldiers and friends of Moreau whom I am sending to perish at St. Domingo; they are grumbling maniacs; let them talk on.'" – Fouché, tom. i., p. 217.

Leclerc's pardon, under the condition that he should retire to a plantation at Gonaives, and never leave it without permission of the commander-in-chief.

DEATH OF TOUSSAINT.

The French had not long had possession of the colony, ere they discovered, or supposed they had discovered, symptoms of a conspiracy amongst the negroes, and Toussaint was, on very slight grounds, accused as encouraging a revolt. Under this allegation, the only proof of which was a letter, capable of an innocent interpretation, the unfortunate chief was seized upon, with his whole family, and put on board of a vessel bound to France. Nothing official was ever learned concerning his fate, farther than that he was imprisoned in the Castle of Joux, in Franche Compté, where the unhappy African fell a victim to the severity of an Alpine climate,[30] to which he was unaccustomed, and the privations of a close confinement. The deed has been often quoted and referred to as one of the worst actions of Buonaparte, who ought, if not in justice, in generosity at least, to have had compassion on the man, whose fortunes bore, in many respects, a strong similarity to his own. It afforded but too strong a proof, that though humanity was often in Napoleon's mouth, and sometimes displayed in his actions, yet its maxims were seldom found sufficient to protect those whom he disliked or feared, from the fate which tyranny most willingly assigns to its victims, that of being silently removed from the living world, and enclosed in their prison as in a tomb, from which no complaints can be heard, and where they are to await the slow approach of death, like men who are literally buried alive.

The perfidy with which the French had conducted themselves towards Toussaint, was visited by early vengeance. That scourge of Europeans, the yellow fever, broke out among their troops, and in an incredible short space of time, swept off General Leclerc,[31] with many of his best officers and bravest soldiers. The negroes, incensed at the conduct of the governor towards Toussaint, and encouraged by the sickly condition of the French army, rose upon them in every quarter. A species of war ensued, of which we are thankful it is not our task to trace the deplorable and ghastly particulars. The cruelty which was perhaps to be expected in the savage Africans, just broke loose from the bondage of slavery, communicated itself to the civilized French. If the former tore out their prisoners' eyes with cork-screws, the latter drowned their captives by hundreds, which imitation of Carrier's republican baptism they called "deportation into the sea." On other occasions, numerous bodies of negroes were confined in hulks, and there smothered to death with the fumes of lighted sulphur. The issue of this hellish warfare was, that the cruelty of the French enraged, instead of terrifying their savage antagonists; and at length, that the numbers of the former, diminished by disease and constant skirmishing, became unequal to the defence even of the garrison towns of the island, much more so to the task of reconquering it. General Rochambeau, who succeeded Leclerc as commander-in-chief, was finally obliged to save the poor wreck of that fine army, by submitting at discretion to an English squadron, 1st December 1803. Thus was the richest colony in the West Indies finally lost to France.[32] Remaining entirely in the possession of the black population, St. Domingo will show, in process of

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[30] Anxiety, age, and a climate too severe for his constitution, soon put an end to his days. He died on April 27, 1803, after a captivity of ten months. His mysterious fate excited great interest – witness the noble sonnet of Wordsworth: —"Toussaint! the most unhappy man of men!Whether the all-cheering sun be free to shedHis beams around thee, or thou rest thy headPillow'd in some dark dungeon's noisome den —O, miserable chieftain! where and whenWilt thou find patience? – Yet die not; do thouWear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,Live and take comfort. Thou hast left behindPowers that will work for thee – Air, Earth, and Skies;There's not a breathing of the common windThat will forget thee; thou hast great allies;Thy friends are Exultations, Agonies,And Love, and Man's unconquerable Mind."

[31] "Leclerc was an officer of the first merit, equally skilful in the labours of the cabinet and in the manœuvres of the field of battle: he had served in the campaigns of 1796 and 1797 as adjutant-general to Napoleon; and in that of 1799 as a general of division under Moreau. He commanded at the battle of Freisingen, where he defeated the Archduke Ferdinand; he led into Spain an army of observation, of 20,000 men, intended to act against Portugal; finally, in this expedition of St. Domingo, he displayed great talent and activity." – Napoleon, tom. i., p. 211.

[32] "I have to reproach myself with the attempt made upon the colony during the Consulship. The design of reducing it by force was a great error. I ought to have been satisfied with governing it through the medium of Toussaint." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iv., p. 171.

time, how far the natives of Africa, having European civilisation within their reach, are capable of forming a state, governed by the usual rules of polity.

COURT OF THE TUILERIES.

While Buonaparte made these strong efforts for repossessing France in this fine colony, it was not to be supposed that he was neglecting the establishment of his own power upon a more firm basis. His present situation was – like every other in life – considerably short of what he could have desired, though so infinitely superior to all that his most unreasonable wishes could at one time have aspired to. He had all the real power of royalty, and, since the settlement of his authority for life, he had daily assumed more of the pomp and circumstance with which sovereignty is usually invested. The Tuileries were once more surrounded with guards without, and filled by levees within. The ceremonial of a court was revived, and Buonaparte, judging of mankind with accuracy, neglected no minute observance by which the princes of the earth are wont to enforce their authority. Still there remained much to be done. He held the sovereignty only in the nature of a life-rent. He could, indeed, dispose of it by will, but the last wills even of kings have been frequently set aside; and, at any rate, the privilege comes short of that belonging to an hereditary crown, which descends, by the right of blood, from one possessor to another, so that, in one sense, it may be said to confer on the dynasty a species of immortality. Buonaparte knew also the virtue of names. The title of chief consul did not necessarily infer sovereign rights – it might signify every thing, or it might signify nothing – in common language, it inferred alike one of the annual executive governors of the Roman Republic, whose *fasces* swayed the world, or the petty resident who presides over commercial affairs in a foreign seaport. There were no precise ideas of power or rights necessarily and unalienably connected with it. Besides, Buonaparte had other objections to his present title of dignity. The title of first consul implied, that there were two others, – far, indeed, from being co-ordinate with Napoleon, but yet who occupied a higher rank on the steps of the throne, and approached his person more nearly than he could have desired. Again, the word reminded the hearer, even by the new mode of its application, that it belonged to a government of recent establishment, and of revolutionary origin, and Napoleon did not wish to present such ideas to the public mind; since that which was but lately erected might be easily destroyed, and that which last arose out of the revolutionary cauldron might, like the phantoms which had preceded it, give place in its turn to an apparition more potent. Policy seemed to recommend to him, to have recourse to the ancient model which Europe had been long accustomed to reverence; to adopt the form of government best known and longest established through the greater part of the world; and, assuming the title and rights of a monarch, to take his place among the ancient and recognised authorities of Europe.

It was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution in this innovation, which, whenever accomplished, must necessarily involve the French people in the notable inconsistency, of having murdered the descendant of their old princes, committed a thousand crimes, and suffered under a mass of misery, merely because they were resolved not to permit the existence of that crown, which was now to be placed on the head of a soldier of fortune. Before, therefore, he could venture on this bold measure, in which, were it but for very shame's sake, he must be certain of great opposition, Buonaparte endeavoured, by every means in his power, to strengthen himself in his government.

The army was carefully new-modelled, so as to make it as much as possible his own; and the French soldiers, who regarded the power of Buonaparte as the fruit of their own victories, were in general devoted to his cause, notwithstanding the fame of Moreau, to whom a certain part of their number still adhered. The consular guard, a highly privileged body of select forces, was augmented to the number of six thousand men. These formidable legions, which included troops of every species of arms, had been gradually formed and increased upon the plan of the corps of guides which Buonaparte introduced during the first Italian campaigns, for immediate attendance on his person and for preventing such accidents as once or twice had like to have befallen him, by unexpected

encounters with flying parties of the enemy. But the guards, as now increased in numbers, had a duty much more extended. They were chosen men, taught to consider themselves as superior to the rest of the army, and enjoying advantages in pay and privileges. When the other troops were subject to privations, care was taken that the guards should experience as little of them as possible, and that by every possible exertion they should be kept in the highest degree of readiness for action. They were only employed upon service of the utmost importance, and seldom in the beginning of an engagement, when they remained in reserve under the eye of Napoleon himself. It was usually by means of his guard that the final and decisive exertion was made which marked Buonaparte's tactics, and so often achieved victory at the very crisis when it seemed inclining to the enemy. Regarding themselves as considerably superior to the other soldiers, and accustomed also to be under Napoleon's immediate command, his guards were devotedly attached to him; and a body of troops of such high character might be considered as a formidable bulwark around the throne which he meditated ascending.

LEGION OF HONOUR.

The attachment of these chosen legions, and of his soldiers in general, formed the foundation of Buonaparte's power, who, of all sovereigns that ever mounted to authority, might be said to reign by dint of victory and of his sword. But he surrounded himself by another species of partisans. The Legion of Honour was destined to form a distinct and particular class of privileged individuals, whom, by honours and bounties bestowed on them, he resolved to bind to his own interest.

This institution, which attained considerable political importance, originated in the custom which Napoleon had early introduced, of conferring on soldiers, of whatever rank, a sword, fusee, or other military weapon, in the name of the state, as acknowledging and commemorating some act of peculiar gallantry. The influence of such public rewards was of course very great. They encouraged those who had received them to make every effort to preserve the character which they had thus gained, while they awakened the emulation of hundreds and thousands who desired similar marks of distinction. Buonaparte now formed the project of embodying the persons who had merited such rewards into an association, similar in many respects to those orders, or brotherhoods of chivalry, with which, during the middle ages, the feudal sovereigns of Europe surrounded themselves, and which subsist to this day, though in a changed and modified form. These, however, have been uniformly created on the feudal principles, and the honour they confer limited, or supposed to be limited, to persons of some rank and condition: but the scheme of Buonaparte was to extend this species of honourable distinction through all ranks, in the quality proper to each, as medals to be distributed among various classes of the community are struck upon metals of different value, but are all stamped with the same dye.[33] The outlines of the institution were these: —

The Legion of Honour was to consist of a great council of administration and fifteen cohorts, each of which was to have its own separate headquarters, in some distinguished town of the Republic. The council of administration was to consist of the three consuls, and four other members; a senator, namely, a member of the Legislative Body, a member of the Tribunate, and one of the Council of State, each to be chosen by the body to which he belonged. The order might be acquired by distinguished merit, either of a civil or a military nature; and various rules were laid down for the mode of selecting the members. The first consul was, in right of his office, captain-general of the legion, and president of the council of administration. Every cohort was to consist of seven grand officers, twenty commanders, thirty subaltern officers, and three hundred and fifty legionaries. Their nomination was for life, and their appointments considerable. The grand officers enjoyed a yearly

[33] "If the Legion of Honour were not the recompense of *civil* as well as *military* services, it would cease to be the *Legion of Honour*. It would be a strange piece of presumption, indeed, in the military to pretend that honours should be paid to them only. Soldiers who knew not how to read or write, were proud of bearing, in recompense for the blood they had shed, the same decoration as was given to distinguished talents in civil life; and, on the other hand, the latter attached a greater value to this reward of their labours, because it was the decoration of the brave. The Legion of Honour was the property of every one who was an honour to his country, stood at the head of his profession, and contributed to the national prosperity and glory." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. ii., p. 145.

pension of 5000 francs; the commanders, 2500; the officers, 1000 francs; the privates, or legionaries, 250. They were to swear upon their honour to defend the government of France, and maintain the inviolability of her empire; to combat, by every lawful means, against the re-establishment of the feudal institutions; and to concur in maintaining the principles of liberty and equality.

Notwithstanding these last words, containing, when properly understood, the highest political and moral truth, but employed in France originally to cover the most abominable cruelties, and used more lately as mere words of course, the friends of liberty were not to be blinded, regarding the purpose of this new institution. Their number was now much limited; but amidst their weakness they had listened to the lessons of prudence and experience, and abandoning these high-swoln, illusory, and absurd pretensions, which had created such general disturbance, seem to have set themselves seriously, and at the same time moderately to work, to protect the cause of practical and useful freedom, by such resistance as the constitution still permitted them to offer, by means of the Tribunate and the Legislative Body.

OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT.

Among the statesmen who associated to form an Opposition, which, on the principle of the constitutional Opposition of England, were to act towards the executive government rather as to an erring friend, whom they desired to put right, than as an enemy, whom they meant to destroy, were Benjamin Constant, early distinguished by talent and eloquence, Chenier, author of the hymn of the Marseilloise, Savoye-Rollin, Chauvelin, and others, among whose names that of Carnot was most distinguished. These statesmen had learned apparently, that it is better in human affairs to aim at that minor degree of good which is practicable, than to aspire to a perfection which is unattainable. In the opinion of most of them, the government of Buonaparte was a necessary evil, without which, or something of the same strength, to control the factions by which she was torn to pieces, France must have continued to be a prey to a succession of such anarchical governments as had already almost ruined her. They, therefore, entertained none of the usual views of conspirators. They considered the country as in the condition of a wounded warrior, compelled for a short time to lay aside her privileges, as he his armour; but they hoped, when France had renewed her strength and spirit by an interval of repose, they might see her, under better auspices than before, renew and assert her claims to be free from military law. Meantime, they held it their duty, professing, at the same time, the highest respect to the government and its head, the first consul, to keep alive as far as was permitted the spirit of the country, and oppose the encroachments of its ruler. They were not long allowed to follow the practical and useful path which they had sketched out; but the French debates were never so decently or respectably conducted as during this period.

The opposition, as they may be called, had not objected to the reappointment of Buonaparte to the Consulate for life. Probably they were reluctant to have the appearance of giving him personal offence, were aware they would be too feebly supported, and were sensible, that struggling for a point which could not be attained, was unlikely to lead to any good practical results. The institution of the Legion of Honour offered a better chance to try their new opposition tactics.

Rœderer, the orator by whom the measure was proposed to the Tribunate, endeavoured to place it in the most favourable light. It was founded, he said, upon the eighty-seventh article of the Constitutional Declaration, which provided that national recompenses should be conferred on those soldiers who had distinguished themselves in their country's service. He represented the proposed order as a moral institution, calculated to raise to the highest the patriotism and gallantry of the French people. It was a coin, he said, of a value different from, and far more precious than that which was issued from the treasury – a treasure of a quality which could not be debased, and of a quantity which was inexhaustible, since the mine consisted in the national sense of honour.

To this specious argument, it was replied by Rollin and others, that the law was of a nature dangerous to public liberty. It was an abuse, they said, of the constitutional article, on which it was

alleged to be founded, since it exhausted at once, by the creation of a numerous corps, the stock of rewards which the article referred to held in frugal reserve, to recompense great actions as they should occur. If everything was given to remunerate merits which had been already ascertained, what stock, it was asked, remained for compensating future actions of gallantry, excepting the chance of a tardy admission into the corps as vacancies should occur? But especially it was pleaded, that the establishment of a military body, distinguished by high privileges and considerable pay, yet distinct and differing from all the other national forces, was a direct violation of the sacred principles of equality. Some reprobated the intermixture of the civil officers of the state in a military institution. Others were of opinion that the oath proposed to be taken was superfluous, if not ridiculous; since, how could the members of the Legion of Honour be more bound to serve the state, or watch over the constitution, than any other citizens; or, in what manner was it proposed they should exert themselves for that purpose? Other arguments were urged; but that which all felt to be the most cogent, was rather understood than even hinted at. This was the immense additional strength which the first consul must attain, by having at his command the distribution of the new honours, and being thus enabled to form a body of satellites entirely dependent upon himself, and carefully selected from the bravest and ablest within the realm.

The institution of the Legion of Honour was at length carried in the Tribunate, by a majority of fifty-six voices over thirty-eight, and sanctioned in the Legislative Body by one hundred and sixty-six over an hundred and ten. The strong divisions of the opposition on this trying question, showed high spirit in those who composed that party; but they were placed in a situation so insulated and separated from the public, so utterly deprived of all constitutional guarantees for the protection of freedom, that their resistance, however honourable to themselves, was totally ineffectual, and without advantage to the nation.[34]

PROPOSITION TO LOUIS XVIII.

Meanwhile, Buonaparte was deeply engaged in intrigues of a different character, by means of which he hoped to place the sovereign authority which he had acquired, on a footing less anomalous, and more corresponding with that of the other monarchs in Europe, than it was at present. For this purpose an overture was made by the Prussian minister Haugwitz, through the medium of M. de Meyer, President of the Regency of Warsaw, proposing to the Comte de Provence (since Louis XVIII.,) that he should resign his rights to the crown of France to the successful general who occupied the throne, in which case the exiled princes were to be invested with dominions in Italy, and restored to a brilliant existence. The answer of Louis was marked at once by moderation, sense, and that firmness of character which corresponded with his illustrious birth and high pretensions. "I do not confound Monsieur Buonaparte," said the exiled monarch, "with those who have preceded him; I esteem his bravery and military talents; I owe him good-will for many acts of his government, for the good which is done to my people I will always esteem done to me. But he is mistaken if he thinks that my rights can be made the subjects of bargain and composition. The very step he is now adopting would go to establish them, could they be otherwise called in question. I know not what may be the designs of God for myself and my family, but I am not ignorant of the duties imposed on me by the rank in which it was his pleasure I should be born. As a Christian, I will fulfil those duties to my last breath. As a descendant of Saint Louis, I will know by his example how to respect myself, even were I in fetters. As the successor of Francis the First, I will at least have it to say with him, 'We have lost all excepting our honour!'"

Such is the account which has been uniformly given by the Princes of the House of Bourbon, concerning this communication, which is said to have taken place on the 26th February, 1803.[35]

[34] Montgaillard, tom. v., p. 573.

[35] Montgaillard, tom. v., p. 5.

Buonaparte has, indeed, denied that he was accessory to any such transaction, and has said truly enough, that an endeavour to acquire an interest in the Bourbon's title by compromise, would have been an admission on his part that his own, flowing, as he alleged, from the people, was imperfect, and needed repairs. Therefore, he denied having taken any step which could, in its consequences, have inferred such an admission.

But, in the first place, it is not to be supposed that such a treaty would have been published by the Bourbon family, unless it had been proposed by Meyer; and it is equally unlikely that either Haugwitz or Meyer would have ventured on such a negotiation, excepting at the instigation of Buonaparte, who alone could make good the terms proposed on the one side, or derive advantage from the concessions stipulated on the other. Secondly, without stopping to inquire how far the title which Buonaparte pretended to the supreme authority, was of a character incapable of being improved by a cession of the Comte de Provence's rights in his favour, it would still have continued an object of great political consequence to have obtained a surrender of the claims of the House of Bourbon, which were even yet acknowledged by a very considerable party within the kingdom. It was, therefore, worth while to venture upon a negotiation which might have had the most important results, although, when it proved fruitless, we can see strong reasons for Napoleon concealing and disowning his accession to a step, which might be construed as implying some sense of deficiency of his own title, and some degree of recognition of that of the exiled prince.

It may be remarked, that, up to this period, Napoleon had manifested no particular spleen towards the family of Bourbon. On the contrary, he had treated their followers with lenity, and spoken with decency of their own claims. But the rejection of the treaty with *Monsieur* Buonaparte, however moderately worded, has been reasonably supposed to have had a deep effect on his mind, and may have been one remote cause of a tragedy, for which it is impossible to find an adequate one – the murder, namely, of the Duke d'Enghien. But, before we approach this melancholy part of Napoleon's history, it is proper to trace the events which succeeded the renewal of the war.

CHAPTER XXVII

Renewal of the War – England lays an Embargo on French Vessels – Napoleon retaliates by detaining British Subjects – Effects of this unprecedented Measure – Hanover and other places occupied by the French – Scheme of Invasion renewed – Napoleon's Preparations – Defensive Measures of England.

The bloody war which succeeded the short peace of Amiens, originated, to use the words of the satirist, in high words, jealousies, and fears. There was no special or determinate cause of quarrel, which could be removed by explanation, apology, or concession.

The English nation were jealous, and from the strides which Buonaparte had made towards universal power, not jealous without reason, of the farther purposes of the French ruler, and demanded guarantees against the encroachments which they apprehended; and such guarantees he deemed it beneath his dignity to grant. The discussion of these adverse claims had been unusually violent and intemperate; and as Buonaparte conceived the English nation to be his personal enemies, so they, on the other hand, began to regard his power as totally incompatible with the peace of Europe, and independence of Britain. To Napoleon, the English people, tradesmen and shopkeepers as he chose to qualify them, seemed assuming a consequence in Europe, which was, he conceived, far beyond their due. He was affected by feelings similar to those with which Haman beheld Mordecai sitting at the King's gate; – all things availing him nothing, while Britain held such a high rank among the nations, without deigning to do him reverence or worship. The English people, on the other hand, regarded him as the haughty and proud oppressor who had the will at least, if not the power, to root Britain out from among the nations, and reduce them to a state of ignominy and bondage.

When, therefore, the two nations again arose to the contest, it was like combatants whose anger against each other has been previously raised to the highest pitch by mutual invective. Each had recourse to the measures by which their enemy could be most prejudiced.

England had at her command the large means of annoyance arising out of her immense naval superiority, and took her measures with the decision which the emergency required. Instant orders were despatched to prevent the cession of such colonies as yet remained to be given up, according to the treaty of Amiens, and to seize by a *coup-de-main* such of the French settlements as had been ceded, or were yet occupied by her. France, on the other hand, in consequence of her equally great superiority by land, assembled upon her extensive line of sea-coast a very numerous army, with which she appeared disposed to make good her ruler's threats of invasion. At the same time, Buonaparte occupied without ceremony the territory of Naples, Holland, and such other states as Britain must have seen in his hands with feelings of keen apprehension, and thus made good the previous menaces of Talleyrand in his celebrated Note.[36]

But besides carrying to the utmost extent all the means of annoyance which the ordinary rules of hostility afford, Napoleon, going beyond these, had recourse to strange and unaccustomed reprisals, unknown as yet to the code of civilized nature, and tending only to gratify his own resentment, and extend the evils of war, already sufficiently numerous.

EMBARGO ON FRENCH VESSELS – DÉTENUS.

The English had, as is the universal custom, laid an embargo on all French vessels in their ports, at the instant the war was proclaimed, and the loss to France was of course considerable. Buonaparte took a singular mode of retaliating, by seizing on the persons of the English of every description, who chanced to be at Paris, or travelling in the dominions of France, who, trusting to the laws of good faith

[36] See *ante*, p. 13.

hitherto observed by all civilized nations, expected nothing less than an attack upon their personal freedom. The absurd excuse at first set up for this extraordinary violation of humanity, at once, and of justice, was, that some of these individuals might be liable to serve in the English militia, and were therefore to be considered as prisoners of war. But this flimsy pretext could not have excused the seizing on the English of all ranks, conditions, and ages. The measure was adopted without the participation of the first consul's ministers; at least we must presume so, since Talleyrand himself encouraged some individuals to remain after the British ambassador had left Paris, with an assurance of safety which he had it not in his power to make good. It was the vengeful start of a haughty temper, rendered irritable, as we have often stated, by uninterrupted prosperity, and of consequence, opposing itself to all resistance, and contradiction, with an acuteness of feeling approaching to frenzy.

The individuals who suffered under this capricious and tyrannical act of arbitrary power, were treated in all respects like prisoners of war, and confined to prison as such, unless they gave their parole to abide in certain towns assigned them, and keep within particular limits.

The mass of individual evil occasioned by this cruel measure was incalculably great. Twelve years, a large proportion of human life, were cut from that of each of these *Détenus*, as they were called, so far as regarded settled plan, or active exertion. Upon many, the interruption fell with fatal influence, blighting all their hopes and prospects; others learned to live only for the passing day, and were thus deterred from habitual study or useful industry. The most tender bonds of affection were broken asunder by this despotic sentence of imprisonment; the most fatal inroads were made on family feelings and affections by this long separation between children, and husbands, and wives – all the nearest and dearest domestic relations. In short, if it was Buonaparte's desire to inflict the highest degree of pain on a certain number of persons, only because they were born in Britain, he certainly attained his end. If he hoped to gain any thing farther, he was completely baffled; and when he hypocritically imputes the sufferings of the *détenus* to the obstinacy of the English Ministry,[37] his reasoning is the same with that of a captain of Italian banditti, who murders his prisoner, and throws the blame of the crime on the friends of the deceased, who failed to send the ransom at which he had rated his life. Neither is his vindication more reasonable, when he pretends to say that the measure was taken in order to prevent England, on future occasions, from seizing, according to ancient usage, on the shipping in her ports. This outrage must therefore be recorded as one of those acts of wanton wilfulness in which Buonaparte indulged his passion at the expense of his honour, and, if rightly understood, of his real interest.

The detention of civilians, unoffending and defenceless, was a breach of those courtesies which ought to be sacred, as mitigating the horrors of war. The occupation of Hanover was made in violation of the Germanic Constitution. This patrimony of our kings had in former wars been admitted to the benefit of neutrality; a reasonable distinction being taken betwixt the Elector of Hanover, as one of the grand feudatories of the empire, and the same person in his character of King of Great Britain; in which latter capacity only he was at war with France. But Buonaparte was not disposed to recognise these metaphysical distinctions; nor were any of the powers of Germany in a condition to incur his displeasure, by asserting the constitution and immunities of the empire. Austria had paid too deep a price for her former attempts to withstand the power of France, to permit her to extend her opposition beyond a feeble remonstrance; and Prussia had too long pursued a temporizing and truckling line of politics, to allow her to break short with Napoleon by endeavouring to merit the title her monarch once claimed, – of Protector of the North of Germany.

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[37] "Your ministers made a great outcry about the English travellers that I detained in France; although they themselves had set the example, by seizing upon all the French vessels and persons on board of them, upon whom they could lay their hands, before the declaration of war, and before I had detained the English in France. I said then, if you detain my travellers at sea, where you can do what you like, I will detain yours at land, where I am equally powerful. But after this I offered to release all the English I had seized in France before the declaration of war, provided you would in like manner release the French and their property which you had seized on board of the ships. Your ministers would not." – Napoleon, *Voice*, &c., vol. i., p. 326.

HANOVER SEIZED.

Every thing in Germany being thus favourable to the views of France, Mortier, who had already assembled an army in Holland, and on the frontiers of Germany, moved forward on Hanover. A considerable force was collected for resistance under his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge and General Walmoden. It soon appeared, however, that, left to their own resources, and absolutely unsupported either by England or the forces of the empire, the electorate was incapable of resistance; and that any attempt at an ineffectual defence would only serve to aggravate the distresses of the country, by subjecting the inhabitants to the extremities of war. In compassion, therefore, to the Hanoverians, the Duke of Cambridge was induced to leave the hereditary dominions of his father's house; and General Walmoden had the mortification to find himself obliged to enter into a convention, by which the capital of the electorate, and all its strongholds, were to be delivered up to the French, and the Hanoverian army were to retire behind the Elbe, on condition not to serve against France and her allies till previously exchanged.[38]

The British government having refused to ratify this convention of Suhlingen, as it was termed, the Hanoverian army were summoned to surrender as prisoners of war; – hard terms, which, upon the determined resistance of Walmoden, were only thus far softened, that these tried and faithful troops were to be disbanded, and deliver up their arms, artillery, horses, and military stores. In a letter to the first consul, Mortier declares that he granted these mitigated terms from respect to the misfortunes of a brave enemy; and mentions, in a tone of creditable feeling, the distress of General Walmoden, and the despair of the fine regiment of Hanoverian guards, when dismounting from their horses to surrender them up to the French.

At the same time that they occupied Hanover, the French failed not to make a further use of their invasion of Germany, by laying forced loans on the Hanseatic towns, and by other encroachments.

The Prince Royal of Denmark was the only sovereign who showed an honourable sense of these outrages, by assembling in Holstein an army of thirty thousand men; but being unsupported by any other power, he was soon glad to lay aside the attitude which he had assumed. Austria accepted, as current payment, the declaration of France, that by her occupation of Hanover she did not intend any act of conquest, or annexation of territory, but merely proposed to retain the electorate as a pledge for the isle of Malta, which the English, contrary, as was alleged, to the faith of treaties, refused to surrender. Prussia, naturally dissatisfied at seeing the aggressions of France extend to the neighbourhood of her own territories, was nevertheless obliged to rest contented with the same excuse.

The French ruler did not confine himself to the occupation of Hanover. Tarentum, and other seaports of the King of Naples's dominions, were seized upon, under the same pretext of their being a pledge for the restoration of Malta. In fact, by thus quartering his troops upon neutral territories, by whom he took care that they should be paid and clothed, Napoleon made the war support itself, and spared France the burden of maintaining a great proportion of his immense army; while large exactions, not only on the commercial towns, but on Spain, Portugal, and Naples, and other neutral countries, in the name of loans, filled his treasury, and enabled him to carry on the expensive plans which he meditated.

Any one of the separate manœuvres which we have mentioned, would, before this eventful war, have been considered as a sufficient object for a long campaign. But the whole united was regarded by Buonaparte only as side-blows, affecting Britain indirectly through the occupation of her monarch's family dominions, the embarrassment offered to her commerce, and the destruction of such independence as had been left to the continental powers. His great and decisive game remained to be played – that scheme of invasion to which he had so strongly pledged himself in his angry dialogue with Lord Whitworth. Here, perhaps, if ever in his life, Buonaparte, from considerations

[38] Annual Register, vol. xlv., p. 283.

of prudence, suffered the period to elapse which would have afforded the best chance for execution of his venturous project.

