WALTER SCOTT

LIFE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. VOLUME IV

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Sir Walter Scott
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CHAPTER XLIX

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The particular conditions of the peace with Austria were not adjusted until the 14th October, 1809, although the armistice was signed nearly three months before. We avail ourselves of the interval to notice other remarkable events, which happened during this eventful summer; and first, we must briefly revert to the conduct of Russia and England during the war.

Notwithstanding the personal friendship betwixt the Emperors Alexander and Napoleon – notwithstanding their engagements entered into at Tilsit, and so lately revived at Erfurt, it seems to have been impossible to engage Russia heartily as an ally of Napoleon, in a war which had the destruction or absolute humiliation of Austria. The Court of St. Petersburgh had, it is true, lost no time in securing the advantages which had been stipulated for Russia in the conferences alluded to. Finland had been conquered, torn from Sweden, to which the province had so long belonged, and united with Russia, to whom it furnished a most important frontier and barrier.[1] Russia was also, with connivance of France, making war on the Porte, in order to enlarge her dominions by the addition of Moldavia and Wallachia. But though the Court of St. Petersburgh had gained one of these advantages, and was in a way of obtaining the other, the Russian Ministers saw with anxiety the impending fate of Austria, the rather that they themselves were bound by treaty to lend their aid for her destruction. We have seen that Russia had interposed to prevent the war. She was now unwillingly compelled to take part in it; yet when Prince Galatzin marched into Galicia at the head of 30,000 Russians, the manifesto which he published could be hardly termed that of a hostile nation. The Emperor, it stated, had done all in his power to prevent things from coming to this extremity; but now, the war having actually

[1] See Russian proclamation to the inhabitants of Finland, Feb. 18, 1808 Annual Register, vol. l., p. 301.

broken out, he was bound by the faith of treaties to send the stipulated number of auxiliaries.[2] The motions of this body of Russians were slow, and their conduct in the Austrian dominions rather that of allies than enemies. Some of the Russian officers of rank avowed their politics to be in direct opposition to those of the Emperor, and declared that three-fourths of the generals commanding territorial divisions in Russia were of their opinion. These expressions, with the unusual slowness and lenity just alluded to, were for the present passed over without remark, but were recorded and remembered as matter of high offence, when Napoleon thought that the time was come to exact from Russia a severe account for every thing in which she had disappointed his expectations.

The exertions of England, at the same period, were of a nature and upon a scale to surprise the world. It seemed as if her flag literally overshadowed the whole seas on the coasts of Italy, Spain, the Ionian Islands, the Baltic Sea. Wherever there was the least show of resistance to the yoke of Buonaparte, the assistance of the English was appealed to, and was readily afforded. In Spain, particularly, the British troops, led by a general whose name began soon to be weighed against those of the best French commanders, displayed their usual gallantry under auspices which no longer permitted it to evaporate in actions of mere eclat.

Yet the British administration, while they had thus embraced

[2] Annual Register, vol. l., p. 759.

a broader and more adventurous, but at the same time a far wiser system of conducting the war, showed in one most important instance, that they, or a part of them, were not entirely free from the ancient prejudices, which had so long rendered vain the efforts of Britain in favour of the liberties of the world. The general principle was indeed adopted, that the expeditions of Britain should be directed where they could do the cause of Europe the most benefit, and the interests of Napoleon the greatest harm; but still there remained a lurking wish that they could be so directed, as, at the same time, to acquire some peculiar and separate advantage to England, and to secure the accomplishment of what was called a British object. Some of the English ministers might thus be said to resemble the ancient converts from Judaism, who, in embracing the Christian faith, still held themselves bound by the ritual, and fettered by the prejudices of the Jewish people, separated as they were from the rest of mankind.

It is no wonder that the voice of what is in reality selfishness, is listened to in national councils with more respect than it deserves, since in that case it wears the mask and speaks the language of a species of patriotism, against which it can only be urged, that it is too exclusive in its zeal. Its effects, however, are not the less to be regretted, as disabling strong minds, and misleading wise men; of which the history of Britain affords but too many instances.

BRITISH EXPEDITION

Besides the forces already in the Peninsula, Britain had the means of disposing of, and the will to send to the continent, 40,000 men, with a fleet of thirty-five ships of the line, and twenty frigates, to assist on any point where their services could have been useful. Such an armament on the coast of Spain might have brought to a speedy decision the long and bloody contest in that country, saved much British blood, which the protracted war wasted, and struck a blow, the effects of which, as that of Trafalgar, Buonaparte might have felt on the banks of the Danube. Such an armament, if sent to the north of Germany, ere the destruction of Schill and the defeat of the Duke of Brunswick's enterprise, might have been the means of placing all the northern provinces in active opposition to France, by an effort for which the state of the public mind was already prepared. A successful action would even have given spirits to Prussia, and induced that depressed kingdom to resume the struggle for her independence. In a word, Britain might have had the honour of kindling the same flame, which, being excited by Russia in 1813, was the means of destroying the French influence in Germany, and breaking up the Confederation of the Rhine.

Unhappily, neither of these important objects seemed to the planners of this enterprise to be connected in a manner sufficiently direct, with objects exclusively interesting to Britain.

It was therefore agreed, that the expedition should be sent against the strong fortresses, swampy isles, and dangerous coasts of the Netherlands, in order to seek for dock-yards to be destroyed, and ships to be carried off. Antwerp was particularly aimed at. But, although Napoleon attached great importance to the immense naval yards and docks which he had formed in the Scheldt, yet, weighed with the danger and difficulty of an attack upon them, the object of destroying them seems to have been very inadequate. Admitting that Buonaparte might succeed in building ships in the Scheldt, or elsewhere, there was no possibility, in the existing state of the world, that he could have been able to get sailors to man them; unless, at least, modern seamen could have been bred on dry land, like the crews of the Roman galleys during the war with Carthage. If even the ships could have been manned, it would have been long ere Napoleon, with his utmost exertions, could have brought out of the Scheldt such a fleet as would not have been defeated by half their own numbers of British ships. The dangers arising to Britain from the naval establishments in the Scheldt were remote, nor was the advantage of destroying them, should such destruction be found possible, commensurate with the expense and hazard of the enterprise which was directed against them. Besides, before Antwerp could be attacked, the islands of Beveland and Walcheren were to be taken possession of, and a long amphibious course of hostilities was to be maintained, to enable the expedition to reach the point where alone great results were

expected.

The commander-in-chief was the Earl of Chatham, who, inheriting the family talents of his father, the great minister, was remarkable for a spirit of inactivity and procrastination, the consequences of which had been felt in all the public offices which he held, and which, therefore, were likely to be peculiarly fatal in an expedition requiring the utmost celerity and promptitude of action. It is remarkable, that though these points in Lord Chatham's character were generally known, the public voice at the time, in deference to the talents which distinguished his house, did not censure the nomination.

WALCHEREN

Upon the 30th of July, the English disembarked on the islands of South Beveland and Walcheren; on the 1st of August they attacked Flushing, the principal place in the neighbourhood, by land and sea. On the 15th of August, the place surrendered, and its garrison, four or five thousand men strong, were sent prisoners of war to England. But here the success of the British ended. The French, who had at first been very much alarmed, had time to recover from their consternation. Fouché, then at the head of the police, and it may be said of the government, (for he exercised for the time the power of minister of the interior,) showed the utmost readiness in getting under arms about 40,000 national guards, to replace the regular soldiers, of which the Low Countries had

been drained. In awakening the military ardour of the citizens of France, in which he succeeded to an unusual degree, Fouché made use of these expressions: – "Let Europe see, that if the genius of Napoleon gives glory to France, still his presence is not necessary to enable her to repel her enemies from her soil." This phrase expressed more independence than was agreeable to Napoleon, and was set down as intimating a self-sufficiency, which counterbalanced the services of the minister.[3]

Neither did Fouché's selection of a military chief to command the new levies, prove more acceptable. Bernadotte, whom we have noticed as a general of republican fame, had been, at the time of Buonaparte's elevation, opposed to his interests, and attached to those of the Directory. Any species of rivalry, or pretence of dispute between them, was long since ended; yet still Bernadotte was scarce accounted an attached friend of the Emperor, though he was in some sort connected with the house of Napoleon, having married a sister-in-law of Joseph, the intrusive King of Spain[4]. In the campaign of Vienna, which we have detailed, Bernadotte, (created Prince of Ponte Corvo,) commanded a division of Saxons, and had incurred Buonaparte's censure more than once, and particularly at the battle of Wagram, for the slowness of his movements. The Prince of Ponte Corvo came, therefore, to Paris in a sort of disgrace, where Fouché,

[3] Mémoires de Fouché, tom. i., p. 337.

[4] In 1798, Bernadotte married Eugénie Cléry, the daughter of a considerable merchant at Marseilles, and sister to Julia, the wife of Joseph Buonaparte.

in conjunction with Clarke, the minister at war, invited him to take on himself the defence of Antwerp. Bernadotte hesitated to accept the charge; but having at length done so, he availed himself of the time afforded by the English to put the place in a complete state of defence, and assembled within, and under its walls, above thirty thousand men. The country was inundated by opening the sluices; strong batteries were erected on both sides of the Scheldt, and the ascending that river became almost impossible.[5]

The British naval and military officers also disagreed among themselves, as often happens where difficulties multiply, and there appears no presiding spirit to combat and control them. The final objects of the expedition were therefore abandoned; the navy returned to the English ports, and the British forces were concentrated – for what reason, or with what expectation, it is difficult to see – in that fatal conquest, the isle of Walcheren. Among the marshes, stagnant canals, and unwholesome trenches of this island, there broods continually, a fever of a kind deeply pestilential and malignant, and which, like most maladies of the same description, is more destructive to strangers than to

[5] "It was not Bernadotte whom Cambêcérès and the Duke of Feltre requested to undertake the defence of Antwerp; but it was I who received several couriers on this subject, and who in fact took the command of the combined army, sufficiently in time to prevent the English surprising Antwerp, as they already had done Walcheren. It was I who flooded the borders of the Scheldt, and erected batteries there. Bernadotte arrived a fortnight afterwards; and, in pursuance of the orders of Napoleon and Clarke, which were officially communicated to me, I resigned the command to him." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 60.

the natives, whose constitutions become by habit proof against its ravages. This dreadful disease broke out among our troops with the force of a pestilence, and besides the numerous victims who died on the spot, shattered, in many cases for ever, the constitution of the survivors. The joy with which Napoleon saw the army of his enemy thus consigned to an obscure and disgraceful death, broke out even in his bulletins, as if the pestilence under which they fell had been caused by his own policy, and was not the consequence of the climate, and of the ill-advised delay which prevented our soldiers being withdrawn from it. "We are rejoiced," he said, in a letter to the minister at war, "to see that the English have packed themselves in the morasses of Zealand. Let them be only kept in check, and the bad air and fevers peculiar to the country will soon destroy their army." At length, after the loss of more lives than would have been wasted in three general battles, the fortifications of Flushing were blown up, and the British forces returned to their own country.[6]

The evil consequences of this expedition did not end even here. The mode in which it had been directed and conducted, introduced dissensions into the British Cabinet, which occasioned the temporary secession of one of the most able and most eloquent of its members, Mr. George Canning, who was thus withdrawn from public affairs when his talents

[6] See Papers relating to the expedition to the Scheldt, Parliamentary Debates, vol. xv., Appendix; and Annual Register, vol. l., pp. 543, 546, 559.

could be least spared by the country. On the other hand, the appointment of Marquis Wellesley to the situation of secretary at war, gave, in the estimation of the public, a strong pledge that the efficient measures suggested by the talents of that noble statesman, would be supported and carried through by his brother Sir Arthur, to whom alone, as a general, the army and the people began to look with hope and confidence.

While England was thus exerting herself, Buonaparte, from the castle of Schoenbrun, under the walls of Vienna, was deciding the fate of the continent on every point where British influence had no means of thwarting him. One of the revolutions which cost him little effort to accomplish, yet which struck Europe with surprise, by the numerous recollections which it excited, was his seizure of the city of Rome, and the territories of the Church, and depriving the Pope of his character of a temporal prince.

PIUS THE SEVENTH

It must be allowed, by the greatest admirers of Napoleon, that his policy, depending less upon principle than upon existing circumstances, was too apt to be suddenly changed, as opportunity or emergency seemed to give occasion. There could, for example, be scarce a measure of his reign adopted on more deep and profound consideration than that of the Concordat, by which he re-established the national religion of France, and

once more united that country to the Catholic Church. In reward for this great service, Pope Pius VII., as we have seen, had the unusual complaisance to cross the Alps, and visit Paris, for the sake of adding religious solemnity, and the blessing of St. Peter's successor, to the ceremony of Napoleon's coronation. It might have been thought that a friendship thus cemented, and which, altogether essential to the safety of the Pope, was far from indifferent to the interests of Buonaparte, ought to have subsisted undisturbed, at least for some years. But the Emperor and Pontiff stood in a suspicious attitude with respect to each other. Pius VII. felt that he had made, in his character of chief of the Church, very great concessions to Napoleon, and such as he could hardly reconcile to the tenderness of his own conscience. He, therefore, expected gratitude in proportion to the scruples which he had surmounted, while Buonaparte was far from rating the services of his Holiness so high, or sympathizing with his conscientious scruples.

Besides, the Pope, in surrendering the rights of the Church in so many instances, must have felt that he was acting under motives of constraint, and in the character of a prisoner; for he had sacrificed more than had been yielded by any prelate who had held the see of Rome, since the days of Constantine. He may therefore have considered himself, not only as doubly bound to secure what remained of the authority of his predecessors, but even at liberty, should opportunity offer, to reclaim some part of that which he had unwillingly yielded up. Thus circumstanced

in respect to each other, Pius VII. felt that he had done more in complaisance to Buonaparte than he could justify to his conscience; while Napoleon, who considered the reunion of France to Rome, in its spiritual relations, as entirely his own work, thought it of such consequence as to deserve greater concessions than his Holiness had yet granted.

The Pope, on his first return to Italy, showed favourable prepossessions for Napoleon, whom he commemorated in his address to the College of Cardinals, as that mighty Emperor of France, whose name extended to the most remote regions of the earth; whom Heaven had used as the means of reviving religion in France, when it was at the lowest ebb; and whose courtesies towards his own person, and compliance with his requests, merited his highest regard and requital. Yet Napoleon complained, that subsequent to this period, Pius VII. began by degrees to receive counsel from the enemies of France, and that he listened to advisers, who encouraged him to hold the rights of the Church higher than the desire to gratify the Emperor. Thus a suppressed and unavowed, but perpetual struggle took place, and was carried on betwixt the Emperor and the Pope; the former desirous to extend and consolidate his recent authority, the latter to defend what remained of the ancient privileges of the Church.

It is probable, however, that, had there been only spiritual matters in discussion between them, Napoleon would have avoided an open rupture with the Holy Father, to which he was conscious much scandal would attach. But in the present situation

of Italy, the temporal states of the Pope furnished a strong temptation for his ambition. These extend, as is well known, betwixt the kingdom of Naples, then governed by Joachim Murat, and the northern Italian provinces, all of which, by the late appropriation of Tuscany, were now amalgamated into one state, and had become, under the name of the kingdom of Italy, a part of the dominions of Buonaparte. Thus the patrimony of the Church was the only portion of the Italian peninsula which was not either directly, or indirectly, under the empire of France; and, as it divided the Neapolitan dominions from those of Napoleon, it afforded facilities for descents of British troops, either from Sicily or Sardinia, and, what Buonaparte was not less anxious to prevent, great opportunities for the importation of English commodities. The war with Austria in 1809, and the large army which the Archduke John then led into Italy, and with which, but for the defeat at Eckmühl, he might have accomplished great changes, rendered the independence of the Roman States the subject of still greater dislike and suspicion to Buonaparte.

His ambassador, therefore, had instructions to press on the Pope the necessity of shutting his ports against British commerce, and adhering to the continental system; together with the further decisive measure, of acceding to the confederacy formed between the kingdom of Italy and that of Naples, or, in other words, becoming a party to the war against Austria and England. Pius VII. reluctantly submitted to shut his ports, but he positively refused to become a party to the war. He was, he said,

the father of all Christian nations; he could not, consistently with that character, become the enemy of any.[7]

Upon receiving this refusal, Buonaparte would no longer keep terms with him; and, in order, as he said, to protect himself against the inconveniences which he apprehended from the pertinacity of the Holy Father, he caused the towns of Ancona and Civita Vecchia to be occupied by French troops, which were necessarily admitted when there were no means of resistance.

This act of aggression, to which the Pope might have seen it prudent to submit without remonstrance, as to what he could not avoid, would probably have sufficiently answered all the immediate purposes of Buonaparte; nor would he, it may be supposed, have incurred the further scandal of a direct and irreconcilable breach with Pius VII., but for recollections, that Rome had been the seat of empire over the Christian world, and that the universal sovereignty to which he aspired, would hardly be thought to exist in the full extent of majesty which he desired to attach to it, unless the ancient capital of the world made a part of his dominions. Napoleon was himself an Italian,[8] and showed

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[7] See Declaration of the Pope against the usurpations of Napoleon, dated May 19, 1808; Annual Register, vol. l., p. 314.

[8] "Napoleon was of Italian origin, but he was born a Frenchman. It is difficult to comprehend for what purpose are those continual repetitions of his Italian origin. His partiality for Italy was natural enough, since he had conquered it, and this beautiful peninsula was a trophy of the national glory, of which Sir Walter Scott allows Napoleon to have been very jealous. I nevertheless doubt whether he had the intention of uniting Italy, and making Rome its capital. Many of my brother's actions contradict the supposition. I was near him one day when he received the report of some victories in

his sense of his origin by the particular care which he always took of that nation, where whatever benefits his administrations conferred on the people, reached them both more profusely and more directly than in any other part of his empire. That swelling spirit entertained the proud, and, could it have been accomplished consistently with justice, the noble idea, of uniting the beautiful peninsula of Italy into one kingdom, of which Rome should once more be the capital. He also nourished the hope of clearing out the Eternal City from the ruins in which she was buried, of preserving her ancient monuments, and of restoring what was possible of her ancient splendour.[9] Such ideas as these, dearer to Napoleon, because involving a sort of fame which no conquest elsewhere could be attended with, must have had charms for a mind which constant success had palled to the ordinary enjoyment of victory; and no doubt the recollection that the existence of the Pope as a temporal prince was totally inconsistent with this fair dream of the restoration of Rome and

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Spain, and amongst others, of one in which the Italian troops had greatly distinguished themselves. One of the persons who were with him exclaimed, at this news – that the Italians would show themselves worthy of obtaining their independence, and it was to be desired that the whole of Italy should be united into one national body. 'Heaven forbid it!' exclaimed Napoleon, with involuntary emotion, 'they would soon be masters of the Gauls.' Amongst all the calumnies heaped against him, there are none more unjust than those which attack his patriotism: he was essentially French, indeed, too exclusively so; for all excess is bad." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 62.

[9] "With regard to the removal of the monuments of antiquity, and to the works undertaken by my brother for their preservation, they were not merely projected; they were not only begun, but even far advanced, and many of them finished." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 63.

Italy, determined his resolution to put an end to his power.

ROME

On the 2d February, 1809, General Miollis, with a body of French troops, took possession of Rome itself, disarmed and disbanded the Pope's guard of gentlemen, and sent his other soldiers to the north of Italy, promising them as a boon that they should be no longer under the command of a priest. The French cardinals, or those born in countries occupied by, or subjected to the French, were ordered to retire to the various lands of their birth, in order to prevent the Holy Father from finding support in the councils of the conclave. The proposal of his joining the Italian League, offensive and defensive, was then again pressed on the Pope as the only means of reconciliation. He was also urged to cede some portion of the estates of the Church, as the price of securing the rest. On both points, Pius VII. was resolute; he would neither enter into an alliance which he conceived injurious to his conscience, nor consent to spoil the See of any part of its territories. This excellent man knew, that though the temporal strength of the Popedom appeared to be gone, every thing depended on the courage to be manifested by the Pope personally.

At length, on the 17th May, Napoleon published a decree,[10]

[10] Published, May 17, at Vienna, and proclaimed in all the public squares, markets, &c., of that capital.

in which, assuming the character of successor of Charlemagne, he set forth, 1st, That his august predecessor had granted Rome and certain other territories in feoff to the bishops of that city, but without parting with the sovereignty thereof. 2d, That the union of the religious and civil authority had proved the source of constant discord, of which many of the Pontiffs had availed themselves to extend their secular dominion, under pretext of maintaining their religious authority. 3d, That the temporal pretensions of the Pope were irreconcilable with the tranquillity and well-being of the nations whom Napoleon governed; and that all proposals which he had made on the subject had been rejected. Therefore it was declared by the decree, that the estates of the Church were reunited to the French empire. A few articles followed for the preservation of the classical monuments, for assigning to the Pope a free income of two millions of francs, and for declaring that the property and palace belonging to the See were free of all burdens or right of inspection. Lastly, The decree provided for the interior government of Rome by a Consultum, or Committee of Administrators, to whom was delegated the power of bringing the city under the Italian constitution. A proclamation of the Consultum, issued upon the 10th June, in consequence of the Imperial rescript, declared that the temporal dominion of Rome had passed to Napoleon, but she would still continue to be the residence of the visible Head of the Catholic Church.

It had doubtless been thought possible to persuade the Pope to acquiesce in the annihilation of his secular power, as the

Spanish Bourbons were compelled to ratify the usurpation of the Spanish crown, their inheritance. But Pius VII. had a mind of a firmer tenor. In the very night when the proclamation of the new functionaries finally divested him of his temporal principality, the Head of the Church assumed his spiritual weapons, and in the name of God, from whom he claimed authority, by missives drawn up by himself, and sealed with the seal of the Fisherman, declared Napoleon, Emperor of the French, with his adherents, favourers, and counsellors, to have incurred the solemn doom of excommunication, which he proceeded to launch against them accordingly.[11] To the honour of Pius VII. it must be added, that, different from the bulls which his predecessors used to send forth on similar occasions, the present sentence of excommunication was pronounced exclusively as a spiritual punishment, and contained a clause prohibiting all and any one from so construing its import, as to hold it authority for any attack on the person either of Napoleon or any of his adherents.

PIUS VII. BANISHED

The Emperor was highly incensed at the pertinacity and courage of the Pontiff in adopting so bold a measure, and determined on punishing him. In the night betwixt the 5th and 6th of July, the Quirinal palace, in which his Holiness

[11] Annual Register, vol. li., p. 513; Botta, tom. iv., p. 394.

resided, was forcibly entered by soldiers, and General Radet, presenting himself before the Holy Father, demanded that he should instantly execute a renunciation of the temporal estates belonging to the See of Rome. "I ought not – I will not – I cannot make such a cession," said Pius VII. "I have sworn to God to preserve inviolate the possessions of the Holy Church – I will not violate my oath." The general then informed his Holiness he must prepare to quit Rome. "This, then, is the gratitude of your Emperor," exclaimed the aged Pontiff, "for my great condescension towards the Gallican Church, and towards himself? Perhaps in that particular my conduct has been blameworthy in the eyes of God, and he is now desirous to punish me. I humbly stoop to his divine pleasure."

At three o'clock in the morning, the Pope was placed in a carriage, which one cardinal alone was permitted to share with him, and thus forcibly carried from his capital. As they arrived at the gate del Popolo, the general observed it was yet time for his Holiness to acquiesce in the transference of his secular estates. The Pontiff returned a strong negative, and the carriage proceeded.[12]

At Florence, Pius was separated from Cardinal Pacca, the only person of his court who had been hitherto permitted to attend him; and the attendance of General Radet was replaced by that of an officer of gendarmes. After a toilsome journey, partly performed in a litter, and sometimes by torch-light, the

[12] Botta, tom. iv., p. 395; Jomini, tom. iii., p. 242; Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 140.

aged Pontiff was embarked for Alexandria, and transferred from thence to Mondovi, and then across the Alps to Grenoble.

But the strange sight of the Head of the Catholic Church travelling under a guard of gendarmes, with the secrecy and the vigilance used in transporting a state criminal, began to interest the people in the south of France. Crowds assembled to beseech the Holy Father's benediction, perhaps with more sincerity than when, as the guest of Buonaparte, he was received there with all the splendour the Imperial orders could command.

At the end of ten days, Grenoble no longer seemed a fitting place for his Holiness's residence, probably because he excited too much interest, and he was again transported to the Italian side of the Alps, and quartered at Savona. Here, it is said, he was treated with considerable harshness, and for a time at least confined to his apartment. The prefect of Savoy, M. de Chabrol, presented his Holiness with a letter from Napoleon, upbraiding him in strong terms for his wilful obstinacy, and threatening to convoke at Paris a Council of Bishops, with a view to his deposition. "I will lay his threats," said Pius VII., with the firmness which sustained him through his sufferings, "at the foot of the crucifix, and I leave with God the care of avenging my cause, since it has become his own."

The feelings of the Catholics were doubtless enhanced on this extraordinary occasion, by their belief in the sacred, and, it may be said, divine character, indissolubly united with the Head of the Church. But the world, Papist and Protestant, were

alike sensible to the outrageous indecency with which an old man, a priest and a sovereign, so lately the friend and guest of Buonaparte, was treated, for no other reason that could be alleged, than to compel him to despoil himself of the territories of the Church, which he had sworn to transmit inviolate to his successors. Upon reflection, Napoleon seems to have become ashamed of the transaction, which he endeavoured to shift from his own shoulders, while in the same breath he apologized for it, as the act of the politician, not the individual.[13]

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[13] See Las Cases, vol. ii., pp. 12 and 13. He avowed that he himself would have refused, as a man and an officer, to mount guard on the Pope, "whose transportation into France," he added, "was done without my authority." Observing the surprise of Las Cases, he added, "that what he said was very true, together with other things which he would learn by and by. Besides," he proceeded, "you are to distinguish the deeds of a sovereign, who acts collectively, as different from those of an individual, who is restrained by no consideration that prevents him from following his own sentiments. Policy often permits, nay orders, a prince to do that which would be unpardonable in an individual." Of this denial and this apology, we shall only say, that the first seems very apocryphal, and the second would justify any crime which Machiavel or Achitophel could invent or recommend. Murat is the person whom the favourers of Napoleon are desirous to load with the violence committed on the Pope. But if Murat had dared to take so much upon himself, would it not have been as king of Naples? and by what warrant could he have transferred the Pontiff from place to place in the north of Italy, and even in France itself, the Emperor's dominions, and not his own? Besides, if Napoleon was, as has been stated, surprised, shocked, and incensed at the captivity of the Pope, why did he not instantly restore him to his liberty, with suitable apologies, and indemnification? His not doing so plainly shows, that if Murat and Radet had not express orders for what they did, they at least knew well it would be agreeable to the Emperor when done, and his acquiescence in their violence is a sufficient proof that they argued justly. – S."The Emperor knew nothing of the event until it had occurred; and then it was too late to disown it. He approved of what had

Regarded politically, never was any measure devised to which the interest of France and the Emperor was more diametrically opposed. Napoleon nominally gained the city of Rome, which, without this step, it was in his power to occupy at any time; but he lost the support, and incurred the mortal hatred of the Catholic clergy, and of all whom they could influence. He unravelled his own web, and destroyed, by this unjust and rash usurpation, all the merit which he had obtained by the re-establishment of the Gallican Church. Before this period he had said of the French clergy, and certainly had some right to use the language, "I have re-established them, I maintain them – they will surely continue attached to me." But in innovating upon their religious creed, in despoiling the Church, and maltreating its visible Head, he had cut the sinews of the league which he had formed betwixt the Church and his own government. It is easy to see the mistaken grounds on which he reckoned. Himself an egotist, Napoleon supposed, that when he had ascertained and secured to any man, or body of men, their own direct advantage in the system which he desired should be adopted, the parties interested were debarred from objecting to any innovations which he might afterwards introduce into that system, providing their own interest was not affected. The priests and sincere Catholics of France, on the other hand, thought, and in conscience could not

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been done, established the Pope at Savona, and afterwards united Rome to the French empire, thereby annulling the donation made of it by Charlemagne. This annexation was regretted by all, because every one desired peace." – Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 142

think otherwise, that the Concordat engaged the Emperor to the preservation of the Catholic Church, as, on the other hand, it engaged them to fealty towards Napoleon. When, therefore, by his unprovoked aggression against the Head of the Church, he had incurred the spiritual censure of excommunication, they held, by consequence, that all their engagements to him were dissolved by his own act.

PIUS THE SEVENTH

The natural feelings of mankind acted also against the Emperor. The Pope, residing at Rome in the possession of temporal power and worldly splendour, was a far less interesting object to a devout imagination, than an old man hurried a prisoner from his capital, transported from place to place like a criminal, and at length detained in an obscure Italian town, under the control of the French police, and their instruments.[14]

The consequences of this false step were almost as injurious as

[14] "In the eyes of Europe, Pius VII. was considered as an illustrious and affecting victim of greedy ambition. A prisoner at Savona, he was despoiled of all his external honours, and shut out from all communication with the cardinals, as well as deprived of all means of issuing bulls and assembling a council. What food for the *petite église*, for the turbulence of some priests, and for the hatred of some devotees! I immediately saw all these leavens would reproduce the secret associations we had with so much difficulty suppressed. In fact, Napoleon, by undoing all that he had hitherto done to calm and conciliate the minds of the people, disposed them in the end to withdraw themselves from his power, and even to ally themselves to his enemies, as soon as they had the courage to show themselves in force." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 335.

those which resulted from the unprincipled invasion of Spain. To place that kingdom under his more immediate control, Napoleon converted a whole nation of docile allies into irreconcilable enemies; and, for the vanity of adding to the empire of France the ancient capital of the world, he created a revolt in the opinion of the Catholics, which was in the long-run of the utmost prejudice to his authority. The bulls of the Pope, in spite of the attention of the police, and of the numerous arrests and severe punishments inflicted on those who dispersed them, obtained a general circulation; and, by affording a religious motive, enhanced and extended the disaffection to Napoleon, which, unavowed and obscure, began generally to arise against his person and government even in France, from the repeated draughts upon the conscription, the annihilation of commerce, and the other distressing consequences arising out of the measures of a government, which seemed only to exist in war.

While Buonaparte, at Schoenbrun, was thus disposing of Rome and its territories, and weighing in his bosom the alternative of dismembering Austria, or converting her into a friend, his life was exposed to one of those chances, to which despotic princes are peculiarly liable. It had often been predicted, that the dagger of some political or religious enthusiast, who might be willing to deposit his own life in gage for the success of his undertaking, was likely to put a period to Napoleon's extended plans of ambition. Fortunately, men like Felton[15] or

[15] The assassin of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, in 1628.

Sandt[16] are rarely met with, for the powerful instinct of self-preservation is, in the common case, possessed of influence even over positive lunatics, as well as men of that melancholy and atrabilious temperament, whose dark determination partakes of insanity. Individuals, however, occur from time to time, who are willing to sacrifice their own existence, to accomplish the death of a private or public enemy.

The life of Buonaparte at Schoenbrun was retired and obscure. He scarcely ever visited the city of Vienna;[17] and spent his time as if in the Tuileries, amid his generals, and a part of his ministers, who were obliged to attend him during his military expeditions. His most frequent appearance in public was when reviewing his troops. On one of these occasions [23d Sept.] while a body of the French guard was passing in review, a young man, well dressed, and of the middle rank, rushed suddenly forward, and attempted to plunge a long sharp knife, or poniard, in Napoleon's bosom. Berthier threw himself betwixt his master and the assassin, and Rapp made the latter prisoner. On his examination, the youth evinced the coolness of a fanatic. He was a native of Erfurt,

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[16] The political fanatic of Jena, who assassinated Kotzebue at Manheim, in 1819.

[17] "In the midst of the Emperor's occupations at Vienna, he was not unmindful of the memory of the Chevalier Bayard. The chapel of the village of Martinière, in which that hero had been christened, was repaired at great expense by his orders. He also directed that the heart of the chevalier should be removed to the said chapel with due ceremony; and an inscription, dictated by the Emperor himself, recording the praises of the knight 'without fear and without reproach,' was placed on the leaden box containing his heart." – Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 97.

son of a Lutheran clergyman, well educated, and of a decent condition in life. He avowed his purpose to have killed Napoleon, as called to the task by God, for the liberation of his country. No intrigue or correspondence with any party appeared to have prompted his unjustifiable purpose, nor did his behaviour or pulse testify any sign of insanity or mental alienation. He told Buonaparte, that he had so much respect for his talents, that if he could have obtained an audience of him, he would have commenced the conference by an exhortation to him to make peace; but if he could not succeed, he was determined to take his life. "What evil have I done you?" asked Napoleon. "To me personally, none; but you are the oppressor of my country, the oppressor of the world, and to have put you to death would have been the most glorious act a man of honour could do."

Stapps, for that was his name, was justly condemned to die; for no cause can justify assassination.[18] His death was marked by the same fanatical firmness which had accompanied his crime; and the adventure remained a warning, though a fruitless one, to Buonaparte, that any man who is indifferent to his own life, may endanger that of the most absolute sovereign upon earth, even when at the head of his military force.[19]

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[18] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 12; Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 151; Rapp, p. 141.

[19] "The wretched young man was taken to Vienna, brought before a council of war, and executed on the 27th. He had taken no sustenance since the 24th, because, as he said, he had sufficient strength to walk to the place of execution. His last words were – 'Liberty forever! Germany for ever! Death to the tyrant!' I delivered the report to Napoleon, who desired me to keep the knife that had been found upon the criminal.

The negotiations for peace with Austria continued, notwithstanding the feeble state of the latter power, to be unusually protracted. The reason, at that time secret, became soon after publicly known.

THE ARCHDUKE CHARLES

Buonaparte's first intentions had been to dismember the empire, which he had found so obstinate and irreconcilable in its enmity, and, separating from the dominions of Austria either the kingdom of Hungary, or that of Bohemia, or both, to reduce the House of Hapsburg to the rank of a second-rate power in Europe. Napoleon himself affirmed, when in Saint Helena, that he was encouraged by one of the royal family (the Archduke Charles is indicated) to persist in his purpose, as the only means of avoiding future wars with Austria; and that the same prince was willing to have worn one of the crowns, thus to be torn from the brows of his brother Francis.[20] We can only say, that the avowals of Napoleon when in exile, like his bulletins when in power, seem so generally dictated by that which he wished to be believed, rather than by a frank adherence to truth, that we cannot hold his unsupported and inexplicit testimony as sufficient to impose the least stain on the noble, devoted, and patriotic character of the archduke, whose sword and talents had so often served

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It is still in my possession." – Rapp, p. 147.