It must be in the memory of most who recollect the period, that the kingdom of Great Britain was seldom less provided against invasion than at the commencement of this second war; and that an embarkation from the ports of Holland, if undertaken instantly after the war had broken out, might have escaped our blockading squadrons, and have at least shown what a French army could have done on British ground, at a moment when the alarm was general, and the country in an unprepared state. But it is probable that Buonaparte himself was as much unprovided as England for the sudden breach of the treaty of Amiens – an event brought about more by the influence of passion than of policy; so that its consequences were as unexpected in his calculations as in those of Great Britain. Besides, he had not diminished to himself the dangers of the undertaking, by which he must have staked his military renown, his power, which he held chiefly as the consequence of his reputation, perhaps his life, upon a desperate game, which, though he had already twice contemplated it, he had not yet found hardihood enough seriously to enter upon.

He now, however, at length bent himself, with the whole strength of his mind, and the whole force of his empire, to prepare for this final and decisive undertaking. The gun-boats in the bay of Gibraltar, where calms are frequent, had sometimes in the course of the former war been able to do considerable damage to the English vessels of war, when they could not use their sails. Such small craft, therefore, were supposed the proper force for covering the intended descent. They were built in different harbours, and brought together by crawling along the French shore, and keeping under the protection of the batteries, which were now established on every cape, almost as if the sea-coast of the Channel on the French side had been the lines of a besieged city, no one point of which could with prudence be left undefended by cannon. Boulogne was pitched upon as the centre port, from which the expedition was to sail. By incredible exertions, Buonaparte had rendered its harbour and roads capable of containing two thousand vessels of various descriptions. The smaller seaports of Vimereux, Ambleteuse, and Etaples, Dieppe, Havre, St. Valeri, Caen, Gravelines, and Dunkirk, were likewise filled with shipping. Flushing and Ostend were occupied by a separate flotilla. Brest, Toulon, and Rochefort, were each the station of as strong a naval squadron as France had still the means to send to sea.

ARMY OF ENGLAND.

A land army was assembled of the most formidable description, whether we regard the high military character of the troops, the extent and perfection of their appointments, or their numerical strength. The coast, from the mouth of the Seine to the Texel, was covered with forces; and Soult, Ney, Davoust, and Victor, names that were then the pride and the dread of war, were appointed to command the army of England, (for that menacing title was once more assumed,) and execute those manœuvres, planned and superintended by Buonaparte, the issue of which was to be the blotting out of Britain from the rank of independent nations.

Far from being alarmed at this formidable demonstration of force, England prepared for her resistance with an energy becoming her ancient rank in Europe, and far surpassing in its efforts any extent of military preparation before heard of in her history. To nearly one hundred thousand troops of the line, were added eighty thousand and upwards of militia, which scarce yielded to the regulars in point of discipline. The volunteer force, by which every citizen was permitted and invited to add his efforts to the defence of the country, was far more numerous than during the last war, was better officered also, and rendered every way more effective. It was computed to amount to three hundred and fifty thousand men, who, if we regard the shortness of the time and the nature of the service, had attained considerable practice in the use and management of their arms. Other classes of men were embodied, and destined to act as pioneers, drivers of waggons, and in the like services. On a sudden, the land seemed converted to an immense camp, the whole nation into soldiers, and the good old

King himself into a general-in-chief. All peaceful considerations appeared for a time to be thrown aside; and the voice, calling the nation to defend their dearest rights, sounded not only in Parliament, and in meetings convoked to second the measures of defence, but was heard in the places of public amusement, and mingled even with the voice of devotion – not unbecomingly surely, since to defend our country is to defend our religion.

Beacons were erected in conspicuous points, corresponding with each other, all around and all through the island; and morning and evening, one might have said, every eye was turned towards them to watch for the fatal and momentous signal. Partial alarms were given in different places from the mistakes to which such arrangements must necessarily be liable; and the ready spirit which animated every species of troops where such signals called to arms, was of the most satisfactory description, and afforded the most perfect assurance, that the heart of every man was in the cause of his country.

Amidst her preparations by land, England did not neglect or relax her precautions on the element she calls her own. She covered the ocean with five hundred and seventy ships of war of various descriptions. Divisions of her fleet blocked up every French port in the Channel; and the army destined to invade our shores, might see the British flag flying in every direction on the horizon, waiting for their issuing from the harbour, as birds of prey may be seen floating in the air above the animal which they design to pounce upon. Sometimes the British frigates and sloops of war stood in, and cannonaded or threw shells into Havre, Dieppe, Granville, and Boulogne itself. Sometimes the seamen and marines landed, cut out vessels, destroyed signal-posts, and dismantled batteries. Such events were trifling, and it was to be regretted that they cost the lives of gallant men; but although they produced no direct results of consequence, yet they had their use in encouraging the spirits of our sailors, and damping the confidence of the enemy, who must at length have looked forward with more doubt than hope to the invasion of the English coast, when the utmost vigilance could not prevent their experiencing insults upon their own.

During this period of menaced attack and arranged defence, Buonaparte visited Boulogne, and seemed active in preparing his soldiers for the grand effort. He reviewed them in an unusual manner, teaching them to execute several manœuvres by night; and experiments were also made upon the best mode of arranging the soldiers in the flat-bottomed boats, and of embarking and disembarking them with celerity. Omens were resorted to for keeping up the enthusiasm which the presence of the first consul naturally inspired. A Roman battle-axe was said to be found when they removed the earth to pitch Buonaparte's tent or barrack; and medals of William the Conqueror were produced, as having been dug up upon the same honoured spot. These were pleasant bodings, yet perhaps did not altogether, in the minds of the soldiers, counterbalance the sense of insecurity impressed on them by the prospect of being packed together in these miserable chaloupes, and exposed to the fire of an enemy so superior at sea, that during the chief consul's review of the fortifications, their frigates stood in shore with composure, and fired at him and his suite as at a mark. The men who had braved the perils of the Alps and of the Egyptian deserts, might yet be allowed to feel alarm at a species of danger which seemed so inevitable, and which they had no adequate means of repelling by force of arms.

BOULOGNE FLOTILLA.

A circumstance which seemed to render the expedition in a great measure hopeless, was the ease with which the English could maintain a constant watch upon their operations within the port of Boulogne. The least appearance of stir or preparation, to embark troops, or get ready for sea, was promptly sent by signal to the English coast, and the numerous British cruisers were instantly on the alert to attend their motions. Nelson had, in fact, during the last war, declared the sailing of a hostile armament from Boulogne to be a most forlorn undertaking, on account of cross tides and other disadvantages, together with the certainty of the flotilla being lost if there were the least wind west-north-west. "As for rowing," he adds, "that is impossible. – It is perfectly right to be prepared

for a mad government," continued this most incontestible judge of maritime possibilities; "but with the active force which has been given me, I may pronounce it almost impracticable."

Buonaparte himself continued to the last to affirm that he was serious in his attempts to invade Great Britain, and that the scheme was very practicable. He did not, however, latterly, talk of forcing his way by means of armed small craft and gun-boats, while the naval forces on each side were in their present degree of comparative strength, the allowed risk of miscarriage being as ten to one to that of success; – this bravade, which he had uttered to Lord Whitworth, involved too much uncertainty to be really acted upon. At times, long after, he talked slightingly to his attendants of the causes which prevented his accomplishing his project of invasion;[39] but when speaking seriously and in detail, he shows plainly that his sole hope of effecting the invasion was by assembling such a fleet as should give him the temporary command of the Channel. This fleet was to consist of fifty vessels, which, despatched from the various ports of France and Spain, were to rendezvous at Martinico, and, returning from thence to the British Channel, protect the flotilla, upon which were to embark one hundred and fifty thousand men.[40] Napoleon was disappointed in his combinations respecting the shipping; for as it happened, Admiral Cornwallis lay before Brest; Pellew observed the harbours of Spain; Nelson watched Toulon and Genoa; and it would have been necessary for the French and Spanish navy to fight their way through these impediments, in order to form a union at Martinico.

It is wonderful to observe how incapable the best understandings become of forming a rational judgment, where their vanity and self-interest are concerned, in slurring over the total failure of a favourite scheme. While talking of the miscarriage of this plan of invasion, Napoleon gravely exclaimed to Las Cases, "And yet the obstacles which made me fail were not of human origin – they were the work of the elements. In the south, the sea undid my plans; in the north, it was the conflagration of Moscow, the snows and ice that destroyed me. Thus, water, air, fire, all nature, in short, have been the enemies of a universal regeneration, commanded by Nature herself. The problems of Providence are inscrutable."[41]

Independent of the presumptuousness of expressions, by which an individual being, of the first-rate talents doubtless, but yet born of a woman, seems to raise himself above the rest of his species, and deem himself unconquerable save by elementary resistance, the inaccuracy of the reasoning is worth remarking. Was it the sea which prevented his crossing to England, or was it the English ships and sailors? He might as well have affirmed that the hill of Mount St. John, and the wood of Soignies, and not the army of Wellington, were the obstacles which prevented him from marching to Brussels.

Before quitting the subject, we may notice, that Buonaparte seems not to have entertained the least doubts of success, could he have succeeded in disembarking his army. A single general action was to decide the fate of England. Five days were to bring Napoleon to London, where he was to perform the part of William the Third; but with more generosity and disinterestedness. He was to call a meeting of the inhabitants, restore them what he calls their rights, and destroy the oligarchical faction. A few months would not, according to his account, have elapsed, ere the two nations, late such determined enemies, would have been identified by their principles, their maxims, their interests. The full explanation of this gibberish, (for it can be termed no better, even proceeding from the lips of Napoleon,) is to be found elsewhere, when he spoke a language more genuine than that of the

[39] "On what trifles does the fate of empires depend! How petty and insignificant are our revolutions in the grand organization of the earth! If, instead of entering upon the Egyptian expedition, I had invaded Ireland; if some slight derangement of my plans had not thrown obstacles in the way of my Boulogne enterprise, what would England have been to-day? What would have been the situation of the Continent, and the whole political world?" – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iii., p. 330.

[40] See Montholon, tom. ii., p. 224. "The invasion of England," adds Napoleon, "was always regarded as practicable; and, if once the descent had been effected, London must infallibly have been taken. The French being in possession of that capital, a very powerful party would have arisen against the oligarchy. Did Hannibal look behind him when he passed the Alps? or Cæsar when he landed in Epirus, or Africa? London is situated only a few marches from Calais; and the English army, scattered for the purpose of defending the coasts, could not have joined in time to have covered that capital after once the descent had been actually made."

[41] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 263.

Moniteur and the bulletins. "England," he said, "must have ended, by becoming an appendage to the France of *my* system. Nature has made it one of our islands, as well as Oleron and Corsica."[42]

It is impossible not to pursue the train of reflections which Buonaparte continued to pour forth to the companion of his exile, on the rock of Saint Helena. When England was conquered, and identified with France in maxims and principles, according to one form of expression, or rendered an appendage and dependency, according to another phrase, the reader may suppose that Buonaparte would have considered his mission as accomplished. Alas! it was not much more than commenced. "I would have departed from thence [from subjugated Britain] to carry the work of European regeneration [that is, the extension of his own arbitrary authority] from south to north, under the Republican colours, for I was then chief consul, in the same manner which I was more lately on the point of achieving it under the monarchical forms."[43] When we find such ideas retaining hold of Napoleon's imagination, and arising to his tongue after his irretrievable fall, it is impossible to avoid exclaiming, Did ambition ever conceive so wild a dream, and had so wild a vision ever a termination so disastrous and humiliating!

DEFENSIVE MEASURES OF ENGLAND.

It may be expected that something should be here said, upon the chances which Britain would have had of defending herself successfully against the army of invaders. We are willing to acknowledge that the risk must have been dreadful; and that Buonaparte, with his genius and his army, must have inflicted severe calamities upon a country which had so long enjoyed the blessings of peace. But the people were unanimous in their purpose of defence, and their forces composed of materials to which Buonaparte did more justice when he came to be better acquainted with them. Of the three British nations, the English have since shown themselves possessed of the same steady valour which won the fields of Cressy and Agincourt, Blenheim and Minden – the Irish have not lost the fiery enthusiasm which has distinguished them in all the countries of Europe – nor have the Scots degenerated from the stubborn courage with which their ancestors, for two thousand years, maintained their independence against a superior enemy. Even if London had been lost, we would not, under so great a calamity, have despaired of the freedom of the country; for the war would, in all probability, have assumed that popular and national character which, sooner or later, wears out an invading army. Neither does the confidence with which Buonaparte affirms the conviction of his winning the first battle, appear so certainly well-founded. This, at least, we know, that the resolution of the country was fully bent up to the hazard; and those who remember the period will bear us witness, that the desire that the French would make the attempt, was a general feeling through all classes, because they had every reason to hope that the issue might be such as for ever to silence the threat of invasion.[44]

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[42] Las Cases, tom. iii., p. 330.

[43] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 263.

[44] "I commanded a brigade of the army of the coasts, united at this period against England, and I remember that, when called upon to give my opinion upon this expedition, I replied, that 'a maritime expedition, unless it had the superiority at sea, appeared to me to be a contradiction.' Nevertheless, let any one imagine a French army of 200,000 men, landing upon the English territory, and seizing upon the immense city of London – would he deny that, even if the liberty of the country had not been lost, England would have suffered an immense and perhaps irreparable injury? It cannot be denied that the plan was well conceived; that the combined fleets of France and Spain were sufficient to sweep the Channel, and to command there during the time necessary to seize upon London, and even to have conveyed the whole army back to France." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 40.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Disaffection begins to arise against Napoleon among the Soldiery – Purpose of setting up Moreau against him – Character of Moreau – Causes of his Estrangement from Buonaparte – Pichegru – The Duke d'Enghien – Georges Cadoudal, Pichegru, and other Royalists, landed in France – Desperate Enterprise of Georges – Defeated – Arrest of Moreau – of Pichegru – and Georges – Captain Wright – Duke d'Enghien seized at Strasburg – Hurried to Paris – Transferred to Vincennes – Tried by a Military Commission – Condemned – and Executed – Universal Horror of France and Europe – Buonaparte's Vindication of his Conduct – His Defence considered – Pichegru found dead in his Prison – Attempt to explain his Death by charging him with Suicide – Captain Wright found with his Throat cut – A similar Attempt made – Georges and other Conspirators Tried – Condemned – and Executed – Royalists Silenced – Moreau sent into Exile.

DISAFFECTION OF THE SOLDIERY.

While Buonaparte was meditating the regeneration of Europe, by means of conquering, first Britain, and then the northern powers, a course of opposition to his government, and disaffection to his person, was beginning to arise even among the soldiers themselves. The acquisition of the consulate for life was naturally considered as a deathblow to the Republic; and to that name many of the principal officers of the army, who had advanced themselves to promotion by means of the Revolution, still held a grateful attachment. The dissatisfaction of these military men was the more natural, as some of them might see in Buonaparte nothing more than a successful adventurer, who had raised himself high above the heads of his comrades, and now exacted their homage. As soldiers, they quickly passed from murmurs to threats; and at a festive meeting, which was prolonged beyond the limits of sobriety, a colonel of hussars proposed himself as the Brutus to remove this new Cæsar. Being expert at the use of the pistol, he undertook to hit his mark at fifty yards distance, during one of those reviews which were perpetually taking place in presence of the first consul. The affair became known to the police, but was hushed up as much as possible by the address of Fouché, who saw that Buonaparte might be prejudiced by the bare act of making public that such a thing had been agitated, however unthinkingly.[45]

The discontent spread wide, and was secretly augmented by the agents of the house of Bourbon; and, besides the constitutional Opposition, whose voice was at times heard in the Legislative Body and the Tribunate, there existed malecontents without doors, composed of two parties, one of whom considered Buonaparte as the enemy of public liberty, whilst the other regarded him as the sole obstacle to the restoration of the Bourbons; and the most eager partisans of both began to meditate on the practicability of removing him by any means, the most violent and the most secret not excepted. Those among the furious Republicans, or enthusiastic Royalists, who entertained such sentiments, excused them, doubtless, to their conscience, by Napoleon's having destroyed the liberties, and usurped the supreme authority, of the country; thus palliating the complexion of a crime which can never be vindicated.

These zealots, however, bore no proportion to the great body of Frenchmen, who, displeased with the usurpation of Buonaparte, and disposed to overthrow it, if possible, held themselves yet obliged to refrain from all crooked and indirect practices against his life. Proposing to destroy his power in the same way in which it had been built, the first and most necessary task of the discontented party was to find some military chief, whose reputation might bear to be balanced against that of

[45] Fouché, tom. i., p. 231.

Napoleon; and no one could claim such distinction excepting Moreau. If his campaigns were inferior to those of his great rival in the lightning-like brilliancy and celerity of their operations, and in the boldness of combination on which they were founded, they were executed at smaller loss to his troops, and were less calculated to expose him to disastrous consequences if they chanced to miscarry. Moreau was no less celebrated for his retreat through the defiles of the Black Forest, in 1796, than for the splendid and decisive victory of Hohenlinden.

Moreau's natural temper was mild, gentle, and accessible to persuasion – a man of great abilities certainly, but scarcely displaying the bold and decisive character which he ought to possess, who, in such times as we write of, aspires to place himself at the head of a faction in the state. Indeed, it rather would seem that he was forced into that situation of eminence by the influence of general opinion, joined to concurring circumstances, than that he deliberately aspired to place himself there. He was the son of a lawyer of Bretagne,[46] and in every respect a man who had risen by the Revolution. He was not, therefore, naturally inclined towards the Bourbons; yet when Pichegru's communications with the exiled family in 1795 became known to him by the correspondence which he intercepted, Moreau kept the secret until some months after,[47] when Pichegru had, with the rest of his party, fallen under the Revolution of 18th Fructidor, which installed the Directory of Barras, Reubel, and La Raveillière. After this period, Moreau's marriage with a lady[48] who entertained sentiments favourable to the Bourbons, seems to have gone some length in deciding his own political opinions.

Moreau had lent Buonaparte his sword and countenance on 18th Brumaire; but he was soon dissatisfied with the engrossing ambition of the new ruler of France, and they became gradually estranged from each other. This was not the fault of Buonaparte, who, naturally desirous of attaching to himself so great a general, showed him considerable attention, and complained that it was received with coldness. On one occasion, a most splendid pair of pistols had been sent to the first consul. "They arrive in a happy time," he said, and presented them to Moreau, who at that instant entered his presence chamber.[49] Moreau received the civility as one which he would willingly have dispensed with. He made no other acknowledgment than a cold bow, and instantly left the levee.

Upon the institution of the Legion of Honour, one of the grand crosses was offered to him. "The fool!" said Moreau, "does he not know that I have belonged to the ranks of honour for these twelve years?" Another pleasantry on this topic, upon which Buonaparte was very sensitive, was a company of officers, who dined together with Moreau, voting a sauce-pan of honour to the general's cook, on account of his merits in dressing some particular dish. Thus, living estranged from Buonaparte, Moreau came to be gradually regarded as the head of the disaffected party in France; and the eyes of all those who disliked Napoleon or his government, were fixed upon him, as the only individual whose influence might be capable of balancing that of the chief consul.

Meantime, the peace of Amiens being broken, the British Government, with natural policy, resolved once more to avail themselves of the state of public feeling in France, and engage the partisans of royalty in a fresh attack upon the Consular Government. They were probably in some degree deceived concerning the strength of that party, which had been much reduced

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[46] Moreau was born at Morlaix in 1763.

[47] "If Moreau's friendship for Pichegru led him into this culpable compromise, he ought not to have communicated these papers at a time when a knowledge of their contents could no longer be serviceable to the state; for, after the transactions of the 18th Fructidor, that party was defeated, and Pichegru was in chains." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. i., p. 43.

[48] "The Empress Josephine married Moreau to Mademoiselle Hulot, a creole of the Isle of France. This young lady had an ambitious mother, who governed her, and soon governed her husband also. She changed his character; he was no longer the same man; he began to intrigue; his house became the rendezvous of all the disaffected. For a long time the first consul refused to notice this imprudent conduct; but at length he said, 'I wash my hands of him; let him run his head against the pillars of the Tuileries.'" – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. i., p. 53.

[49] "Moreau went to Paris during the armistice of Pahrsdorff, and alighted unexpectedly at the Tuileries. Whilst he was engaged with the first consul, the minister at war, Carnot, arrived from Versailles with a pair of pistols, enriched with diamonds, of very great value: they were intended for the first consul, who, taking the pistols, presented them to Moreau, saying, 'They come very opportunely.' This was not a thing contrived for effect." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. i., p. 52.

under Buonaparte's management, and had listened too implicitly to the promises and projects of agents, who, themselves sanguine beyond what was warranted, exaggerated even their own hopes in communicating them to the British ministers. It seems to have been acknowledged, that little success was to be hoped for, unless Moreau could be brought to join the conspiracy. This, however, was esteemed possible; and notwithstanding the disagreement, personal as well as political, which had subsisted betwixt him and Pichegru, the latter seems to have undertaken to become the medium of communication betwixt Moreau and the Royalists. Escaped from the deserts of Cayenne, to which he had been exiled, Pichegru had for some time found refuge and support in London, and there openly professed his principles as a Royalist, upon which he had for a long time acted in secret.

THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN.

A scheme was in agitation for raising the Royalists in the west, and the Duke de Berri was to make a descent on the coast of Picardy, to favour the insurrection. The Duke d'Enghien, grandson of the Prince of Condé, fixed his residence under the protection of the Margrave of Baden, at the chateau of Ettenheim, with the purpose, doubtless, of being ready to put himself at the head of the Royalists in the east of France, or, if occasion should offer, in Paris itself. This prince of the house of Bourbon, the destined inheritor of the name of the great Condé, was in the flower of youth, handsome, brave, and high-minded. He had been distinguished for his courage in the emigrant army, which his grandfather commanded. He gained by his valour the battle of Bortsheim; and when his army, to whom the French Republicans showed no quarter, desired to execute reprisals on their prisoners, he threw himself among them to prevent their violence. "These men," he said "are Frenchmen – they are unfortunate – I place them under the guardianship of your honour and your humanity." Such was the princely youth, whose name must now be written in bloody characters in this part of Napoleon's history.

Whilst the French princes expected on the frontier the effect of commotions in the interior of France, Pichegru, Georges Cadoudal, and about thirty other Royalists of the most determined character, were secretly landed in France, made their way to the metropolis, and contrived to find lurking places invisible to the all-seeing police. There can be no reason to doubt that a part of those agents, and Georges in particular, saw the greatest obstacle of their enterprise in the existence of Buonaparte, and were resolved to commence by his assassination. Pichegru, who was constantly in company with Georges, cannot well be supposed ignorant of this purpose, although better befitting the fierce chief of a band of Chouans than the conqueror of Holland.

In the meantime, Pichegru effected the desired communication with Moreau, then, as we have said, considered as the chief of the discontented military men, and the declared enemy of Buonaparte. They met at least twice; and it is certain that on one of these occasions Pichegru carried with him Georges Cadoudal, at whose person and plans Moreau expressed horror, and desired that Pichegru would not again bring that irrational savage into his company. The cause of his dislike we must naturally suppose to have been the nature of the measures Georges proposed, being the last to which a brave and loyal soldier like Moreau would willingly have resorted to; but Buonaparte, when pretending to give an exact account of what passed betwixt Moreau and Pichegru, represents the conduct of the former in a very different point of view. Moreau, according to this account, informed Pichegru, that while the first consul lived, he had not the slightest interest in the army, and that not even his own aides-de-camp would follow him against Napoleon; but were Napoleon removed, Moreau assured them all eyes would be fixed on himself alone – that he would then become first consul – that Pichegru should be second; and was proceeding to make farther arrangements, when Georges broke in on their deliberations with fury, accused the generals of scheming their own grandeur, not the restoration of the king, and declared that to choose betwixt *blue* and *blue*, (a phrase by which the Vendéans

distinguished the Republicans,)[50] he would as soon have Buonaparte as Moreau at the head of affairs, and concluded by stating his own pretensions to be third consul at least. According to this account, therefore, Moreau was not shocked at the atrocity of Georges' enterprise, of which he himself had been the first to admit the necessity, but only disgusted at the share which the Chouan chief assorted to himself in the partition of the spoil. But we give no credit whatever to this story. Though nothing could have been so important to the first consul at the time as to produce proof of Moreau's direct accession to the plot on his life, no such proof was ever brought forward; and therefore the statement, we have little doubt, was made up afterwards, and contains what Buonaparte might think probable, and desire that others should believe, not what he knew from certain information, or was able to prove by credible testimony.

The police was speedily alarmed, and in action. Notice had been received that a band of Royalists had introduced themselves into the capital, though it was for some time very difficult to apprehend them. Georges, meanwhile, prosecuted his attempt against the chief consul, and is believed at one time to have insinuated himself in the disguise of a menial into the Tuileries, and even into Buonaparte's apartment; but without finding any opportunity to strike the blow, which his uncommon strength and desperate resolution might otherwise have rendered decisive. All the barriers were closed, and a division of Buonaparte's guards maintained the closest watch, to prevent any one escaping from the city. By degrees sufficient light was obtained to enable the government to make a communication to the public upon the existence and tendency of the conspiracy, which became more especially necessary, when it was resolved to arrest Moreau himself. This took place on the 15th February, 1804. He was seized without difficulty or resistance, while residing quietly at his country-house. On the day following, an order of the day, signed by Murat, then Governor of Paris, announced the fact to the citizens, with the additional information, that Moreau was engaged in a conspiracy with Pichegru, Georges, and others, who were closely pursued by the police.

The news of Moreau's imprisonment produced the deepest sensation in Paris; and the reports which were circulated on the subject were by no means favourable to Buonaparte. Some disbelieved the plot entirely, while others, less sceptical, considered the chief consul as making a pretext of the abortive attempt of Pichegru and Georges for the purpose of sacrificing Moreau, who was at once his rival in military fame, and the declared opponent of his government. It was even asserted, that secret agents of Buonaparte in London had been active in encouraging the attempts of the original conspirators, for the sake of implicating a man whom the first consul both hated and feared. Of this there was no proof; but these and other dark suspicions pervaded men's minds, and all eyes were turned with anxiety upon the issue of the legal investigations which were about to take place.

Upon the 17th February, the great judge of police, by a report[51] which was communicated to the Senate, the Legislative Body, and the Tribunate, denounced Pichegru, Georges, and others, as having returned to France from their exile, with the purpose of overthrowing the government, and assassinating the chief consul, and implicated Moreau as having held communication with them. When the report was read in the Tribunate, the brother of Moreau arose, and, recalling the merits and services of his relative, complained of the cruelty of calumniating him without proof, and demanded for him the privilege of an open and public trial.

"This is a fine display of sensibility," said Curee, one of the tribunes, in ridicule of the sensation naturally produced by this affecting incident.

"It is a display of indignation," replied the brother of Moreau, and left the assembly.

The public bodies, however, did what was doubtless expected of them, and carried to the foot of the consular throne the most exaggerated expressions of their interest in the life and safety of him by whom it was occupied.

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[50] See Mémoires de Savary, tom. ii., p. 52.

[51] See Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 616.

ARREST OF PICHEGRU AND GEORGES.

Meanwhile, the vigilance of the police, and the extraordinary means employed by them, accomplished the arrest of almost all the persons concerned in the plot. A false friend, whom Pichegru had trusted to the highest degree, betrayed his confidence for a large bribe, and introduced the gendarmes into his apartment while he was asleep. They first secured the arms which lay beside him, and then his person, after a severe struggle. Georges Cadoudal, perhaps a yet more important capture, fell into the hands of the police soon after. He had been traced so closely, that at length he dared not enter a house, but spent many hours of the day and night in driving about Paris in a cabriolet. On being arrested, he shot one of the gendarmes dead, mortally wounded another, and had nearly escaped from them all. The other conspirators, and those accused of countenancing their enterprise, were arrested to the number of forty persons, who were of very different characters and conditions; some followers or associates of Georges, and others belonging to the ancient nobility. Among the latter were Messrs. Armand and Jules Polignac, Charles de la Rivière, and other Royalists of distinction. Chance had also thrown into Buonaparte's power a victim of another description. Captain Wright, the commander of a British brig of war, had been engaged in putting ashore on the coast of Morbihan, Pichegru and some of his companions. Shortly afterwards, his vessel was captured by a French vessel of superior force. Under pretence that his evidence was necessary to the conviction of the French conspirators, he was brought up to Paris, committed to the Temple, and treated with a rigour which became a prelude to the subsequent tragedy.

It might have been supposed, that among so many prisoners, enough of victims might have been selected to atone with their lives for the insurrection which they were accused of meditating; nay, for the attempt which was alleged to be designed against the person of the first consul. Most unhappily for his fame, Napoleon thought otherwise; and, from causes which we shall hereafter endeavour to appreciate, sought to give a fuller scope to the gratification of his revenge, than the list of his captives, though containing several men of high rank, enabled him to accomplish.

THE DUKE D'ENGHIEN.

We have observed, that the residence of the Duke d'Enghien upon the French frontier was to a certain degree connected with the enterprise undertaken by Pichegru, so far as concerned the proposed insurrection of the royalists in Paris. This we infer from the duke's admission, that he resided at Ettenheim in the expectation of having soon a part of importance to play in France.[52] This was perfectly vindicated by his situation and connexions. But that the duke participated in, or countenanced in the slightest degree, the meditated attempt on Buonaparte's life, has never even been alleged, and is contrary to all the proof led in the case, and especially to the sentiments impressed upon him by his grandfather, the Prince of Condé.[53] He lived in great privacy, and amused himself principally with hunting. A pension allowed him by England was his only means of support.