[20] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 104.

his brother's cause, and whose life exhibits no indication of that meanness which would be implied in a wish to share the spoils of his country, or accept at the hands of the conqueror a tributary kingdom, reft from the dominions of his king and brother. Buonaparte himself paid the courage and devotion of the Austrian prince a flattering compliment, when, in sending to him a decoration of the Legion of Honour, he chose that which was worn by the common soldier, as better suited to the determination and frankness of his character, than one of those richly ornamented, which were assigned to men of rank, who had perhaps never known, or only seen at some distance, the toils and dangers of battle.

The crisis, however, approached, which was to determine the fate of Austria. Buonaparte's favourite minister, Champagny, Duke of Cadore, had been for some time at Presburg, arranging with Metternich the extent of cession of territory by which Austria was to pay for her unfortunate assumption of hostilities. The definitive treaty of peace, when at length published, was found to contain the following articles: – I. Austria ceded, in favour of the Princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, Saltsburg, Berchtolsgaden, and a part of Upper Austria. II. To France directly, she ceded her only seaport of Trieste, the districts of Carniola, Friuli, the circle of Villach, and some part of Croatia and Dalmatia. These dominions tended to strengthen and enlarge the French province of Illyria, and to exclude Austria from the Adriatic, and the possibility of communication with

Great Britain. A small lordship, called Razons, lying within the territories of the Grison League, was also relinquished. III. To the King of Saxony, in that character, Austria ceded some small part of Bohemia, and in the capacity of Duke of Warsaw, she gave up to him the city of Cracow, and the whole of Western Galicia. IV. Russia had a share, though a moderate one, in the spoils of Austria. She was to receive, in reward of her aid, though tardily and unwillingly tendered, a portion of Eastern Galicia, containing a population of four hundred thousand souls. But from this cession the town of Brody, a commercial place of consequence, was specially excepted; and it has been said that this exception made an unfavourable impression on the Emperor Alexander, which was not overbalanced by the satisfaction he received from the portion of spoil transferred to him.[21]

In his correspondence with the Russian Court, Napoleon expressed himself as having, from deference to Alexander's wishes, given Austria a more favourable peace than she had any reason to expect.[22] Indeed, Europe in general was surprised at the moderation of the terms; for though Austria, by her cessions at different points, yielded up a surface of 45,000 square miles, and a population of between three and four millions, yet the extremity in which she was placed seemed to render this a cheap ransom, as she still retained 180,000 square miles, and upwards, of territory, which, with a population of twenty-one

[21] For a copy of the treaty, see Annual Register, vol. li., p. 791.

[22] Annual Register, vol. li., p. 790.

millions, rendered her, after France and Russia, even yet the most formidable power on the continent. But her good angel had not slept. The House of Rodolph of Hapsburg had arisen, from small beginnings, to its immense power and magnitude, chiefly by matrimonial alliances,[23] and it was determined that, by another intermarriage of that Imperial House, with the most successful conqueror whom the world had ever seen, she should escape with comparative ease from the greatest extremity in which she had ever been placed. There is no doubt, also, that by secret articles of treaty, Napoleon, according to his maxim of making the conquered party sustain the expense of the war, exacted for that purpose heavy contributions from the Austrian Government.

He left Schoenbrun on the 16th October, the day after the definitive treaty of peace, which takes its name from that palace, had been signed there; and it is remarkable that no military caution was relaxed in the evacuation of the Austrian dominions by the French troops. They retreated by echelon, so as to be always in a position of mutual support, as if they had still been manœuvring in an enemy's country.

On the 14th November, Napoleon received at Paris the gratulations of the Senate, who too fondly complimented him on having acquired, by his triumphs, the palm of peace. That emblem, they said, should be placed high above his other laurels, upon a monument which should be dedicated by the gratitude of the French people. "To the Greatest of Heroes who never

[23] The verses are well known, —

achieved victory but for the happiness of the world."

CHAPTER L

Change in Napoleon's Domestic Life – Causes which led to it – His anxiety for an Heir – A Son of his brother Louis is fixed upon, but dies in Childhood – Character and influence of Josephine – Strong mutual attachment betwixt her and Napoleon – Fouché opens to Josephine the Plan of a Divorce – her extreme Distress – On 5th December, Napoleon announces her Fate to Josephine – On 15th they are formally separated before the Imperial Council – Josephine retaining the rank of Empress for life – Espousals of Buonaparte and Maria Louisa of Austria take place at Vienna, 11th March, 1810.

CHANGE IN NAPOLEON'S DOMESTIC LIFE

There is perhaps no part of the varied life of the wonderful person of whom we treat, more deeply interesting, than the change which took place in his domestic establishment, shortly after the peace of Vienna. The main causes of that change are strongly rooted in human nature, but there were others which arose out of Napoleon's peculiar situation. The desire of posterity – of being represented long after our own earthly career is over, by those who derive their life and condition in society from us, is deeply rooted in our species. In all ages and countries, children

are accounted a blessing, barrenness a misfortune at least, if not a curse. This desire of maintaining a posthumous connexion with the world, through the medium of our descendants, is increased, when there is property or rank to be inherited; and, however vain the thought, there are few to which men cling with such sincere fondness, as the prospect of bequeathing to their children's children the fortunes they have inherited from their fathers, or acquired by their own industry. There is kindness as well as some vanity in the feeling; for the attachment which we bear to the children whom we see and love, naturally flows downward to their lineage, whom we may never see. The love of distant posterity is in some degree the metaphysics of natural affection.

It was impossible that the founder of so vast an empire as that of Napoleon, could be insensible to a feeling which is so deeply grafted in our nature, as to influence the most petty proprietor of a house and a few acres – it is of a character to be felt in proportion to the extent of the inheritance; and so viewed, there never existed in the world before, and, it is devoutly to be hoped, will never be again permitted by Providence to arise, a power so extensive, so formidable as Napoleon's. Immense as it was, it had been, moreover, the work of his own talents; and, therefore, he must have anticipated, with the greater pain, that the system, perfected by so much labour and blood, should fall to pieces on the death of him by whom it had been erected, or that the reins of empire should be grasped after that event "by some unlineal

hand,"

"No son of his succeeding."

The drop of gall, which the poet describes so naturally as embittering the cup of the Usurper of Scotland, infused, there is no doubt, its full bitterness into that of Napoleon.

JOSEPHINE

The sterility of the Empress Josephine was now rendered, by the course of nature, an irremediable evil, over which she mourned in hopeless distress; and conscious on what precarious circumstances the continuance of their union seemed now to depend, she gave way occasionally to fits of jealousy, less excited, according to Napoleon,[24] by personal attachment, than by suspicion that her influence over her husband's mind might be diminished, in case of his having offspring by some paramour.

She turned her thoughts to seek a remedy, and exerted her influence over her husband, to induce him to declare some one his successor, according to the unlimited powers vested in him by the Imperial constitution. In the selection, she naturally endeavoured to direct his choice towards his step-son, Eugene

[24] "'A son by Josephine would have completed my happiness. It would have put an end to her jealousy, by which I was continually harassed. She despaired of having a child, and she in consequence looked forward with dread to the future.'" – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. ii., p. 298.

Beauharnois, her own son by her first marriage; but this did not meet Buonaparte's approbation. A child, the son of his brother Louis, by Hortense Beauharnois, appeared, during its brief existence, more likely to become the destined heir of this immense inheritance. Napoleon seemed attached to the boy; and when he manifested any spark of childish spirit, rejoiced in the sound of the drum, or showed pleasure in looking upon arms and the image of war, he is said to have exclaimed – "*There* is a child fit to succeed, perhaps to surpass me."[25]

The fixing his choice on an heir so intimately connected with herself, would have secured the influence of Josephine, as much as it could receive assurance from any thing save bearing her husband issue herself; but she was not long permitted to enjoy this prospect. The son of Louis and Hortense died of a disorder incident to childhood; and thus was broken, while yet a twig, the shoot, that, growing to maturity, might have been reckoned on as the stay of an empire. Napoleon showed the deepest grief, but Josephine sorrowed as one who had no hope.[26]

Yet, setting aside her having the misfortune to bear him no issue, the claims of Josephine on her husband's affections were as numerous as could be possessed by a wife. She had shared his more lowly fortunes, and, by her management and address

[25] Fouché, tom. i., p. 324.

[26] "Never did I see Napoleon a prey to deeper and more concentrated grief; never did I see Josephine in more agonizing affliction. They appeared to find in it a mournful presentiment of a futurity without happiness and without hope." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 324.

during his absence in Egypt, had paved the way for the splendid success which he had attained on his return. She had also done much to render his government popular, by softening the sudden and fierce bursts of passion to which his temperament induced him to give way. No one could understand, like Josephine, the peculiarities of her husband's temper – no one dared, like her, to encounter his displeasure, rather than not advise him for his better interest – no one could possess such opportunities of watching the fit season for intercession – and no one, it is allowed on all hands, made a more prudent, or a more beneficent use of the opportunities she enjoyed. The character of Buonaparte, vehement by temper, a soldier by education, and invested by Fortune with the most despotic power, required peculiarly the moderating influence of such a mind, which could interfere without intrusion, and remonstrate without offence.

To maintain this influence over her husband, Josephine made not only unreluctantly, but eagerly, the greatest personal sacrifices. In many of the rapid journeys which he performed, she was his companion. No obstacle of road or weather was permitted to interfere with her departure. However sudden the call, the Empress was ever ready; however untimely the hour, her carriage was in instant attendance. The influence which she maintained by the sacrifice of her personal comforts, was used for the advancement of her husband's best interests – the relief of those who were in distress, and the averting the consequences of hasty resolutions, formed in a moment of violence or irritation.

Besides her considerable talents, and her real beneficence of disposition, Josephine was possessed of other ties over the mind of her husband. The mutual passion which had subsisted between them for many years, if its warmth had subsided, seems to have left behind affectionate remembrances and mutual esteem. The grace and dignity with which Josephine played her part in the Imperial pageant, was calculated to gratify the pride of Napoleon, which might have been shocked at seeing the character of Empress discharged with less ease and adroitness; for her temper and manners enabled her, as one early accustomed to the society of persons of political influence, to conduct herself with singular dexterity in the intrigues of the splendid and busy court, where she filled so important a character. Lastly, it is certain that Buonaparte, who, like many of those that affect to despise superstition, had a reserve of it in his own bosom, believed that his fortunes were indissolubly connected with those of Josephine; and loving her as she deserved to be beloved, he held his union with her the more intimate, that there was attached to it, he thought, a spell affecting his own destinies, which had ever seemed most predominant when they had received the recent influence of Josephine's presence.

Notwithstanding all these mutual ties, it was evident to the politicians of the Tuileries, that whatever attachment and veneration for the Empress Napoleon might profess and feel, it was likely, in the long-run, to give way to the eager desire of a lineal succession, to which he might bequeath his splendid

inheritance. As age advanced, every year weakened, though in an imperceptible degree, the influence of the Empress, and must have rendered more eager the desire of her husband to form a new alliance, while he was yet at a period of life enabling him to hope he might live to train to maturity the expected heir.

DIVORCE OF JOSEPHINE

Fouché, the minister of police, the boldest political intriguer of his time, discovered speedily to what point the Emperor must ultimately arrive, and seems to have meditated the ensuring his own power and continuance in favour, by taking the initiative in a measure in which, perhaps, Napoleon might be ashamed to break the ice in person.[27] Sounding artfully his master's disposition, Fouché was able to discover that the Emperor was struggling betwixt the supposed political advantages to be derived from a new matrimonial union on the one hand, and, on the other, love for his present consort, habits of society which particularly attached him to Josephine, and the species of superstition which we have already noticed. Having been able to conjecture

[27] "It would ill have become me to have kept within my own breast the suggestions of my foresight. In a confidential memoir, which I read to Napoleon himself, I represented to him the necessity of dissolving his marriage; of immediately forming, as Emperor, a new alliance more suitable and more happy; and of giving an heir to the throne on which Providence had placed him. Without declaring any thing positive, Napoleon let me perceive, that, in a political point of view, the dissolution of his marriage was already determined in his mind." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 326.

the state of the Emperor's inclinations, the crafty counsellor determined to make Josephine herself the medium of suggesting to Buonaparte the measure of her own divorce, and his second marriage, as a sacrifice necessary to consolidate the empire, and complete the happiness of the Emperor.

One evening at Fontainbleau, as the Empress was returning from mass, Fouché detained her in the embrasure of a window in the gallery, while, with an audacity almost incomprehensible, he explained, with all the alleviating qualifications his ingenuity could suggest, the necessity of a sacrifice, which he represented as equally sublime and inevitable. The tears gathered in Josephine's eyes – her colour came and went – her lips swelled – and the least which the counsellor had to fear, was his advice having brought on a severe nervous affection. She commanded her emotions, however, sufficiently to ask Fouché, with a faltering voice, whether he had any commission to hold such language to her. He replied in the negative, and said that he had only ventured on such an insinuation from his having predicted with certainty what must necessarily come to pass; and from his desire to turn her attention to what so nearly concerned her glory and happiness.[28]

In consequence of this interview, an impassioned and interesting scene is said to have taken place betwixt Buonaparte and his consort, in which he naturally and truly disavowed the communication of Fouché, and attempted, by every means

[28] Fouché, tom. i., p. 328.

in his power, to dispel her apprehensions. But he refused to dismiss Fouché, when she demanded it as the punishment due to that minister's audacity, in tampering with her feelings; and this refusal alone might have convinced Josephine, that though ancient habitual affection might for a time maintain its influence in the nuptial chamber, it must at length give way before the suggestions of political interest, which were sure to predominate in the cabinet. In fact, when the idea had once been started, the chief objection was removed, and Buonaparte, being spared the pain of directly communicating the unkind and ungrateful proposal to Josephine, had now only to afford her time to familiarise herself with the idea of a divorce, as that which political combinations rendered inevitable.

The communication of Fouché was made before Napoleon undertook his operations in Spain; and by the time of the meeting at Erfurt, the divorce seems to have been a matter determined, since the subject of a match betwixt Buonaparte and one of the archduchesses, the possibility of which had been anticipated as far back as the treaty of Tilsit, was resumed, seriously treated of, and if not received with cordiality by the Imperial family of Russia, was equally far from being finally rejected. The reigning Empress, and the Empress Mother, were, however, opposed to it. The ostensible motive was, as we have elsewhere said, the difference of religion; but these high-minded princesses rejected the alliance chiefly on account of the personal character of the suitor. And although it must have been managed with the

greatest secrecy imaginable, it seems probable that the idea of substituting an Archduchess of Austria for her whose hand was refused him, was started in the course of the treaty of Schoenbrun, and had its effects in providing lenient terms for the weaker party. Napoleon himself says, that he renounced his purpose of dismembering Austria when his marriage was fixed upon. But the conditions of peace were signed on the 15th of October, and therefore the motive which influenced Napoleon in granting them must have had existence previous to that period.

Yet the contrary is boldly asserted. The idea of the match is said to have been suggested by the Austrian government at a later period, upon understanding that difficulties had occurred in Napoleon's negotiation for a matrimonial alliance in the family of Alexander. Fouché ascribes the whole to the address of his own agent, the Comte de Narbonne, a Frenchman of the old school, witty, pliant, gay, well-mannered, and insinuating, who was ambassador at Vienna in the month of January 1810.[29]

But, whether the successor of Josephine were or were not already determined upon, the measures for separating this amiable and interesting woman from him whose fortunes she had assisted to raise, and to whose person she was so much attached, were in full and public operation soon after her husband's return from the campaign of Wagram. Upon the 3d of December, Buonaparte attended the solemn service of Te Deum for his victories. He was clad with unusual magnificence, wearing the

[29] Mémoires de Fouché, tom. i., p. 348.

Spanish costume, and displaying in his hat an enormous plume of feathers. The Kings of Saxony and Wirtemberg, who attended as his satellites on this occasion, were placed beside him in full uniform, and remained uncovered during the ceremony.

From the cathedral, Napoleon passed to the opening of the Legislative Body, and boasted, in the oration he addressed to them, of the victories which he had achieved, and the trophies which he had acquired; nay, he vaunted of his having reunited Tuscany to the empire – as if the spoiling the inoffensive and unresisting widow and orphan could ever be a legitimate subject of triumph. From the existing affairs of Spain, no direct reason for gratulation could be derived; but when Napoleon could no longer claim praise from things as they presently stood, he was profuse in his promises of a rapid change to the better, and spoke as a prophet when he ceased to be the reporter of agreeable facts. "When I," he said, "show myself on the other side of the Pyrenees, the terrified Leopard shall plunge into the ocean, to avoid shame, defeat, and destruction. The triumph of my arms shall be that of the Genius of Good over the Genius of Evil, of moderation, order, and morals, over civil war, anarchy, and the malevolent passions." With such fair colouring will ambition and injustice attempt to screen their purposes. A poetical reply from M. de Fontanes assured the Emperor, that whatever was connected with him must arise to grandeur, whatever was subjected to any other influence was threatened with a speedy fall. "It was therefore necessary," he

continued, "to submit to your ascendency, whose counsels are at once recommended by heroism and by policy." To this speech Buonaparte made a rejoinder, in which, resuming the well-worn themes of his own praises, he alluded to the obstacles which he had surmounted, and concluded, "I and my family will always know how to sacrifice our most tender affections to the interests and welfare of the Great Nation." These concluding words, the meaning of which was already guessed by all who belonged to the Court, were soon no riddle to the public in general.

Two days afterwards, Napoleon made Josephine acquainted with the cruel certainty, that the separation was ultimately determined upon. But not the many months which had passed since the subject was first touched upon by Fouché – not the conviction which she must have long since received from various quarters, that the measure was unalterably resolved upon, could strengthen her to hear the tongue of her beloved husband announce what was in fact, though not in name, a sentence of repudiation. She fell into a long and profound swoon. Napoleon was much affected, but his resolution was taken, and could not be altered. The preparations for the separation went on without delay.