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[52] The passage alluded to is in the Duke of Rovigo's (Savary's) Vindication of his own Conduct. At the same time, no traces of such an admission are to be found in the interrogations, as printed elsewhere. It is also said, that when the duke (then at Ettenheim) first heard of the conspiracy of Pichegru, he alleged that it must have been only a pretended discovery. "Had there been such an intrigue in reality," he said, "my father and grandfather would have let me know something of the matter, that I might provide for my safety." It may be added, that if he had been really engaged in that conspiracy, it is probable that he would have retired from the vicinity of the French territory on the scheme being discovered. – S.

[53] A remarkable letter from the Prince of Condé to the Comte d'Artois, dated 24th January, 1802, contains the following passage, which we translate literally: – "The Chevalier de Roll will give you an account of what has passed here yesterday. A man of a very simple and gentle exterior arrived the night before, and having travelled, as he affirmed, on foot, from Paris to Calais, had an audience of me about eleven in the forenoon, and distinctly offered to rid us of the usurper by the shortest method possible. I did not give him time to finish the details of his project, but rejected the proposal with horror, assuring him that you, if present, would do the same. I told him, we should always be the enemies of him who had arrogated to himself the power and the throne of our Sovereign, until he should make restitution: that we had combated the usurper by open force, and would do so again if opportunity offered; but that we would never employ that species of means which only became the Jacobin party; and if that faction should meditate such a crime, assuredly we would not be their accomplices." This discourse the prince renewed to the secret agent in the presence of the Chevalier

On the evening of the 14th March, a body of French soldiers and gendarmes, commanded by Colonel Ordenner, acting under the direction of Caulaincourt, afterwards called Duke of Vicenza, suddenly entered the territory of Baden, a power with whom France was in profound peace, and surrounded the chateau in which the unfortunate prince resided. The descendant of Condé sprung to his arms, but was prevented from using them by one of his attendants, who represented the force of the assailants as too great to be resisted. The soldiers rushed into the apartment, and, presenting their pistols, demanded to know which was the Duke d'Enghien. "If you desire to arrest him," said the Duke, "you ought to have his description in your warrant." – "Then we must seize on you all," replied the officer in command; and the prince, with his little household, were arrested and carried to a mill at some distance from the house, where he was permitted to receive some clothes and necessaries. Being now recognised, he was transferred, with his attendants, to the citadel of Strasburg, and presently afterwards separated from the gentlemen of his household, with the exception of his aide-de-camp, the Baron de St. Jacques. He was allowed to communicate with no one. He remained a close prisoner for three days; but on the 18th, betwixt one and two in the morning, he was obliged to rise and dress himself hastily, being only informed that he was about to commence a journey. He requested the attendance of his valet-de-chambre, but was answered that it was unnecessary. The linen which he was permitted to take with him amounted to two shirts only; so nicely had his worldly wants been calculated and ascertained. He was transported with the utmost speed and secrecy towards Paris, where he arrived on the 20th; and, after having been committed for a few hours to the Temple, was transferred to the ancient Gothic castle of Vincennes, about a mile from the city, long used as a state prison, but whose walls never received a more illustrious or a more innocent victim. There he was permitted to take some repose; and, as if the favour had only been granted for the purpose of being withdrawn, he was awaked at midnight, and called upon to sustain an interrogatory on which his life depended, and to which he replied with the utmost composure. On the ensuing night, at the same dead hour, he was brought before the pretended court. The law enjoined that he should have had a defender appointed to plead his cause. But none such was allotted to him.

The inquisitors before whom he was hurried, formed a military commission of eight officers, having General Hulin as their president. They were, as the proceedings express it, named by Buonaparte's brother-in-law Murat, then governor of Paris. Though necessarily exhausted with fatigue and want of rest, the Duke d'Enghien performed in this melancholy scene a part worthy of the last descendant of the great Condé. He avowed his name and rank, and the share which he had taken in the war against France, but denied all knowledge of Pichegru or of his conspiracy. The interrogations ended by his demanding an audience of the chief consul. "My name," he said, "my rank, my sentiments, and the peculiar distress of my situation, lead me to hope that my request will not be refused."

The military commissioners paused and hesitated – nay, though selected doubtless as fitted for the office, they were even affected by the whole behaviour, and especially by the intrepidity, of the unhappy prince. But Savary, then chief of the police, stood behind the president's chair, and controlled their sentiments of compassion. When they proposed to further the prisoner's request of an audience of the first consul, Savary cut the discussion short, by saying, that was inexpedient. At length they reported their opinion, that the Duke d'Enghien was guilty of having fought against the Republic, intrigued with England, and maintained intelligence in Strasburg, for the purpose of seizing the place; – great part of which allegations, and especially the last, was in express contradiction to the only proof adduced, the admission, namely, of the prisoner himself. The report being sent to Buonaparte to know

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de Roll, as a confidential friend of the Comte d'Artois, and, finally, advised the man instantly to leave England, as, in case of his being arrested, the prince would afford him no countenance or protection. The person to whom the Prince of Condé addressed sentiments so worthy of himself and of his great ancestor, afterwards proved to be an agent of Buonaparte, despatched to sound the opinions of the Princes of the House of Bourbon, and if possible to implicate them in such a nefarious project as should justly excite public indignation against them. – S.

his farther pleasure, the court received for answer their own letter, marked with the emphatic words, "Condemned to death." Napoleon was obeyed by his satraps with Persian devotion. The sentence was pronounced, and the prisoner received it with the same intrepid gallantry which distinguished him through the whole of the bloody scene. He requested the aid of a confessor. "Would you die like a monk?" is said to have been the insulting reply. The duke, without noticing the insult, knelt down for a minute, and seemed absorbed in profound devotion.

"Let us go," he said, when he arose from his knees. All was in readiness for the execution; and, as if to stamp the trial as a mere mockery, the grave had been prepared ere the judgment of the court was pronounced.[54] Upon quitting the apartment in which the pretended trial had taken place, the prince was conducted by torch-light down a winding-stair, which seemed to descend to the dungeons of the ancient castle.

"Am I to be immured in an oubliette?" he said, naturally recollecting the use which had sometimes been made of those tombs for the living. – "No, Monseigneur," answered the soldier he addressed, in a voice interrupted by sobs, "be tranquil on that subject." The stair led to a postern, which opened into the castle ditch, where, as we have already said, a grave was dug, beside which were drawn up a party of the gendarmes d'élite. It was near six o'clock in the morning, and day had dawned. But as there was a heavy mist on the ground, several torches and lamps mixed their pale and ominous light with that afforded by the heavens, – a circumstance which seems to have given rise to the inaccurate report, that a lantern was tied to the button of the victim, that his slayers might take the more certain aim. Savary was again in attendance, and had taken his place upon a parapet which commanded the place of execution. The victim was placed, the fatal word was given by the future Duke de Rovigo, the party fired, and the prisoner fell. The body, dressed as it was, and without the slightest attention to the usual decencies of sepulture, was huddled into the grave with as little ceremony as common robbers use towards the carcases of the murdered.

Paris learned with astonishment and fear the singular deed which had been perpetrated so near her walls. No act had ever excited more universal horror, both in France and in foreign countries, and none has left so deep a stain on the memory of Napoleon. If there were farther proof necessary of the general opinion of mankind on the subject, the anxiety displayed by Savary, Hulin, and the other subaltern agents in this shameful transaction to diminish their own share in it, or transfer it to others, would be sufficient evidence of the deep responsibility to which they felt themselves subjected.

There is but justice, however, in listening to the defence which Buonaparte set up for himself when in Saint Helena, especially as it appeared perfectly convincing to Las Cases, his attendant who, though reconciled to most of his master's actions, had continued to regard the Duke d'Enghien's death as so great a blot upon his escutcheon, that he blushed even when Napoleon himself introduced the subject.[55]

His exculpation seems to have assumed a different and inconsistent character, according to the audience to whom it was stated. Among his intimate friends and followers, he appears to have represented the whole transaction as an affair not of his own device, but which was pressed upon him by surprise by his ministers. "I was seated," he said, "alone, and engaged in finishing my coffee, when they came to announce to me the discovery of some new machination. They represented it was time to put an end to such horrible attempts, by washing myself in the blood of one amongst the Bourbons; and they suggested the Duke d'Enghien as the most proper victim." Buonaparte proceeds to say, that he did not know exactly who the Duke d'Enghien was, far less that he resided so near

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[54] Savary has denied this. It is not of much consequence. The illegal arrest – the precipitation of the mock trial – the disconformity of the sentence from the proof – the hurry of the execution – all prove that the unfortunate prince was doomed to die long before he was brought before the military commission. – S. – See, in Savary's Memoirs, tom. ii, p. 221, the Supplementary Chapter, "On the Catastrophe of the Duke d'Enghien."

[55] The reasoning and sentiments of Buonaparte on this subject are taken from the work of Las Cases, tom. iv., partie 7ieme, p. 249, where they are given at great length. – S.

France as to be only three leagues from the Rhine. This was explained. "In that case," said Napoleon, "he ought to be arrested." His prudent ministers had foreseen this conclusion. They had the whole scheme laid, and the orders ready drawn up for Buonaparte's signature; so that, according to this account, he was hurried into the enormity by the zeal of those about him, or perhaps in consequence of their private views and mysterious intrigues. He also charged Talleyrand with concealing from him a letter,[56] written by the unfortunate prisoner, in which he offered his services to Buonaparte, but which was intercepted by the minister. If this had reached him in time, he intimates that he would have spared the prince's life. To render this statement probable, he denies generally that Josephine had interested herself to the utmost to engage him to spare the duke; although this has been affirmed by the testimony of such as declared, that they received the fact from the Empress's own lips.[57]

It is unfortunate for the truth of this statement and the soundness of the defence which it contains, that neither Talleyrand, nor any human being save Buonaparte himself, could have the least interest in the death of the Duke d'Enghien. That Napoleon should be furious at the conspiracies of Georges and Pichegru and should be willing to avenge the personal dangers he incurred; and that he should be desirous to intimidate the family of Bourbon, by "washing himself," as he expresses it, "in the blood of one of their House," was much in character. But that the sagacious Talleyrand should have hurried on a cruel proceeding, in which he had no earthly interest, is as unlikely, as that, if he had desired to do so, he could have been able to elicit from Buonaparte the powers necessary for an act of so much consequence, without his master having given the affair, in all its bearings, the most full and ample consideration. It may also be noticed, that besides transferring a part at least of the guilt from himself, Buonaparte might be disposed to gratify his revenge against Talleyrand, by stigmatizing him, from St. Helena, with a crime the most odious to his new sovereigns of the House of Bourbon. Lastly, the existence of the letter above mentioned has never been proved, and it is inconsistent with every thought and sentiment of the Duke d'Enghien. It is besides said to have been dated from Strasburg; and the duke's aide-de-camp, the Baron de St. Jacques, has given his testimony that he was never an instant separated from his patron, during his confinement in that citadel; and that the duke neither wrote a letter to Buonaparte nor to any one else. But, after all, if Buonaparte had actually proceeded in this bloody matter upon the instigation of Talleyrand, it cannot be denied, that, as a man knowing right from wrong, he could not hope to transfer to his counsellor the guilt of the measures which he executed at his recommendation. The murder, like the rebellion of Absalom, was not less a crime, even supposing it recommended and facilitated by the unconscientious counsels of a modern Achitophel.

Accordingly, Napoleon has not chosen to trust to this defence; but, inconsistently with this pretence of being hurried into the measure by Talleyrand, he has, upon other occasions, broadly and boldly avowed that it was in itself just and necessary; that the Duke d'Enghien was condemned by the laws, and suffered execution accordingly under their sanction.

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[56] Napoleon in Exile, vol. i., p. 335.

[57] "The idea of the death of the Duke d'Enghien never crossed the first consul's mind, till he was astonished and confounded by the tidings communicated to him by Savary of his execution. The question was not whether he should be put to death, but whether he should be put on his trial. Joseph, Josephine, Cambacérès, Berthier, earnestly expostulated with the chief magistrate against it. Joseph, who was living at Morfontaine, and transiently in town, on the 20th of March, the day the Duke d'Enghien was taken a prisoner to Paris, spoke to his brother in his behalf, warmly urging the defence of the grandson of the Prince of Condé, who, he reminded his brother, had seven times crowned him for as many distinctions gained at the Royal School; to which expostulation the first consul's reply affords a curious proof of the state of his mind at the moment. His answer was given by declaiming the following passage from a speech of Cæsar, in Corneille's tragedy of *La Mort de Pompée*: —'Votre zèle est faux, si seul il redoutaitCe que le monde entier à pleins vœux souhaitait:Et s'il vous a donné ces craintes trop subtiles,Qui m'ôtent tout le fruit de nos guerres civiles,Où l'honneur seul m'engage, et que pour terminerJe ne veux que celui de vaincre et pardonner;Où mes plus dangereux et plus grands adversaires,Sitôt qu'ils sont vaincus, ne sont plus que mes frères;Et mon ambition ne va qu'à les forcer,Ayant domté leur haine, à vivre et m'embrasser.Oh! combien d'allegresse une si triste guerreAurait-elle laisée dessus toute la terre,Si l'on voyait marcher dessus un même char,Vainqueurs de leur discorde, et Pompée et César.'"Joseph Buonaparte.

It is an easy task to show, that even according to the law of France, jealous and severe as it was in its application to such subjects, there existed no right to take the life of the duke. It is true he was an emigrant, and the law denounced the penalty of death against such of these as should return to France with arms in their hands. But the duke did not so return – nay, his returning at all was not an act of his own, but the consequence of violence exercised on his person. He was in a more favourable case than even those emigrants whom storms had cast on their native shore, and whom Buonaparte himself considered as objects of pity, not of punishment. He had indeed borne arms against France; but as a member of the House of Bourbon, he was not, and could not be accounted, a subject of Buonaparte, having left the country before his name was heard of; nor could he be considered as in contumacy against the state of France, for he, like the rest of the royal family, was specially excluded from the benefits of the amnesty which invited the return of the less distinguished emigrants. The act by which he was trepanned, and brought within the compass of French power, not of French law, was as much a violation of the rights of nations, as the precipitation with which the pretended trial followed the arrest, and the execution the trial, was an outrage upon humanity. On the trial no witnesses were produced, nor did any investigation take place, saving by the interrogation of the prisoner. Whatever points of accusation, therefore, are not established by the admission of the duke himself, must be considered as totally unproved. Yet this unconscientious tribunal not only found their prisoner guilty of having borne arms against the Republic, which he readily admitted, but of having placed himself at the head of a party of French emigrants in the pay of England, and carried on machinations for surprising the city of Strasburg; charges which he himself positively denied, and which were supported by no proof whatever.

Buonaparte, well aware of the total irregularity of the proceedings in this extraordinary case, seems, on some occasions, to have wisely renounced any attempt to defend what he must have been convinced was indefensible, and has vindicated his conduct upon general grounds, of a nature well worthy of notice. It seems that, when he spoke of the death of the Duke d'Enghien among his attendants, he always chose to represent it as a case falling under the ordinary forms of law, in which all regularity was observed, and where, though he might be accused of severity, he could not be charged with violation of justice. This was safe language to hearers from whom he was sure to receive neither objection nor contradiction, and is just an instance of an attempt, on the part of a conscientiously guilty party, to establish, by repeated asseverations, an innocence which was inconsistent with fact. But with strangers, from whom replies and argument might be expected, Napoleon took broader grounds. He alleged the death of the Duke d'Enghien to be an act of self-defence, a measure of state policy, arising out of the natural rights of humanity, by which a man, to save his own life, is entitled to take away that of another. "I was assailed," he said, "on all hands by the enemies whom the Bourbons raised up against me; threatened with air-guns, infernal machines, and deadly stratagems of every kind. I had no tribunal on earth to which I could appeal for protection, therefore I had a right to protect myself; and by putting to death one of those whose followers threatened my life, I was entitled to strike a salutary terror into the others."[58]

We have no doubt that, in this argument, which is in the original much extended, Buonaparte explained his real motives; at least we can only add to them the stimulus of obstinate resentment, and implacable revenge. But the whole resolves itself into an allegation of that state necessity, which has been justly called the Tyrant's plea, and which has always been at hand to defend, or rather to palliate, the worst crimes of sovereigns. The prince may be lamented, who is exposed, from civil disaffection, to the dagger of the assassin, but his danger gives him no right to turn such a weapon even against the individual person by whom it is pointed at him. Far less could the attempt of any violent partisans of the House of Bourbon authorise the first consul to take, by a suborned judgment, and the most precipitate procedure, the life of a young prince, against whom the accession to the

[58] See Las Cases, tom. iv., p. 269.

conspiracies of which Napoleon complained had never been alleged, far less proved. In every point of view, the act was a murder; and the stain of the Duke d'Enghien's blood must remain indelibly upon Napoleon Buonaparte.

With similar sophistry, he attempted to daub over the violation of the neutral territory of Baden, which was committed for the purpose of enabling his emissaries to seize the person of his unhappy victim. This, according to Buonaparte, was a wrong which was foreign to the case of the Duke d'Enghien, and concerned the sovereign of Baden alone. As that prince never complained of this violation, "the plea," he contended, "could not be used by any other person."[59] This was merely speaking as one who has power to do wrong. To whom was the Duke of Baden to complain, or what reparation could he expect by doing so? He was in the condition of a poor man, who suffers injustice at the hands of a wealthy neighbour, because he has no means to go to law, but whose acquiescence under the injury cannot certainly change its character, or render that invasion just which is in its own character distinctly otherwise. The passage may be marked as showing Napoleon's unhappy predilection to consider public measures not according to the immutable rules of right and wrong, but according to the opportunities which the weakness of one kingdom may afford to the superior strength of another.[60]

It may be truly added, that even the pliant argument of state necessity was far from justifying this fatal deed. To have retained the Duke d'Enghien a prisoner, as a hostage who might be made responsible for the Royalists' abstaining from their plots, might have had in it some touch of policy; but the murder of the young and gallant prince, in a way so secret and so savage, had a deep moral effect upon the European world, and excited hatred against Buonaparte wherever the tale was told. In the well-known words of Fouché, the duke's execution was worse than a moral crime – it was a political blunder.[61] It had this consequence, most unfortunate for Buonaparte, that it seemed to stamp his character as bloody and unforgiving; and in so far prepared the public mind to receive the worst impressions, and authorised the worst suspicions, when other tragedies of a more mysterious character followed that of the last of the race of Condé.[62]

DEATH OF PICHEGRU.

The Duke d'Enghien's execution took place on the 21st March; on the 7th April following, General Pichegru was found dead in his prison. A black handkerchief was wrapped round his neck, which had been tightened by twisting round a short stick inserted through one of the folds. It was asserted that he had turned this stick with his own hands, until he lost the power of respiring, and then, by laying his head on the pillow, had secured the stick in its position. It did not escape the public, that this was a mode of terminating life far more likely to be inflicted by the hands of others than those of the deceased himself. Surgeons were found, but men, it is said, of small reputation, to sign a report upon the state of the body, in which they affirm that Pichegru had died by suicide; yet as he must have lost animation and sense so soon as he had twisted the stick to the point of strangulation, it seems strange he should not have then unclosed his grasp on the fatal tourniquet, which he used as the means of self-destruction. In that case the pressure must have relaxed, and the

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[59] See Las Cases, tom. iv., p. 271.

[60] See, in the Appendix to this volume, No. II., "Further Particulars concerning the Arrest, Trial, and Death of the Duke d'Enghien."

[61] "I was not the person who hesitated to express himself with the least restraint, respecting this violence against the rights of nations and humanity. 'It is more than a crime,' I said, 'it is a political blunder;' words which I record, because they have been repeated and attributed to others." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 266.

[62] "I deplore as much as any man can possibly do, the catastrophe of the Duke d'Enghien; but as Napoleon has himself spoken of it, it does not become me to add another word. I shall only observe, that this affair is far from having been cleared up – that it was impossible that my brother should have brought the prince to Paris to be immolated – that he who established a Bourbon in Tuscany, had quite a contrary design, and one which could but be favourable; else why cause so distinguished a prince to make a journey to Paris, when his presence in traversing France could but be dangerous? If it be asked, why the commendable design attributed to Napoleon was not followed up, and was so cruelly changed, I cannot explain: but I am persuaded that impartial history will one day reveal this secret." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 40.

fatal purpose have remained unaccomplished. No human eye could see into the dark recesses of a state prison, but there were not wanting many who entertained a total disbelief of Pichegru's suicide. It was argued that the first consul did not dare to bring before a public tribunal, and subject to a personal interrogatory, a man of Pichegru's boldness and presence of mind – it was said, also, that his evidence would have been decisively favourable to Moreau – that the citizens of Paris were many of them attached to Pichegru's person – that the soldiers had not forgotten his military fame – and, finally, it was reported, that in consideration of these circumstances, it was judged most expedient to take away his life in prison. Public rumour went so far as to name, as the agents in the crime, four of those Mamelukes, of whom Buonaparte had brought a small party from Egypt, and whom he used to have about his person as matter of parade. This last assertion had a strong impression on the multitude, who are accustomed to think, and love to talk, about the mutes and bowstrings of Eastern despotism. But with well-informed persons, its improbability threw some discredit on the whole accusation. The state prisons of France must have furnished from their officials enough of men as relentless and dexterous in such a commission as those Eastern strangers, whose unwonted appearance in these gloomy regions must have at once shown a fatal purpose, and enabled every one to trace it to Buonaparte.[63]

A subsequent catastrophe, of nearly the same kind, increased by its coincidence the dark suspicions which arose out of the circumstances attending the death of Pichegru.

Captain Wright, from whose vessel Pichegru and his companions had disembarked on the French coast, had become, as we have said, a prisoner of war, his ship being captured by one of much superior force, and after a most desperate defence. Under pretext that his evidence was necessary to the conviction of Pichegru and Georges, he was brought to Paris, and lodged a close prisoner in the Temple. It must also be mentioned, that Captain Wright had been an officer under Sir Sidney Smith, and that the mind of Buonaparte was tenaciously retentive of animosity against those who had aided to withstand a darling purpose, or diminish and obscure the military renown, which was yet more dear to him. The treatment of Captain Wright was – must have been severe, even if it extended no farther than solitary imprisonment; but reports went abroad, that torture was employed to bring the gallant seaman to such confessions as might suit the purposes of the French Government. This belief became very general, when it was heard that Wright, like Pichegru, was found dead in his apartment, with his throat cut from ear to ear, the result, according to the account given by Government, of his own impatience and despair. This official account of the second suicide committed by a state prisoner, augmented and confirmed the opinions entertained concerning the death of Pichegru, which it so closely resembled. The unfortunate Captain Wright was supposed to have been sacrificed, partly perhaps to Buonaparte's sentiments of petty vengeance, but chiefly to conceal, within the walls of the Temple, the evidence which his person would have exhibited in a public court of justice, of the dark and cruel practices by which confession was sometimes extorted.

Buonaparte always alleged his total ignorance concerning the fate of Pichegru and Wright, and affirmed upon all occasions, that they perished, so far as he knew, by their own hands, and not by those of assassins. No proof has ever been produced to contradict his assertion; and so far as he is

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[63] "M. de Bourrienne does not scruple to charge with a frightful crime the man whom he calls the friend of his youth, in whose service he had been for years, and by whom he sought to be again employed, as long as fortune was on his side. In my conscience, I believe there never existed a man less capable of committing such a crime than Napoleon; yet it is he whom the schoolfellow of Brienne dares to accuse. On the morning of Pichegru's death, I was in the first consul's cabinet in the Tuileries, searching for some papers, when Savary was announced, and I heard him detail the particulars of the suicide, precisely as they were afterwards published. I read on Napoleon's countenance the surprise which the event created, and little imagined that there were men so base as to charge him with so detestable and uncalled-for a murder; for the meeting between Pichegru and Moreau had been fully established." – Joseph Buonaparte. – "What advantage could accrue to me from Pichegru's assassination? – a man who was evidently guilty, against whom every proof was ready, and whose condemnation was certain. The fact is, that he found himself in a hopeless situation; his high mind could not bear to contemplate the infamy of a public execution, he despaired of my clemency, or disdained to appeal to it, and put an end to his existence." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iv., p. 258.

inculpated upon these heads, his crime can be only matter of strong suspicion. But it was singular that this rage for suicide should have thus infected the state prisons of Paris, and that both these men, determined enemies of the Emperor, should have adopted the resolution of putting themselves to death, just when that event was most convenient to their oppressor. Above all, it must be confessed, that, by his conduct towards the Duke d'Enghien, Buonaparte had lost that fairness of character to which he might otherwise have appealed, as in itself an answer to the presumptions formed against him. The man who, under pretext of state necessity, ventured on such an open violation of the laws of justice, ought not to complain if he is judged capable, in every case of suspicion, of sacrificing the rights of humanity to his passions or his interest. He himself has affirmed, that Wright died, long before it was announced to the public, but has given no reason why silence was preserved with respect to the event.[64] The Duke de Rovigo, also denying all knowledge of Wright's death, acknowledges that it was a dark and mysterious subject, and intimates his belief that Fouché was at the bottom of the tragedy.[65] In Fouché's real or pretended Memoirs, the subject is not mentioned. We leave, in the obscurity in which we found it, a dreadful tale, of which the truth cannot, in all probability, be known, until the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open.

TRIAL OF CADOUDAL AND OTHERS.

Rid of Pichegru, by his own hand or his jailor's, Buonaparte's government was now left to deal with Georges and his comrades, as well as with Moreau. With the first it was an easy task, for the Chouan chief retained, in the court of criminal justice before which he was conveyed, the same fearless tone of defiance which he had displayed from the beginning. He acknowledged that he came to Paris for the sake of making war personally on Napoleon, and seemed only to regret his captivity, as it had disconcerted his enterprise. He treated the judges with cool contempt, and amused himself by calling Thuriot, who conducted the process, and who had been an old Jacobin, by the name of Monsieur Tue-Roi. There was no difficulty in obtaining sentence of death against Georges and nineteen of his associates; amongst whom was Armand de Polignac, for whose life his brother affectionately tendered his own. Armand de Polignac, however, with seven others, were pardoned by Buonaparte; or rather banishment in some cases, and imprisonment in others, were substituted for a capital punishment. Georges and the rest were executed, and died with the most determined firmness.

The discovery and suppression of this conspiracy seems to have produced, in a great degree, the effects expected by Buonaparte. The Royal party became silent and submissive, and, but that their aversion to the reign of Napoleon showed itself in lampoons, satires, and witticisms, which were circulated in their evening parties, it could hardly have been known to exist. Offers were made to Buonaparte to rid him of the remaining Bourbons, in consideration of a large sum of money; but with better judgment than had dictated his conduct of late, he rejected the proposal. His interest, he was now convinced, would be better consulted by a line of policy which would reduce the exiled family to a state of insignificance, than by any rash and violent proceedings, which must necessarily draw men's attention, and, in doing so, were likely to interest them in behalf of the sufferers, and animate them against their powerful oppressor. With this purpose, the names of the exiled family were, shortly after this period, carefully suppressed in all periodical publications, and, with one or two exceptions, little allusion to their existence can be traced in the pages of the official journal of France; and, unquestionably, the policy was wisely adopted towards a people so light, and animated

[64] See Napoleon in Exile, vol. ii., p. 215.

[65] "When, as minister of the police, the sources of information were open to me, I ascertained that Wright cut his throat in despair, after reading the account of the capitulation of the Austrian general, Mack, at Ulm, that is, while Napoleon was engaged in the campaign of Austerlitz. Can any one, in fact, without alike insulting common sense and glory, admit that the Emperor had attached so much importance to the destruction of a scurvy lieutenant of the English navy, as to send from one of his most glorious fields of battle the order for his destruction? It has been added, that it was I who received from him this commission: now I never quitted him for a single day during the whole campaign, from his departure from Paris till his return." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 61.

so intensely with the interest of the moment, as the French, to whom the present is a great deal, the future much less, and the past nothing at all.

Though Georges's part of the conspiracy was disposed of thus easily, the trial of Moreau involved a much more dangerous task. It was found impossible to procure evidence against him, beyond his own admission that he had seen Pichegru twice; and this admission was coupled with a positive denial that he had engaged to be participant in his schemes. A majority of the judges seemed disposed to acquit him entirely, but were cautioned by the president Hemart, that, by doing so, they would force the government upon violent measures. Adopting this hint, and willing to compromise matters, they declared Moreau guilty, but not to the extent of a capital crime. He was subjected to imprisonment for two years; but the soldiers continuing to interest themselves in his fate, Fouché, who about this time was restored to the administration of police, interceded warmly in his favour,[66] and seconded the applications of Madame Moreau, for a commutation of her husband's sentence.[67] His doom of imprisonment was therefore exchanged for that of exile; a mode of punishment safer for Moreau, considering the late incidents in the prisons of state; and more advantageous for Buonaparte, as removing entirely from the thoughts of the republican party, and of the soldiers, a leader, whose military talents brooked comparison with his own, and to whom the public eye would naturally be turned when any cause of discontent with their present government might incline them to look elsewhere. Buonaparte thus escaped from the consequences of this alarming conspiracy; and, like a patient whose disease is brought to a favourable crisis by the breaking of an imposthume, he attained additional strength by the discomfiture of those secret enemies.

[66] Mémoires de Fouché, tom. i., p. 267.