On the 15th December, just ten days after the official communication of her fate had been given to the Empress, Napoleon and Josephine appeared in presence of the Arch-Chancellor, the family of Napoleon, the principal officers of state – in a word, the full Imperial Council. In this assembly,

Napoleon stated the deep national interest which required that he should have successors of his own body, the heirs of his love for his people, to occupy the throne on which Providence had placed him. He informed them, that he had for several years renounced the hope of having children by his well-beloved Empress Josephine; and that therefore he had resolved to subject the feelings of his heart to the good of the state, and desire the dissolution of their marriage. He was, he said, but forty years old, and might well hope to live to train up such children as Providence might send him, in his own sentiments and arts of government. Again he dwelt on the truth and tenderness of his beloved spouse, his partner during fifteen years of happy union. Crowned as she had been by his own hand, he desired she should retain the rank of Empress during her life.

Josephine arose, and with a faltering voice, and eyes suffused with tears, expressed in a few words[30] sentiments similar to those

[30] "By the permission of our dear and august consort, I ought to declare, that not perceiving any hope of having children, which may fulfil the wants of his policy and the interests of France, I am pleased to give him the greatest proof of attachment and devotion which has ever been given on earth. I possess all from his bounty; it was his hand which crowned me; and from the height of this throne I have received nothing but proofs of affection and love from the French people. I think I prove myself grateful in consenting to the dissolution of a marriage which heretofore was an obstacle to the welfare of France, which deprived it of the happiness of being one day governed by the descendant of a great man, evidently raised up by Providence, to efface the evils of a terrible revolution, and to re-establish the altar, the throne, and social order. But the dissolution of my marriage will in no degree change the sentiments of my heart; the Emperor will ever have in me his best friend. I know how much this act, demanded by policy, and by interest so great, has chilled his heart; but both of us exult in the

of her husband. The Imperial pair then demanded from the Arch-Chancellor a written instrument in evidence of their mutual desire of separation; and it was granted accordingly, in all due form, with the authority of the Council.

The Senate were next assembled; and on the 16th December, pronounced a consultum, or decree, authorising the separation of the Emperor and Empress, and assuring to Josephine a dowry of two millions of francs, and the rank of Empress during her life. Addresses were voted to both the Imperial parties, in which all possible changes were rung on the duty of subjecting our dearest affections to the public good; and the conduct of Buonaparte in exchanging his old consort for a young one, was proclaimed a sacrifice, for which the eternal love of the French people could alone console his heart.

The union of Napoleon and Josephine being thus abrogated by the supreme civil power, it only remained to procure the intervention of the spiritual authorities. The Arch-Chancellor, duly authorised by the Imperial pair, presented a request for this purpose to the Diocesan of the Officiality, or ecclesiastical court of Paris, who did not hesitate to declare the marriage dissolved, assigning, however, no reason for such their doom. They announced it, indeed, as conforming to the decrees of councils, and the usages of the Gallican Church – a proposition which would have cost the learned and reverend officials much

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sacrifice which we make for the good of the country." —*Moniteur*, Dec. 17, 1809; *Annual Register*, vol. li., p. 808.

trouble, if they had been required to make it good either by argument or authority.

When this sentence had finally dissolved their union, the Emperor retired to St. Cloud, where he lived in seclusion for some days. Josephine, on her part, took up her residence in the beautiful villa of Malmaison, near St. Germains. Here she principally dwelt for the remaining years of her life, which were just prolonged to see the first fall of her husband; an event which might have been averted had he been content to listen more frequently to her lessons of moderation. Her life was chiefly spent in cultivating the fine arts, of which she collected some beautiful specimens, and in pursuing the science of botany; but especially in the almost daily practice of acts of benevolence and charity, of which the English *détenus*, of whom there were several at St. Germains, frequently shared the benefit.[31] Napoleon visited her very frequently, and always treated her with the respect to which she was entitled. He added also to her dowry a third million of francs, that she might feel no inconvenience from the habits of expense to which it was her foible to be addicted.

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[31] "In quitting the court, Josephine drew the hearts of all its votaries after her: she was endeared to all by a kindness of disposition which was without a parallel. She never did the smallest injury to any one in the days of her power: her very enemies found in her a protectress: not a day of her life but what she asked a favour for some person, oftentimes unknown to her, but whom she found to be deserving of her protection. Regardless of self, her whole time was engaged in attending to the wants of others." – Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 177.

This important state measure was no sooner completed, than the Great Council was summoned, on the 1st February, to assist the Emperor in the selection of a new spouse. They were given to understand, that a match with a Grand Duchess of Russia had been proposed, but was likely to be embarrassed by disputes concerning religion. A daughter of the King of Saxony was also mentioned, but it was easily indicated to the Council that their choice ought to fall upon a Princess of the House of Austria. At the conclusion of the meeting, Eugene, the son of the repudiated Josephine, was commissioned by the Council to propose to the Austrian ambassador a match between Napoleon and the Archduchess Maria Louisa.[32] Prince Schwartzenberg had his instructions on the subject; so that the match was proposed, discussed, and decided in the Council, and afterwards adjusted between plenipotentiaries on either side, in the space of twenty-four hours.[33] The espousals of Napoleon and Maria Louisa were celebrated at Vienna, 11th March, 1810. The person of Buonaparte was represented by his favourite Berthier, while

[32] Maria Louisa, the eldest daughter of the Emperor of Austria and Maria Theresa of Naples, was born the 12th December, 1791. Her stature was sufficiently majestic, her complexion fresh and blooming, her eyes blue and animated, her hair light, and her hand and foot so beautiful, that they might have served as models for the sculptor.

[33] Fouché, tom. i., p. 350.

the Archduke Charles assisted at the ceremony, in the name of the Emperor Francis. A few days afterwards, the youthful bride, accompanied by the Queen of Naples, proceeded towards France.

With good taste, Napoleon dispensed with the ceremonies used in the reception of Marie Antoinette, whose marriage with Louis XVI., though never named or alluded to, was in other respects the model of the present solemnity. Near Soissons, a single horseman, no way distinguished by dress, rode past the carriage in which the young Empress was seated, and had the boldness to return, as if to reconnoitre more closely. The carriage stopped, the door was opened, and Napoleon, breaking through all the tediousness of ceremony, introduced himself to his bride, and came with her to Soissons.[34] The marriage ceremony was performed at St. Cloud by Buonaparte's uncle, the Cardinal Fesch. The most splendid rejoicings, illuminations, concerts, festivals, took place upon this important occasion. But a great calamity occurred, which threw a shade over these demonstrations of joy. Prince Schwartzenberg had given a distinguished ball on the occasion, when unhappily the dancing-room, which was temporary, and erected in the garden, caught fire. No efforts could stop the progress of the flames, in which several persons perished, and amongst them even the sister of

[34] "She had always been given to understand that Berthier, who had married her by proxy at Vienna, in person and age exactly resembled the Emperor: she, however, signified that she observed a very pleasing difference between them." – Las Cases, tom. i., p. 312.

Prince Schwartzenberg. This tragic circumstance struck a damp on the public mind, and was considered as a bad omen, especially when it was remembered that the marriage of Louis XVI. with a former Princess of Austria had been signalized by a similar disaster.[35]

As a domestic occurrence, nothing could more contribute to Buonaparte's happiness than his union with Maria Louisa. He was wont to compare her with Josephine, by giving the latter all the advantages of art and grace; the former the charms of simple modesty and innocence. His former Empress used every art to support or enhance her personal charms; but with so much prudence and mystery, that the secret cares of her toilette could never be traced – her successor trusted for the power of pleasing, to youth and nature. Josephine mismanaged her revenue, and incurred debt without scruple. Maria Louisa lived within her income, or if she desired any indulgence beyond it, which was rarely the case, she asked it as a favour of Napoleon. Josephine, accustomed to political intrigue, loved to manage, to influence, and to guide her husband; Maria Louisa desired only to please and to obey him. Both were excellent women, of great sweetness of temper, and fondly attached to Napoleon.[36] In the difference between these distinguished persons, we can easily discriminate the leading features of the Parisian, and of

[35] "The most unfortunate presages were drawn from it; Napoleon himself was struck with it." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 355.

[36] Las Cases, tom. i., p. 310.

the simple German beauty; but it is certainly singular that the artificial character should have belonged to the daughter of the West Indian planter; that marked by nature and simplicity, to a princess of the proudest court in Europe.

Buonaparte, whose domestic conduct was generally praiseworthy, behaved with the utmost kindness to his princely bride. He observed, however, the strictest etiquette, and required it from the Empress. If it happened, for example, as was often the case, that he was prevented from attending at the hour when dinner was placed on the table, he was displeased if, in the interim of his absence, which was often prolonged, she either took a book or had recourse to any female occupation – if, in short, he did not find her in the attitude of waiting for the signal to take her place at table. Perhaps a sense of his inferior birth made Napoleon more tenacious of this species of form, as what he could not afford to relinquish. On the other hand, Maria Louisa is said to have expressed her surprise at her husband's dispensing with the use of arms and attendance of guards, and at his moving about with the freedom of an individual;[37] although this could be no great novelty to a member of the Imperial Family of Austria, most of whom, and especially the Emperor Francis, are in the habit of mixing familiarly with the people of Vienna, at public places, and in the public walks.

As it influenced his political fate, Buonaparte has registered his complaint, that the Austrian match was a precipice covered

[37] Voice from St. Helena, vol. ii., p. 225.

with flowers, which he was rashly induced to approach by the hopes of domestic happiness.[38] But if this proved so, it was the fault of Napoleon himself; his subjects and his allies augured very differently of its consequences, and to himself alone it was owing that these auguries were disappointed. It was to have been expected, that a connexion formed with the most ancient Imperial Family in Christendom, might have induced Buonaparte to adopt some of those sentiments of moderation which regard rather the stability than the increase of power. It constituted a point at which he might pause. It might have been thought that, satiated with success, and wearied with enterprise, he would have busied himself more in consolidating the power which he desired to transmit to his expected posterity, than in aiming at rendering his grandeur more invidious and more precarious, by further schemes of ambition. Even the charms which this union added to his domestic life, might, it was hoped, bring on a taste for repose, which, could it have influenced that fiery imagination and frame of iron, might have been of such essential advantage to Europe.

Napoleon knew what was expected, and endeavoured to vindicate himself beforehand for the disappointment which he foresaw was about to ensue. "The good citizens rejoice sincerely

[38] "Austria had become a portion of my family; and yet my marriage ruined me. If I had not thought myself safe, and protected by this alliance, I should have delayed the insurrection of Poland: I should have waited until Spain was subdued and tranquil. I set foot on an abyss, concealed by a bed of flowers!" – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. ii., p. 105.

at my marriage, monsieur?" he said to Decrés, his minister. – "Very much, Sire." – "I understand they think the Lion will go to slumber, ha?" – "To speak the truth, Sire, they entertain some hopes of that nature." Napoleon paused an instant, and then replied, "They are mistaken; yet it is not the fault of the Lion; slumber would be as agreeable to him as to others. But see you not that while I have the air of being constantly the attacking party, I am, in fact, acting only on the defensive?" This sophism, by which Napoleon endeavoured to persuade all men, that his constant wars arose, not from choice, but out of the necessity of his situation, will be best discussed hereafter.

In the meantime, we may only notice, that the Emperor Alexander judged most accurately of the consequences of the Austrian match, when he said, on receiving the news, "Then the next task will be, to drive me back to my forests;" so certain he was that Napoleon would make his intimate alliance with the Emperor Francis, the means of an attack upon Russia; and so acute was he in seeing the germs of future and more desperate wars, in a union from which more shortsighted politicians were looking for the blessings of peace.

CHAPTER LI

Almost all the foreign French Settlements fall into the hands of the British – French Squadron destroyed at the Isle of Aix, by Lord Cochrane – and at the Isle of Rosas, by Lord Collingwood – Return to the Proceedings in Spain – Soult takes Oporto – Attacked and Defeated by Sir Arthur Wellesley – Ferrol and Corunna retaken by the Patriots – Battle of Talavera, gained by Sir Arthur Wellesley – Created Lord Wellington – The French Armies take many towns and strong Places – Supreme Junta retreat to Cadiz – The Guerilla System – Growing disappointment of Buonaparte – His immense exertions – Battle of Busaco – Lord Wellington's famous Retreat on Torres Vedras.

Notwithstanding the credit which Napoleon had acquired, by dictating to the House of Austria the triumphant treaty of Schoenbrun, and also by allying himself with that ancient Imperial House, which had, on different occasions, showed towards him the signs of persevering enmity, this period of his history did not pass without his experiencing several reverses of fortune. The few foreign settlements which hitherto remained united to France, were now successively taken by the British. Cayenne, Martinico, Senegal, and Saint Domingo, were conquered and occupied in the West Indies; while Lord Collingwood, with troops furnished from Sicily, occupied the

islands of Cephalonia, Zante, Ithaca, and Cerigo.

A French squadron of men-of-war being blockaded in the roadstead of the isle of Aix, the determined valour of Lord Cochrane was employed for their destruction. Fire-ships were sent against the French vessels, and though the execution was less complete than had been expected, owing to some misunderstanding between Lord Cochrane and Admiral Gambier, who commanded in chief, yet the greater part of the French ships were burnt, or driven ashore and destroyed. Lord Collingwood also destroyed an important French convoy, with the armed vessels who protected it, in the isle of Rosas. Every thing announced that England retained the full command of what has been termed her native element; while the transactions in Spain showed, that, under a general who understood at once how to gain victories, and profit by them when obtained, the land forces of Britain were no less formidable than her navy. This subject draws our attention to the affairs of the Peninsula, where it might be truly said "the land was burning."

The evacuation of Corunna by the army of the late Sir John Moore, and their return to England, which their disastrous condition rendered indispensable, left Soult in seeming possession of Galicia, Ferrol and Corunna having both surrendered to him. But the strength of the Spanish cause did not lie in walls and ramparts, but in the indomitable courage of the gallant patriots. The Galicians continued to distinguish themselves by a war of posts, in which the invaders could claim

small advantages; and when Soult determined to enter Portugal, he was obliged to leave Ney, with considerable forces, to secure his communication with Spain.

SOULT OCCUPIES OPORTO

Soult's expedition began prosperously, though it was doomed to terminate very differently. He defeated General Romana, and compelled him to retreat to Senabria. The frontier town of Chaves was taken by Soult, after some resistance, and he forced his way towards Oporto. But no sooner had the main body of Soult's army left Chaves, than, in spite of the efforts of the garrison, the place was relieved by an insurrectionary army of Portuguese, under General Silviera. The invader, neglecting these operations in his rear, continued to advance upon Oporto, carried that fine city by storm, after a desultory defence of three days, and suffered his troops to commit the greatest cruelties, both on the soldiers and unarmed citizens.[39]

But when Marshal Soult had succeeded thus far, his situation became embarrassing. The Galicians, recovering their full energy, had retaken Vigo and other places; and Silviera,

[39] "It was in vain that Soult strove with all his power to stop the slaughter. The frightful scene of rape, pillage, and murder, closed not for many hours, and what with those who fell in battle, those who were drowned, and those sacrificed to revenge, it is said that 10,000 Portuguese died on that unhappy day! The loss of the French did not exceed 500 men." – Napier, vol. ii., p. 207. See also Southey, vol. iii., p. 249.

advancing from Chaves to the bridge of Amarante, interposed betwixt the French general and Galicia, and placed himself in communication with the Spaniards.

While Soult was thus cooped up in Oporto, the English Ministry, undaunted by the failure of their late expedition, resolved to continue the defence of the Portuguese, and to enter into still closer alliance with the Supreme Junta of Spain. Consulting their own opinion and the public voice, all consideration of rank and long service was laid aside, in order to confer the command of the troops which were to be sent to the continent, on Sir Arthur Wellesley, whose conduct in the battle of Vimeiro, and the subsequent explanations which he afforded at the Court of Inquiry, had taught all Britain to believe, that if Portugal could be defended at all, it must be by the victor of that day. He was scarce landed at Lisbon [April 22] ere he fully justified the good opinion of his countrymen. He crossed the Douro at different points with a celerity for which the French were unprepared, and, after a brilliant action under the walls of Oporto, compelled Soult to evacuate that city, and commence a retreat, so disastrous as to resemble that of Sir John Moore. In this retrograde movement, the French left behind them cannon, equipments, baggage – all that can strengthen an army, and enable it to act as such; and, after all these sacrifices, their leader could hardly make his escape into Galicia, with scarce three-fourths of his army remaining, where he found great difficulty in remodelling his forces. Ney, whom he had left as governor

of that province, was hard pressed by the patriots, who defeated the French in several battles, and eventually retook the towns of Ferrol and Corunna.

Sir Arthur Wellesley was prevented from completing Soult's defeat by pursuing him into Galicia, because, after the Spaniards had sustained the severe defeat of Tudela, the French had penetrated into Andalusia in great strength, where they were only opposed by an ill-equipped and dispirited army of 40,000 men, under the rash and ill-starred General Cuesta. It was evident, that Marshal Victor, who commanded in Andalusia, had it in his power to have detached a considerable part of his force on Lisbon, supposing that city had been uncovered, by Sir Arthur Wellesley's carrying his forces in pursuit of Soult. This was to be prevented, if possible. The English general formed the magnificent plan, for which Napoleon's departure to the Austrian campaign afforded a favourable opportunity, of marching into Andalusia, uniting the British forces with those of Cuesta, and acting against the invaders with such vigour, as might at once check their progress in the South, and endanger their occupation of Madrid. Unhappily an ill-timed jealousy seems to have taken possession of Cuesta, which manifested itself in every possible shape, in which frowardness, and a petty obstinacy of spirit, could be exhibited. To no one of the combined plans, submitted to him by the English general, would he give assent or effectual concurrence; and when a favourable opportunity arrived of attacking Victor, before he was united with the forces which

Joseph Buonaparte and Sebastiani were bringing from Madrid to his support, Cuesta alleged he would not give battle on a Sunday.[40]

BATTLE OF TALAVERA

The golden opportunity was thus lost; and when the allies were obliged to receive battle instead of giving it, on the 28th July, 1809, it was without the advantages which the former occasion held out. Yet the famous battle of Talavera de la Reina, in which the French were completely defeated, was, under these unfavourable circumstances, achieved by Sir Arthur Wellesley. The event of this action, in which the British forces had been able to defend themselves against double their own number, with but little assistance from the Spanish army, became, owing to the continued wilfulness of Cuesta, very different from what such a victory ought to have produced. The French troops, assembling from every point, left Sir Arthur no other mode of assuring the safety of his army, than by a retreat on Portugal; and for want of means of transport, which the Spanish general ought to have furnished, more than fifteen hundred of the wounded were left to the mercy of the French.[41] They were treated as became

[40] Southey, vol. iv., p. 10. The reader is requested to compare this account with that given by Lord Burghersh, in his "Memoir on the Early Campaigns of Wellington," p. 77 – where the details are somewhat differently represented – Ed. (1842.)

[41] "Victor sent soldiers to every house, with orders to the inhabitants immediately to

a courteous enemy, yet the incident afforded a fine pretext to contest the victory, which the French had resigned by flying from the field.

The assertions of the bulletins in the *Moniteur* could not deceive men on the true state of affairs. The Spanish Junta were sensible of the services rendered by the English general, and, somewhat of the latest, removed Cuesta from the command, to manifest their disapprobation of his unaccountable conduct. At home, Sir Arthur Wellesley was promoted to the peerage, by the title of Lord Wellington, who was destined to ascend, with the universal applause of the nation, as high as our constitution will permit. But Buonaparte paid the greatest compliment to the victor of Talavera, by the splenetic resentment with which he was filled by the news. He had received the tidings by his private intelligence, before the officer arrived with the regular despatches. He was extremely ill received by the Emperor; and, as if the messengers had been responsible for the tidings they brought, a second officer, with a duplicate of the same intelligence, was treated still more harshly, and for a time put under arrest. This explosion of passion could not be occasioned by the consequences of the action, for the experienced eye of Napoleon must have discriminated the circumstances by which the effects of victory were in a great measure lost to the allied

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receive and accommodate the wounded of the two nations, who were lodged together, one English and one Frenchman; and he expressly directed that the Englishman should always be served first." – Southey, vol. iv., p. 49.

armies; but he saw in the battle of Talavera, an assurance given to both English and Spanish soldiers, that, duly resisted, the French would fly from them. He foresaw, also, that the British Government would be tempted to maintain the contest on the continent, and that the Spaniards would be encouraged to persevere in resistance. He foresaw, in short, that war of six desperate and bloody campaigns, which did not terminate till the battle of Tholouse, in 1814.

But it needed no anticipation to fill Napoleon's mind with anxiety on the subject of Spain. It is true, fortune seemed every where to smile on his arms. Zaragossa, once more besieged, maintained its former name, but without the former brilliant result. After a defence as distinguished as in the first siege, the brave garrison and citizens, deprived of means of defence, and desperate of all hope of relief, had been compelled to surrender some months before.[42]

Gerona, Tarragona, Tortosa, though still vigorously defended, were so powerfully invested, that it seemed as if Catalonia, the most warlike of the Spanish departments, was effectually subdued; and, accordingly, these fortresses also were afterwards obliged to capitulate.

Andalusia, the richest province which sustained the patriot cause, certainly was conquered, in consequence of a total defeat encountered by the Spanish grand army, under Areizaga, at Ocana, November 1809, after the English troops had retreated

[42] Southey, vol. iii., p. 168.

to the Portuguese frontier.[43] Joseph Buonaparte, whose road was cleared by this last success, entered Cordoba in triumph upon the 17th of January, 1810, and proud Seville itself upon the 1st of February following. Yet the chief prize of victory had not yet been gained. The Supreme Junta had effected their retreat to Cadiz, which city, situated in an island, and cut off from the mainland, on one side by a canal, and on the other three by the ocean, was capable of the most strenuous defence.

Cadiz contained a garrison of 20,000 men, English, Spanish, and Portuguese, under the command of General Graham, a distinguished officer, whose merits, like those of Buonaparte, had been first distinguished at the siege of Toulon. Marshal Soult, as first in command in Spain, disposed himself to form the siege of this city, the capture of which would have been almost the death-knell to the cause of the patriots.

But although these important successes read well in the *Moniteur*, yet such was the indomitable character of the Spaniards, which Napoleon had contrived fully to awaken, that misfortunes, which would have crushed all hope in any other people, seemed to them only an incentive to further and more desperate resistance. When they talked of the state of their country, they expressed no dismay at their present adverse circumstances. It had cost their ancestors, they said, two centuries to rid themselves of the Moors; they had no doubt that in a shorter time they should free themselves of the yoke of

[43] Southey, vol. iv., p. 159.

France; but they must reckon on time and opportunity, as well as valour. The events of the war in many respects gave credit to their hopes. The Spaniards, often found weak where they thought themselves strongest, proved sometimes most powerful, where, to all human appearance, they seemed weakest. While they lost Andalusia, believed to be so defensible, the mountainous province of Galicia, through which the French had so lately marched triumphantly in pursuit of the British, taking in their progress the important maritime towns of Corunna and Ferrol, was wrenched from the conquerors by the exertions of Romana, assisted by the warlike natives of the country, and at the head of an undisciplined and ill-equipped army.

CATALONIA – THE GUERILLAS

In Catalonia, too, the French had hardly time to accomplish the conquest of towns and fortresses to which we have alluded, when they found themselves checked, baffled, and sometimes defeated, by the Catalans, under Lacy, O'Donnell, and D'Eroles, who maintained the patriotic cause at the head of those energetic marksmen, the Somatenes, or Miquelets. Nay, while the French were extending their seeming conquests to the Mediterranean Sea, and thundering at the gates of Cadiz, so little were they in peaceful possession of Navarre, and the other provinces adjoining to France, that not an officer with despatches could pass from Burgos to Bayonne without a powerful escort, and

bands of Spaniards even showed themselves on the French frontier, and passed it for the purpose of skirmishing and raising contributions. Such being the case on the frontiers nearest to France, it may be well supposed, that the midland provinces were not more subordinate. In fact, through the whole Peninsula the French held no influence whatever that was not inspired by the force of the bayonet and sabre; and where these could not operate, the country was in universal insurrection.

The basis of this extensive and persevering resistance was laid in the general system of Guerilla, or partisan warfare, to which the genius of the Spanish people, and the character of their country, are peculiarly fitted, and which offered a resistance to the invaders more formidable by far than that of regular armies, because less tangible, and less susceptible of being crushed in general actions. It was with the defenders of Spain, as with the guardian of the enchanted castle in the Italian romance. An armed warrior first encountered the champion who attempted the adventure, and when he had fallen under the sword of the assailant, the post which he had occupied appeared manned by a body of pigmies, small in size, but so numerous and so enterprising as to annoy the knight-errant far more than the gigantic force of his first adversary. The qualities of a partisan, or irregular soldier, are inherent in the national character of the Spaniard. Calm, temperate, capable of much fatigue, and veiling under a cold demeanour an ardent and fiery character, they are qualified to wait for opportunities of advantage, and are not easily

discouraged by difficulty or defeat. Good marksmen in general, and handling the lance, sword, and dagger with address, they are formidable in an ambush, and not less so in a close mêlée, where men fight hand to hand, more as nature dictates than according to the rules of war. The obstinacy of the Castilian character also, had its advantages in this peculiar state of warfare. Neither promises nor threats made any impression on them; and the severities executed in fulfilment of menaces, only inflamed the spirit of hostility by that of private revenge, to which the Spaniard is far more accessible than either to the voice of caution or persuasion.

Neither were the officers less qualified for the task than the men. The command of a guerilla was of a character not to be desired by any who did not find himself equal to, and in some measure called upon to accept, the dangerous pre-eminence. There were few Spanish officers possessed of the scientific knowledge of war, and of course few adequate to lead armies into the field; but the properties necessary for a guerilla leader are imprinted in the human mind, and ready for exercise whenever they are required. These leaders were, as it chanced: some of them men of high birth and military education; some had been smugglers or peasants, or had practised other professions; as was discovered from their noms-de-guerre, as the Curate, the Doctor, the Shepherd, and so forth.[44] Many of their names will be long associated with the recollection of their gallant actions; and those

[44] Napier, vol. ii., p. 349; Southey, vol. iii., p. 511.

of others, as of Mina and the Empecinado,[45] will, at the same time, remind us of the gross ingratitude with which their heroic efforts have been rewarded.

These daring men possessed the most perfect knowledge of the passes, strengths, woods, mountains, and wildernesses, of the provinces in which they warred; and the exact intelligence which they obtained from the peasantry, made them intimately acquainted with the motions of the enemy. Was too weak a French detachment moved, it ran the risk of being cut off; was the garrison too feeble at the place which it left, the fort was taken. The slightest as well as the most important objects, met the attention of the guerillas; a courier could not move without a large escort, nor could the intrusive King take the amusement of hunting, however near to his capital, unless, like Earl Percy in the ballad, attended by a guard of fifteen hundred men. The Juramentados, those Spaniards that is, who had sworn allegiance to King Joseph, were of course closely watched by the guerillas, and if they rendered themselves inconveniently or obnoxiously active in the cause they had espoused, were often kidnapped and punished as traitors; examples which rendered submission to,

[45] "Various explanations have been offered of this name. One account says, that upon finding his family murdered by the French, Juan Martin Diaz smeared his face with pitch and made a solemn vow of vengeance. Another, that he was so called because of his swarthy complexion. But in the account of his life it is said, that all the inhabitants of Castrillo de Duero, where he was born, have this nickname indiscriminately given them by their neighbours, in consequence of a black mud, called *pecina*, deposited by a little stream which runs through the place; and the appellation became peculiar to him from his celebrity." – Southey, vol. iii., p. 511.

or active co-operation with the French, at least as imprudent as boldly opposing the invaders.

THE GUERILLAS

The numbers of the guerillas varied at different times, as the chiefs rose or declined in reputation, and as they possessed the means of maintaining their followers. Some led small flying armies of two thousand and upwards. Others, or the same chiefs under a reverse of fortune, had only ten or twenty followers. The French often attempted to surprise and destroy the parties by which they suffered most, and for that purpose detached moveable columns from different points, to assemble on the rendezvous of the guerilla. But, notwithstanding all their activity and dexterity on such expeditions, they rarely succeeded in catching their enemy at unawares; or if it so happened, the individuals composing the band broke up, and dispersed by ways only known to themselves; and when the French officers accounted them totally annihilated, they were again assembled on another point, exercising a partisan war on the rear, and upon the communications, of those who lately expected to have them at their mercy. Thus invisible when they were sought for, the guerillas seemed every where present when damage could be done to the invaders. To chase them was to pursue the wind, and to circumvent them was to detain water with a sieve.

Soult had recourse to severity to intimidate these desultory but

most annoying enemies, by publishing a proclamation [May 9] threatening to treat the members of the guerillas, not as regular soldiers, but as banditti taken in the fact, and thus execute such of them as chanced to be made prisoners. The chiefs, in reply to this proclamation, published a royal decree, as they termed it, declaring that each Spaniard was, by the necessity of the times, a soldier, and that he was entitled to all military privileges when taken with arms in his hands. They therefore announced, that having ample means of retaliation in their power, they would not scruple to make use of them, by executing three Frenchmen for every one of their followers who should suffer in consequence of Soult's unjust and inhuman proclamation.[46] These threats were fulfilled on both sides. It is said, a horrid example of cruelty was given by a French general, who in a manner crucified, by nailing to trees, eight prisoners, whom he had taken from the guerillas of the Empecinado. The daring Spaniard's passions were wound up too high to listen either to pity or fear; he retaliated the cruelty by nailing the same number of Frenchmen to the same trees, and leaving them to fill the forest of Guadarama with their groans. But these excesses became rare on either side; for the mutual interest of both parties soon led them to recur to the ordinary rules of war.

We have given a slight sketch of the peculiar character of this singular warfare, which constitutes a curious and interesting chapter in the history of mankind, and serves to show how

[46] Southey, vol. iv., p. 405.

difficult it is to subject, by the most formidable military means, a people who are determined not to submit to the yoke. The probability of the case had not escaped the acute eye of Buonaparte himself, who, though prescient of the consequences, had not been able to resist the temptation of seizing upon this splendid sovereignty, and who was still determined, as he is said to have expressed himself, to reign at least over Spain, if he could not reign over the Spanish people. But even this stern wish, adopted in vengeance rather than in soberness of mind, could not, if gratified, have removed the perplexity which was annexed to the affairs of the Peninsula.

Buonaparte, in the spirit of calculation which was one of his great attributes, had reckoned that Spain, when in his hands, would retain the same channels of wealth which she had possessed from her South American provinces. Had he been able to carry into execution his whole plan – had the old king really embarked for Peru or Mexico, it might have happened, that Napoleon's influence over Charles, his Queen, and her favourite Godoy, could have been used to realize these expectations. But, in consequence of the rupture which had taken place, the Spanish colonies, at first taking part with the patriots of the mother country, made large remittances to Cadiz for the support of the war against the French; and when afterwards, adopting another view of the subject, the opportunity appeared to them favourable for effecting their own independence, the golden tide which annually carried tribute to Old Spain was entirely dried up.

This Buonaparte had not reckoned upon, and he had now to regret an improvident avidity, similar to that of Esop's boy, who killed the bird which laid eggs of gold. The disappointment was as great as unexpected. Napoleon had, from his private treasure, and the means he possessed in France, discharged the whole expense of the two large armies, by whom the territory of Spain was first occupied; and it was natural for him to suppose, that in this, as in so many other cases, the French troops should, after this first expedition, be paid and maintained at the expense of the provinces in which they were quartered. This was the rather to be expected, when Andalusia, Grenada, Valencia, fertile and rich provinces, were added to the districts overrun by the invading army. But, so general was the disinclination to the French, so universal the disappearance of specie, so unintermitting the disturbances excited by the guerillas, that both King Joseph, his court, and the French army, were obliged to have constant recourse to Napoleon for the means of supporting themselves; and such large remittances were made for these purposes, that in all the countries occupied by the French, the Spanish coin gradually disappeared from the circulation, and was replaced by that of France. The being obliged, therefore, to send supplies to the kingdom from which he had expected to receive them, was a subject of great mortification to Napoleon, which was not, however, the only one connected with the government he had established there.

SITUATION OF KING JOSEPH

In accepting the crown of Spain at the hands of Napoleon, Joseph, who was a man of sense and penetration, must have been sufficiently aware that it was an emblem of borrowed and dependent sovereignty, gleaming but with such reflected light as his brother's Imperial diadem might shed upon it. He could not but know, that in making him King of Spain, Napoleon retained over him all his rights as a subject of France, to whose Emperor, in his regal as well as personal capacity, he still, though a nominal monarch, was accounted to owe all vassalage. For this he must have been fully prepared. But Joseph, who had a share of the family pride, expected to possess with all others, save Buonaparte, the external appearance at least of sovereignty, and was much dissatisfied with the proceedings of the marshals and generals sent by his brother to his assistance. Each of these, accustomed to command his own separate corps d'armée, with no subordination save that to the Emperor only, proceeded to act on his own authority, and his own responsibility, levied contributions at pleasure, and regarded the authority of King Joseph as that of a useless and ineffective civilian, who followed the march along with the impediments and baggage of the camp, and to whom little honour was reckoned due, and no obedience. In a word, so complicated became the state of the war and of the government, so embarrassing the rival

pretensions set up by the several French generals, against Joseph and against each other, that when Joseph came to Paris to assist at the marriage of Napoleon and Maria Louisa, he made an express demand, that all the French troops in Spain should be placed under his own command, or rather that of his Major-General; and in case this was declined, he proposed to abdicate the crown, or, what was equivalent, that the French auxiliaries should be withdrawn from Spain. Buonaparte had on a former occasion, named his brother generalissimo of the troops within his pretended dominions; he now agreed that the French generals serving in Spain should be subjected, without exception, to the control of Marshal Jourdan, as Major-General of King Joseph. But as these commanders were removed from Buonaparte's immediate eye, and were obliged to render an account of their proceedings both to the intrusive king and to Napoleon, it was not difficult for them to contrive to play off the one against the other, and in fact to conduct themselves as if independent of both.