[67] "I was the person whom the first consul sent to him in the Temple to communicate his consent, and to make arrangements with him for his departure. I gave him my own carriage, and the first consul paid all the expenses of his journey to Barcelona. The general expressed a wish to see Madame Moreau; I went myself to fetch her, and brought her to the Temple." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 66.

CHAPTER XXIX

General Indignation of Europe in consequence of the Murder of the Duke d'Enghien – Russia complains to Talleyrand of the Violation of Baden – and, along with Sweden, Remonstrates in a Note laid before the German Diet – but without effect – Charges brought by Buonaparte against Mr. Drake and Mr. Spencer Smith – who are accordingly Dismissed from the Courts of Stuttgard and Munich – Seizure – Imprisonment – and Dismissal – of Sir George Rumbold, the British Envoy at Lower Saxony – Treachery attempted against Lord Elgin, by the Agents of Buonaparte – Details – Defeated by the Exemplary Prudence of that Nobleman – These Charges brought before the House of Commons – and peremptorily Denied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

GENERAL INDIGNATION OF EUROPE.

Buonaparte, as we have seen, gained a great accession of power by the event of Pichegru's conspiracy. But this was, in some measure, counterbalanced by the diminution of character which attached to the kidnapping and murdering the Duke d'Enghien, and by the foul suspicions arising from the mysterious fate of Pichegru and Wright. He possessed no longer the respect which might be claimed by a victor and legislator, but had distinctly shown that either the sudden tempest of ungoverned passion, or the rankling feelings of personal hatred, could induce him to take the readiest means of wreaking the basest, as well as the bloodiest vengeance. Deep indignation was felt through every country on the Continent, though Russia and Sweden alone ventured to express their dissatisfaction with a proceeding so contrary to the law of nations. The court of St. Petersburg went into state mourning for the Duke d'Enghien, and while the Russian minister at Paris presented a note to M. Talleyrand, complaining of the violation of the Duke of Baden's territory, the Russian resident at Ratisbon was instructed to lay before the Diet of the Empire a remonstrance to the same effect. The Swedish minister did the same. The answer of the French minister was hostile and offensive.[68] He treated with scorn the pretensions of Russia to interfere in the affairs of France and Germany, and accused that power of being desirous to rekindle the flames of war in Europe. This correspondence tended greatly to inflame the discontents already subsisting betwixt France and Russia, and was one main cause of again engaging France in war with that powerful enemy.

The Russian and Swedish remonstrance to the Diet produced no effect. Austria was too much depressed, Prussia was too closely leagued with France to be influenced by it; and there were none of the smaller powers who could be expected to provoke the displeasure of the first consul, by seconding the complaint of the violation of the territory of Baden. The blood of the Duke d'Enghien was not, however, destined to sleep unavenged in his obscure dwelling. The Duke of Baden himself requested the matter might be left to silence and oblivion; but many of the German potentates felt as men, what they dared not, in their hour of weakness, resent as princes. It was a topic repeatedly and efficaciously resumed whenever an opportunity of resistance against the universal conqueror presented itself; and the perfidy and cruelty of the whole transaction continued to animate new enemies against him, until, in the issue, they became strong enough to work his overthrow. From the various and inconsistent pleas which Buonaparte set up in defence of his conduct – now attempting to justify, now to apologize for, now to throw on others a crime which he alone had means and interest to commit, it is believed that he felt the death of the Duke d'Enghien to be the most reprehensible as well as the most impolitic act in his life.

[68] See Annual Register, vol. xlvi., pp. 642-656.

Already aware of the unpopularity which attached to his late cruel proceedings, Buonaparte became desirous to counterbalance it by filling the public mind with a terrific idea of the schemes of England, which, in framing and encouraging attempts upon his life, drove him to those unusual and extraordinary acts, which he desired to represent as measures of retaliation. Singular manœuvres were resorted to for the purpose of confirming the opinions which he was desirous to impress upon the world. The imprudence – so, at least, it seems – of Mr. Drake, British resident at Munich, enabled Buonaparte to make his charges against England with some speciousness. This agent of the British Government had maintained a secret correspondence with a person of infamous character, called Mehee de la Touche, who, affecting the sentiments of a Royalist and enemy of Buonaparte, was, in fact, employed by the first consul to trepan Mr. Drake into expressions which might implicate the English ministers, his constituents, and furnish grounds for the accusations which Buonaparte made against them. It certainly appears that Mr. Drake endeavoured, by the medium of de la Touche, to contrive the means of effecting an insurrection of the Royalists, or other enemies of Buonaparte, with whom his country was then at war; and, in doing so, he acted according to the practice of all belligerent powers, who, on all occasions, are desirous to maintain a communication with such malecontents as may exist in the hostile nation. But, unless by the greatest distortion of phrase and expression, there arises out of the letters not the slightest room to believe that Mr. Drake encouraged the party with whom he supposed himself to be in correspondence, to proceed by the mode of assassination, or any others that are incompatible with the law of nations, and acknowledged by civilized governments. The error of Mr. Drake seems to have been, that he was not sufficiently cautious respecting the sincerity of the person with whom he maintained his intercourse. Mr. Spencer Smith, the British envoy at Stuttgard, was engaged in a similar intrigue, which appears also to have been a snare spread for him by the French Government.

Buonaparte failed not to make the utmost use of these pretended discoveries, which were promulgated with great form by Regnier,[69] who held the office of grand judge. He invoked the faith of nations, as if the Duke d'Enghien had been still residing in peaceable neutrality at Ettenheim, and exclaimed against assassination, as if his state dungeons could not have whispered of the death of Pichegru. The complaisant sovereigns of Stuttgard and Munich readily ordered Smith and Drake to leave their courts; and the latter was forced to depart on foot, and by crossroads, to avoid being kidnapped by the French gendarmes.

SIR GEORGE RUMBOLD.

The fate which Mr. Drake dreaded, and perhaps narrowly escaped, actually befell Sir George Rumbold, resident at the free German city of Hamburgh, in the capacity of his British Majesty's envoy to the Circle of Lower Saxony. On the night of the 25th October, he was seized, in violation of the rights attached by the law of nations to the persons of ambassadors, as well as to the territories of neutral countries, by a party of the French troops, who crossed the Elbe for that purpose. The envoy, with his papers, was then transferred to Paris in the capacity of a close prisoner, and thrown into the fatal Temple. The utmost anxiety was excited even amongst Buonaparte's ministers, lest this imprisonment should be intended as a prelude to further violence; and both Fouché and Talleyrand exerted what influence they possessed over the mind of Napoleon, to prevent the proceedings which were to be apprehended. The King of Prussia also extended his powerful interposition; and the result was, that Sir George Rumbold, after two days' imprisonment, was dismissed to England, on giving his parole not to return to Hamburgh. It seems probable, although the *Moniteur* calls this gentleman the worthy associate of Drake and Spencer Smith, and speaks of discoveries amongst his papers which were to enlighten the public on the policy of England, that nothing precise was alleged against him, even to palliate the outrage which the French ruler had committed.

[69] For the First and Second Reports of the Grand Judge to the First Consul, on the alleged Conspiracies against him, see Annual Register, vol. xlvi., pp. 619, 622.

The tenor of Buonaparte's conduct in another instance, towards a British nobleman of distinction, though his scheme was rendered abortive by the sagacity of the noble individual against whom it was directed, is a striking illustration of the species of intrigue practised by the French police, and enables us to form a correct judgment of the kind of evidence upon which Buonaparte brought forward his calumnious accusation against Britain and her subjects.

LORD ELGIN.

The Earl of Elgin, lately ambassador of Great Britain at the Porte, had, contrary to the usage among civilized nations, been seized upon with his family as he passed through the French territory; and during the period of which we are treating, he was residing upon his parole near Pau, in the south of France, as one of the *Détenus*. Shortly after the arrest of Moreau, Georges, &c., an order arrived for committing his lordship to close custody, in reprisal, it was said, of severities exercised in England on the French General Boyer. The truth was, that the affair of General Boyer had been satisfactorily explained to the French Government. In the Parisian papers, on the contrary, his lordship's imprisonment was ascribed to barbarities which he was said to have instigated against the French prisoners of war in Turkey – a charge totally without foundation. Lord Elgin was, however, transferred to the strong castle of Lourdes, situated on the descent of the Pyrenees, where the commandant received him, though a familiar acquaintance, with the reserve and coldness of an entire stranger. Attempts were made by this gentleman and his lieutenant to exasperate the feelings which must naturally agitate the mind of a man torn from the bosom of his family, and committed to close custody in a remote fortress, where the accommodation was as miserable as the castle itself was gloomy, strong, and ominously secluded from the world. They failed, however, in extracting from their prisoner any expressions of violence or impatience, however warranted by the usage to which he was subjected.

After a few days' confinement, a sergeant of the guard delivered to Lord Elgin a letter, the writer of which informed him, that, being his fellow prisoner, and confined in a secluded dungeon, he regretted he could not wait on his lordship, but that when he walked in the court-yard, he could have conversation with him at the window of his room. Justly suspecting this communication, Lord Elgin destroyed the letter; and while he gave the sergeant a louis-d'or, told him, that if he or any of his comrades should again bring him any secret letter or message, he would inform the commandant of the circumstance. Shortly afterwards, the commandant of the fortress, in conversation with Lord Elgin, spoke of the prisoner in question as a person whose health was suffering for want of exercise; and next day his lordship saw the individual walking in the court-yard before his window. He manifested every disposition to engage his lordship in conversation, which Lord Elgin successfully avoided.

A few weeks afterwards, and not till he had been subjected to several acts of severity and vexation, Lord Elgin was permitted to return to Pau. But he was not yet extricated from the nets in which it was the fraudulent policy of the French Government to involve him. The female, who acted as porter to his lordship's lodgings, one morning presented him with a packet, which she said had been left by a woman from the country, who was to call for an answer. With the same prudence which distinguished his conduct at Lourdes, Lord Elgin detained the portress in the apartment, and found that the letter was from the state prisoner already mentioned; that it contained an account of his being imprisoned for an attempt to burn the French fleet; and detailed his plan as one which he had still in view, and which he held out in the colours most likely, as he judged, to interest an Englishman. The packet also covered letters to the Comte d'Artois, and other foreigners of distinction, which Lord Elgin was requested to forward with his best convenience. Lord Elgin thrust the letters into the fire in presence of the portress, and kept her in the room till they were entirely consumed; explaining to her, at the same time, that such letters to him as might be delivered by any other channel than the ordinary post, should be at once sent to the governor of the town. His lordship judged it his farther

duty to mention to the prefect the conspiracy detailed in the letter, under the condition, however, that no steps should be taken in consequence, unless the affair became known from some other quarter.

Some short time after these transactions, and when Buonaparte was appointed to assume the imperial crown, (at which period there was hope of a general act of grace, which should empty the prisons,) Lord Elgin's fellow-captive at Lourdes, being, it seems, a real prisoner, as well as a spy, in hopes of meriting a share in this measure of clemency, made a full confession of all which he had done or designed to do against Napoleon's interest. Lord Elgin was naturally interested in this confession, which appeared in the *Moniteur*, and was a good deal surprised to see that a detail, otherwise minute, bore no reference to, or correspondence regarding, the plan of burning the Brest fleet. He lost no time in writing an account of the particulars we have mentioned to a friend at Paris, by whom they were communicated to Monsieur Fargues, senator of the district of Bearn, whom these plots particularly interested as having his senatorie for their scene. When Lord Elgin's letter was put into his hand, the senator changed countenance, and presently after expressed his high congratulation at what he called Lord Elgin's providential escape. He then intimated, with anxious hesitation, that the whole was a plot to entrap Lord Elgin; that the letters were written at Paris, and sent down to Bearn by a confidential agent, with the full expectation that they would be found in his lordship's possession. This was confirmed by the commandant of Lourdes, with whom Lord Elgin had afterwards an unreserved communication, in which he laid aside the jailor, and resumed the behaviour of a gentleman. He imputed Lord Elgin's liberation to the favourable report which he himself and his lieutenant had made of the calm and dignified manner in which his lordship had withstood the artifices which they had been directed to use, with a view of working on his feelings, and leading him into some intemperance of expression against France or her ruler; which might have furnished a pretext for treating him with severity, and for implicating the British Government in the imprudence of one of her nobles, invested with a diplomatic character.[70]

The above narrative forms a singularly luminous commentary on the practices imputed to Messrs. Drake and Spencer, and subsequently to Sir George Rumbold; nor is it a less striking illustration of the detention of the unfortunate Captain Wright. With one iota less of prudence and presence of mind, Lord Elgin must have been entangled in the snare which was so treacherously spread for him. Had he even engaged in ten minutes conversation with the villanous spy and incendiary, it would have been in the power of such a wretch to represent the import after his own pleasure. Or had his lordship retained the packet of letters even for half an hour in his possession, which he might have most innocently done, he would probably have been seized with them upon his person, and it must in that case have been impossible for him to repel such accusations, as Buonaparte would have no doubt founded on a circumstance so suspicious.

While Napoleon used such perfidious means, in order to attach, if possible, to a British ambassador of such distinguished rank, the charge of carrying on intrigues against his person, the British ministers, in a tone the most manly and dignified, disclaimed the degrading charges which had been circulated against them through Europe. When the topic was introduced by Lord Morpeth[71] into the British House of Commons, by a motion respecting the correspondence of Drake, the Chancellor of the Exchequer replied, "I thank the noble lord for giving me an opportunity to repel, openly and courageously, one of the most gross and most atrocious calumnies ever fabricated in one civilized nation to the prejudice of another. I affirm, that no power has been given, no instruction has been sent, by this government to any individual, to act in a manner contrary to the law of nations. I again affirm,

[70] This account is abstracted from the full details which Lord Elgin did us the honour to communicate in an authenticated manuscript. – S.

[71] Now Earl of Carlisle.

as well in my own name as in that of my colleagues, that we have not authorised any human being to conduct himself in a manner contrary to the honour of this country, or the dictates of humanity."[72]

This explicit declaration, made by British ministers in a situation where detected falsehood would have proved dangerous to those by whom it was practised, is to be placed against the garbled correspondence of which the French possessed themselves, by means violently subversive of the law of nations; and which correspondence was the result of intrigues that would never have existed but for the treacherous suggestions of their own agents.

[72] See Parliamentary Debates, April 16, 1804, vol. ii., p. 131.

CHAPTER XXX

Napoleon meditates a change of title from Chief Consul to Emperor – A Motion to this purpose brought forward in the Tribunate – Opposed by Carnot – Adopted by the Tribunate and Senate – Outline of the New System – Coldly received by the People – Napoleon visits Boulogne, Aix-la-Chapelle, and the Frontiers of Germany, where he is received with respect – The Coronation – Pius VII. is summoned from Rome to perform the Ceremony at Paris – Details – Reflections – Changes that took place in Italy – Napoleon appointed Sovereign of Italy, and Crowned at Milan – Genoa annexed to France.

NAPOLEON MEDITATES A CHANGE OF TITLE.

The time seemed now propitious for Buonaparte to make the last remaining movement in the great game, which he had hitherto played with equal skill, boldness, and success. The opposing factions of the state lay in a great measure prostrate before him. The death of the Duke d'Enghien and of Pichegru had intimidated the Royalists, while the exile of Moreau had left the Republicans without a leader.

These events, while they greatly injured Buonaparte's character as a man, extended, in a like proportion, the idea of his power, and of his determination to employ it to the utmost extremity against whoever might oppose him. This moment, therefore, of general submission and intimidation was the fittest to be used for transmuting the military baton of the first consul into a sceptre, resembling those of the ancient and established sovereignties of Europe; and it only remained, for one who could now dispose of France as he listed, to dictate the form and fashion of the new emblem of his sway.

The title of King most obviously presented itself; but it was connected with the claims of the Bourbons, which it was not Buonaparte's policy to recall to remembrance. That of Emperor implied a yet higher power of sovereignty, and there existed no competitor who could challenge a claim to it. It was a novelty also, and flattered the French love of change; and though, in fact, the establishment of an empire was inconsistent with the various oaths taken against royalty, it was not, in terms, so directly contradictory to them. As the re-establishment of a kingdom, so far it was agreeable to those who might seek, not indeed how to keep their vows, but how to elude, in words at least, the charge of having broken them. To Napoleon's own ear, the word King might sound as if it restricted his power within the limits of the ancient kingdom; while that of Emperor might comprise dominions equal to the wide sweep of ancient Rome herself, and the bounds of the habitable earth alone could be considered as circumscribing their extent.

The main body of the nation being passive or intimidated,[73] there was no occasion to stand upon much ceremony with the constitutional bodies, the members of which were selected and paid by Buonaparte himself, held their posts at his pleasure, had every species of advancement to hope if they promoted his schemes, and every evil, of which the least would be deprivation of office, to expect, should they thwart him.

CHANGE OF TITLE.

On the 30th of April, 1804, Curée,[74] an orator of no great note, (and who was perhaps selected on that very account, that his proposal might be disavowed, should it meet with unexpected

[73] "I advised Buonaparte to make himself master of the crisis, and cause himself to be proclaimed Emperor, in order to terminate all our uncertainties, by the foundation of his dynasty. I knew that his resolution was taken. Would it not have been absurd, on the part of the men of the Revolution, to compromise every thing, in order to defend our principles, while we had nothing further to do but enjoy the reality?" – Fouché, tom. i., p. 268.

[74] Curée was born at St. André, near Lodève, in 1756. When, in 1807, the Tribunate was dissolved, he was appointed a member

opposition,) took the lead in this measure, which was to destroy the slight and nominal remains of a free constitution which France retained under her present form of government. "It was time to bid adieu," he said, "to political illusions. The internal tranquillity of France had been regained, peace with foreign states had been secured by victory. The finances of the country had been restored, its code of laws renovated and re-established. It was time to ascertain the possession of these blessings to the nation in future, and the orator saw no mode of doing this, save rendering the supreme power hereditary in the person and family of Napoleon, to whom France owed such a debt of gratitude. This, he stated, was the universal desire of the army and of the people. He invited the Tribunate, therefore, to give effect to the general wish, and hail Napoleon Buonaparte by the title of Emperor, as that which best corresponded with the dignity of the nation."[75]

The members of the Tribunate contended with each other who should most enhance the merits of Napoleon, and prove, in the most logical and rhetorical terms, the advantages of arbitrary power over the various modifications of popular or limited governments. But one man, Carnot, was bold enough to oppose the full tide of sophistry and adulation. This name is unhappily to be read among the colleagues of Robespierre in the Revolutionary Committee, as well as amongst those who voted for the death of the misused and unoffending Louis XVI.; yet his highly honourable conduct in the urgent crisis now under discussion, shows that the zeal for liberty which led him into such excesses was genuine and sincere; and that, in point of firmness and public spirit, Carnot equalled the ancient patriots whom he aspired to imitate. His speech was as temperate and expressive as it was eloquent. Buonaparte, he admitted, had saved France, and saved it by the assumption of absolute power; but this, he contended, was only the temporary consequence of a violent crisis of the kind to which republics were subject, and the evils of which could only be stemmed by a remedy equally violent. The present head of the government was, he allowed, a dictator; but in the same sense in which Fabius, Camillus, and Cincinnatus, were so of yore, who retired to the condition of private citizens when they had accomplished the purpose for which temporary supremacy had been intrusted to them. The like was to be expected from Buonaparte, who, on entering on the government of the state, had invested it with republican forms, which he had taken a solemn oath to maintain, and which it was the object of Curée's motion to invite him to violate. He allowed that the various republican forms of France had been found deficient in stability, which he contended was owing to the tempestuous period in which they had been adopted, and the excited and irritable temper of men fired with political animosity, and incapable at the moment of steady or philosophical reflection; but he appealed to the United States of America, as an example of a democratical government, equally wise, vigorous, and permanent. He admitted the virtues and talents of the present governor of France, but contended that these attributes could not be rendered hereditary along with the throne. He reminded the Tribunate that Domitian had been the son of the wise Vespasian, Caligula of Germanicus, and Commodus of Marcus Aurelius. Again, he asked, whether it was not wronging Buonaparte's glory to substitute a new title to that which he had rendered so illustrious, and to invite and tempt him to become the instrument of destroying the liberties of the very country to which he had rendered such inestimable services? He then announced the undeniable proposition, that what services soever an individual might render to the state of which he was a member, there were bounds to public gratitude prescribed by honour as well as reason. If a citizen had the means of operating the safety, or restoring the liberty of his country, it could not be termed a becoming recompense to surrender to him that very liberty, the re-establishment of which had been his own work. Or what glory, he asked, could accrue to the selfish individual who should claim the surrender of his country's independence in requital of his services, and desire to convert the state which his talents had preserved into his own private patrimony![76]

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of the Conservative Senate. In 1808, Napoleon bestowed on him the title of Count de Labédissières.

[75] Moniteur, No. 222, An. xii.; Montgaillard, Hist. de France, tom. vi., p. 57.

[76] Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 76; Moniteur, No. 222, An. xii.

Carnot concluded his manly and patriotic speech by declaring, that though he opposed, on grounds of conscience, the alteration of government which had been proposed, he would, nevertheless, should it be adopted by the nation, give it his unlimited obedience. He kept his word accordingly, and retired to a private station, in poverty most honourable to a statesman who had filled the highest offices of the state, and enjoyed the most unlimited power of amassing wealth.[77]

When his oration was concluded, there was a contention for precedence among the time-serving speakers, who were each desirous to take the lead in refuting the reasoning of Carnot. It would be tedious to trace them through their sophistry. The leading argument turned upon the talents of Buonaparte, his services rendered to France, and the necessity there was for acknowledging them by something like a proportionate act of national gratitude. Their eloquence resembled nothing so nearly as the pleading of a wily procuress, who endeavours to persuade some simple maiden, that the services rendered to her by a liberal and gallant admirer, can only be rewarded by the sacrifice of her honour. The speaking (for it could neither be termed debate nor deliberation) was prolonged for three days, after which the motion of Curée was adopted by the Tribunate,[78] without one negative voice, excepting that of the inflexible Carnot.

EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

The Senate, to whom the Tribunate hastened to present their project of establishing despotism under its own undisguised title, hastened to form a senatus consultum, which established the new constitution of France. The outline, – for what would it serve to trace the minute details of a design sketched in the sand, and obliterated by the tide of subsequent events,[79]– was as follows: —

1st, Napoleon Buonaparte was declared hereditary Emperor of the French nation. The empire was made hereditary, first in the male line of the Emperor's direct descendants. Failing these, Napoleon might adopt the sons or grandsons of his brothers, to succeed him in such order as he might point out. In default of such adoptive heirs, Joseph and Louis Buonaparte were, in succession, declared the lawful heirs of the empire. Lucien and Jerome Buonaparte were excluded from this rich inheritance, as they had both disobliged Napoleon by marrying without his consent.

2d, The members of the Imperial family were declared Princes of the Blood, and by the decree of the Senate, the offices of Grand Elector, Archchancellor of the Empire, Archchancellor of State, High Constable, and Great Admiral of the Empire, were established as necessary appendages of the empire. These dignitaries, named of course by the Emperor himself, consisting of his relatives, connexions, and most faithful adherents, formed his Grand Council. The rank of Marshal of the Empire was conferred upon seventeen of the most distinguished generals, comprehending Jourdan, Augereau, and others, formerly zealous Republicans.[80] Duroc was named Grand Marshal of the Palace; Caulaincourt, Master of the Horse; Berthier, Grand Huntsman, and the Comte de Ségur, a nobleman of the old court, Master of Ceremonies.

Thus did republican forms, at length and finally, give way to those of a court; and that nation, which no moderate or rational degree of freedom would satisfy, now contentedly, or at least passively, assumed the yoke of a military despot. France, in 1792, had been like the wild elephant in his fits of fury, when to oppose his course is death; in 1804, she was like the same animal tamed and trained, who kneels down and suffers himself to be mounted by the soldier, whose business is to drive him into the throng of the battle.

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[77] "When a member of the Tribunate, Carnot spoke and voted against the establishment of the empire; but his conduct, open and manly, gave no uneasiness to the administration." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iv., p. 141.

[78] For the decree, passed the Tribunate on the 3d of May, and carried up to the Conservative Senate on the following day, see Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 658.

[79] See Organic Senatus Consultum, May 18, Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 664.

[80] Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 103; Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 663.

Measures were taken, as on former occasions, to preserve appearances, by obtaining, in show at least, the opinion of the people, on this radical change of their system.[81] Government, however, were already confident of their approbation, which, indeed, had never been refused to any of the various constitutions, however inconsistent, that had succeeded each other with such rapidity. Secure on this point, Buonaparte's accession to the empire was proclaimed with the greatest pomp, without waiting to inquire whether the people approved of his promotion or otherwise. The proclamation was coldly received, even by the populace, and excited little enthusiasm.[82] It seemed, according to some writers, as if the shades of D'Enghien and Pichegru had been present invisibly, and spread a damp over the ceremony. The Emperor was recognised by the soldiery with more warmth. He visited the encampments at Boulogne, with the intention apparently, of receiving such an acknowledgment from the troops as was paid by the ancient Franks to their monarchs, when they elevated them on their bucklers. Seated on an iron chair, said to have belonged to King Dagobert, he took his place between two immense camps, and having before him the Channel and the hostile coasts of England. The weather, we have been assured, had been tempestuous, but no sooner had the Emperor assumed his seat, to receive the homage of his shouting host, than the sky cleared, and the wind dropt, retaining just breath sufficient gently to wave the banners. Even the elements seemed to acknowledge the imperial dignity, all save the sea, which rolled as carelessly to the feet of Napoleon as it had formerly done towards those of Canute the Dane.

The Emperor, accompanied with his Empress, who bore her honours both gracefully and meekly, visited Aix-la-Chapelle, and the frontiers of Germany. They received the congratulations of all the powers of Europe, excepting England, Russia, and Sweden, upon their new exaltation; and the German princes, who had every thing to hope and fear from so powerful a neighbour, hastened to pay their compliments to Napoleon in person, which more distant sovereigns offered by their ambassadors.[83]

But the most splendid and public recognition of his new rank was yet to be made, by the formal act of coronation, which, therefore, Napoleon determined should take place with circumstances of solemnity, which had been beyond the reach of any temporal prince, however powerful, for many ages. His policy was often marked by a wish to revive, imitate, and connect his own titles and interest with some ancient observance of former days; as if the novelty of his claims could have been rendered more venerable by investing them with antiquated forms, or as men of low birth, when raised to wealth and rank, are sometimes desirous to conceal the obscurity of their origin under the blaze of heraldic honours. Pope Leo, he remembered, had placed a golden crown on the head of Charlemagne, and proclaimed him Emperor of the Romans. Pius VII., he determined, should do the same for a successor to much more than the actual power of Charlemagne. But though Charlemagne had repaired to Rome to receive inauguration from the hands of the Pontiff of that day, Napoleon resolved that he who now owned the proud, and in Protestant eyes profane, title of Vicar of Christ, should travel to France to perform the coronation of the successful chief, by whom the See of Rome had been more than once humbled, pillaged, and impoverished, but by whom also her power had been re-erected and restored, not only in Italy, but in France itself.

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[81] "In the army the proposed change went down of itself; this is easily accounted for. The dragoons gave the first impulsion. They sent an address to the first consul, in which they alleged that their efforts would be of no service if wicked men should succeed in taking away his life; that the best way to thwart their designs, and to fix their resolute, was to put the imperial crown on his head, and to fix that dignity in his family. After the dragoons came the cuirassiers, then all the corps of infantry, and then the seamen; and lastly, those of the civil orders who wished for the change, followed the example of the army. The spirit spread in an instant to the smallest parishes; the first consul received carriages full of such addresses. A register for the reception of votes was opened in every parish in France. It was the summary of all these votes, laid before the senate, that formed the basis of the *procès-verbal* of inauguration of the Buonaparte family to the imperial dignity." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 69.

[82] "Napoleon's elevation to the imperial dignity met, from all quarters, with the most chilling reception; there were public *fêtes* without animation, and without joy." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 272.

[83] Fouché, tom. ii., p. 280.

Humiliating as the compliance with Buonaparte's request must have seemed to the more devoted Catholics, Pius VII. had already sacrificed, to obtain the Concordat, so much of the power and privileges of the Roman See, that he could hardly have been justified if he had run the risk of losing the advantages of a treaty so dearly purchased, by declining to incur some personal trouble or, it might be termed, some direct self-abasement. The Pope, and the cardinals whom he consulted, implored the illumination of Heaven upon their councils; but it was the stern voice of necessity which assured them, that except at the risk of dividing the Church by a schism, they could not refuse to comply with Buonaparte's requisition. The Pope left Rome on the 5th November. He was every where received on the road with the highest respect, and most profound veneration; the Alpine precipices themselves had been secured by parapets wherever they could expose the venerable Father of the Catholic Church to danger, or even apprehension. Upon the 25th November he met Buonaparte at Fontainbleau;[84] and the conduct of the Emperor Napoleon was as studiously respectful towards him as that of Charlemagne, whom he was pleased to call his predecessor, could have been towards Leo.

THE CORONATION.

On the 2d December, the ceremony of the coronation took place in the ancient cathedral of Notre Dame, with the addition of every ceremony which could be devised to add to its solemnity.[85] Yet we have been told, that the multitude did not participate in the ceremonial with that eagerness which characterises the inhabitants of all capitals, but especially those of Paris, upon similar occasions.[86] They had, within a very few years, seen so many exhibitions, processions and festivals, established on the most discordant principles, which, though announced as permanent and unchangeable, had successively given way to newer doctrines, that they considered the splendid representation before them as an unsubstantial pageant, which would fade away in its turn. Buonaparte himself seemed absent and gloomy, till recalled to a sense of his grandeur by the voice of the numerous deputies and functionaries sent up from all the several departments of France, to witness the coronation.[87] These functionaries had been selected with due attention to their political opinions; and many of them holding offices under the government, or expecting benefits from the Emperor, made up, by the zealous vivacity of their acclamations, for the coldness of the good citizens of Paris.

EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH.

The Emperor took his coronation oath, as usual on such occasions, with his hands upon the Scripture, and in the form in which it was repeated to him by the Pope. But in the act of coronation

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[84] "The Emperor went to meet the Pope on the road to Nemours. To avoid ceremony, the pretext of a hunting party was assumed: the attendants, with his equipages, were in the forest. The Emperor came on horseback, and in a hunting dress, with his retinue. It was at the half moon at the top of the hill that the meeting took place. There the Pope's carriage drew up; he got out at the left door in his white costume; the ground was dirty; he did not like to step upon it with his white silk shoes, but was obliged to do so at last. Napoleon alighted to receive him. They embraced; and the Emperor's carriage, which had been purposely driven up, was advanced a few paces; but men were posted to hold the two doors open; at the moment of getting in, the Emperor took the right door, and an officer of the court handed the Pope to the left, so that they entered the carriage by the two doors at the same time. The Emperor naturally seated himself on the right; and this first step decided, without negotiation, upon the etiquette to be observed during the whole time that the Pope was to remain at Paris." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 73.

[85] "The departure of the Pope from the Tuileries for the Archiepiscopal Palace, was delayed for a short time by a singular cause. Every body was ignorant in France, that it was customary at Rome when the Pope went out to officiate in the great churches, for one of his principal chamberlains to set off a little before him, mounted on an ass, and carrying a large cross, such as is used in processions. It was not till the very moment of departure that this custom was made known. The chamberlain would not, for all the gold in the world, have derogated from the practice, and accepted a nobler animal. All the grooms of the Tuileries were instantly despatched in quest of an ass; and they were fortunate enough to find a tolerably well-looking one, which was hastily caparisoned. The chamberlain rode with a composure which nothing could disturb, through the innumerable multitudes who lined the quays, and could not help laughing at this odd spectacle, which they beheld for the first time." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 75.

[86] "At the ceremony of the coronation, the acclamations, at first extremely few, were afterwards reinforced by the multitude of men in office, (*fonctionnaires*,) who were summoned from all parts of France to be present at the coronation. But upon returning to his palace, Napoleon found cold and silent spectators." – Fouché, tom. ii., p. 285.

[87] Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 142.

itself, there was a marked deviation from the universal custom, characteristic of the man, the age, and the conjuncture. In all other similar solemnities, the crown had been placed on the sovereign's head by the presiding spiritual person, as representing the Deity, by whom princes rule. But not even from the Head of the Catholic Church would Buonaparte consent to receive as a boon the golden symbol of sovereignty, which he was sensible he owed solely to his own unparalleled train of military and civil successes. The crown having been blessed by the Pope, Napoleon took it from the altar with his own hands, and placed it on his brows. He then put the diadem on the head of his Empress, as if determined to show that his authority was the child of his own actions. *Te Deum* was sung; the heralds (for they also had again come into fashion) proclaimed, "that the thrice glorious and thrice august Napoleon, Emperor of the French, was crowned and installed." Thus concluded this remarkable ceremony. Those who remember having beheld it, must now doubt whether they were waking, or whether fancy had framed a vision so dazzling in its appearance, so extraordinary in its origin and progress, and so ephemeral in its endurance.[88]

The very day before the ceremony of coronation, (that is, on the 1st of December,) the Senate had waited upon the Emperor with the result of the votes collected in the departments, which, till that time, had been taken for granted. Upwards of three millions five hundred thousand citizens had given their votes on this occasion; of whom only about three thousand five hundred had declared against the proposition. The vice-president, Neufchateau, declared, "this report was the unbiassed expression of the people's choice. No government could plead a title more authentic."[89]

This was the established language of the day; but when the orator went farther, and mentioned the measure now adopted as enabling Buonaparte to guide into port the vessel of the *Republic*, one would have thought there was more irony than compliment in the expression.

Napoleon replied, by promises to employ the power which the unanimous consent of the Senate, the people, and the army, had conferred upon him, for the advantage of that nation which he himself, writing from fields of battle, had first saluted with the title of the Great. He promised, too, in name of his Dynasty, that his children should long preserve the throne, and be at once the first soldiers in the army of France, and the first magistrates among her citizens.[90]

As every word on such an occasion was scrupulously sifted and examined, it seemed to some that this promise, which Napoleon volunteered in behalf of children who had as yet no existence, intimated a meditated change of consort, since from his present Empress he had no longer any hope of issue. Others censured the prophetic tone in which he announced what would be the fate and conduct of unborn beings, and spoke of a reign, newly commenced, under the title of a Dynasty, which is usually applied to a race of successive princes.

THE IMPERIAL CONSTITUTION.

We pause for a moment to consider the act of popular accession to the new government; because there, if any where, we are to look for something like a legal right, in virtue of which Napoleon might claim obedience. He himself, when pleading his own cause after his fall, repeatedly rests his right

[88] Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 144; Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 680; Savary, tom. ii., p. 75.

[89] Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 685.

[90] "I ascend the throne, to which the unanimous wishes of the senate, the people, and the army have called me, with a heart penetrated with the great destinies of that people, whom, from the midst of camps, I first saluted with the name of Great. From my youth, my thoughts have been solely fixed upon them, and I must add here, that my pleasures and my pains are derived entirely from the happiness or misery of my people. My descendants shall long preserve this throne; in the camps, they will be the first soldiers of the army, sacrificing their lives in the defence of their country. As magistrates, they will never forget that the contempt of the laws, and the confusion of social order, are only the result of the imbecility and unsteadiness of princes. You, senators, whose councils and support have never failed me in the most difficult circumstances; your spirit will be handed down to your successors. Be ever the props and first counsellors of that throne, so necessary to the welfare of this vast empire."

to be considered and treated as a legitimate monarch, upon the fact, that he was called to the crown by the voice of the people.[91]

We will not stop to inquire how the registers, in which the votes of the citizens were enrolled, were managed by the functionaries who had the charge of them; – it is only necessary to state in passing, that these returning officers were in general accessible to the influence of government, and that there was no possibility of instituting any scrutiny into the authenticity of the returns. Neither will we repeat, that instead of waiting for the event of the popular vote, he had accepted of the empire from the Senate, and had been proclaimed Emperor accordingly. Waving those circumstances entirely, let it be remembered, that France is usually reckoned to contain upwards of thirty millions of inhabitants, and that three millions five hundred thousand, only gave their votes. This was not a third part, deducing women and children, of those who had a title to express their opinion, where it was to be held decisive of the greatest change which the state could undergo; and it must be allowed that the authority of so limited a portion of the people is far too small to bind the remainder. We have heard it indeed argued, that the question having been formally put to the nation at large, every one was under an obligation to make a specific reply; and they who did not vote, must be held to have acquiesced in the opinion expressed by the majority of such as did. This argument, being directly contrary to the presumption of law in all similar cases, is not more valid than the defence of the soldier, who, accused of having stolen a necklace from an image of the Virgin, replied to the charge, that he had first asked the Madonna's permission, and, receiving no answer, had taken silence for consent.

In another point of view, it must be remembered that this vote, by which Napoleon claimed the absolute and irredeemable cession of the liberties of France in his favour, was not a jot more solemn than those by which the people had previously sanctioned the Constitutional Monarchy of 1791, the Republic of 1792, the Directory of 1795, and the Consular Government of 1799. Now, either the vote upon all those occasions was binding and permanent, or it was capable of being denied and recalled at the pleasure of the people. If the former was the case, then the people had no right, in 1804, to resume the votes they had given, and the oaths they had sworn, to the first form of government in 1791. The others which they sanctioned in its stead, were in consequence, mere usurpations, and that now attempted the most flagrant of all; since three constitutions, each resting on the popular consent, were demolished, and three sets of oaths broken and discarded, to make room for the present model. Again, if the people, in swearing to one constitution, retained inalienably the right of substituting another whenever they thought proper, the imperial constitution remained at their mercy as much as those that preceded it; and then on what could Buonaparte rest the inviolability of his authority, guarded with such jealous precaution, and designed to descend to his successors, without any future appeal to the people? The dynasty which he supposed himself to have planted, was in that case not the oak-tree which he conceived it, but, held during the good pleasure of a fickle people, rather resembled the thistle, whose unsubstantial crest rests upon the stalk only so long as the wind shall not disturb it.

But we leave these considerations; nor do we stop to inquire how many, amid the three millions and upwards of voters, gave an unwilling signature, which they would have refused if they had dared, nor how many more attached no greater consequence to the act than to a piece of formal complaisance, which every government expected in its turn, and which bound the subject no longer than the ruler had means to enforce his obedience. Another and more formidable objection remains behind, which pervaded the whole pretended surrender by the French nation of their liberties, and rendered it void, null, and without force or effect whatever. It was, from the commencement, what jurists call a *pactum in illicito*: – the people gave that which they had no right to surrender, and Buonaparte accepted that which he had no title to take at their hands. In most instances of despotic

[91] "If I was not a legitimate sovereign, William the Third was a usurper of the throne of England, as he was brought in chiefly by the aid of foreign bayonets. George the First was placed on the throne by a faction, composed of a few nobles. I was called to that of France by the votes of nearly four millions of Frenchmen." – Napoleon, *Voice*, &c., vol. ii., p. 113.

usurpation – we need only look at the case of Cæsar – the popular party have been made the means of working out their own servitude; the government being usurped by some demagogue who acted in their name, and had the art to make their own hands the framers of their own chains. But though such consent on the part of the people, elicited from an excess of partial confidence or of gratitude, may have rendered such encroachments on the freedom of the state more easy, it did not and could not render it in any case more legal. The rights of a free people are theirs to enjoy, but not theirs to alienate or surrender. The people are in this respect like minors, to whom law assures their property, but invests them with no title to give it away or consume it; the national privileges are an estate entailed from generation to generation, and they can neither be the subject of gift, exchange, nor surrender, by those who enjoy the usufruct or temporary possession of them. No man is lord even of his person, to the effect of surrendering his life or limbs to the mercy of another; the contract of the Merchant of Venice would now be held null from the beginning in any court of justice in Europe. But far more should the report of 1804, upon Buonaparte's election, be esteemed totally void, since it involved the cession on the part of the French people of that which ought to have been far more dear to them, and held more inalienable, than "the pound of flesh nearest the heart,"[92] or the very heart itself.

As the people of France had no right to resign their own liberties, and that of their posterity, for ever, so Buonaparte could not legally avail himself of their prodigal and imprudent cession. If a blind man give a piece of gold by mistake instead of a piece of silver, he who receives it acquires no legal title to the surplus value. If an ignorant man enter unwittingly into an illegal compact, his signature, though voluntary, is not binding upon him. It is true, that Buonaparte had rendered the highest services to France by his Italian campaigns in the first instance, and afterwards by that wonderful train of success which followed his return from Egypt. Still the services yielded by a subject to his native land, like the duty paid by a child to a parent, cannot render him creditor of the country, beyond the amount which she has legal means of discharging. If France had received the highest benefits from Buonaparte, she had in return raised him as high as any subject could be advanced, and had, indeed, in her reckless prodigality of gratitude, given, or suffered him to assume, the very despotic authority, which this compact of which we treat was to consolidate and sanction under its real name of Empire. Here, therefore, we close the argument; concluding the pretended vote of the French people to be totally null, both as regarding the subjects who yielded their privileges, and the emperor who accepted of their surrender. The former could not give away rights which it was not lawful to resign, the latter could not accept an authority which it was unlawful to exercise.

An apology, or rather a palliation of Buonaparte's usurpation, has been set up by himself and his more ardent admirers, and we are desirous of giving to it all the weight which it shall be found to deserve. They have said, and with great reason, that Buonaparte, viewed in his general conduct, was no selfish usurper, and that the mode in which he acquired his power was gilded over by the use which he made of it. This is true; for we will not under-rate the merits which Napoleon thus acquired, by observing that shrewd politicians have been of opinion, that sovereigns who have only a questionable right to their authority, are compelled, were it but for their own sakes, to govern in such a manner as to make the country feel its advantage in submitting to their government. We grant willingly, that in much of his internal administration Buonaparte showed that he desired to have no advantage separate from that of France; that he conceived her interests to be connected with his own glory; that he expended his wealth in ornamenting the empire, and not upon objects more immediately personal to himself. We have no doubt that he had more pleasure in seeing treasures of art added to the Museum, than in hanging them on the walls of his own palace; and that he spoke truly, when asserting that he grudged Josephine the expensive plants with which she decorated her residence at Malmaison, because her taste interfered with the prosperity of the public botanical garden of Paris.[93]

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[92] Merchant of Venice, act iv., scene 1.

[93] Las Cases, tom. vii., p. 120.

We allow, therefore, that Buonaparte fully identified himself with the country which he had rendered his patrimony; and that while it should be called by his name, he was desirous of investing it with as much external splendour, and as much internal prosperity as his gigantic schemes were able to compass. No doubt it may be said, so completely was the country identified with its ruler, that as France had nothing but what belonged to its Emperor, he was in fact improving his own estate when he advanced her public works, and could no more be said to lose sight of his own interest, than a private gentleman does, who neglects his garden to ornament his park. But it is not fair to press the motives of human nature to their last retreat, in which something like a taint of self-interest may so often be discovered. It is enough to reply, that the selfishness which embraces the interests of a whole kingdom, is of a kind so liberal, so extended, and so refined, as to be closely allied to patriotism; and that the good intentions of Buonaparte towards that France, over which he ruled with despotic sway, can be no more doubted, than the affections of an arbitrary father whose object it is to make his son prosperous and happy, to which he annexes as the only condition, that he shall be implicitly obedient to every tittle of his will. The misfortune is, however, that arbitrary power is in itself a faculty, which, whether exercised over a kingdom, or in the bosom of a family, is apt to be used with caprice rather than judgment, and becomes a snare to those who possess it, as well as a burden to those over whom it extends. A father, for example, seeks the happiness of his son, while he endeavours to assure his fortunes, by compelling him to enter into a mercenary and reluctant marriage; and Buonaparte conceived himself to be benefiting as well as aggrandizing France, when, preferring the splendour of conquest to the blessings of peace, he led the flower of her young men to perish in foreign fields, and finally was the means of her being delivered up, drained of her population,[94] to the mercy of the foreign invaders, whose resentment his ambition had provoked.

CHANGES IN ITALY.

Such are the considerations which naturally arise out of Napoleon's final and avowed assumption of the absolute power, which he had in reality possessed and exercised ever since he had been created First Consul for life. It was soon after made manifest, that France, enlarged and increased in strength as she had been under his auspices, was yet too narrow a sphere for his domination. Italy afforded the first illustration of his grasping ambition.[95]

The northern states of Italy had followed the example of France through all her change of models. They had become republican in a directorial form, when Napoleon's sword conquered them from the Austrians; had changed to an establishment similar to the consular, when that was instituted in Paris by the 18th Brumaire; and were now destined to receive, as a king, him who had lately accepted and exercised with regal authority the office of their president.

The authorities of the Italian (late Cisalpine) republic had a prescient guess of what was expected of them. A deputation[96] appeared at Paris, to declare the absolute necessity which they felt, that their government should assume a monarchical and hereditary form. On the 17th March, 1805, they obtained an audience of the Emperor, to whom they intimated the unanimous desire of their countrymen, that Napoleon, founder of the Italian Republic, should be monarch of the Italian

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[94] "The Emperor constantly insisted on subjecting the whole nation to the laws of the conscription. 'The conscription,' he said, 'is the root of a nation, its moral purification, the real foundation of its habits. Organized, built up in this way, the French people might have defied the world, and might with justice have renewed the saying of the proud Gauls: 'If the sky should fall, we will keep it up with our lances.'" – Las Cases, tom. vii., p. 98.

[95] "We soon perceived that Napoleon meditated a great diversion. When he mentioned in council his idea of going to be crowned King of Italy, we all told him he would provoke a new continental war. 'I must have battles and triumphs,' replied he. And yet he did not relax his preparations for the invasion of England. One day, upon my objecting to him that he could not make war at the same time, against England and against all Europe, he replied, 'I may fail by sea, but not by land; besides, I shall be able to strike the blow before the old coalition machines are ready. The people of the old school (*têtes à perruques*) understand nothing about it, and the kings have neither activity nor decision of character. I do not fear old Europe." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 285.

[96] Consisting of M. Melzi, vice-president of the Italian republic; M. Mareschalchi, ambassador of that republic; and the representatives of its principal bodies.

Kingdom. He was to have power to name his successor, such being always a native of France or Italy. With an affectation of jealous independence, however, the authors of this "humble petition and advice" stipulated, that the crowns of France and Italy should never, save in the present instance, be placed on the head of the same monarch. Napoleon might, during his life, devolve the sovereignty of Italy on one of his descendants, either natural or adopted; but it was anxiously stipulated, that such delegation should not be made during the period while France continued to occupy the Neapolitan territories, the Russians Corfu, and the British Malta.[97]

Buonaparte granted the petition of the Italian states, and listened with indulgence to their jealous scruples. He agreed with them, that the separation of the crowns of France and Italy, which might be useful to their descendants, would be in the highest degree dangerous to themselves; and therefore he consented to bear the additional burden which their love and confidence imposed, at least until the interest of his Italian subjects should permit him to place the crown on a younger head, who, animated by his spirit, should, he engaged, "be ever ready to sacrifice his life for the people over whom he should be called to reign, by Providence, by the constitution of the country, and by the will of Napoleon."[98] In announcing this new acquisition to the French Senate, Buonaparte made use of an expression so singularly audacious, that to utter it required almost as much courage as to scheme one of his most daring campaigns. "The power and majesty of the French empire," he said, "are surpassed by the moderation which presides over her political transactions."

CORONATION AT MILAN.

Upon the 11th April, Napoleon, with his Empress, set off to go through the form of coronation, as King of Italy.[99] The ceremony almost exactly resembled that by which he had been inaugurated Emperor. The ministry of the Pope, however, was not employed on this second occasion, although, as Pius VII. was then on his return to Rome, he could scarcely have declined officiating, if he had been requested by Buonaparte to take Milan in his route for that purpose. Perhaps it was thought too harsh to exact from the Pontiff the consecration of a King of Italy, whose very title implied a possibility that his dominion might be one day extended, so as to include the patrimony of Saint Peter. Perhaps, and we rather believe it was the case, some cause of dissatisfaction had already occurred betwixt Napoleon and Pius VII. However this may be, the ministry of the Archbishop of Milan was held sufficient for the occasion, and it was he who blessed the celebrated iron crown, said to have girded the brows of the ancient Kings of the Lombards. Buonaparte, as in the ceremony at Paris, placed the ancient emblem on his head with his own hands, assuming and repeating aloud the haughty motto attached to it by its ancient owners, *Dieu me l'a donné; Gare qui la touche*. "God has given it me: Let him beware who touches it."[100]

The new kingdom was, in all respects, modelled on the same plan with the French empire. An order, called "of the Iron Crown," was established on the footing of that of the Legion of Honour. A large French force was taken into Italian pay, and Eugene Beauharnois,[101] the son of Josephine by her

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[97] See official proceedings relative to the assumption of the crown of Italy by Napoleon, emperor of the French. —*Annual Register*, vol. xlvii., p. 720.

[98] "I shall keep this crown; but only so long as your interests shall require; and I shall with pleasure see the moment arrive, when I can place it on the head of a younger person, who, animated by my spirit, may continue my work, and be on all occasions ready to sacrifice his person and interests to the security and the happiness of the people over whom Providence, the constitutions of the kingdom, and my wish, shall have called him to reign."

[99] "Napoleon remained three weeks at Turin, and was in that city when the Pope arrived there. His holiness had lodgings provided for him in the royal palace; the Emperor went thither to see him, and set out the next day by Asti for Alexandria; the Pope took the road to Casal on his way back to Rome. At Alexandria the Emperor inspected the immense works which, by his direction, were carrying on there. He held a review on the field of Marengo; he put on that day the same coat and laced hat which he wore in the engagement; the coat was quite moth-eaten." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 80.

[100] See official account of the coronation of the Emperor of the French, as king of Italy, at Milan, 26th May, 1805. – Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 723. See also Botta, Storia d'Italia, tom. iv., p. 209; Jomini, Vie Politique, tom. ii., p. 86.

[101] "After the ceremony of the coronation, the Emperor went in procession to the Italian senate, where he invested Prince Eugene

former marriage, who enjoyed and merited the confidence of his father-in-law, was created viceroy, and appointed to represent, in that character, the dignity of Napoleon.[102]

Napoleon did not leave Italy without further extension of his empire. Genoa, once the proud and the powerful, resigned her independence, and her Doge presented to the Emperor a request that the Ligurian republic, laying down her separate rights, should be considered in future as a part of the French nation. It was but lately that Buonaparte had declared to the listening Senate, that the boundaries of France were permanently fixed, and should not be extended for the comprehension of future conquests. It is farther true, that, by a solemn alliance with France, Genoa had placed her arsenals and harbours at the disposal of the French government; engaged to supply her powerful ally with six thousand sailors, and ten sail of the line, to be equipped at her own expense; and that her independence, or such a nominal share of that inestimable privilege as was consistent with her connexion with this formidable power, had been guaranteed by France. But neither the charge of inconsistency with his own public declarations, nor consideration of the solemn treaty acknowledging the Ligurian republic, prevented Napoleon from availing himself of the pretext afforded by the petition of the Doge. It was convenient to indulge the city and government of Genoa in their wish to become an integral part of the Great Nation.[103] Buonaparte was well aware, that, by recognising them as a department of France, he was augmenting the jealousy of Russia and Austria, who had already assumed a threatening front towards him; but, as he visited the splendid city of the Dorias, and saw its streets of marble palaces, ascending from and surrounding its noble harbours, he was heard to exclaim, that such a possession was well worth the risks of war.[104] The success of one mighty plan only induced him to form another; and while he was conscious that he was the general object of jealousy and suspicion to Europe, Napoleon could not refrain from encroachments, which necessarily increased and perpetuated such hostile sentiments towards him.[105]

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with the viceroyalty of Italy." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 80.

[102] "During Napoleon's stay at Milan, he directed his attention towards the embellishment of that city, with the same zeal as if it had been Paris. He had always regretted that none of the governments of that country had undertaken the completion of the cathedral of Milan, the largest edifice of the kind, after St. Peter's at Rome. He ordered the works to be immediately resumed, forbidding them to be interrupted on any pretext whatever, and created a special fund for defraying the expenses. To him the Milanese are indebted for the completion of that noble structure." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 81.

[103] "The Doge and Senate had come to Milan to beg the Emperor to accept them, and to incorporate them with the French empire. I have no doubt that this resolution had been somewhat assisted. Such was the state of this unfortunate republic, that its inhabitants were almost famishing: the English closely blockaded it by sea; the French *douanes* cooped it up by land: it had no territory, and could not, without difficulty, procure wherewithal to subsist. Add to this, that whenever a quarrel took place in Italy, the first thing was to send it a garrison, which it had not the means of refusing. It had, therefore, all the inconveniences arising from a union with France, without possessing any of the advantages: it determined, therefore, to make application to be incorporated with the empire." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 83. See also Botta, tom. iv., p. 214; Dumas, Précis des Evénemens Militaires; and Jomini, Vie Politique, tom. ii., p. 87.

[104] "In order to show himself to his new subjects, Napoleon traversed his kingdom of Italy. Upon seeing the magnificent city of Genoa and its picturesque environs, he exclaimed – 'This is indeed worth a war.'" – Fouché, tom. i., p. 286.

[105] "All the organisations of Italy were provisional. Napoleon wished to make a single power of that great peninsula; for which reason he reserved the iron crown to himself, in order to keep in his own hands the direction of the different people of Italy. He preferred uniting Genoa, Rome, Tuscany and Piedmont to the empire, rather than to the kingdom of Italy, because the people of those countries preferred it; because the imperial influence would be more powerful; because it was a means of calling a great number of the inhabitants of those countries into France, and of sending a number of French thither in exchange; and because it would bring the conscripts and sailors of those provinces to strengthen the French regiments, and the crews of Toulon." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. ii., p. 234.

CHAPTER XXXI

Napoleon addresses a Second Letter to the King of England personally – Answered by the British Secretary of State to Talleyrand – Alliance formed betwixt Russia and England – Prussia keeps aloof, and the Emperor Alexander visits Berlin – Austria prepares for War, and marches an Army into Bavaria – Her impolicy in prematurely commencing Hostilities, and in her Conduct to Bavaria – Unsoldierlike Conduct of the Austrian General Mack – Buonaparte is joined by the Electors of Bavaria and Wirtemberg, and the Duke of Baden – Skilful Manœuvres of the French Generals, and successive losses of the Austrians – Napoleon violates the Neutrality of Prussia, by marching through Anspach and Bareuth – Further Losses of the Austrian Leaders, and consequent Disunion among them – Mack is cooped up in Ulm – Issues a formidable Declaration on the 16th October – and surrenders on the following day – Fatal Results of this Man's Poltroonery, want of Skill, and probable Treachery.

LETTER TO THE KING OF ENGLAND.

Buonaparte, Consul, had affected to give a direct testimony of his desire to make peace, by opening a communication immediately and personally with the King of Great Britain. Buonaparte, Emperor, had, according to his own interpretation of his proceedings, expiated by his elevation all the crimes of the Revolution, and wiped out for ever the memory of those illusory visions of liberty and equality, which had alarmed such governments as continued to rest their authority on the ancient basis of legitimacy. He had, in short, according to his own belief, preserved in his system all that the Republic had produced of good, and done away all the memory of that which was evil.

With such pretensions, to say nothing of his absolute power, he hastened to claim admission among the acknowledged Princes of Europe; and a second time (2d January 1805,) by a letter addressed to King George III., personally, under the title of "Sir my Brother," endeavoured to prove, by a string of truisms, – on the preference of a state of peace to war, and on the reciprocal grandeur of France and England, both advanced to the highest pitch of prosperity, – that the hostilities between the nations ought to be ended.[106]

We have already stated the inconveniences which must necessarily attach to a departure from the usual course of treating between states, and to the transference of the discussions usually intrusted to inferior and responsible agents, to those who are themselves at the head of the nation. But if

[106] "Sir and Brother, – Called to the throne of France by Providence, and by the suffrages of the senate, the people, and the army, my first sentiment is a wish for peace. France and England abuse their prosperity. They may contend for ages; but do their Governments well fulfil the most sacred of their duties, and will not so much blood, shed uselessly and without a view to any end, condemn them in their own consciences? I consider it as no disgrace to make the first step. I have, I hope, sufficiently proved to the world, that I fear none of the chances of war; it, besides, presents nothing that I need to fear: peace is the wish of my heart, but war has never been inconsistent with my glory. I conjure your majesty not to deny yourself the happiness of giving peace to the world, nor to leave that sweet satisfaction to your children; for certainly there never was a more fortunate opportunity, nor a moment more favourable, to silence all the passions, and listen only to the sentiments of humanity and reason. This moment once lost, what end can be assigned to a war which all my efforts will not be able to terminate! Your majesty has gained more within ten years, both in territory and riches, than the whole extent of Europe. Your nation is at the highest point of prosperity; what can it hope from war? To form a coalition with some powers of the continent? The continent will remain tranquil: a coalition can only increase the preponderance and continental greatness of France. To renew intestine troubles? The times are no longer the same. To destroy our finances? Finances founded on a flourishing agriculture can never be destroyed. To take from France her colonies? The colonies are to France only a secondary object; and does not your majesty already possess more than you know how to preserve? If your majesty would but reflect, you must perceive that the war is without an object, without any presumable result to yourself. Alas! what a melancholy prospect to cause two nations to fight merely for the sake of fighting. The world is sufficiently large for our two nations to live in it, and reason is sufficiently powerful to discover means of reconciling every thing, when the wish for reconciliation exists on both sides. I have, however, fulfilled a sacred duty, and one which is precious to my heart. I trust your majesty will believe in the sincerity of my sentiments, and my wish to give you every proof of it." – Napoleon.

Napoleon had been serious in desiring peace, and saw any reason for directly communicating with the English King rather than with the English Government, he ought to have made his proposal something more specific than a string of general propositions, which, affirmed on the one side, and undisputed on the other, left the question between the belligerent powers as undecided as formerly. The question was, not whether peace was desirable, but on what terms it was offered, or could be obtained. If Buonaparte, while stating, as he might have been expected to do, that the jealousies entertained by England of his power were unjust, had agreed, that for the tranquillity of Europe, the weal of both nations, and the respect in which he held the character of the monarch whom he addressed, Malta should remain with Britain in perpetuity, or for a stipulated period, it would have given a serious turn to his overture, which was at present as vague in its tendency, as it was unusual in the form.

The answer to his letter, addressed by the British Secretary of State[107] to M. Talleyrand, declared, that Britain could not make a precise reply to the proposal of peace intimated in Napoleon's letter, until she had communicated with her allies on the continent, and in particular with the Emperor of Russia.