These very embarrassing circumstances were increased by the presence of the English army, which, having twice driven the French from Portugal, showed no intention of returning to their ships, but lay on the frontiers of the latter kingdom, ready to encourage and assist the continued resistance of Spain. It was not the fault of the commander-in-chief that their duties were, for the present, in a great measure limited to those of an army of observation. If the troops which assisted in the ill-advised Walcheren expedition had been united to those under

the command of Lord Wellington, they would, at a loss infinitely less, and yet greatly more honourably incurred, have driven the French beyond the Ebro, or, more probably, have compelled them to evacuate Spain. But the British Cabinet, though adopting new and more bold, as well as more just ideas of the force of the country, could not be expected perhaps all at once, and amid the clamour of an Opposition who saw nothing but reckless desperation in whatever measures were calculated to resist France, to hazard so much of the national force upon one single adventure, although bearing in their own eyes a promising aspect. Statesmen, and even those of no mean character, are apt to forget, that where a large supply of men and money is necessary to ensure the object aimed at, it is miserable policy to attempt to economize either; and that such ill-timed thrift must render the difficulties attending the expedition either altogether insurmountable, or greatly add to the loss which must be encountered to overcome them.

In the meantime, Buonaparte, with respect to the Peninsula, convulsed as it was by civil war in every province – half-subdued and half-emancipated – causing him an immense expense, as well as endless contradiction and mortification – stood much in the condition, to use a popular simile, of one, who, having hold of a wolf, feels it equally difficult to overpower the furious animal, and dangerous to let him go. His power over the general mind, however, rested a great deal on the opinion commonly received, that he was destined to succeed in whatever enterprise he

undertook. He himself entertained some such ideas concerning the force of his own destiny; and as it was no part either of his temper or his policy to abandon what he had once undertaken, he determined to make a gigantic effort to drive the Leopards and their Sepoy general, as the French papers called the British and Lord Wellington, out of Portugal; to possess himself of Lisbon; and to shut that avenue against foreign forces again attempting to enter the Peninsula.

In obedience to the Emperor's commands, an army, to be termed that of Portugal, was assembled, on a scale which the Peninsula had scarcely yet seen. It was called by the French themselves 110,000 men, but certainly rather exceeded than fell short of the number of 80,000. This large force was put under the command of Massena, Prince of Essling, the greatest name in the French army, after that of Napoleon, and so favoured by fortune, that his master was wont to call him the Spoilt Child of Victory.[47]

Lord Wellington's British troops did not exceed 25,000 in number, and there were among them so many invalids, that his motions were necessarily entirely limited to the defensive. He had, however, a subsidiary force under his command, consisting of 30,000 Portuguese, in whom other generals might have rested little confidence; but they were receiving British pay and British allowances, were disciplined in the British manner, and commanded by British officers; and Lord Wellington,

[47] Southey, vol. iv., p. 415.

who had seen the unwarlike Hindu behave himself in similar circumstances, like a companion not unworthy of the English soldier, had little doubt of being able to awaken the dormant and suppressed, but natural ardour of the natives of Portugal. This force had been, in a great measure, trained under the auspices of Marshal Beresford, an officer who has eternal claims on the gratitude of his country, for the generous manner in which he devoted himself to a labour, which had at first little that was flattering or promising; and for the very great perfection to which, by dint of skill, good temper, and knowledge of human nature, he was able to bring his task to completion at such an important crisis.

It was, however, of the utmost importance to avoid trusting too much to the Portuguese troops, which were so recently levied and trained, until they had acquired something of the practice, as well as the theory, of the military profession.

Thus, between the weak state of the British, and the imperfect discipline of the Portuguese, Lord Wellington was reduced to temporary inactivity, and had the mortification to see the frontier places of Ciudad Rodrigo and Almeida taken almost in the presence of his army. The fears of the British nation were as usual excited in an unreasonable degree by these two sinister events; but they had both come within the calculations of Lord Wellington, whose advance to the frontier was without the intention of incurring any risk for the preservation of those places, but merely, by inducing the garrisons to hold out, to

protract as long as possible a defence, the duration of which must be equally advantageous to the allies, and wasteful to the French.

TORRES VEDRAS

The position on which he meant to maintain the defence of Portugal, had been long since fixed upon, and the fortifications had been as long in progress. It was that of Torres Vedras, where, as appears from his own evidence before the Cintra Court of Inquiry, he had expected Junot to make a defence, after the battle of Vimeiro. All Lord Wellington's previous movements were adjusted carefully, for the purpose of drawing the enemy from his supplies and communications to that point, beyond which he proposed the invader should pass no farther.

Admirably as Lord Wellington's premises were connected with the conclusion he aimed at, chance, or rather the presumption of the French general, favoured him with an unexpected opportunity of adding glory to a retreat, which was dictated by prudence. Massena, if he did justice to British courage, thought himself entitled to set the military skill of their general at utter defiance. He saw, indeed, their retrograde movements, from the banks of the Coa towards Lisbon, conducted with all the deliberate and guarded caution of a game at chess; but still these movements were retrograde, nor could he resist the temptation, by a bold and sudden attack, to attempt to precipitate the retreat of the British, and drive them,

if not into the sea, at least into their ships, to which he doubted not they were ultimately bound.

This led to the battle of Busaco, which was fought on the 27th of September 1810. Upon that memorable day the British army was assembled on the Sierra, or ridge of the hills called Busaco. Massena, by turning the extremity of the ridge, might have compelled the English general to recommence his retreat; but he meditated a direct attack on the position. It was made by five strong divisions of the French. Two attacked on the right, one of which, forcing its way to the top of the ridge, was bayoneted and driven headlong down; the other, suffering great loss from the fire, gave way before reaching the top. Three divisions attacked on the left, with nearly the same fate. Defeated upon such unfavourable ground, the enemy lost, it was computed, at least 2000 men slain, besides very many wounded. The moral effect of the battle of Busaco was immense. It assured both the English themselves, and the people of Portugal, that the retreat of Lord Wellington's army was not the effect of fear, but of a deliberate choice. It evinced, also, what degree of trust might be securely reposed in the Portuguese levies. "They had shown themselves worthy of contending," said Lord Wellington, in his official despatch, "in the same ranks with British troops;" and they felt their own confidence rise as their merits became acknowledged.[48]

The French army, declining any farther attack on the Sierra,

[48] Southey, vol. iv., p. 482.

proceeded to turn its extremity, and move upon Lisbon by the way of Coimbra. Here Massena established a strong rear-guard with his hospitals and wounded, but the inspiration occasioned by the victory of Busaco had not yet subsided among the Portuguese. Colonel Trant, a British officer, who commanded a body of Portuguese militia, rushed gallantly into Coimbra, and carried the place by a sudden attack. About 5000 men, many of course wounded, with all the French hospital stores, fell into the hands of the Portuguese; and Massena who could not recover the place, suffered all the loss of stores and provisions which that city afforded as a depôt, and which the fertile district in the neighbourhood might have enabled him to collect.

Great was the surprise of both armies when the retreat of the British, and advance of the French, suddenly terminated. The former entered a regular position, which, by the utmost exertion of skill and labour, had been rendered almost impregnable, being most formidably protected by field-works and heavy guns. They found that the Tagus and port of Lisbon afforded them assurance of subsistence, even in plenty, and that their inferiority in numbers was completely made-up to them by the strength of their position.

The French, on the contrary, who had fondly expected to enter Lisbon as conquerors, found themselves in a country wasted by the hands of its cultivators; without hospitals or magazines in their rear; in front a foe, of whom they had lately felt the strength; and around, a hostile population, for the greater part in

arms. If, in such a situation, Massena could be said to besiege Lisbon, he was, nevertheless, in the utmost danger of suffering those extremities of famine which usually fall to the lot of the beleaguered party. He seemed, by some strange transmutation, to have changed lots with the natives of Lisbon, and to suffer all the evils which he expected to inflict.

The war now paused on both sides. Lord Wellington had reached the point of his defence. Massena seemed at a loss where to commence his attack. The deer was turned to bay, but the dog sprung not. The eyes of all Europe were rested upon the Tagus, on whose banks were to be decided the pretensions to superiority asserted by two great generals in the name of two mighty nations. But that event was suspended for several months, during which it is fitting that we should resume the narrative of other matters.

CHAPTER LII

Change in Napoleon's Principles of Government – Becomes suspicious of Talleyrand and Fouché – Fouché endeavours, without the knowledge of Napoleon, to ascertain the Views of England with respect to Peace – His Plan is defeated by a singular collision with a similar one of Napoleon – and Fouché is sent away as Governor-General of Rome – His Moral and Political Character – Murmurings of the People against the Austrian Alliance – Continental System – Ignorance of Napoleon of the Actual Political Feelings of Great Britain – The License System – Louis Buonaparte – Endeavours in vain to defend Holland from the Effects of the Continental System – He abdicates the Throne, and retires to Gratz in Styria – Holland is annexed to the French Empire.

CHANGES IN NAPOLEON'S GOVERNMENT

Since Buonaparte obtained, in 1804, the absolute rule of the French Republic, a change had been gradually taking place in his principles of government, and in the character of the statesmen whom he employed as his ministers and advisers. For the first two years, and more, he had governed on the principle of a limited monarch, who avails himself of the best talents he can

find among his subjects, and shows a deference to those who are distinguished, either for the political part which they have performed, or the share they possess in the good opinion of the public. Among his advisers at this period, we find many of the leading men of the Revolution; persons who, though they had been induced, from various motives, to see the rise of Napoleon with equanimity, and even to aid him, then their equal, in his attempt to climb to supreme power, yet still remembered in what relation he and they had originally stood to each other. In counselling an Emperor, these statesmen did it with the more freedom, that they remembered a period when they were on a level with him, nay, perhaps, when they stood a good deal higher.

This period of his reign, during which Napoleon suffered the wild and powerful flights of his own ambition to be, in some degree, restrained and directed by the judgment of others, formed the most laudable and useful certainly, if not the most brilliant part of his career. But, gradually as his power became augmented and consolidated, the Emperor began to prefer that class of complaisant ministers, who would rather reflect his own opinions, prefaced with additional recommendations and arguments, than less courteously attempt to criticise and refute them.

The history of Napoleon justifies, or at least excuses him, for falling into this natural error. He felt, and justly, that he was the sole projector of his gigantic plans, and also, in a great measure, the agent who carried them through; and he was led

to believe, that, because he did so much, he might as well do the whole. The schemes which he had himself originally formed, were executed by his own military genius; and thus it seemed as if the advice of counsellors, so indispensable to other princes, might be unnecessary to a sovereign who had shown himself all-sufficient alike in the cabinet and in the field. Yet this, though a plausible, was a delusive argument, even though it appeared to be borne out by the actual fact. It may be true, that in Buonaparte's councils, few measures of consequence were suggested by his ministers, and that he himself generally took the lead in affairs of importance. But still it was of great consequence that such plans, having been proposed, should be critically weighed, and canvassed by men of too much experience to be deceived by appearances, and too much courage to be prevented from speaking their mind. The advice of such men as Talleyrand and Fouché, operated as a restraint upon schemes hastily adopted, or opinionatively maintained; and their influence, though unseen and unheard, save in the Imperial cabinet, might yet be compared to the keel of a vessel, which, though invisible, serves to steady her among the waves, and regulate the force by which she is propelled by her swelling canvass; or to the pendulum of a time-piece, which checks and controls the mainspring of the machinery. Yet, though Buonaparte must have been sensible of these advantages, he was still more accessible to the feelings of jealousy, which made him suspect that these statesmen were disposed rather to establish separate interests for themselves in

the government and nation, than to hold themselves completely dependent on the Imperial authority.

TALLEYRAND – FOUCHÉ

The character of both Talleyrand and Fouché, indeed, authorised some such suspicion. They had been distinguished in the French Revolution before Napoleon's name had been heard of, were intimately acquainted with all the springs which had moved it, and retained, as Buonaparte might suspect, the inclination, and even the power, to interfere at some possible state-crisis more effectually than accorded with his views of policy. He had gorged them indeed with wealth; but, if he consulted his own bosom, he might learn that wealth is but an indifferent compensation for the loss of political power. In a word, he suspected that the great services which Talleyrand rendered him with regard to foreign relations, and Fouché as minister of police, were calculated to raise them into necessary and indispensable agents, who might thus become, to a certain degree, independent of his Authority. He doubted, moreover, that they still kept up relations with a political society called Philadelphes, consisting of old republicans and others, of different political creeds, but who were united in their views of obtaining some degree of freedom, either by availing themselves of such slender means of restraint as the constitution, so carefully purged of every means of opposing the Imperial will, might yet

afford, or by waiting for some disaster befalling Napoleon which might render their voice potential.[49]

The suspicions with which Buonaparte regarded his ministers did not rest on vague conjecture. While he was in Spain, he received information, appearing to indicate that a party was forming itself in the Legislative Assembly, the bond connecting which was opposition to the Imperial will. That body voted, it must be remembered, by ballot; and great was the surprise and alarm of the assembly, when black balls, disapproving a measure suggested to their consideration by government, were counted to the number of an hundred and twenty-five, being a full third of the members present.[50]

An official note, dated from Valladolid, 4th December, instantly recalled the presumptuous dissentients to a sense that the power of rejecting the laws laid before them in the Emperor's name, which they had attempted thus boldly to exercise, was only intrusted to them for show, but was meant to contain no really effectual power of control. The words of Napoleon, the friend, as has been pretended, of liberal institutions, are well worthy of remark. "Our evils," he said, "have arisen in part from an exaggeration of ideas, which has tempted the Legislative Body to consider itself as representing the nation; an idea which is chimerical and even criminal, since implying a claim of representation which is vested in the Emperor

[49] Southey, vol. iii., p. 405; Fouché, tom. i., p. 339.

[50] Fouché, tom. i., p. 329.

alone. The Legislative Body ought to be called the Legislative Council – it does not possess the right of making laws, since it has not the right of propounding them. In the constitutional hierarchy, the Emperor, and the ministers his organs, are the first representatives of the nation. If any other pretensions, pretending to be constitutional, should pervert the principles of our monarchical constitution, every thing is undone."[51]

This is all very intelligible, and shows that in principle, if not in practice, the monarchical constitution of France rested upon the same basis of despotism which supports the monarchical constitution of Constantinople, where the Ulemats, or men of law, have an ostensible title to resist the Grand Signior's edicts, and are only exposed to the penalty of being pounded to death in a mortar, should they presume to exercise it. Yet, a member of the French Legislative Body might have been pardoned for being inquisitive on two subjects. 1st, He might wish to know, if that body, chosen by the people, though indeed not directly, did not represent their electors, whom was it that they did represent? 2dly, What was their real authority in the state, since they were not to enjoy the power of rejecting the overtures which the constitution contended should be laid before them, before they were passed into laws?

[51] Fouché, tom. i., p. 329.

FOUCHÉ

Buonaparte entertained strong suspicion that this recalcitrating humour, so suddenly testified by so complaisant an assembly, must have had the countenance of Talleyrand and of Fouché. So soon as he returned to Paris, therefore, he sounded the latter minister on the revolt in the Legislative Body, and desired his opinion on the sort of measures by which he had repressed it. Fouché had been too long a spy upon the private thoughts of others, to be capable of the weakness of betraying his own. He expatiated, in a tone of panegyric, on the decisive tone of the official note, affirmed that this was the only way to govern a kingdom, and added, that if any constitutional body arrogated the right of national representation, the sovereign had no choice but instantly to dissolve it. "If Louis XVI. had acted thus," said the minister, "he might have been alive, and King of France at this day." Astonished at the zeal and promptitude of this reply, Buonaparte looked for an instant with wonder at his minister, who thus avouched sentiments so different from those which had governed the earlier part of his political life. "And yet, Duke of Otranto," said the Emperor to the ex-jacobin, "methinks you were yourself one of those whose voices sent Louis XVI. to the scaffold?" – "I was," answered the supple statesman, without confusion or hesitation; "and it was the first service which I

had the honour to render to your Majesty."[52]– This courtly answer saved the minister for the moment; but Napoleon did not the less continue to see in Fouché an object of suspicion and apprehension, whose power, owing to his having been so long at the head of the police, was immense; whose duplicity was unfathomable, and who evinced many indications of desiring to secure some separate individual authority, either by being too necessary to be dismissed, or too formidable to be offended.

Fouché himself has, indeed, admitted, that he endeavoured to regulate the duties of his office, so as to secure as much power to himself as possible, and was anxious, out of a desire of popularity, as well as from respect for the virtue which he did not himself possess, to execute those duties with the least possible harm to individuals. His mode of transacting business with the Emperor was thus characteristically described by himself. A person of rank, one of the *détenus*, desirous of escaping from the durance in which he was confined, had been fortunate enough to engage the interest of Fouché in his behalf. He had received more than one intimation from this statesman, that his passport would certainly be granted, but still it never received the Imperial signature; and Fouché, who began to fear that his own sincerity might be called in question, commenced one morning, in the presence of our informer, and of one of the distinguished generals of the empire, the following oblique explanation of the cause of his failure. "You no doubt think yourself a brave

[52] Mémoires de Fouché, tom. i., p. 331.

man?" said he, addressing the general. – "Bah!" replied the other, entering in to the same vein of raillery – "Brave? brave as an hundred lions." – "But I," continued the statesman, "am much braver than you. Look you, I desire some favour, the liberation of a friend, or the like; I watch the happy moment of access, select the moment of persuasion, am insinuating – eloquent – at length, by argument or importunity, I am successful. Next day, the paper which should ratify the boon which I had requested, is rejected when offered, torn perhaps, or flung beneath a heap of petitions and supplications. Now, herein is displayed my courage, which consists in daring again and again to recommence the unacceptable suit, and, what is perhaps the last verge of audacity, to claim it as a promise, which, being once pledged, can only be redeemed by specific performance." In this confession we read the account of a minister, still possessing influence, but declining in favour, and already become the object of his sovereign's jealousy; to whose personal request a favour cannot be decently refused, although a promise, reluctantly conceded to importunity, is willingly forgotten, or at length tardily and disobligingly granted.

Standing on these terms with a master at once watchful and jealous, we cannot be surprised at the audacity of Fouché, who feared not to affect a sort of independence, by anticipating the desires of Napoleon in the public service, and even in the Imperial family. A striking instance of the last occurred in his

intrigue with Josephine on the subject of the divorce;[53] and perhaps it was his escape out of that former involvement,[54] without loss of power or credit, which urged him to a second interference of a more public and national character, by which he endeavoured to sound the possibility of accomplishing a peace with England.

We may discover more than one motive for Fouché's proceeding in this most important business without either the knowledge or consent of Napoleon. He was aware that his master might have rendered it, in his way of treating, impossible even at starting, to discover on what terms Great Britain would conclude peace, by stating as preliminaries certain concessions which it was probable would not be granted, but from which, once stated, Napoleon could not himself recede. If, therefore, Fouché could find some secret mode of ascertaining upon what terms a treaty with England might really be obtained, he was doing a service to France, to Britain, to Napoleon himself, and to the world. It is not the Duke of Otranto, however, in particular, whom we would expect to incur disgrace, and even personal hazard, on mere public grounds. But, besides the pleasure which those who have long engaged in political intrigues find in carrying them on, until the habit becomes as inveterate as that of the gambler,

[53] Fouché, tom. i., p. 32.

[54] "It is well known that Josephine never spoke to the Emperor otherwise than in favourable terms of all those who were about his person; she was even of service to M. Fouché, though he had attempted to become the instrument for bringing about her divorce." – Savary, tom. ii., p. 178.

we can see that Fouché might reasonably propose to himself an important accession of influence by the success of such a negotiation. If he could once acquire a knowledge of the price at which Napoleon might obtain that peace for which the world sighed in vain, he would become possessed of an influence over public opinion, both at home and abroad, which could not but render him a person of extreme importance; and if he was able to become the agent in turning such knowledge to advantage, and negotiating such an important treaty, he might fix himself even on Napoleon, as one of those ministers frequently met with in history, whom their sovereign may have disliked, but could not find means to dismiss.

M. OUVRARD – FOUCHÉ

Acting upon such motives, or on others which we can less easily penetrate, Fouché anxiously looked around, to consider what concessions France might afford to make, to soothe the jealousy of England; trusting it would be possible to come to some understanding with the British Ministry, weakened by the loss of Mr. Canning, and disheartened by the defeats sustained by the Spanish patriots, and the sinister event of the Walcheren expedition. The terms which he would have been willing to have granted, comprehended an assurance of the independence of the two kingdoms of Holland and Spain (as if such a guarantee could have availed any thing while these kingdoms had for sovereigns

the brothers of Napoleon, men reigning as his prefects, and, we shall presently see, subject to removal at his pleasure,) together with the acknowledgment of the Sicilian monarchy in the present King, and that of Portugal in the House of Braganza. M. Ouvrard, a gentleman who had been permitted to go to London on commercial business, was employed by Fouché to open this delicate and furtive negotiation with the Marquis of Wellesley. But the negotiation was disconcerted by a singular circumstance.[55]

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[55] "Although Sir Walter Scott does not mention me, I am able to speak pertinently to this affair: the following is the truth. I went to Paris in 1809, against my inclination, to comply with the wish of the principal Dutch, who imagined that I could prevent, or at least adjourn by my presence in Paris, and my immediate efforts, the evident intention of seizing upon Holland. During my stay at Paris, I was persuaded that all the tricks, the attacks, and ill-treatment, of which I was the object, had not for their real end the union of Holland, since it was the interest of France to aggrandise that kingdom, but that it was a political stratagem, to induce the English government to repeal its decrees of council, and to conclude the peace; and I was therefore prevailed upon while at Paris to send M. Labouchère from Amsterdam to London with instructions to make known to the Marquis Wellesley, that if England did not withdraw its decrees of council, the union of Holland with France was inevitable. The reply of the marquis proved at once how favourable my government in Holland had been to France, since the English Government declared, 'that the fate of Holland could not fail to occasion much interest in England; but that, in the present state of that country, the influence of France was so entire there, that the political change spoken of, must have some weight in the determination of the British Cabinet.' This attempt having proved useless, I could only succeed in delaying the union of Holland, the decree for which being prepared beforehand, and always in readiness, was often placed before me – by sacrificing Brabant and Zealand. After my return to Amsterdam, I was requested to allow M. Ouvrard a passage to England. I consented to this the more willingly, as I imagined that it was in consequence of the step I had already taken in sending M. Labouchère to

The idea of endeavouring to know on what terms peace could be obtained, had occurred to Napoleon as well as to Fouché; and the sovereign, on his part, unsuccessful as he had been on two occasions in his attempt to open a personal correspondence with the King of England, had followed the steps of his minister, in making M. Labouchère, a commercial person, agent of a great Dutch mercantile establishment, the medium of communication with the British Government. The consequence was, that Ouvrard, and the agent of the Emperor, neither of whom knew of the other's mission, entered about the same time into correspondence with the Marquis Wellesley, who, returned from his Spanish mission, was now secretary at war. The British statesman, surprised at this double application, became naturally suspicious of some intended deception, and broke off all correspondence both with Ouvrard and his competitor for the office of negotiator.[56]

Napoleon must naturally have been so highly incensed with Fouché for tampering without his consent[57] in a matter of such vital consequence, that one is almost surprised to find him

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London. A short time after, the Emperor visited Antwerp. Whilst conversing with him there, I assured him that there had been no communication with England except that which had taken place through M. Ouvrard, according to his request. My astonishment was extreme on learning, that not only it was without his request, but that he was ignorant of it, and from that moment he determined on the discharge of M. Fouché, who had allowed so singular a proceeding." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 65.

[56] Fouché, tom. i., p. 354; Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 208.

[57] "Ah, Fouché! how well the Emperor knew you, when he said, that your ugly foot was sure to be thrust in every body's shoes." – Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 18.

limiting the effects of his resentment to disgracing the minister. He sent for Fouché [June 2,] and having extorted from him an avowal of his secret negotiation, he remarked, "So, then, you make peace or war without my leave?"[58] The consequence was, that the Duke of Otranto was deprived of his office of minister of police, in which he was succeeded by Savary; and he was shortly after sent into a species of honourable exile, in the character of Governor-general of Rome.[59] It cost Buonaparte no little trouble to redeem from the clutches of his late minister the confidential notes which he had himself written to him upon affairs of police. For a long time Fouché pretended that he had consigned these important documents to the flames; and it was not until he had before his eyes the alternative of submission or a dungeon, that he at length delivered up the Imperial warrants, containing, no doubt, much that would have been precious to history. Dismissed at present from the stage, we shall again meet with this bold statesman at other periods of our history, when, as is observed of some kinds of sea-fowl, his appearance seldom failed to announce danger and tempest.

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[58] "Napoleon left the council, and gave orders to Savary to arrest M. Ouvrard; at the same time, I was forbidden to have any communication with the prisoner. The next day the portfolio of the police was given to Savary. This time it was a real disgrace." – Fouché, tom. i., p. 358.

[59] "The decree constituting Fouché Governor-general of Rome, bears date June 3, 1810. 'This nomination,' says Fouché, 'was nothing but an honourable veil woven by Napoleon's policy, in order to conceal and mitigate, in the eyes of the public, my disgrace, of which his intimates alone had the secret." —*Mémoires*, tom. ii., p. 7.

The character of Fouché, in point of principle or morality, could scarcely be accounted even tolerable; but he had high talents, and in many points the soundness of his judgment led him to pursue and recommend moderate and beneficent measures, out of policy, if not from a higher motive. On other accounts, also, many of the French had some partiality to him; especially those who cast their eyes backward upon their national history, and regretted the total loss of that freedom, so eagerly longed for, so briefly possessed, and which they could never be properly said to have enjoyed; and to the recovery of which, in part at least, Fouché was understood to be favourable as far as he could or dared. The remnant of the sterner Republicans might despise him as a time server, yet they respected him, at the same time, as a relic of the Revolution, and on different occasions experienced his protection. To the Royalists also he had been courteous, and so decidedly so, as encouraged one of the boldest agents of the Bourbons to penetrate to his presence, and endeavour to bring him over to the cause of the exiled family. Fouché dismissed him, indeed, with a peremptory refusal to listen to his proposal; but he did not deliver him to the police, and he allowed him twenty-four hours to leave the kingdom. These various feelings occasioned to many, alarm and regret at the dismissal of the Duke of Otranto.

The discharge of this able minister seemed the more portentous, that shortly before it occurred, the terrible charge of which he was about to be deprived, had received an alarming

extension of jurisdiction. The number of state prisons was extended from one, being the old tower of Vincennes, to no less than six, situated in different parts of France.[60] These Bastiles, chiefly old Gothic castles, were destined to be the abode of captives, whom the Government described as persons who could not be convicted of any crime perpetrated, but whom, as entertaining dangerous thoughts, and principles, it was not safe to permit to remain at large. The *lettre de cachet*, by authority of which these victims of political suspicion were to be secluded from liberty, was to consist in a decree of the Privy Council, which might have been as well termed the pleasure of the Emperor. This measure was adopted on the 3d of March, 1810, upon a report made to the Council of State in the name of Fouché, and agreed to by them; but it was well understood, that, in this and similar instances, the individual at the head of any department was obliged to father the obloquy of such measures as Napoleon desired to introduce into it. The minister of police was therefore held guiltless of recommending an extension of the Government's encroachments upon public liberty; which, in fact, were the exclusive device of Napoleon and his Privy Council.[61]

AUSTRIAN ALLIANCE UNPOPULAR

It was another unfortunate circumstance for Napoleon, that

[60] Saumar, Ham, Landskaone, Pierre-Châtel, and Fennestrelles.

[61] Fouché, tom. i., p. 352.

the observers of the times ascribed the dismissal of the old Republican counsellors, and the more rigorous measures adopted against political malecontents, to the influence of the Austrian alliance. With many persons in France, Buonaparte, as the Heir of the Revolution, might, like Danton, Robespierre, and others, have exercised the most despotic authority, providing he claimed his right to do so by and through the Revolution. But they could not endure to see the Emperor Napoleon, while exercising the same authority with a thousand times more lenity, attempt to improve his right to the submission of his subjects by an alliance with one of the ancient houses of Europe, against whom the principles of the Revolution had declared eternal war. Every class of politicians has its fanatics, and in that of the ancient Jacobins were many who would rather have perished by the short, sharp terrors of the Republican guillotine, than survived to linger in a dungeon during the pleasure of a son-in-law of the Emperor of Germany. Such ideas, inconsistent as they were in themselves, and utterly irreconcilable with the quiet, gentle, and irreproachable character of Maria Louisa, who could never be justly accused of even attempting to influence her husband upon any political subject, circulated, nevertheless, and were even accredited in political society. There was indeed this argument in their favour, that no other motive could be assigned for Buonaparte's sparing Austria when she was lying at his mercy, and choosing a partner out of her royal family, than the desire of allying himself with the House of Hapsburg, and of gaining

such access as could be attained by such an alliance to a share in the rights and privileges of the most ancient hereditary dynasty of Europe. But in approaching to that fraternal alliance with legitimate royalty, Napoleon proportionally abandoned those revolutionary principles and associates, by whose means he had first climbed to power; and by this change, rather of the basis of his authority than of the authority itself, he offended many of the Republicans, without effectually gaining the aristocrats, to whom his new connexion might have seemed a recommendation. Indeed, when his right to sovereignty was considered without reference to his possession, and his power to maintain it, Napoleon was in some measure censured like the bat in the fable. The democrats urged against him his matrimonial alliance with a house of the ancient régime; while the aristocrats held him disqualified on account of the origin of his power under the revolutionary system.

But although such objections existed among the zealots of both political factions, the great body of the French people would have cared little on what principle Napoleon had ascribed his title to the Imperial crown, providing he had but been contented to allow the subject and himself the advantage of a short repose from wars and conquests. This tranquillity, however, was becoming every day less probable, for new incidents seemed to dictate new acquisitions to the empire; and, unhappily for his own and other countries, the opportunity of aggrandisement was with Buonaparte all that it wanted to recommend it, and the

pressure of the occasion was always a complete justification of any measure which the time rendered expedient.

That which now chiefly occupied him, since the overtures for peace with England had been rendered abortive by the collision of his own confidential emissary with that of Fouché, was the destruction of the strength, and the sapping of the resources of that country, by dint of enforcing and extending what he called the European Continental System; which consisted of the abolition of all commerce, and the reducing each nation, as in the days of primitive barbarism, to remain satisfied with its own productions, however inadequate to the real or artificial wants to which its progress in society had gradually given rise.

Like most foreigners, Napoleon understood little or nothing of the constitutional opinions, or influential principles belonging to England. He was well acquainted with human character, as modified by the governments and customs of France and Italy; but this experience no more qualified him to judge of the English character, than the most perfect acquaintance with the rise and fall of the Mediterranean, amounting to five or six inches in height, would prepare a navigator to buffet with the powerful tides which burst and foam on the shores of the British islands. The information which he received from that hostile country, Buonaparte construed according to his wishes; and when it was supplied by private intelligencers, they were of course desirous of enhancing the value of what they told, by exaggerating its importance. It was, indeed, no difficult task to impose on a

statesman, ignorant enough of the present state of North Britain, to believe that he could, even at this time of day, have disturbed the security of the reigning family, by landing in Scotland some candidate, having pretensions to the crown through the House of Stuart. With the same inaccuracy, he concluded every warm speech in Parliament a summons to revolt – every temporary riot or testimony of popular displeasure, from whatever cause, a commencement of open rebellion. He could not be convinced, that from the peculiarity of the English constitution, and the temper of her people, such disturbances and such violent debates must frequently exist; and although, like eruptions on the human body, they are both unpleasant and unseemly, they are yet the price at which sound internal health is preserved.

THE CONTINENTAL SYSTEM

Actuated by such erroneous views as we have stated, Napoleon conceived that in 1810 he saw in England the important results of his Continental System, or interdiction of British commerce with the continent.

The associations of the Luddites, as they were called, were at this time giving great disturbance in the manufacturing districts of England. These, it is well known, were framed to prevent the introduction of looms wrought by machinery, or power-looms, to the superseding the ordinary looms wrought by hand. The cause would have equally existed, and the discontent also,

if the Continental System had never been heard of; for such discontent must and will exist in every trade where a number of men are suddenly thrown out of employment by the introduction of abbreviated means of labour. Yet Napoleon never doubted that these heart-burnings, and the violence of the Parliamentary debates, arose entirely from the new mode he had found of striking at Great Britain by the destruction of her commerce. He, therefore, as we shall presently see, examined all Europe, with the intention of shutting every creek and fishing-port, through which cargoes of muslins or cotton goods could by possibility penetrate; and the absolute authority which he could exercise over the whole continent, with the exception of Russia, and of the "still vexed" Peninsula, entitles us to compare him to the heedful governor of a jail, who traverses his gloomy dominions at stated hours, striking with his hammer every bar to ascertain that it rings sound, and proving every lock, to see that no secret means of communication exists with the free part of humanity. Thus commerce, the silken tie which binds nations to each other, whose influence is so salutary to all states, so essential to the very existence of many, was in danger of being totally abrogated, unless in as far as it was carried on by a system of licenses.

The adoption of this system, which went in a great measure to counteract the effects of that very Continental System which he made it such an especial point to press and enforce upon all neutral powers, was a singular sacrifice made by Napoleon, partly to necessity, partly to the desire of accumulating treasure.

The license system was a relaxation of the continental blockade, of which England had set the example by giving protections to such neutral vessels, as, clearing out from a British port, had a certain proportion of their cargo made up of British goods or colonial produce. This was what, in mercantile language, is termed a real transaction – the British merchandise was purchased by such as designed to make a profit, by selling it again upon any part of the continent to which they might be able to introduce it. Buonaparte, in like manner, granted Imperial licenses, purchased for large sums of money, by which trading vessels were permitted to import a certain quantity of colonial produce, on condition of exporting an equal proportion of French manufactures. This system differed from that of England, in this important respect, that the demand for articles of the French manufactures was entirely simulated. The goods were not wanted in Britain, could not be re-sold there without payment of heavy duties, and were often thrown into the sea in preference to discharging the English duties upon them. Editions of books, a commodity thus exported, and thus disposed of, were wittily said to be *ad usum Delphini*. The prime cost at which these French goods had been purchased, in compliance with Buonaparte's regulations, was of course laid upon the colonial goods, which were the only actual subject of trade. Thus, if the French manufacturers derived any profit from the transaction, it was raised, not by their goods being exported and sold in foreign countries, in the usual course of trade, but by the prime cost being

imposed as a tax upon the colonial produce imported; and the price was paid, of course, not by the foreign market, which the goods seldom reached, but by the French consumers of sugar, rum, and coffee.

The real temptation for continuing this attempt to force a trade, was, as we have seen, the impossibility of dispensing with colonial produce entirely, and the large revenue accruing to the French government from these licenses, who, in this manner, exercising a complete monopoly in a trade which they interdicted to all others, made immense additions to the treasure which almost choked the vaults of the pavilion Marsan, in the Tuileries. The language held by the minister of Napoleon to the powers thus affected, amounted therefore to the following proposition: – "You shall shut your ports against British commodities; for without your doing so, it will be impossible for the Emperor Napoleon to humble the Mistress of the Seas. But while you are thus deprived of all commerce, whether passive or active, Napoleon reserves to himself, by the system of license, the privilege of purchasing and dealing in the commodities of Britain and her colonies, which, reaching your country by any other mode than through his permission, will be subject to confiscation, nay, to destruction."