These expressions indicated, what was already well known to Buonaparte, the darkening of another continental storm, about to be directed against his power. On this occasion, Russia was the soul of the confederacy. Since the death of the unfortunate Paul had placed that mighty country under the government of a wise and prudent prince, whose education had been sedulously cultivated, and who had profited in an eminent degree by that advantage, her counsels had been dignified, wise, and moderate. She had offered her mediation betwixt the belligerent powers, which, accepted willingly by Great Britain, had been somewhat haughtily declined by France, whose ruler was displeased, doubtless, to find that power in the hands of a sharp-sighted and sagacious sovereign, which, when lodged in those of Paul, he might reckon upon as at his own disposal, through his influence over that weak and partial monarch.

THE KING OF SWEDEN.

From this time, there was coldness betwixt the French and Russian Governments. The murder of the Duke d'Enghien increased the misunderstanding. The Emperor of Russia was too high-spirited to view this scene of perfidy and violence in silence; and as he not only remonstrated with Buonaparte himself, but appealed to the German Diet on the violation of the territories of the Empire,[108] Napoleon, unused to have his actions censured and condemned by others, how powerful soever, seems to have regarded the Emperor Alexander with personal dislike.[109] Russia and Sweden, and their monarchs, became the subject of satire and ridicule in the *Moniteur*;[110] and, as every one knew, such arrows were never discharged without Buonaparte's special authority. The latter prince withdrew his ambassador from Paris, and in a public note, delivered to the French envoy at Stockholm, expressed his surprise at the "indecent and ridiculous insolences which Monsieur *Napoleon Buonaparte* had permitted to be inserted in the *Moniteur*."[111] Gustavus was, it is true, of an irregular and violent temper, apt to undertake plans, to the achievement of which the strength of his kingdom was

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[107] Lord Mulgrave. For the letter see Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 616.

[108] See Note presented to M. Talleyrand, by M. d'Oubril, relative to the seizure of the Duke d'Enghien, April 20, 1804; and also Note of the Minister Resident of Russia, communicated to the Diet of Ratisbon, May 5; Annual Register, vol. xlvi., pp. 642, 654.

[109] "As to the Emperor of Russia, he possesses wit, grace, information, is fascinating; but he is not to be trusted; he is a true Greek of the Lower Empire. Would you believe what I had to discuss with him? He maintained that inheritance was an abuse of monarchy, and I had to spend more than an hour, and employ all my eloquence and logic in proving to him that this right constituted the peace and happiness of the people. It may be that he was mystifying; for he is cunning, false, and expert. If I die in St. Helena, he will be my real heir in Europe." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. i., p. 300.

[110] See Moniteur, 14th August, 1804.

[111] See Note presented by order of the King of Sweden to. M. Caillard, the French Chargé d'Affaires at Stockholm, Sept. 7, 1804; Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 697.

inadequate;[112] yet he would scarcely have expressed himself with so little veneration for the most formidable authority in Europe, had he not been confident in the support of the Czar. In fact, on the 10th of January, 1805, the King of Sweden had signed a treaty of close alliance with Russia; and, as a necessary consequence, on the 31st of October following, he published a declaration of war against France, in terms personally insulting to Napoleon.[113]

Russia and England, in the meantime, had engaged in an alliance, the general purpose of which was to form a league upon the continent, to compel the French Government to consent to the re-establishment of the balance of Europe. The objects proposed were briefly the independence of Holland and Switzerland; the evacuation of Hanover and the north of Germany by the French troops; the restoration of Piedmont to the King of Sardinia; and the complete evacuation of Italy by the French.[114] These were gigantic schemes, for which suitable efforts were to be made. Five hundred thousand men were to be employed; and Britain, besides affording the assistance of her forces by sea and land, was to pay large subsidies for supporting the armies of the coalition.

Great Britain and Russia were the animating sources of this new coalition against France; but it was impossible, considering the insular situation of the first of those powers, and the great distance of the second from the scene of action, that they alone, without the concurrence of the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, should be able to assail France with any prospect of making a successful impression. Every effort, therefore, was used to awaken those states to a sense of the daily repeated encroachments of Buonaparte, and of the extreme danger to which they, were respectively exposed by the rapidly increasing extent of his empire.

PRUSSIA.

But since the unsuccessful campaign of the year 1792, Prussia had observed a cautious and wary neutrality. She had seen, not perhaps without secret pleasure, the humiliation of Austria, her natural rival in Germany, and she had taken many opportunities to make acquisition of petty objects of advantage, in consequence of the various changes upon the continent; so that she seemed to find her own interest in the successes of France. It is imagined, also, that Buonaparte had found some of her leading statesmen not altogether inaccessible to influence of a different kind, by the liberal exercise of which he was enabled to maintain a strong interest in the Prussian councils.[115] But the principles of these ministers were far from being shared by the nation at large. The encroachments on the German Empire intimately concerned the safety of Prussia, and the nation saw, in the decay of the Austrian influence, the creation and increase of a strong German party in favour of France, to whom Bavaria, Wirtemberg, and almost all the petty princes upon the Rhine, and its vicinity, began now to look up with the devotion and reverence which had hitherto been paid to the great states of Austria and Prussia. The subjects of the Great Frederick also remembered his numerous victories, and, proud of the army which he had created and bequeathed to his successor, felt neither apprehension nor unwillingness at the thought of measuring forces with the Dictator of Europe. The councils, therefore, of Prussia were divided; and though those which were favourable to France prevailed so far as to prevent her immediately becoming a member of the coalition, yet, by increasing her army to the war establishment, and marching forces towards the country which appeared about to become the scene of hostilities, Prussia gave plain intimation that the continuance of her neutrality depended upon the events of war.

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[112] "On my accession to the sovereignty, Gustavus declared himself my great antagonist; it might have been supposed, that nothing short of renewing the exploits of the great Gustavus Adolphus would have satisfied him. He ran over the whole of Germany, for the purpose of stirring up enemies against me. At the time of the catastrophe of the Duke d'Enghien, he swore he would exact vengeance in person; and at a later period, he insolently sent back the black eagle to the King of Prussia, because the latter had accepted my Legion of Honour." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. v., p. 168.

[113] See Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 717.

[114] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 82.

[115] Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 165.

Oct. 25.

To animate her councils, if possible, with a more decided spirit, Alexander visited the court of Berlin in person. He was received, with the utmost distinction, and both the King of Prussia, and his beautiful and interesting queen, gave manifest tokens of the share they took personally in the success of the alliance. An oath was taken by the two sovereigns at the tomb of the Great Frederick, by which they are said to have devoted themselves to the liberation of Germany,[116]– a vow which, though at a distant period, they amply redeemed. Still, whatever might be the personal opinions of the King of Prussia, the counsels of Haugwitz continued to influence his Cabinet; and the Emperor withdrew from Berlin, to place himself at the head of his troops, while the Prussian monarch, assembling an army of observation, assumed the menacing air of a neutral who feels himself able to turn the scale in favour of either of the belligerent powers at his pleasure. This was not the moment for Buonaparte to take offence at these demonstrations, as the doing so might convert a doubtful friend into an avowed and determined enemy. But the dubious policy of Prussia was not forgotten, – it was carefully treasured in Napoleon's memory, as that for which she was to be called to account at a future period. In the meantime, he had the full advantage of her hesitating councils and doubtful neutrality.

Austria was more accessible to the application of the allies. Notwithstanding the disasters of the last two wars, the loss of a large portion of Italy, the disasters of Bellegarde, Alvinzi, and Wurmser, and the disastrous defeats of Marengo and Hohenlinden, the extent and military character of her population, amongst whom a short interval of peace was sufficient to recruit the losses of the most bloody war, – above all, the haughty determination of a Cabinet remarkable for the tenacity with which they retain and act upon the principles which they have once adopted, induced her Government to accede to the alliance betwixt Russia and Great Britain. She had not forgotten the successes which her generals and armies had obtained when fighting by the side of Suwarrow, and might hope to see once more renewed the victories of Trebia and of Novi. She therefore increased her force in every quarter; and while the Archduke Charles took the command of eighty thousand men in Italy, on which country Austria always kept a wishful eye, eighty thousand more, destined to act upon the Lech, and it was hoped upon the Rhine, were placed under the charge of General Mack, whose factitious and ill-merited reputation had, unfortunately for Austria, remained unabated, notwithstanding his miserable Neapolitan campaign in 1799. The Archduke Ferdinand, a prince of great courage and hopes, was the nominal commander of the last-mentioned army, while the real authority was lodged in this old and empty professor of tactics. To conclude this detail of preparation, the Archduke John was appointed to command in the Tyrol.[117]

It remained only to try the event of negotiation, ere finally proceeding to military extremities. It was not difficult to state the causes of the war, which was now about to break out anew. By the peace of Luneville, finally concluded between Austria and France, the independence of the Italian, Helvetian, and Batavian republics had been stipulated; but instead of such terms being complied with, Napoleon, rendering himself Grand Mediator of Switzerland and King of Italy, had at the same time filled Holland with troops, and occupied the whole three countries in such a manner, as made them virtually, and almost avowedly, the absolute dependencies of France.

Complaints on these heads, warmly urged by Austria, were sharply answered by France, who in her turn accused Austria of want of confidence, and of assuming arms in the midst of peace.[118] The Emperor of Russia interfered, and sent a special ambassador to Paris, with the purpose of coming, if possible, to an amicable accommodation, which might even yet preserve the tranquillity of Europe. But ere Novosiltzoff had reached his place of destination, the union of Genoa with the French empire

[116] Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 179; Jomini, tom. ii., p. 137.

[117] Jomini, Vie Politique et Militaire, tom. ii., pp. 97-101.

[118] See two Notes, delivered on the 13th and 16th April, by M. de Talleyrand to Count Cobentzel, Annual Register, vol. xlvii., pp. 644, 648.

was announced; an encroachment which, joined to Napoleon's influence in Switzerland, rendered the whole north-western frontier of Italy completely open for the march of French armies, and precluded the possible hope of that fine country assuming any character of independence, even if, at a future time, its crown should be vested in a person different from the ruler of France.[119]

AUSTRIA – BAVARIA.

Upon hearing of this new usurpation, made at the very time when Napoleon's steps towards the aggrandisement of his power were under challenge, Russia countermanded her ambassador; and Austria, after the exchange of some more angry notes, began her daring enterprise by marching a large army upon Bavaria.[120] It would have been better, probably, had the Emperor Francis suspended this decisive measure, and continued to protract, if possible, the negotiation, until the Russian auxiliary armies, two in number, of fifty thousand men each, could have advanced to the assistance of their allies; or until a sense of the approaching crisis had removed the indecision in the Prussian councils, and induced the King to join the coalition. Either of these events, and more especially both, might have given a very different turn to this disastrous campaign.[121]

But Austria was not alone to be blamed for precipitating the war – she exposed herself to censure by the mode in which she conducted it. Occupying Bavaria with numerous forces, the elector was required to join the confederacy. Maximilian of Bavaria was not disinclined to unite his forces with those which proposed for their object the defence of Germany; but he pleaded that his son, now travelling in France, would be made responsible, should he join the coalition. "On my knees," he said, in a letter [September 8] to the Emperor Francis, "I implore you for permission to remain neutral."[122] His reasonable request was rejected, and the elector was required to join the confederacy with a violence of urgency, both unjust and impolitic. He was farther given to understand, that his troops would not be permitted to remain as a separate army, but must be incorporated with those of Austria. These were terms so harsh, as to render even the precarious alliance of France preferable to submission. Maximilian, retreating from his capital of Munich to Wurtzburg, and withdrawing his army into Franconia, again endeavoured to negotiate for neutrality. It was again imperiously refused; and while the Austrian Government insisted that the elector should join them with his whole forces, the Austrian troops were permitted to conduct themselves as in an enemy's country; requisitions were raised, and other measures resorted to, tending to show that the invaders remembered the ancient grudge which had so long subsisted between Bavaria and Austria. It was natural that the Bavarian prince, incensed at this treatment, should regard the allies as enemies, and wait the arrival of the French as liberators.

UNSOLDIERLIKE CONDUCT OF MACK.

The military manœuvres of the Austrian army were not more able, than her conduct towards the neutral state of Bavaria was politic or just. There are two errors, equally fatal, into which a general of middling or inferior talent is apt to fall, when about to encounter with an adversary of genius. If he mixes presumption with his weakness of parts, he will endeavour to calculate the probable motions of his antagonist; and having, as he supposes, ascertained what they are likely to be, will attempt to

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[119] Mémoires de Savary, tom. ii., p. 123; Jomini, tom. ii., p. 93.

[120] "The public, who had been solely occupied with the projected invasion of England, saw, with astonishment, in the *Moniteur* of the 21st September, the announcement of the invasion of Bavaria by Austria, without any rupture or previous declaration of war. What a fortunate diversion for the French Emperor! It saved his maritime honour, and probably preserved him from a disaster which would have destroyed both himself and his ancient empire. The army hastened to abandon the Boulogne coast. It was a magnificent one, and felt the highest enthusiasm at quitting a state of irksome inaction to march on towards the Rhine." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 291.

[121] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 95.

[122] "I pledge," he added, "my most sacred word to your majesty, that my troops shall not, in the smallest degree, interfere with the operations of your army. It is a father, a prey to the most frightful despair, that applies for mercy in favour of his son." – See Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 710.

anticipate and interrupt them, and thereby expose himself to some signal disaster, by mistaking the principle on which his enemy designs to act. Or, if intimidated by the reputation of the commander opposed to him, such a general is apt to remain passive and irresolute, until the motions of the enemy make his purpose evident, at a time when it is probably impossible to prevent his attaining it. It was left for General Mack,[123] within the space of a very brief campaign, to unite both characters; and fall first into errors of rashness and presumption, afterwards into those of indecision and cowardice.

It required little experience to know, that, after two singularly unfortunate wars, every precaution should have been taken to bring the Austrian troops into contact with their enemy, under such advantages of position and numbers as might counterbalance the feelings of discouragement with which the bravest soldiers must be affected, in consequence of a course of defeat and disaster so uniform, that there seemed to be a fate in it. In this point of view, the Austrian armies ought to have halted on their own territories, where the river Inn forms a strong and excellent line of defence, extending betwixt the Tyrol and the Danube, into which the Inn empties itself at Passau. Supposing Mack's large force concentrated, with this formidable barrier in front, it seems as if the Austrians might have easily maintained a defensive position until the armies of Russia appeared to support them.

If, determined upon the imperious and unjust aggression on Bavaria, Mack found it necessary to advance more to the westward than the line of the Inn, in order to secure the country of the elector, the Lech, in its turn, offered him a position in which he might have awaited the Russians, though their junction must necessarily have been protracted, in proportion to the extent of his advance. But it was the choice of this unlucky tactician to leave Bavaria also behind him, and, approaching the frontiers of France, to take possession of Ulm, Memmingen, and the line of the Iller and Danube, where he fortified himself with great care, as if to watch the defiles of the Black Forest. It can only be thought by those who judge most favourably of Mack's intentions, that, as the passes of that celebrated forest had been frequently the route by which the French invaded Germany, he had concluded it must therefore be by that road, and no other, that their approach on the present occasion was to be expected. Knowing with whom he had to contend, the Austrian general ought to have suspected the direct contrary; for Buonaparte's manœuvres were not more distinguished by talent, than by novelty and originality of design.[124]

It is not to be supposed that this great confederacy took at unawares one who had so many reasons for being alert. The Austrian forces, though they had commenced the campaign so hastily, were not more early ready for the field, than were the immense armies of the French empire. The camps at Boulogne, so long assembled on the shores of the Channel, were now to be relieved from their inactivity;[125] and serious as the danger was in which their assistance was required, Buonaparte was perhaps not displeased at finding a fair pretext to withdraw from the invasion to which he had hastily pledged himself. This formidable assemblage of troops, laying aside the appellation of the Army of England, was hereafter distinguished by that of the Grand Army. At the same time, the armies maintained in Holland, and in the North of Germany, were put into motion.

In this remarkable campaign Buonaparte commenced, for the first time, the system of issuing official bulletins, for the purpose of announcing to the French nation his accounts of success, and

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[123] "The Austrian army was nominally under the command of the Archduke Ferdinand; but orders had been given him to follow implicitly the advice of Mack, whom all Germany fancied a great general notwithstanding the glaring incapacity he had already shown in Flanders and at Naples." – Jomini, tom. ii., p. 101.

[124] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 107.

[125] "The Emperor, before he left Boulogne, had in haste sent orders to the banks of the Rhine to collect draught horses, and to provide as large a quantity as possible of *materiel* for artillery. We were taken quite unawares; and it required all the activity of the Emperor to supply that army, on the spur of the occasion, with what it needed for the campaign, into which it was so suddenly forced. He, however, had already calculated and foreseen every thing. The maps of England had disappeared: those of Germany alone were admitted into his cabinet. He made us follow the march of the troops; and one day addressed to us these remarkable words: 'If the enemy comes to meet me, I will destroy him before he has repassed the Danube; if he waits for me, I will take him between Augsburg and Ulm.' He issued the last orders to the navy and to the army, and set out for Paris." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 91.

impressing upon the public mind what truths he desired them to know, and, at the same time, what falsehoods he was desirous they should believe. In every country, such official accounts will naturally have a partial character, as every government must desire to represent the result of its measures in as favourable a light as possible. Where there is a free press, however, the deception cannot be carried to extremity; imposture cannot be attempted, on a grand scale at least, where it can be contrasted with other sources of information, or refuted by arguments derived from evidence. But Buonaparte had the unlimited and exclusive privilege of saying what he pleased, without contradiction or commentary, and he was liberal in using a license which could not be checked. Yet his bulletins are valuable historical documents, as well as the papers in the *Moniteur*, which he himself frequently composed or superintended. Much correct information there certainly is; and that which is less accurate is interesting, since it shows, if not actual truths, at least what Napoleon desired should be received as such, and so throws considerable light both on his schemes and on his character.

Buonaparte communicated to the Senate the approach of war, by a report, dated 23d September,[126] in which, acquainting them with the cause of quarrel betwixt himself and the allied powers, he asked, and of course obtained, two decrees; one for ordering eighty thousand conscripts to the field, another for the organisation of the National Guard.[127] He then put himself at the head of his forces, and proceeded to achieve the destruction of Mack's army, not as at Marengo by one great general battle, but by a series of grand manœuvres, and a train of partial actions necessary to execute them, which rendered assistance and retreat alike impossible. These manœuvres we can only indicate; nor can they perhaps be well understood without the assistance of the map.

MANŒUVRES OF FRENCH GENERALS.

While Mack expected the approach of the French upon his front, Buonaparte had formed the daring resolution to turn the flank of the Austrian general, cut him off from his country and his resources, and reduce him to the necessity, either of surrender, or of giving battle without a hope of success. To execute this great conception, the French army was parted into six grand divisions. That of Bernadotte, evacuating Hanover, which it had hitherto occupied, and traversing Hesse, seemed as if about to unite itself to the main army, which had now reached the Rhine on all points. But its real destination was soon determined, when, turning towards the left, Bernadotte ascended the river Maine, and at Wurtzburg formed a junction with the elector of Bavaria, who, with the troops which had followed him into Franconia, immediately declared for the French cause.

The elector of Wirtemberg and the Duke of Baden followed the same line of politics; and thus Austria had arrayed against her those very German princes, whom a moderate conduct towards Bavaria might perhaps have rendered neutral; France, at the outset of the contest, scarce having the power to compel them to join her standard. The other five columns of French troops, under Ney, Soult, Davoust, Lannes, and Marmont, crossed the Rhine at different points, and entered Germany to the northward of Mack's position; while Murat, who made his passage at Kehl, approaching the Black Forest, manœuvred in such a manner as to confirm Mack in his belief that the main attack was

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[126] "The wishes of the eternal enemies of the continent are accomplished; war has commenced in the midst of Germany, Austria and Russia have united with England; and our generation is again involved in all the calamities of war. But a very few days ago I cherished a hope that peace would not be disturbed. Threats and outrages only showed that they could make no impression upon me; but the Austrians have passed the Inn; Munich is invaded; the Elector of Bavaria is driven from his capital; *all* my hopes are therefore vanished. I tremble at the idea of the blood that must be spilt in Europe; but the French name will emerge with renovated and increased lustre."

[127] He started next day for Strasburg, and on reaching that city issued the following proclamation to the army: —"Soldiers! The war of the third coalition has begun. The Austrian army has passed the Inn, violated treaties, and has attacked and driven our ally from his capital. You yourselves have been compelled to advance by forced marches to the defence of our frontiers. Already you have passed the Rhine. We will not again make peace without a sufficient guarantee. Our policy shall no more give way to our generosity. Soldiers, your Emperor is in the midst of you. You are only the advanced guard of a great people. If it should be necessary, they will all rise at my voice to confound and dissolve this new league which has been formed by the hatred and the gold of England. But, soldiers, we shall have forced marches to make, fatigues and privations of every kind to endure. Whatever obstacles may be opposed to us, we will overcome them, and we shall take no rest until we have planted our eagles on the territory of our enemy."

to come from that quarter. But the direction of all the other divisions intimated that it was the object of the French Emperor to move round the right wing of the Austrians, by keeping on the north or left side of the Danube, and then by crossing that river, to put themselves in the rear of Mack's army, and interpose betwixt him and Vienna. For this purpose, Soult, who had crossed at Spires, directed his march upon Augsburg; while, to interrupt the communication betwixt that city and Ulm, the Austrian headquarters, Murat and Lannes had advanced to Wertingen, where a smart action took place. The Austrians lost all their cannon, and it was said four thousand men – an ominous commencement of the campaign. The action would have been termed a battle, had the armies been on a smaller scale; but where such great numbers were engaged on either side, it did not rank much above a skirmish.[128]

With the same purpose of disquieting Mack in his headquarters, and preventing him from attending to what passed on his left wing and rear, Ney, who advanced from Stutgard, attacked the bridges over the Danube at Guntzburg, which were gallantly but fruitlessly defended by the Archduke Ferdinand, who had advanced from Ulm to that place. The archduke lost many guns, and nearly three thousand men.[129]

In the meantime, an operation took place, which marked, in the most striking manner, the inflexible and decisive character of Napoleon's councils, compared with those of the ancient courts of Europe. To accomplish the French plan, of interposing betwixt Mack and the supplies and reinforcements, both Austrian and Russian, which were in motion towards him, it was necessary that all the French divisions should be directed upon Nordlingen, and particularly that the division under Bernadotte, which now included the Bavarian troops, should accomplish a simultaneous movement in that direction. But there was no time for the last-mentioned general to get into the desired position, unless by violating the neutrality of Prussia, and taking the straight road to the scene of operations, by marching through the territories of Anspach and Bareuth, belonging to that power. A less daring general, a more timid politician than Napoleon, would have hesitated to commit such an aggression at such a moment. Prussia, undecided in her councils, was yet known to be, in point of national spirit, hostilely disposed towards France; and a marked outrage of this nature was likely to raise the indignation of the people in general to a point which Haugwitz and his party might be unable to stem. The junction of Prussia with the allies at a moment so critical, might be decisive of the fate of the campaign, and well if the loss ended there.

Yet, with these consequences before his eyes, Napoleon knew, on the other hand, that it was not want of pretexts to go to war which prevented Prussia from drawing the sword, but diffidence in the power of the allies to resist the arms and fortune of France. If, therefore, by violating the territory of Prussia, he should be able to inflict a sudden and terrible blow upon the allies, he reckoned truly, that the court of Berlin would be more astounded at his success, than irritated at the means which he had taken to obtain it. Bernadotte received, therefore, the Emperor's commands to march through the territory of Anspach and Bareuth, which were only defended by idle protests and reclamations of the rights of neutrality. The news of this aggression gave the utmost offence at the Prussian court; and the call for war, which alone could right their injured honour, became almost unanimous through the nation. But while the general irritation, which Buonaparte of course foresaw, was thus taking place on the one side, the success which he had achieved over the Austrians acted on the other as a powerful sedative.[130]

CAPITULATION OF MEMMINGEN.

The spirit of enterprise had deserted Mack as soon as actual hostilities commenced. With the usual fault of Austrian generals, he had extended his position too far, and embraced too many points

[128] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 108; Savary, tom. ii., p. 99.

[129] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 112.

[130] "Sir Walter Scott blames the violation of the territory of Bareuth; but, how little have these neutralities been respected by conquerors! Witness the invasion of Switzerland at the end of 1813, so fatal to France!" – Louis Buonaparte, p. 43.

of defence, rendering his communications difficult, and offering facilities for Buonaparte's favourite tactics, of attacking and destroying in detail the divisions opposed to him. The defeat at Guntzburg induced Mack at length to concentrate his army around Ulm; but Bavaria and Suabia were now fully in possession of the French and Bavarians; and the Austrian General Spangenberg, surrounded in Memmingen, was compelled to lay down his arms with five thousand men.[131] The French had crossed the Rhine about the 26th September; it was now the 13th October, and they could scarcely be said to have begun the campaign, when they had made, on various points, not fewer than twenty thousand prisoners. Napoleon, however, expected that resistance from Mack's despair, which no other motive had yet engaged him to offer; and he announced to his army the prospect of a general action. He called on his soldiers to revenge themselves on the Austrians for the loss of the plunder of London, of which, but for this new continental war, they would have been already in possession. He pointed out to them, that, as at Marengo, he had cut the enemy off from his reserves and resources, and he summoned them to signalise Ulm by a battle, which should be yet more decisive.[132]

No general action, however, took place, though several sanguinary affairs of a partial nature were fought, and terminated uniformly to the misfortune of the Austrians. In the meantime, disunion took place among their generals. The Archduke Ferdinand, Schwartzenberg, afterwards destined to play a remarkable part in this changeful history, with Collowrath and others, seeing themselves invested by toils which were daily narrowed upon them, resolved to leave Mack and his army, and cut their way into Bohemia at the head of the cavalry. The archduke executed this movement with the greatest gallantry, but not without considerable loss. Indeed, the behaviour of the Austrian princes of the blood throughout these wars was such, as if Fate had meant to mitigate the disasters of the Imperial House, by showing forth the talents and bravery of their ancient race, and proving, that although Fortune frowned on them, Honour remained faithful to their line. Ferdinand, after much fighting, and considerable damage done and received, at length brought six thousand cavalry in safety to Egra, in Bohemia.[133]

CAPITULATION OF ULM.

Meanwhile, Mack found himself, with the remains of his army, cooped up in Ulm, as Wurmser had been in Mantua. He published an order of the day, which intimated an intention to imitate the persevering defence of that heroic veteran. He forbade the word surrender to be used by any one – he announced the arrival of two powerful armies, one of Austrians, one of Russians, whose appearance would presently raise the blockade – he declared his determination to eat horse-flesh rather than listen to any terms of capitulation. This bravado appeared on the 16th October, and the conditions of surrender were subscribed by Mack on the next day, having been probably in the course of adjustment when he was making these notable professions of resistance.[134]

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[131] "This intelligence reached Napoleon in a wretched bivouac, which was so wet, that it was necessary to seek a plank for him to keep his feet out of the water. He had just received this capitulation, when Prince Maurice Lichtenstein, whom Mack had sent with a flag of truce, was announced. He came to treat for the evacuation of Ulm: the army which occupied it demanded permission permission to return to Austria. The Emperor could not forbear smiling, and said, 'What reason have I to comply with this demand? in a week you will be in my power, without conditions?' Prince Maurice protested, that without the conditions which he demanded, the army should not leave the place. 'I shall not grant them,' rejoined the Emperor; 'there is the capitulation of Memmingen; carry it to Marshal Mack, and whatever may be your resolutions in Ulm, I will never grant him any other terms: besides, I am in no hurry; the longer he delays, the worse he will render his own situation, and that of you all. For the rest, I shall have the corps which took Memmingen here to-morrow, and we shall then see.'" – Savary, tom. ii., p. 96.

[132] "Soldiers! But for the army which is now in front of you, we should this day have been in London; we should have avenged ourselves for six centuries of insults, and restored the freedom of the seas. But bear in mind to-morrow, that you are fighting against the allies of England; that you have to avenge yourselves on a perjured prince, whose own letters breathed nothing but peace, at the moment when he was marching his army against our ally! Soldiers! to-morrow will be a hundred times more celebrated than the day of Marengo. I have placed the enemy in the same position."

[133] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 123.

[134] For the terms of the capitulation of Ulm, see Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 662.

The course of military misconduct which we have traced, singular as it is, might be perhaps referred to folly or incapacity on the part of Mack, though it must be owned it was of that gross kind which civilians consider as equal to fraud. But another circumstance remains to be told, which goes far to prove that this once celebrated and trusted general had ingrafted the traitor upon the fool. The terms of capitulation, as subscribed on the 17th October, bore, that there should be an armistice until 26th October at midnight; and that if, during this space, an Austrian or Russian army should appear to raise the blockade, the army at Ulm should have liberty to join them, with their arms and baggage. This stipulation allowed the Austrian soldiers some hope of relief, and in any event it was sure to interrupt the progress of Buonaparte's successes, by detaining the principal part of his army in the neighbourhood of Ulm, until the term of nine days was expired. But Mack consented to a revision of these terms, a thing which would scarcely have been proposed to a man of honour, and signed on the 19th a second capitulation, by which he consented to evacuate Ulm on the day following;[135] thus abridging considerably, at a crisis when every minute was precious, any advantage, direct or contingent, which the Austrians could have derived from the delay originally stipulated. No reason has ever been alleged for this concession. Buonaparte, indeed, had given Mack an audience[136] previous to the signing of this additional article of capitulation, and what arguments he then employed must be left to conjecture.[137]

The effects of Mack's poltroonery, want of skill, and probable treachery, were equal to the results of a great victory. Artillery, baggage, and military stores, were given up to an immense extent. Eight general officers surrendered upon parole, upwards of 20,000 men became prisoners of war, and were marched into France. The numbers of the prisoners taken in this campaign were so great, that Buonaparte distributed them amongst the agriculturists, that their work in the fields might make up for the absence of the conscripts, whom he had withdrawn from such labour. The experiment was successful; and from the docile habits of the Germans, and the good-humour of their French employers, this new species of servitude suited both parties, and went some length to soften the hardships of war. For not the field of battle itself, with its wounded and dead, is a more distressing sight to humanity and reflection, than prison-barracks and hulks, in which hundreds and thousands of prisoners are delivered up to idleness, and all the evils which idleness is sure to introduce, and not unfrequently to disease and death. Buonaparte meditated introducing this alteration into the usages of war upon a great scale, and thought of regimenting his prisoners for the purpose of labouring on public works. His jurists objected to the proposal as contrary to the law of nations.[138] This scruple might have been avoided, by employing only volunteers, which would also have prevented the appearance of retrograding towards those barbarous times, when the captive of the sword became the slave of his victor. But national character would, in most instances, render the scheme impracticable. Thus,

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[135] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 126.

[136] "Marshal Mack paid the Emperor a visit at the abbey of Elchingen. He kept him a long time, and made him talk a great deal. It was on this interview that he learned all the circumstances which had preceded the resolution of the Austrian cabinet to make war upon him. He was made acquainted with all the springs which the Russians had set to work to decide it; and lastly, with the plans of the coalition." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 98.

[137] "It must be owned, that Napoleon did not think himself justified in resting his sole dependence upon his excellent troops. He recollected the saying of Machiavel: that a prudent prince must be both a fox and a lion at the same time. After having well studied his new field of battle, (for it was the first time he made war in Germany) he told us, that we should soon see that the campaigns of Moreau were nothing in comparison with his. In fact, he acted admirably in order to derange Mack's plans, who permitted himself to be petrified in his position of Ulm. All the Emperor's spies were more easily purchased than may be conceived. Almost all the Austrian staff-officers were virtually gained over. I had intrusted Savary, who was employed in the management of the *espoinage* at the grand headquarters, with all my secret notes upon Germany, and, with his hands full, he worked quickly and successfully." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 291.

[138] "I intended to enrol them in regiments, and to make them labour under military discipline, at public works and monuments. They should have received whatever money they earned, and would thus have been secured against the misery of absolute idleness, and the disorders arising out of it. They would have been well fed and clothed, and would have wanted for nothing, without being a burden on the state. But my idea did not meet the approval of the Council of State, which, in this instance, was swayed by the mistaken philanthropy, that it would be unjust and cruel to compel men to labour." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. vii., p. 45.

an attempt was afterwards made to dispose of the Spanish prisoners in a similar way, who in most cases made their escape, and in some rose upon and destroyed their taskmasters. A French soldier would, in like manner, make an indifferent serf to an English farmer, an English prisoner a still more intractable assistant to a French agriculturist. The advantages of comparative freedom would be in both cases counterbalanced, by a feeling of degradation in the personal subjection experienced.

When the general officers of the Austrians[139] were admitted to a personal interview with the French Emperor, he behaved with courtesy to Klenau and others of reputation, whose character had become known to him in the Italian campaigns. But he complained of the politics of their court, which he said had forced him into war when he knew not what he was fighting for. He prophesied the fall of the House of Austria, unless his brother the Emperor hastened to make peace, and reprobated the policy which brought the uncivilized Russians to interfere in the decision of more cultivated countries than their own. Mack[140] had the impudence to reply, that the Emperor of Austria had been forced into the war by Russia. "Then," said Napoleon, "you no longer exist as an independent power." The whole conversation appeared in the bulletin[141] of the day, which also insinuates, with little probability, that the Austrian officers and soldiers concurred generally in blaming the alliance between their own Emperor and Alexander.[142] From this we infer, that the union between those two powerful sovereigns was, even in the moment of this great success, a subject of apprehension to Buonaparte; whose official notes are sometimes expressed with generosity towards the vanquished, who had ceased to struggle, but always with an eager tone of reproach and offence towards those from whom an animated resistance was to be apprehended.

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[139] "The 19th October arrived. The drums beat – the bands played; the gates of Ulm opened; the Austrian army advanced in silence, filed off slowly, and went, corps by corps, to lay down its arms on a spot which had been prepared to receive them. The ceremony occupied the whole day. The Emperor was posted on a little hill in front of the centre of his army; a great fire had been lighted, and by this fire he received the Austrian generals, to the number of seventeen. They were all very dull: it was the Emperor who kept up the conversation." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 200.

[140] It will be unnecessary again to mention this man's name, of which our readers are doubtless as much tired as we ourselves are. He was committed to a state prison, in a remote part of the Austrian dominions; and whether he died in captivity, or was set at liberty, we have not learned, nor are we anxious to know. – S. – On his return to Austria, Mack was arrested, and sent to the citadel of Brunn, in Moravia, whence he was transferred to the fortress of Josephstadt, in Bohemia. He was tried by a military commission and condemned to death, but the penalty was commuted by the Emperor for two years' imprisonment, and the loss of rank.

[141] Tenth Official Bulletin of the Grand Army.

[142] "This conversation was not lost upon all: none of them, however, made any reply." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 100.

CHAPTER XXXII

Position of the French Armies – Napoleon advances towards Vienna – The Emperor Francis leaves his Capital – French enter Vienna on the 13th November – Review of the French Successes in Italy and the Tyrol – Schemes of Napoleon to force on a General Battle – Battle of Austerlitz is fought on the 2d December, and the combined Austro-Russian Armies completely Defeated – Interview betwixt the Emperor of Austria and Napoleon – The Emperor Alexander retreats towards Russia – Treaty of Presburgh signed on the 26th December – Its Conditions – Fate of the King of Sweden – and of the Two Sicilies.

POSITION OF THE FRENCH ARMIES.

The tide of war now rolled eastward, having surmounted and utterly demolished the formidable barrier which was opposed to it. Napoleon placed himself at the head of his central army.[143] Ney, upon his right, was ready to repel any descent which might be made from the passes of the Tyrol. Murat, on his left, watched the motions of the Austrians, under the Archduke Ferdinand, who, refusing to join in the unworthy capitulation of Ulm, had cut their way into Bohemia, and there united themselves with other forces, either stationed in that kingdom, or who had, like themselves, escaped thither. Lastly, the division of Augereau, (who had recently advanced from France at the head of an army of reserve,) occupying part of Swabia, served to protect the rear of the French army against any movement from the Vorarlberg; and at the same time menaced the Prussians, in case, acting upon the offence given by the violation of their territory, they should have crossed the Danube, and engaged in the war.[144]

If, however, the weight of Prussia had been thrown into the scale with sufficient energy at this decisive moment, it would not probably have been any resistance which Augereau could have offered that could have saved Napoleon from a perilous situation, since the large armies of the new enemy would have been placed in his rear, and, of course, his communications with France entirely cut off. It was a crisis of the same kind which opened to Austria in the year 1813; but she was then taught wisdom by experience, and availed herself of the golden opportunity which Prussia now suffered to escape. Buonaparte had reckoned with accuracy upon the timid and fluctuating councils of that power. The aggression on their territories of Anspach and Bareuth was learned at Berlin; but then the news of the calamity sustained by the Austrians at Ulm succeeded these tidings almost instantly, and while the first article of intelligence seemed to urge instant hostilities, the next was calculated to warn them against espousing a losing cause.

Thus, trusting to the vacillating and timid policy of Prussia,[145] Napoleon, covered on his flank and rear as we have stated, continued to push forward[146] with his central forces towards Vienna,

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[143] From Elchingen, Oct. 21, Napoleon issued the following address to the army: – "Soldiers of the Grand Army! In a fortnight we have finished a campaign: we have expelled the troops of the house of Austria from Bavaria, and re-established our ally in the sovereignty of his estates. That army which, with equal ostentation and imprudence, had posted itself on our frontiers, is annihilated. Soldiers! you owe this success to your unbounded confidence in your Emperor; to your patience in supporting fatigues and privations of every description; and to your singular intrepidity. But we will not stop here. You are impatient to commence a second campaign. We are about to make the Russian army, which the gold of England has transported from the extremities of the universe, undergo the same fate. Here there are no generals in combating against whom I can have any glory to acquire. All my care shall be to obtain the victory with the least possible effusion of blood. My soldiers are my children."

[144] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 133.

[145] "The conduct of Prussia at this period was conformable to the wholesome policy which had so long connected this power with France. It is not for us, Frenchmen, to reproach her inaction at this important crisis, even while criticising her raising the shield before Jena. Until then Prussia had showed herself reasonable, in not allowing herself to be drawn into new coalitions." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 44.

[146] "Napoleon was always on horseback whatever weather it might be, travelling in his carriage only when his army was two or three marches in advance. This was a calculation on his part, the point always entered into in his combinations, and to him distances

menaced repeatedly in the former wars, but whose fate seemed decided after the disaster of Ulm. It is true, that an army, partly consisting of Russians and partly of Austrians, had pressed forward to prevent that disgraceful calamity, and, finding that the capitulation had taken place, were now retreating step by step in front of the advancing French; but, not exceeding forty-five thousand men, they were unable to make any effectual stand upon the Inn, the Traun, the Ens, or in any other position which might have covered Vienna. They halted, indeed, repeatedly, made a considerable show of resistance, and fought some severe though partial actions; but always ended by continuing their retreat, which was now directed upon Moravia, where the grand Russian, army had already assembled, under the command of the Emperor Alexander, and were expecting still further reinforcements under General Buxhowden.[147]

Some attempts were made to place Vienna in a state of defence, and the inhabitants were called upon to rise in mass for that purpose. But as the fortifications were ancient and in disrepair, an effort at resistance could only have occasioned the destruction of the city. The Emperor Francis saw himself, therefore, under the necessity of endeavouring to provide for the safety of his capital by negotiation, and for that of his person by leaving it. On the 7th November, accordingly, he departed from Vienna for Brunn in Moravia, in order to place himself under the protection of the Russian forces.

On the same day, but late in the evening, Count Giulay arrived at Buonaparte's headquarters, then established at Lintz, with a proposal for an armistice, previous to a general negotiation for peace. Napoleon refused to listen to the proposal, unless Venice and the Tyrol were put into his hands. These terms were too hard to be accepted.[148] Vienna, therefore, was left to its fate; and that proud capital of the proud House of Austria remained an unresisting prize to the invader.

VIENNA TAKEN.

On the 13th November the French took possession of Vienna, where they obtained an immense quantity of military stores, arms, and clothing;[149] a part of which spoils were bestowed by Napoleon on his ally the Elector of Bavaria, who now witnessed the humiliation of the Imperial House which had of late conducted itself so haughtily towards him. General Clarke was appointed Governor of Vienna; and by a change as rapid as if it had taken place on the stage, the new Emperor of France occupied Schonbrun, the splendid palace of the long-descended Emperor of Austria. But though such signal successes had crowned the commencement of the campaign, it was necessary to defeat the haughty Russians, in whose aid the Emperor of Austria still confided, before the object of the war could be considered as attained. The broken and shattered remnant of the Austrian forces had rallied from different quarters around the yet untouched army of Alexander; and although the latter retreated from Brunn towards Olmutz, it was only with the purpose of forming a junction with Buxhowden, before they hazarded a general battle.

In the meantime, the French army, following close on their back into Moravia, fought one or two partial actions, which, though claimed as victories, were so severely disputed as to make Napoleon aware that he had to do with a more obstinate enemy than he had of late encountered in the dispirited Austrians. He waited, therefore, until the result of his skilful combinations should have drawn around him the greatest force he could expect to collect, ere venturing upon an engagement, of which, if he failed to obtain a decisive victory, the consequences were likely to be fatal to him.

At this period, success had smiled on the French in Italy, and in the Tyrol, as well as in Germany. In the former country, it may be remembered that the Archduke Charles, at the head

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were nothing: he traversed them with the swiftness of eagles." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 103.

[147] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 133; Savary, tom. ii., p. 101. Fourteenth and Fifteenth Bulletins of the Grand Army.

[148] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 145.

[149] "In the magazines and arsenals of Vienna were found artillery and ammunition enough for two campaigns: we had no farther occasion to draw upon our stores at Strasburg or Metz: but could, on the contrary, despatch a considerable *materiel* to those two great establishments." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 107.

of seventy-five or eighty thousand men, exclusive of garrisons, was opposed to Massena, whose forces considerably exceeded that amount. The prince occupied the left bank of the Adige, with the purpose of maintaining a defensive warfare, until he should hear news of the campaign in Germany. Massena, however, after some fighting, succeeded in forcing the passage of the river at Verona, and in occupying the village of St. Michael. This was on the 20th October. Soon afterwards, the account of the surrender at Ulm reached the Frenchman, and determined him on a general attack along the whole Austrian line, which was strongly posted near Caldiero. The assault took place on the 30th October, and was followed by a very desperate action; for the Austrians, confident in the presence of their favourite commander, fought with the greatest courage. They were, however, defeated; and a column of five thousand men, under General Hellinger, detached for the purpose of attacking the French in the rear, failed in their purpose, and being themselves surrounded, were obliged to lay down their arms. The victors were joined by General St. Cyr, at the head of twenty-five thousand men, who had evacuated the kingdom of Naples, upon a treaty of neutrality entered into with the King, and now came to join their countrymen in Lombardy.

In the midst of his own misfortunes, the Archduke Charles received the fatal intelligence of the capitulation of Ulm, and that the French were advancing in full march towards Vienna. To cover his brother's capital became a matter of more pressing necessity than to attempt to continue the defence of Italy, which circumstances rendered almost hopeless. He commenced his retreat, therefore, on the night of the 1st of November, determining to continue it through the mountain passes of Carinthia, and so on into Hungary. If he had marched by the Tyrol, he would have found Augereau in his front, with Ney and Marmont threatening his flanks, while Massena, before whom he was now retreating, pressed on his rear.

The archduke commenced this dispiriting and distressing movement, over nearly the same ground which he had passed while retreating before Buonaparte himself in 1797. He did not, however, as on that occasion, avail himself of the Tagliamento, or Palma Nova. His purpose was retreat, not defence; and, though pursued closely by Massena, he halted no longer at these strong posts than was necessary to protect his march, and check the vivacity of the French advance. He effected at length his retreat upon Laybach, where he received tidings from his brother the Archduke John, whose situation on the Tyrol was not more agreeable than his own in Italy; and who, like Charles himself, was desirous to escape into the vicinity of Hungary with what forces remained to him.

The distress of the Archduke John was occasioned by an army of French and Bavarians, commanded by Ney, who had penetrated into the Tyrol by paths deemed impracticable; taken the forts of Schwatz, Neustadt, and Inspruck itself, and placed the archduke's army in the most precarious situation. Adopting a determination worthy of his birth, the Austrian prince resolved at all risks to effect a junction with his brother, and, though hard pressed by the enemy, he accomplished his purpose. Two considerable corps of Austrians, being left in an insulated situation by these movements of the two princes, were obliged to surrender. These were the divisions of Jellachich, in the Vorarlberg, and of the Prince of Rohan, in Lombardy. The whole of the north of Italy, with the Tyrol and all its passes, was left to the undisturbed and unresisted occupation of the French.[150]

The army of the royal brothers had, however, become formidable by their junction, and was daily growing stronger. They were in communication with Hungary, the brave inhabitants of which warlike country were universally rising in arms. They were also joined by volunteers from Croatia, the Tyrol, and all those wild and mountainous countries, which have so long supplied the Austrian army with the finest light troops in the world.

It might seem to counterbalance these advantages, that Massena had also entered into communications with the French army of Germany at Clagenfurt, the capital of Carinthia. But having left great part of his troops in Italy, he had for the time ceased to be formidable to the Austrian

[150] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 169; Savary, tom. ii., p. 107

princes, who now meditated advancing on the French grand army, which the audacity of its leader had placed in a situation extremely perilous to any other than French troops acting under the eye of their Emperor.

SUCCESSION OF GRAND MANŒUVRES.

Nothing, it is true, could be more admirably conceived and satisfactorily accomplished than the succession of grand manœuvres, which, distinguishing the opening of the campaign, had produced the great, yet cheaply-purchased success of Ulm, and the capture of Vienna. Nor was the series of combination less wonderful, by which, clearing the Vorarlberg, the Tyrol, and the north of Italy of the enemy, Napoleon had placed almost all the subordinate divisions of his own army at his disposal, ready to assist him in the grand enterprise against the Austro-Russian forces. But he has been considered by military critics as having trusted too great a risk upon the precarious event of battle, when he crossed the Danube, and plunged into Moravia, where a defeat, or even a check, might have been attended with the most fatal consequences. The position of the Archdukes Charles and John; the organisation of the Hungarian insurrection, which proceeded rapidly; the success of the Archduke Ferdinand, in raising a similar general levy in Bohemia, threatened alarming operations in the French rear; while Prussia, with the sword drawn in her hand, and the word *war* upon her lips, watched but the slightest waning of Buonaparte's star, to pronounce the word, and to strike a blow at the same moment.

Napoleon accordingly, though he had dared the risk, was perfectly sensible that as he had distinguished the earlier part of this campaign by some of the most brilliant manœuvres which military history records, it was now incumbent upon him, without delay, to conclude it by a great and decisive victory over a new and formidable enemy. He neglected, therefore, no art by which success could be ensured. In the first place, it was necessary to determine the allies to immediate battle; for, situated in the heart of an enemy's country, with insurrection spreading wide and wider around him, an immediate action was as desirable on his part, as delay would have been advantageous to his opponents.

Some attempts at negotiation were made by the Austrians, to aid which Haugwitz, the Prussian minister, made his appearance in the French camp with the offer of his master's mediation, but with the alternative of declaring war in case it was refused. To temporize with Prussia was of the last consequence, and the French Emperor found a willing instrument in Haugwitz. "The French and Austrian outposts," said Napoleon, "are engaged; it is a prelude to the battle which I am about to fight – Say nothing of your errand to me at present – I wish to remain in ignorance of it. Return to Vienna, and wait the events of war."[151] Haugwitz, to use Napoleon's own expression, was no novice, and returned to Vienna without waiting for another hint; and doubtless the French Emperor was well pleased to be rid of his presence.[152]

Napoleon next sent Savary[153] to the Russian camp, under pretence of compliment to the Emperor Alexander, but in reality as a spy upon that monarch and his generals. He returned, having discovered, or affected to discover, that the Russian sovereign was surrounded by counsellors, whom their youth and rank rendered confident and presumptuous, and who, he concluded, might be easily misguided into some fatal act of rashness.[154]

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[151] Montholon, tom. ii., p. 241.

[152] "I asked Napoleon, if Haugwitz had been gained by him? he replied 'No; but he was of opinion that Prussia should never play the first fiddle in the affairs of the continent; that she was only a second-rate power, and ought to act as such.'" – O'Meara, vol. i., p. 227.

[153] "Napoleon sent for me at daybreak: he had passed the night over his maps; his candles were burnt down to the sockets: he held a letter in his hand; he was silent for some moments, and then abruptly said to me, 'Be off to Olmutz; deliver this letter to the Emperor of Russia, and tell him that, having heard of his arrival at his army, I have sent you to salute him in my name. If he questions you,' added he, 'you know what answer ought to be given under such circumstances.'" – Savary, tom. ii., p. 112.

[154] "I saw at Olmutz a great number of young Russians, belonging to the different ministerial departments of their country, who talked wildly of the ambition of France; and all of whom, in their plans for reducing her to a state of harmlessness, made much the

Buonaparte acted on the hint, and upon the first movement of the Austro-Russian army in advance, withdrew his forces from the position they had occupied. Prince Dolgorucki, aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander, was despatched by him to return the compliments which had been brought him. He too was, doubtless, expected to use his powers of observation, but they were not so acute as those of the old officer of police. Buonaparte, as if the interior of his camp displayed scenes which he did not desire Dolgorucki to witness, met the prince at the outposts, which the soldiers were in the act of hastily covering with field-works, like an army which seeks to shelter conscious weakness under intrenchments. Encouraged by what he thought he saw of the difficulties in which the French seemed to be placed, Dolgorucki entered upon politics, and demanded in plain terms the cession of the crown of Italy. To this proposal Buonaparte listened with a patience which seemed to be the effect of his present situation. In short, Dolgorucki carried back to his imperial master the hastily conceived opinion, that the French Emperor was retreating, and felt himself in a precarious posture.[155] On this false ground the Russian council of war determined to act. Their plan was to extend their own left wing, with the purpose of turning the right of the French army, and taking them upon the flank and rear.

AUSTERLITZ.

It was upon the 1st December at noon that the Russians commenced this movement, by which, in confidence of success, they abandoned a chain of heights where they might have received an attack with great advantage, descended into ground more favourable to the enemy, and, finally, placed their left wing at too great a distance from the centre. The French general no sooner witnessed this rash manœuvre, than he exclaimed, "Before to-morrow is over, that army is my own." In the meantime, withdrawing his outposts, and concentrating his forces, he continued to intimate a conscious inferiority, which was far from existing.

The two armies seem to have been very nearly of the same strength. For though the bulletin, to enhance the victory, makes the opposite army amount to 100,000 men, yet there were not actually above 50,000 Russians, and about 25,000 Austrians, in the field of battle.[156] The French army might be about the same force. But they were commanded by Napoleon, and the Russians by Kutousof; a veteran soldier indeed, full of bravery and patriotism, and accustomed to war as it was waged against the Turks; but deficient in general talent, as well as in the alertness of mind necessary to penetrate into and oppose the designs of his adversary, and, as is not unusual, obstinate in proportion to the narrowness of his understanding, and the prejudices of his education.

Meanwhile Buonaparte, possessed of his enemy's plan by the demonstrations of the preceding day, passed the night in making his arrangements.[157] He visited the posts in person, and apparently desired to maintain an incognito which was soon discovered. As soon as the person of the Emperor was recognised, the soldiers remembered that next day [2d December] was the anniversary of his coronation. Bunches of lighted hay, placed on the end of poles, made an extempore illumination, while the troops, with loud acclamations, protested they would present him on the following day with a bouquet becoming the occasion; and an old grenadier, approaching his person, swore that the Emperor should only have to combat with his eyes, and that, without his exposing his person, the

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same kind of calculations as the maid with her pail of milk." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 113.

[155] Thirtieth Bulletin of the Grand Army.

[156] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 181.

[157] "The Emperor passed the whole day of the 1st December inspecting his army himself, regiment by regiment. He spoke to the troops, viewed all the parks, all the light batteries, and gave instructions to all the officers and gunners. He returned to dine at his bivouac and sent for all his marshals; he enlarged upon all that they ought to do the next day, and all that it was possible for the enemy to attempt. He knew his ground as well as the environs of Paris. It would require a volume to detail all that emanated from his mind in those twenty-four hours." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 131.

whole colours and artillery of the Russian army should be brought to him to celebrate the festival of the morrow.[158]

In the proclamation which Napoleon, according to his custom, issued to the army, he promises that he will keep his person out of the reach of fire; thus showing the full confidence, that the assurance of his personal safety would be considered as great an encouragement to the troops, as the usual protestation of sovereigns and leaders, that they will be in the front, and share the dangers of the day.[159] This is, perhaps, the strongest proof possible of the complete and confidential understanding which subsisted between Napoleon and his soldiers. Yet there have not been wanting those, who have thrown the imputation of cowardice on the victor of a hundred battles, and whose reputation was so well established amongst those troops who must be the best judges, that his attention to the safety of his person was requested by them, and granted by him, as a favour to his army.

BATTLE OF AUSTERLITZ.

The Battle of Austerlitz, fought against an enemy of great valour but slender experience, was not of a very complicated character. The Russians, we have seen, were extending their line to surround the French flank. Marshal Davoust, with a division of infantry, and another of dragoons, was placed behind the convent of Raygern, to oppose the forces destined for this manœuvre, at the moment when they should conceive the point carried. Soult commanded the right wing; Lannes conducted the left, which last rested upon a fortified position called Santon, defended by twenty pieces of cannon. Bernadotte led the centre, where Murat and all the French cavalry were stationed. Ten battalions of the Imperial Guard, with ten of Oudinot's division, were kept in reserve in the rear of the line, under the eye of Napoleon himself, who destined them, with forty field-pieces, to act wherever the fate of battle should render their services most necessary. Such were the preparations for this decisive battle, where three Emperors, each at the head of his own army, strove to decide the destinies of Europe. The sun rose with unclouded brilliancy; it was that sun of Austerlitz which Napoleon, upon so many succeeding occasions apostrophised, and recalled to the minds of his soldiers. As its first beams rose above the horizon, Buonaparte appeared in front of the army, surrounded by his marshals, to whom he issued his last directions, and they departed at full gallop to their different posts.[160]

The column detached from the left of the Austro-Russian army was engaged in a false manœuvre, and it was ill executed. The intervals between the regiments of which it consisted were suffered to become irregular, and the communications between this attacking column itself and the main body were not maintained with sufficient accuracy. When the Russians thought themselves on the point of turning the right flank of the French, they found themselves suddenly, and at unawares, engaged with Davoust's division, of whose position behind the convent of Raygern, they had not been aware. At the same time, Soult, at the head of the French right wing, rushed forward upon the interval between the Austro-Russian centre and left, caused by the march of the latter upon Raygern, and, completely intersecting their line, severed the left wing entirely from the centre.

The Emperor of Russia perceived the danger, and directed a desperate attempt to be made upon Soult's division by the Russian Guards, for the purpose of restoring the communication with his left. The French infantry were staggered by this charge, and one regiment completely routed.

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[158] Thirtieth Bulletin of the Grand Army.

[159] "*Order of the Day. On the Field, Dec. 1.*– Soldiers! The Russian forces are before you, to avenge the Austrian army at Ulm; they are the same battalions you conquered at Hollabrun, and which you have constantly pursued. The positions we occupy are formidable, and, whilst they march to turn my right, they shall present me their flank. Soldiers! I shall direct myself all your battalions, I shall keep at a distance from the firing, if, with your accustomed bravery, you carry confusion and disorder into the enemy's ranks; but should victory be for a moment doubtful, you shall behold your Emperor expose himself to the first blow. This victory will finish our campaign, when we shall return to winter quarters, and be joined by the new armies forming in France; then the peace which I shall sanction will be worthy of my people, of you, and of myself."

[160] "In passing along the front of several regiments, the Emperor said, 'Soldiers! we must finish this campaign by a thunderbolt, which shall confound the pride of our enemies;' and, instantly, hats were placed on the points of their bayonets, and cries of 'Vive l'Empereur!' were the signal for the battle." —*Thirtieth Bulletin.*

But it was in such a crisis that the genius of Buonaparte triumphed. Bessières had orders to advance with the Imperial Guard, while the Russians were disordered with their own success. The encounter was desperate, and the Russians displayed the utmost valour before they at length gave way to the discipline and steadiness of Buonaparte's veterans. Their artillery and standards were lost, and Prince Constantine, the Emperor's brother, who fought gallantly at their head, was only saved by the speed of his horse.

The centre of the French army now advanced to complete the victory, and the cavalry of Murat made repeated charges with such success, that the Emperors of Russia and Austria, from the heights of Austerlitz, beheld their centre and left completely defeated. The fate of the right wing could no longer be protracted, and it was disastrous even beyond the usual consequences of defeat.[161] They had been actively pressed during the whole battle by Lannes, but now the troops on their left being routed, they were surrounded on all sides, and, unable to make longer resistance, were forced down into a hollow, where they were exposed to the fire of twenty pieces of cannon. Many attempted to escape across a lake, which was partially frozen; but the ice proving too weak gave way under them, or was broken by the hostile cannonade. This fatality renewed, according to Buonaparte's description, the appearance of the battle with the Turks at Aboukir, where so many thousand men, flying from the battle, perished by drowning. It was with the greatest difficulty, that, rallying the remains of their routed forces around them, and retiring in the best manner they could, the Emperors effected their personal retreat. Only the devoted bravery of the Russians, and the loyalty of the Austrian cavalry, who charged repeatedly to protect the retrograde movement, could have rendered it possible, since the sole passage to the rear lay along a causeway, extending between two lakes. The retreat was, however, accomplished, and the Emperors escaped without sustaining the loss in the pursuit which might have been expected. But in the battle, at least twenty thousand men had remained, killed, wounded, and prisoners; and forty standards, with a great proportion of the hostile artillery, were the trophies of Napoleon, whose army had thus amply redeemed their pledge. It was, however, at a high rate that they had purchased the promised bouquet. Their own ranks had lost probably five thousand men, though the bulletin diminishes the numbers to two thousand five hundred.[162]

The Austrian Emperor considered his last hope of successful opposition to Napoleon as extinguished by this defeat, and conceived, therefore, that he had nothing remaining save to throw himself upon the discretion of the victor. There, were, indeed some, who accused his councils of pusillanimity. It was said, that the levies of Prince Charles in Hungary, and of Prince Ferdinand in Bohemia, were in great forwardness – that the Emperors had still a considerable army under their own command – and that Prussia, already sufficiently disposed for war, would certainly not permit Austria to be totally overwhelmed. But it ought to be considered, on the other hand, that the new levies, however useful in a partisan war, could not be expected to redeem the loss of such a battle as

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[161] "The Russians fled and dispersed: Alexander and the Emperor of Austria witnessed the defeat. Stationed on a height at a little distance from the field of battle, they beheld the guard, which had been expected to decide the victory, cut to pieces by a handful of brave men. Their guns and baggage had fallen into our possession, and Prince Repnin was our prisoner; unfortunately, however, we had a great number of men killed and wounded. I had myself received a sabre wound in the head; in which situation I galloped off to give an account of the affair to the Emperor. My sabre broken, my wound, the blood with which I was covered, the decided advantage we had gained with so small a force over the enemy's chosen troops, inspired Napoleon with the idea of the picture that was painted by Girard." —*Mémoires du Général Rapp*, p. 62.

[162] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 180-191; Savary, tom. ii., p. 133. Thirtieth Bulletin of the Grand Army. On the field of battle, Napoleon issued the following proclamation: —"Headquarters, Dec. 2, 10 o'clock at night."Soldiers of the Grand Army! Even at this hour, before this great day shall pass away and be lost in the ocean of eternity, your Emperor must address you, and express how much he is satisfied with the conduct of all those who have had the good fortune to combat in this memorable battle. Soldiers! you are the first warriors in the world! The recollection of this exploit and of your deeds, will be eternal! thousands of ages hereafter, so long as the events of the universe continue to be related, will record, that a Russian army, of seventy-six thousand men, hired by the gold of England, was annihilated by you on the plains of Olmutz. – The miserable remains of that army, upon which the commercial spirit of a despicable nation had placed its expiring hope, are in flight, hastening to make known to the savage inhabitants of the north what the French are capable of performing; they will, likewise, tell them, that, after having destroyed the Austrian army, at Ulm, you told Vienna – 'That army is no more!' To Petersburgh you shall also say – 'The Emperor Alexander has no longer an army.'"

Austerlitz – that they were watched by French troops, which, though inferior in number, were greatly more formidable in discipline – and that, as for Prussia, it was scarce rational to expect that she would interfere by arms, to save, in the hour of distress, those to whom she had given no assistance, when such would probably have been decisive of the contest, and that in favour of the allies.

CONVENTION WITH PRUSSIA.

The influence of the victory on the Prussian councils was indeed soon made evident; for Count Haugwitz, who had been dismissed to Vienna till the battle should take place, now returned to Buonaparte's headquarters, having changed the original message of defiance of which he was the bearer, into a handsome compliment to Napoleon upon his victory. The answer of Napoleon intimated his full sense of the duplicity of Prussia. – "This," he said, "is a compliment designed for others, but Fortune has transferred the address to me."[163] It was, however, still necessary to conciliate a power which had a hundred and fifty thousand men in the field; and a private treaty with Haugwitz assigned the Electorate of Hanover to Prussia, in exchange for Anspach, or rather as the price of her neutrality at this important crisis.[164] Thus all hopes of Prussian interference being over, the Emperor Francis must be held justified in yielding to necessity, and endeavouring to secure the best terms which could be yet obtained, by submitting at discretion. His ally, Alexander, refused indeed to be concerned in a negotiation, which in the circumstances could not fail to be humiliating.

A personal interview took place betwixt the Emperor of Austria and Napoleon, to whose camp Francis resorted almost in the guise of a suppliant. The defeated prince is represented as having thrown the blame of the war upon the English. "They are a set of merchants," he said, "who would set the continent on fire, in order to secure to themselves the commerce of the world." The argument was not very logical, but the good prince in whose mouth it is placed, is not to be condemned for holding at such a moment the language which might please the victor. When Buonaparte welcomed him to his military hut, and said it was the only palace he had inhabited for nearly two months, the Austrian answered with a smile, "You have turned your residence, then, to such good account, that you ought to be content with it."

The Emperor of Austria, having satisfied himself that he would be admitted to terms of greater or less severity, next stipulated for that which Alexander had disdained to request in his own person – the unmolested retreat of the Russians to their own country. – "The Russian army is surrounded," said Napoleon; "not a man can escape me. But I wish to oblige their Emperor, and will stop the march of my columns, if your Majesty promises me that these Russians shall evacuate Germany and the Austrian and Prussian parts of Poland." – "It is the purpose of the Emperor Alexander to do so."[165]

The arrangement was communicated by Savary to the Russian Emperor, who acquiesced in the proposal to return with his army to Russia by regular marches.[166] No other engagement was required of Alexander than his word; and the respectful manner in which he is mentioned in the bulletins, indicates Buonaparte's desire to cultivate a good understanding with this powerful and spirited young monarch. On the other hand, Napoleon has not failed to place in the Czar's mouth such compliments to himself as the following: – "Tell your master," said he to Savary, "that he did miracles yesterday –

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[163] Thirty-Fourth Bulletin of the Grand Army; Savary, tom. ii., p. 148.

[164] "The battle of Austerlitz took place on the 2d December, and on the 15th, Prussia, by the convention of Vienna, renounced the treaty of Potsdam and the oath of the tomb; she yielded Wesel, Bareuth, and Neuchatel to France; who, in return, consented to Frederic William's taking possession of Hanover, and uniting that country to his dominions." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. ii., p. 242.

[165] Thirty-First Bulletin of the Grand Army.

[166] "The Emperors seemed to be both in excellent humour; they laughed, which seemed to us all to be a good *omen*: accordingly, in an hour or two, the sovereigns parted with a mutual embrace. We followed Napoleon, who rode his horse at a foot-pace, musing on what he meant to do. He called me, and said, 'Run after the Emperor of Austria: tell him that I have desired you to go and wait at his headquarters for the adhesion of the Emperor of Russia to what has just been concluded between us. When you are in possession of this adhesion, proceed to the corps d'armée of Marshal Davoust, stop his movement, and tell him what has passed.'" – Savary, tom. ii., p. 140.

that this bloody day has augmented my respect for him – He is the predestined of Heaven – it will take a hundred years ere my army equals that of France." Savary is then stated to have found Alexander, despite of his reverse of fortune, a man of heart and head. He entered into details of the battle.

"You were inferior to us on the whole," he said, "yet we found you superior on every point of action."

"That," replied Savary, "arises from warlike experience, the fruit of sixteen years of glory. This is the fortieth battle which the Emperor has fought."

"He is a great soldier," said Alexander; "I do not pretend to compare myself with him – this is the first time I have been under fire. But it is enough. I came hither to the assistance of the Emperor of Austria – he has no farther occasion for my services – I return to my capital."

Accordingly, he commenced his march towards Russia, in pursuance of the terms agreed upon. The Russian arms had been unfortunate; but the behaviour of their youthful Emperor, and the marked deference shown towards him by Buonaparte, made a most favourable impression upon Europe at large.[167]

ARMISTICE WITH AUSTRIA.
Dec. 6.

The Austrian monarch, left to his fate, obtained from Buonaparte an armistice[168]– a small part of the price was imposed in the shape of a military contribution of a hundred millions of francs, to be raised in the territories occupied by the French armies. The cessation of hostilities was to endure while Talleyrand on the one side, and Prince John of Lichtenstein on the other, adjusted the terms of a general pacification. Buonaparte failed not to propitiate the Austrian negotiator by the most extravagant praises in his bulletins, and has represented the Emperor of Austria as asking, "Why, possessing men of such distinguished talent, should the affairs of my cabinet be committed to knaves and fools?" Of this question we can only say, that if really asked by Francis, which we doubt, he was himself the only person by whom it could have been answered.

The compliments to the Prince John of Lichtenstein, were intended to propitiate the public in favour of the treaty of peace, negotiated by a man of such talents. Some of his countrymen, on the other hand, accused him of selfish precipitation in the treaty, for the purpose of removing the scene of war from the neighbourhood of his own family estates. But what could the wisdom of the ablest negotiator, or the firmness of the most stubborn patriot have availed, when France was to dictate terms, and Austria to receive them. The treaties of Campo Formio and Luneville, though granted to Austria by Napoleon in the hour of victory, were highly advantageous compared to that of Presburgh, which was signed on the 26th of December, 1805, about a fortnight after the battle of Austerlitz.[169] By this negotiation, Francis ceded to Bavaria the oldest possession of his house, the mountains of Tyrol and of the Vorarlberg, filled with the best, bravest, and most attached of his subjects, and which, by their geographical situation, had hitherto given Austria influence at once in Germany and Italy. Venice, Austria's most recent possession, and which had not been very honourably obtained, was also yielded up, and added to the kingdom of Italy.[170] She was again reduced to the solitary seaport of Trieste, in the Adriatic.

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[167] "I could not help feeling a certain timidity on finding myself in Alexander's presence; he awed me by the majesty and nobleness of his look. Nature had done much for him; and it would have been difficult to find a model so perfect and so graceful; he was then twenty-six years old. He was already somewhat hard of hearing with the left ear, and he turned the right to hear what was said to him. He spoke in broken sentences; he laid great stress upon his finals, so that the discourse was never long. For the rest, he spoke the French language in all its purity, and always used its elegant academic expression. As there was no affectation in his language, it was easy to judge that this was one of the results of an excellent education." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 115.

[168] See Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 666.

[169] For a copy of the treaty, see Annual Register, vol. xlvii., p. 668.

[170] "After leaving Vienna, Napoleon, on his way to Munich, passed through Passau, where he met General Lauriston, who was returning from Cadiz; he sent him as governor to Venice." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 155.

By the same treaty, the Germanic allies of Buonaparte were to be remunerated. Wirtemberg, as well as Bavaria,[171] received large additions at the expense of Austria and of the other princes of the empire, and Francis consented that both the electors should be promoted to the kingly dignity, in reward of their adherence to the French cause. Other provisions there were, equally inconsistent with the immunities of the Germanic body, for which scarcely a shadow of respect was retained, save by an illusory clause, or species of protest, by which Austria declared that all the stipulations to which she consented were under reservation of the rights of the empire. By the treaty of Presburgh, Austria is said to have lost upwards of 20,000 square miles of territory, two millions and a half of subjects, and a revenue to the amount of ten millions and a half of florins. And this momentous surrender was made in consequence of one unfortunate campaign, which lasted but six months, and was distinguished by only one general action.

There were two episodes in this war, of little consequence in themselves, but important considered with reference to the alterations they produced in two of the ancient kingdoms of Europe, which they proved the proximate cause of re-modelling according to the new form of government which had been introduced by Buonaparte, and sanctioned by the example of France.

The King of Sweden had been an ardent and enthusiastic member of the anti-Gallican league. He was brave, enterprising, and chivalrous, and ambitious to play the part of his namesake and progenitor, Gustavus Adolphus, or his predecessor, Charles XII.; without, however, considering, that since the time of those princes, and partly in consequence of their wars and extensive undertakings, Sweden had sunk into a secondary rank in the great European family; and without reflecting, that when great enterprises are attempted without adequate means to carry them through, valour becomes Quixotic, and generosity ludicrous. He had engaged to join in a combined effort for the purpose of freeing Hanover, and the northern parts of Germany, from the French, by means of an army of English, Russians, and Swedes. Had Prussia acceded to the confederacy, this might have been easily accomplished; especially as Saxony, Hesse, and Brunswick, would, under her encouragement, have willingly joined in the war. Nay, even without the accession of Prussia, a diversion in the north, ably conducted and strongly supported, might have at least found Bernadotte sufficient work in Hanover, and prevented him from materially contributing, by his march to the Danube, to the disasters of the Austrian army at Ulm. But, by some of those delays and misunderstandings, which are so apt to disappoint the objects of a coalition, and disconcert enterprises attempted by troops of different nations, the forces designed for the north of Europe did not assemble until the middle of November, and then only in strength sufficient to undertake the siege of the Hanoverian fortress of Hamelen, in which Bernadotte had left a strong garrison. The enterprise, too tardy in its commencement, was soon broken off by the news of the battle of Austerlitz and its consequences, and, being finally abandoned, the unfortunate King of Sweden returned to his own dominions, where his subjects received with unwillingness and terror a prince, who, on many accounts, had incurred the fatal and persevering resentment of Buonaparte. Machinations began presently to be agitated for removing him from the kingdom, as one with whom Napoleon could never be reconciled, and averting from Sweden, by such sacrifice, the punishment which must otherwise fall on the country, as well as on the King.[172]

NAPLES.

[171] "The Emperor arrived at Munich, a few hours before New Year's-day, 1806. The Empress had come thither by his order a fortnight before. There was, as may be supposed, great rejoicing at the court of Bavaria: not only was the country saved, but almost doubled in extent. The greatest delight was therefore expressed at seeing us. It was at Munich that we began to perceive something which we had as yet only heard vaguely talked of. A courier was sent by the Tyrol with orders to the Viceroy of Italy to come immediately to Munich: accordingly, five days afterwards, he arrived. No secret was any longer made of his marriage with the Princess Augusta of Bavaria. The viceroy was much beloved, and the greatest pleasure was expressed to see him unite his destiny with that of a princess so virtuous and so lovely. The nuptials were celebrated at Munich; after which Napoleon returned to Paris." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 156.

[172] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 196; Las Cases, tom. v., p. 168; Montgaillard, tom. vi., p. 280.

While the trifling attempt against Hamelen, joined to other circumstances, was thus preparing the downfall of the ancient dynasty of Sweden, a descent, made by the Russians and English on the Neapolitan territories, afforded a good apology to Buonaparte for depriving the King of the Two Sicilies of his dominions, so far as they lay open to the power of France. Governed entirely by the influence of the Queen, the policy of Naples had been of a fickle and insincere character. Repeatedly saved from the greatest hazard of dethronement, the King or his royal consort had never omitted an opportunity to resume arms against France, under the conviction, perhaps, that their ruin would no longer be deferred than whilst political considerations induced the French Emperor to permit their possession of their power. The last interference in their behalf had been at the instance of the Emperor Paul. After this period we have seen that their Italian dominions were occupied by French troops, who held Otranto, and other places in Calabria, as pledges (so they pretended) for the restoration of Malta.

But upon the breaking out of the war of 1805, it was agreed, by a convention entered into at Paris, 21st of September, and ratified by the King of Naples on the 8th of October, that the French should withdraw their forces from the places which they occupied in the Neapolitan territories, and the King should observe a strict neutrality. Neither of the contracting parties was quite sincere. The French troops, which were commanded by St. Cyr, were, as we have seen, withdrawn from Naples, for the purpose of reinforcing Massena, in the beginning of the campaign of Austerlitz. Their absence would probably have endured no longer than the necessity which called them away. But the court of Naples was equally insincere; for no sooner had St. Cyr left the Neapolitan territories to proceed northward, than the King, animated by the opportunity which his departure afforded, once more raised his forces to the war establishment, and received with open arms an army, consisting of 12,000 Russian troops from Corfu, and 8000 British from Malta, who disembarked in his dominions.[173]

Had this armament occupied Venice at the commencement of the war, they might have materially assisted in the campaign of the Archduke Charles against Massena. The sending them in November to the extremity of the Italian peninsula, only served to seal the fate of Ferdinand the Fourth. On receiving the news of the armistice at Austerlitz, the Russians and the British re-embarked, and not long after their departure a large French army, commanded by Joseph Buonaparte, approached, once more to enforce the doom passed against the royal family of Naples, that they should cease to reign.[174] The King and Queen fled from the storm which they had provoked. Their son, the prince royal, in whose favour they had abdicated, only made use of his temporary authority to surrender Gaeta, Pescara, and Naples itself, with its castles, to the French general. In Calabria, however, whose wild inhabitants were totally disinclined to the French yoke, Count Roger de Damas and the Duke of Calabria attempted to make a stand. But their hasty and undisciplined levies were easily defeated by the French under General Regnier, and, nominally at least, almost the whole Neapolitan kingdom was subjected to the power of Joseph Buonaparte.

SURRENDER OF GAETA.

One single trait of gallantry illuminated the scene of universal pusillanimity. The Prince of Hesse Philipsthal, who defended the strong fortress of Gaeta in name of Ferdinand IV., refused to surrender it in terms of the capitulation. "Tell your general," said he, in reply to the French summons,

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[173] "Before his departure from Vienna, Napoleon received intelligence of the entry of the Russians, jointly with some English, into Naples. He immediately made dispositions for marching troops thither. He had an old grudge against the Queen of Naples, and on receiving this news, he said, 'Ah! as for her, I am not surprised at it; but woe betide her if I enter Naples; never shall she set foot there again!' He sent from the staff of his own army officers to compose that which was about to assemble on the frontiers of Naples, and ordered Prince Joseph, his brother, whom he had left at Paris, to go and put himself at the head of it." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 152.

[174] "General St. Cyr is advancing by forced marches towards Naples, to punish the treason of the Queen, and to precipitate from the throne this culpable woman, who has violated, in so shameless a manner, all that is held sacred among men. It was endeavoured to intercede for her with the Emperor. He replied, 'Were hostilities to recommence, and the nation to support a thirty years' war, so atrocious an act of perfidy cannot be pardoned.' *The Queen of Naples has ceased* to reign." —*Thirty-seventh Bulletin of the Grand Army*, Dec. 26.

"that Gaeta is not Ulm, nor the Prince of Hesse General Mack!" The place was defended with a gallantry corresponding to these expressions, nor was it surrendered until the 17th of July, 1806, after a long siege, in which the brave governor was wounded.[175] This heroic young prince only appeared on the public scene to be withdrawn from it by an untimely death, which has been ascribed to poison. His valour, however honourable to himself, was of little use to the royal family of Naples, whose deposition was determined on by Buonaparte, in order to place upon the throne one of his own family.

[175] Jomini, tom. ii., p. 237; Annual Register, vol. xlviii., p. 144.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Relative situations of France and England – Hostilities commenced with Spain, by the Stoppage, by Commodore Moore, of four Spanish Galleons, when three of their Escort were taken, and one blew up – Napoleon's Plan of Invasion stated and discussed – John Clerk of Eldin's great System of Breaking the Line, explained – The French Admiral, Villeneuve, forms a junction with the Spanish Fleet under Gravina – Attacked and defeated by Sir Robert Calder – Nelson appointed to the Command in the Mediterranean – Battle of Trafalgar fought 21st October, 1805 – Death of Nelson – Behaviour of Napoleon on learning the Intelligence of this signal Defeat – Villeneuve commits Suicide – Address of Buonaparte to the Legislative Body – Statement of M. de Champagny on the Internal Improvements of France – Elevation of Napoleon's Brothers, Louis and Joseph, to the Thrones of Holland and Naples – Principality of Lucca conferred on Eliza, the eldest Sister of Buonaparte, and that of Guastalla on Pauline, the youngest – Other Alliances made by his Family – Napoleon appoints a new Hereditary Nobility – Converts from the old Noblesse anxiously sought for and liberally rewarded – Confederation of the Rhine established, and Napoleon appointed Protector – The Emperor Francis lays aside the Imperial Crown of Germany, retaining only the Title of Emperor of Austria – Vacillating and Impolitic Conduct of Prussia.

The triumphs of Napoleon had been greater at this period of his reign, than had ever before been recorded in history as achieved by a single man. Yet even these, like every thing earthly, had their limit. Fate, while she seemed to assign him complete domination over the land, had vested in other hands the empire of the seas; and it frequently happened, that when his victorious eagles were flying their highest pitch upon the continent, some conspicuous naval disaster warned the nations, that there was another element, where France had a rival and a superior.

It is true, that the repeated success of England, resembling almost that of the huntsman over his game, had so much diminished the French navy, and rendered so cautious such seamen as France had remaining, that the former country, unable to get opportunities of assailing the French vessels, was induced to have recourse to strange, and, as it proved, ineffectual means of carrying on hostilities. Such was the attempt at destroying the harbour of Boulogne, by sinking in the roads ships loaded with stones, and another scheme to blow up the French ships, by means of detonating machines to be affixed to them under water. The one, we believe, only furnished the inhabitants of Boulogne with a supply of useful building stone; the other, from the raft on which the machines were conveyed, was much ridiculed under the name of the catamaran expedition.[176]

Buonaparte, meanwhile, never lost sight of that combination of naval manœuvres, through means of which, by the time that the subjugation of Austria should permit the Grand Army to resume its destination for England, he hoped to assemble in the Channel such a superior fleet, as might waft his troops in safety to the devoted shores of Britain. The unbounded influence which he exercised over the court of Spain, seemed likely to facilitate this difficult enterprise. Yet, as from Spain the French Emperor derived large supplies of treasure, it would have been convenient for him, that, for a time at least, she should retain the mask of neutrality, while, in fact, she was contributing to serve

[176] These implements of destruction were afterwards used against the British cruizers in America, and were judged formidable. But such desperate courage is necessary to attach the machine to the destined vessel, and the fate of the engineer, if discovered, is so certainly fatal, that, like fire-ships, petards, and similar inventions, liable to the same inconvenience, they do not appear likely to get into general use. – S. See in the Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 553, Lord Keith's account of the failure of the catamaran expedition against the French flotilla outside the pier of Boulogne.

France, and prejudice England, more effectually than if she had been in a state of avowed hostility with the latter power.

The British Government determined to bring this state of things to a decided point, by stopping four galleons, or vessels loaded with treasure, proceeding under an escort from the South Sea, and destined for Cadiz. The purpose of the English was only to detain these ships, as a pledge for the sincerity of the Government of Spain, in observing a more strict neutrality than hitherto. But unhappily the British force, under Commodore Moore, amounted only to four frigates. Spanish honour rendered the admiral unwilling to strike the national flag to an equal strength, and an action ensued, in which three of the Spanish vessels were taken, and one unfortunately blew up – an accident greatly to be regretted. Mr. Southey observes, with his usual sound sense and humanity, "Had a stronger squadron been sent, (against the Spaniards,) this deplorable catastrophe might have been saved – a catastrophe which excited not more indignation in Spain, than it did grief in those who were its unwilling instruments, in the British people and in the British government."

WAR BETWIXT SPAIN AND ENGLAND.

This action took place on the 5th of October 1804; and as hostilities were of course immediately commenced betwixt Spain and Britain,[177] Buonaparte, losing the advantages he derived from the neutrality of the former power, had now only to use the naval and military means which she afforded for the advancement of his own purposes. The Court of Spain devoted them to his service, with a passive complaisance of which we shall hereafter see the reward.

Napoleon persisted to the last in asserting, that he saw clearly the means of utterly destroying the English superiority at sea. This he proposed to achieve by evading the blockades of the several ports of France and Spain, which, while weather permitted, were each hermetically sealed by the presence of a British squadron, and by finally assembling in the Channel that overwhelming force, which, according to his statement, was to reduce England to a dependency on France, as complete as that of the Isle of Oleron.[178] But men of the greatest talents must necessarily be liable to error, when they apply the principles of a science with which they are well acquainted upon one element, to the operations which are to be carried on by means of another. It is evident that he erred, when calculating his maritime combinations, in not sufficiently considering two most material differences betwixt them, and those which had exalted his glory upon land.

In the first place, as a landsman, Napoleon did not make sufficient allowance for the action of contrary winds and waves; as indeed it was perhaps his fault, even in land operations, where their influence is less essential, to admit too little consequence to the opposition of the elements. He complained, when at St. Helena, that he could never get a seaman sufficiently emancipated from the technicality of his profession, to execute or enter into any of his schemes. "If I proposed," he said, "any new idea, I had Gantheaume and all the marine department to contend with – Sir, that is impossible – Sir, – the winds – the calms – the currents, will not permit it; and thus I was stopped short."[179] We believe little dread could have been entertained of the result of naval combinations in which the influence of the winds and waves was not previously and accurately calculated; and that British seamen would have desired nothing more ardently, than that their enemies should have acted upon a system in which these casualties were neglected, even if that system had been derived from the genius of Napoleon.

But, secondly, there was this great difference betwixt the land and the sea service, to which (the vehemence of his wishes, doubtless, overpowering his judgment) Buonaparte did not give sufficient weight. Upon land, the excellence of the French troops, their discipline, and the enthusiasm arising

[177] See declaration of war made by Spain against England, dated Madrid, Dec. 12, 1804, and also declaration of war with Spain on the part of the King of England, Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 699, and vol. xlvii., p. 608.

[178] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 264; O'Meara, vol. i., p. 351.

[179] Las Cases, tom. iii., p. 248.

from uninterrupted success, might be safely reckoned upon as likely to bear down any obstacle which they might unexpectedly meet with, in the execution of the movements which they were commanded to undertake. The situation of the French seamen was diametrically the contrary. Their only chance of safety consisted in their being able to elude a rencontre with a British squadron, even of very inferior force. So much was this the case at the period of which we treat, that Linois, their admiral in the East Indian seas, commanding an eighty-four-gun ship, and at the head of a considerable squadron of ships of war, was baffled and beaten off in the straits of Malacca by a squadron of merchant vessels belonging to the British East India Company, although built, of course, for traffic, and not for war, and, as usual in war time, very imperfectly manned.[180]

Yet, notwithstanding the great and essential difference which we have pointed out between the French navy and their land forces, and that the former was even more inferior to that of England than the continental troops in general were to the French soldiers, it is evident that Buonaparte, when talking of ships of the line, was always thinking of battalions. Thus he imagines that the defeat of the Nile might have been prevented, had the headmost vessels of the French line, instead of remaining at anchor, slipped their cables, and borne down to the assistance of those which were first attacked by the British. But in urging this, the leading principle of the manœuvre of breaking the line had totally escaped the French Emperor. It was the boast of the patriotic sage,[181] who illustrated and recommended this most important system of naval tactics, that it could serve the purpose of a British fleet only. The general principle is briefly this: By breaking through the line, a certain number of ships are separated from the rest, which the remainder must either abandon to their fate by sailing away, or endeavour to save by bearing down, or doubling as it were, upon the assailants, and engaging in a close and general engagement. Now, this last alternative is what Buonaparte recommends, – what he would certainly have practised on land, – and what he did practise, in order to extricate his right wing, at Marengo. But the relative superiority of the English navy is so great, that, while it is maintained, a close engagement with an enemy in the least approaching to equality, is equivalent to a victory; and to recommend a plan of tactics which should render such a battle inevitable, would be, in other words, advising a French admiral to lose his whole fleet, instead of sacrificing those ships which the English manœuvre had cut off, and crowding sail to save such as were yet unengaged.[182]

Under this consciousness of inferiority, the escape of a Spanish or French squadron, when a gale of wind forced, from the port in which they lay, the British blockading vessels, was a matter, the ultimate success of which depended not alone on the winds and waves, but still more upon the chance of their escaping any part of the hostile navy, with whom battle, except with the most exorbitant superiority on their side, was certain and unavoidable defeat. Their efforts to comply with the wishes of the Emperor of France, were therefore so partially conducted, so insulated, and so ineffectual, that they rather resembled the children's game of hide and seek, than any thing like a system of regular

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[180] See Commodore Dance's account of the defeat of Admiral Linois' squadron in the Indian seas, Annual Register, vol. xlvi., p. 551.

[181] The late John Clerk of Eldin; a name never to be mentioned by Britons without respect and veneration, since, until his systematic Essay upon Naval Tactics appeared, the breaking of the line (whatever professional jealousy may allege to the contrary) was never practised on decided and defined principle. His suavity, nay, simplicity of manner, equalled the originality of his genius. This trifling tribute is due from one, who, honoured with his regard from boyhood, has stood by his side, while he was detailing and illustrating the system which taught British seamen to understand and use their own force, at an age so early, that he can remember having been guilty of abstracting from the table some of the little cork models by which Mr. Clerk exemplified his manœuvres; unchecked but by his good-humoured raillery, when he missed a supposed line-of-battle ship, and complained that the demonstration was crippled by its absence. – S

[182] "If it were permitted to a man whose only campaign at sea was that of Egypt in the vessel of Brueyes, to speak of naval tactics, I could easily refute all that Sir Walter Scott has here said. I shall limit myself to the relation of the observations made with General Kleber, when, from the neighbouring coast, we witnessed the battle of Aboukir. The greater part of our squadron remained inactive, while the English turned the left; there was not a single spectator who was not irritated at seeing the six vessels on the right of the squadron, commanded by Brueyes, keep their line, when, if they had hoisted sail, and fallen back on the left, they would have put the English between two fires, and would certainly have gained the victory." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 46.

combination. A more hasty and less cautious compliance with Napoleon's earnest wishes to assemble a predominant naval force, would have only occasioned the total destruction of the combined fleets at an earlier period than when it actually took place.

ROCHEFORT SQUADRON.

Upon this desultory principle, and seizing the opportunity of the blockading squadron being driven by weather from the vicinity of their harbour, a squadron of ten French vessels escaped from Rochefort on the 11th of January, 1805; and another, under Villeneuve, got out of Toulon on the 18th by a similarly favourable opportunity. The former, after rendering some trifling services in the West Indies, was fortunate enough to regain the port from which they had sailed, with the pride of a party who have sallied from a besieged town, and returned into it without loss. Villeneuve also regained Toulon without disaster, and, encouraged by his success, made a second sortie upon the 18th of March, having on board a large body of troops, designed, it was supposed, for a descent upon Ireland or Scotland. He made, however, towards Cadiz, and formed a junction there with the Spanish fleet under Gravina. They sailed for the West Indies, where the joint squadrons were able to possess themselves of a rock called Diamond, which is scarce to be discovered on the map; and with this trophy, which served at least to show they had been actually out of harbour, they returned with all speed to Europe. As for executing manœuvres, and forming combinations, as Napoleon's plans would lead us to infer was the purpose of their hurried expedition, they attempted none, save of that kind which the hare executes when the hound is at its heels. Nelson, they were aware, was in full pursuit of them, and to have attempted any thing which involved a delay, or gave a chance of his coming up with them, was to court destruction. They were so fortunate as to escape him, though very narrowly, yet did not reach their harbours in safety.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.