At a later period, Buonaparte greatly regretted that he had suffered the emolument derived from the license-trade, to seduce him into relaxing his Continental System.[62] He seems to lament

[62] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 283.

having relinquished his supposed advantage, as a vindictive freebooter might regret his having been reduced to let go his hold on his enemy's throat, by the tempting opportunity of plunging his hand into the pocket of a bystander. The injustice which thus imposed on neutrals the necessity of abstaining from a lucrative commerce, which France, the belligerent power, reserved to herself the privilege of carrying on, in such degree as she might find convenient, was of so crying a description, that, at any other time than during the irresistible ascendency of Napoleon, the very mention of it would have revolted all Europe. And even as times stood, the non-compliance with terms so harsh and unjust, cost the fall of two European thrones, ere it became the means of undermining that of Napoleon himself.

LOUIS BUONAPARTE

The first of the royal sufferers was the brother of Napoleon, Louis Buonaparte, who had been created King of Holland. By every account which we have been able to collect, Louis was an amiable, well-intentioned, and upright man, of a romantic disposition, and a melancholic complexion, which he had increased by studying the sentimental philosophy of Rousseau.[63] But he was, in his brother's language, an ideologist; that is, one who is disposed to do that which is right according to principle,

[63] See *ante*, vol. ii., p. 211, *note*. "Louis had been spoiled by reading the works of Rousseau." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. ii., p. 306.

rather than that which circumstances render expedient. He was embarrassed by some family disputes, and lived on indifferent terms with his wife,[64] who was a greater favourite with Napoleon than was Louis himself. Since he had been under the necessity of accepting the crown of Holland, he had endeavoured to afford that country all the protection which could be derived from his near relationship to Napoleon; and if he could not save his subjects entirely from the evils of a conquered and dependent state, he endeavoured to diminish these as much as his means permitted. The Dutch, a calm and deliberate people, gave Louis full credit for his efforts, and, in general, regarded him as their friend and protector. But at the period we treat of, the evils which approached their state were far beyond Louis' power to avert or even to modify. Other countries may have more or less of a commercial character, but Holland exists by commerce entirely. It was the influence of commerce which gained her amphibious territory from the waves, and, were that influence withdrawn, her fair towns must again become fishing villages; her rich pastures must return to their original state of salt-water marshes, shallows, and sand-banks. The French exactions already paid, to

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[64] "As Louis and Hortensia had lived almost always separate since their marriage, except three short periods of a few months, they each demanded of the family council a separation, presently after Louis arrived at Paris in 1809. But after a meeting of the said council was granted, the separation was refused, though it had long existed in point of fact. He was informed of the refusal verbally: no document whatever was transmitted to him on a result, on which however depended the ease, condition, and fame of a man of honour." – Louis Buonaparte, *La Hollande*, tom. iii., p. 199.

the amount of one hundred millions of francs, had purchased, as the natives of Holland fondly imagined, some right to exert the small means of commerce which remained to them, and which, under King Louis' sanction, were almost entirely engaged in traffic with England, now declared contraband.

Napoleon used threats and commands to induce Louis to bring his subjects to a more rigorous observance of the Continental System, while Louis employed expostulation and entreaty in behalf of the nation over whom he had been called to rule. Each brother grew more obstinate in his opinion, and at length, as the Emperor began to see that neither fear nor favour could induce Louis to become the agent of oppression in Holland, his removal from that country was distinctly pointed at as the consequence of his obstinacy. It was intimated, in a report by Champagny, the Duke de Cadore, that the situation of Louis on the throne of Holland was rendered critical, by his feelings being divided betwixt the imprescriptible duties which he owed to France and to his family, and the interest which it was natural he should take in the welfare of Dutch commerce. To terminate this strife in his brother's mind, the report informed the public that Napoleon meant to recall the prince of his blood whom he had placed on the Dutch throne, since the first duty of a French prince having a place in the succession to that monarchy, was to France exclusively; and it was intimated, that Holland, divested of her King, and her nominal independence, would be reduced to the condition of a province of France, occupied by

French troops, and French officers of the revenue; and thus deprived of the means of thwarting the Continental System, so necessary for the subjugation of Britain, by the obstinate continuance of commercial intercourse with a nation under the ban of the empire.[65]

HOLLAND – ABDICATION OF LOUIS BUONAPARTE

This report is peculiarly interesting, as explanatory of Buonaparte's views respecting the rights and regal authority of the sovereigns whom he created and displaced at pleasure, as the interests of France, or rather as his own, required, or seemed to require. Either, however, Napoleon became, for the moment, ashamed to acknowledge this fact so broadly; or he thought that such a contradiction of his repeated declarations might have a bad effect upon the Westphalian subjects of Jerome, and upon the Spaniards, whom he desired to become those of Joseph; or, perhaps, the remonstrances of Louis produced some temporary effect upon his mind; for he stopped short in his full purpose, and on the 16th March concluded a treaty with Louis, the terms of which were calculated, it was said, to arrange disputed points betwixt the sovereigns, and render the independence of Holland consistent with the necessary conformity to the Continental

[65] Documens Historiques sur la Hollande, tom. iii., p. 238.

System.

July 1

By this treaty, Zealand, Dutch Brabant, and the whole course of the Rhine, as well the right as the left bank, were transferred from Holland to France. French officers of the customs were to be placed in all the Dutch harbours; 18,000 troops were to be maintained by the kingdom of Holland, of whom 6000 were to be French; a fleet was to be fitted out by the same kingdom for the service of France; English manufactures were to be prohibited by the Dutch government; and other restrictions were subscribed to by Louis,[66] in hopes his brother's stern resolution might be so far softened as to leave the remaining portions of the territories of Holland in a state of nominal independence. But he was soon made sensible that this was no part of Napoleon's intentions. Instead of 6000 French troops, 20,000 were assembled at Utrecht, with the purpose of being poured into Holland. Instead of this foreign soldiery being stationed on the coasts, where alone their presence could be requisite to prevent the contraband trade, which was the sole pretext of introducing them at all, Louis was informed, that they were to take military possession of the whole country; and that the headquarters of this army, which

[66] "This treaty, which was rather a capitulation, was imposed by the Emperor, signed by Verhueil, and ratified conditionally by the King, who added the words, '*as far as possible*.'" – Louis Buonaparte, *Documens Hist.*, tom. iii., p. 248.

was totally independent of his authority, were to be established at Amsterdam, his capital.

Seeing himself thus deprived by his brother of all power in the kingdom which was still called his, Louis generously refused to play the pageant part of a monarch, who could neither exert his rights nor protect his subjects. On the 1st of July he executed a deed of abdication in favour of his son, then a minor, expressing an affectionate hope, that though he himself had been so unhappy as to offend his brother the Emperor, he would not, nevertheless, visit with his displeasure his innocent and unoffending family. In a letter from Haarlem, dated the 1st July, Louis enlarged on the causes of his abdication, in a manner honourable to his head and his heart, and with a moderation, when he spoke of his brother, which gave weight to his just complaints. "He could not," he said, "consent to retain the mere title of King, separated from all real authority in his kingdom, his capital, or even his palace. He should be, in such a case, the witness of all that passed, without the power of influencing the current of events for the good of his people, yet remaining responsible for evils which he could neither remedy nor prevent. He had long foreseen the extremity to which he was now reduced, but could not avoid it without sacrificing his most sacred duties, without ceasing to bear at heart the happiness of his people, and to connect his own fate with that of the country. This," he said, "was impossible. Perhaps," he continued, "I am the only obstacle to the reconciliation of Holland with France. Should that prove the case, I may find some

consolation in dragging out the remainder of a wandering and languishing life, at a distance from my family, my country, and the good people of Holland, so lately my subjects."[67]

Having finished his vindication, and adjusted means for making it public, which he could only do by transmitting it to England, the Ex-King of Holland entertained a chosen party of friends at his palace at Haarlem until near midnight, and then, throwing himself into a plain carriage which was in attendance, left behind him the kingly name and the kingly revenue, rather than hold them without the power of discharging the corresponding duties of a sovereign. Louis retired to Gratz, in Styria, where he lived in a private manner, upon a moderate pension,[68] amusing his leisure with literature.[69] His more ambitious consort, with a much more ample revenue, settled herself at Paris, where her wit and talents, independent of

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[67] Documens Historiques, tom. iii., p. 310.

[68] "This is not correct. I did not, nor could not, receive a pension from any one: my revenue was derived principally from the sale of my decorations and jewels, and the interest of the obligations I had taken upon me, in order to encourage the loan from Holland to Prussia at the time of the greatest misfortunes of the virtuous sovereign of that country, who, in spite of all opposition and every political consideration, was anxious to acquit himself towards me with scrupulous exactitude." – Louis Buonaparte, p. 69.

[69] In 1808, Louis gave to the world a sentimental romance, called "Marie, ou les Peines de l'Amour," of which a second edition appeared in 1814, under the title of "Marie, ou les Hollandaises." A distinguished critic describes the royal production as "a farrago of dulness, folly, and bad taste." – (*Quart. Rev.*, vol. xii., p. 391.) His treatise, entitled "Documens Historiques, et Réflexions sur le Gouvernement de la Hollande," is an unpresuming account of his administration in Holland.

her connexion with Napoleon, attracted around her the world of fashion, of which she was a distinguished ornament.

Buonaparte, as was to have been expected, paid no regard to the claim of Louis's son, in whose favour his father had abdicated. He created that young person Grand Duke of Berg, and, although he was yet a child, he took an opportunity to make him a speech, which we have elsewhere adverted to, in which, after inculpating the conduct of his brother, the tenor of which he stated could be accounted for by *malady* alone,[70] he explained in few words the duties incurred by his satellite sovereigns. "Never forget, that whatever position you may be required to occupy, in order to conform to my line of politics, and the interest of my empire, your first duty must always regard ME, your second must have reference to France. All your other duties, even those towards the countries which I commit to your charge, are secondary to these primary obligations."

Thus was the leading principle clearly announced, upon which

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[70] "The conduct of your father grieves me to the heart: his disorder alone can account for it. When you are grown up you will pay his debt and your own." —*Documens Hist.*, tom. iii., p. 326; and *Moniteur*, July 23, 1810. "When Napoleon received the news of his brother's abdication, he was struck with astonishment: he remained silent for a few moments, and after a kind of momentary stupor, suddenly appeared to be greatly agitated. His heart was ready to burst, when he exclaimed, 'Was it possible to suspect so mischievous a conduct in the brother most indebted to me.' When I was a mere lieutenant of artillery, I brought him up with the scanty means which my pay afforded me I divided my bread with him; and this is the return he makes for my kindness!' The Emperor was so overpowered by his emotion, that his grief was said to have vented itself in sobs." – Savary, tom. ii., part ii., p. 239.

the nominal independence of kingdoms allied to France was in future to be understood as resting. The monarchs, to whom crowns were assigned, were but to be regarded as the lieutenants of the kingdoms in which they ruled; and whatever part the interest of their dominions might call upon them to act, they were still subject, in the first instance, to the summons and control of their liege lord the Emperor, and compelled to prefer what his pleasure should term the weal of France, to every other call of duty whatever.

HOLLAND ANNEXED TO FRANCE

The fate of Holland was not long undecided. Indeed, it had probably been determined on as far back as Champagny's first report, in which it had been intimated, that Holland, with all its provinces, was to become an integral part of France. This was contrary to the pledge given by Napoleon to the Senate, that the Rhine should be considered as the natural boundary of France; nor was it less inconsistent with his pretended determination, that the independence of Holland should be respected and maintained. But both these engagements yielded to the force of the reasoning used by his mouth-piece Champagny, in recommending the union of Holland with the French empire, and with France itself. They are worth quoting, were it only to show how little men of sense are ashamed to produce the weakest and most inconsistent arguments, when they speak as

having both the power and the settled purpose to do wrong. "Holland," said the minister, whose very effrontery renders his arguments interesting; "is in a manner an emanation from the territory of France, and is necessary to the full complement of the empire. To possess the entire Rhine," (which had been proposed as the natural boundary of France,) "your majesty must extend the frontier to the Zuyder-Zee. Thus the course of all the rivers which arise in France, or which bathe her frontier, will belong to her as far as the sea. To leave in the hands of strangers the mouths of our rivers, would be, Sire, to confine your power to an ill-bounded monarchy, instead of extending its dominions to the natural limits befitting an imperial throne." On such precious reasoning (much on a par with the claim which Napoleon set up to Great Britain as the natural appendage of France, along with the isle of Oleron,) Holland was, 9th July, 1810, declared an integral part of the French empire.

But the usurpation was not unavenged. It cost Buonaparte a greater declension in public opinion than had arisen even from his unprincipled attempts on Spain. It is true, none of the bloody and extensively miserable consequences had occurred in Holland, which had been occasioned by the transactions at Bayonne. But the seizure of Holland brought Buonaparte's worst fault, his ambition, before the public, in a more broad and decided point of view.[71]

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[71] Napoleon acknowledged at St. Helena, that the "annexation of Louis' kingdom to his own was a measure which contributed to ruin his credit in Europe." – Las Cases,

There were people who could endure his robbing strangers, who were yet shocked that he, so fond of his kindred, and in general so liberal to them, should not have hesitated to dethrone his own brother, merely for entertaining sentiments becoming the rank to which he had been raised by himself; to disinherit his nephew; to go nigh taxing so near a relation with mental imbecility; and all on so slight a provocation; – for the only real point of difference, that, viz. respecting the English commerce, had been yielded by Louis in the treaty which Napoleon had signed, but only, it seemed, for the purpose of breaking it. It was observed, too, that in the manly, but respectful opposition made by Louis to his brother's wishes, there appeared nothing to provoke the displeasure of Napoleon, though one of the most irritable of men on subjects with which his ambition was implicated. It seemed a species of gratuitous violence, acted as if to show that no circumstance of relationship, family feeling, or compassion (to make no mention of justice or moderation,) could interfere with or check the progress of Napoleon's ambition; and whilst the more sanguine prophesied, that he who ran so rashly, might one day run himself to a close, all agreed that his empire, composed of such heterogeneous parts, could not, in all probability, survive the mortal date of the founder, supposing it to last so long. In the meantime, it was evident, that the condition of no state, however solemnly guaranteed by Buonaparte himself, could be considered as secure

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tom. ii., p. 307.

or free from change while it was subject to his influence. To conclude the whole, the Dutch were informed by the Emperor with bitter composure, that "he had hoped to unite them to France as allies, by giving them a prince of his own blood as a ruler; that his hopes, however, had been deceived; and that he had shown more forbearance than consisted with his character, or than his rights required;" – thus intimating some farther and unexpressed severity, which he might have felt himself justified in adding to the virtual exile of his brother, and the confiscation of his late dominions; and insinuating, that the Dutch had escaped cheaply with the loss of their separate national existence.

CHAPTER LIII

Gustavus IV. of Sweden is Dethroned and succeeded by his Uncle – The Crown Prince killed by a fall from his horse – Candidates proposed for the Succession – The Swedes, thinking to conciliate Napoleon, fix on Bernadotte – Buonaparte reluctantly acquiesces in the choice – Parting Interview between Bernadotte and Napoleon – Subsequent attempts of the latter to bind Sweden to the policy of France – The Crown Prince unwillingly accedes to the Continental System – Napoleon makes a Tour through Flanders and Holland – returns to Paris, and takes measures for extending the Continental System – Seizure of the Valois – Coast along the German Ocean annexed to France – Protest by the Czar against the appropriation of Oldenburg – Russia allows the importation, at certain Seaports, of various articles of British Commerce – Negotiations for Exchange of Prisoners between France and England; and for a general Peace, broken off by Buonaparte's unreasonable Demands.

GUSTAVUS IV. OF SWEDEN DETHRONED

In the destruction of the kingdom of Holland, a new sceptre, and that of Napoleon's own forming, was broken, as he wrenched it out of the hands of his brother. In the case of Sweden, and

in hopes of ensuring the patronage of the French Emperor, or averting his enmity, a diadem was placed on the brows of one, who, like Napoleon himself, had commenced his career as a soldier of fortune.

We have repeatedly observed, that the high spirit and intrepid enterprise of Gustavus IV., unsupported as they were either by distinguished military abilities, or by effectual power, seemed as if he aped the parts of Gustavus Adolphus or Charles XII., without considering the declined condition of the country he governed, or the inferiority of his own talents. Sweden had suffered great losses by the daring manner in which this prince maintained the ancient principles of aristocracy against the overwhelming power of France.

Pomerania, being the only dominion belonging to Sweden on the south side of the Baltic, had been taken possession of by France in the war of 1806-7; and Russia, who had been a party to that war, and who had encouraged Gustavus to maintain it, had, since changing her politics at the treaty of Tilsit, herself declared war against Sweden, for the sole and undisguised purpose of possessing herself of Finland, which she had succeeded in appropriating. Sweden had, therefore, lost, under this ill-fated monarch, above one-third of her territories, and the inhabitants became anxious to secure, even were it by desperate measures, the independence of that which remained. There were fears lest Russia should aspire to the conquest of the rest of the ancient kingdom – fears that France might reward the adhesion and the

sufferings of Denmark, by uniting the crown of Sweden with that of Denmark and Norway, and aiding the subjugation of the country with an auxiliary army. While these calamities impended over their ancient state, the Swedes felt confident that Gustavus was too rash to avert the storm by submission, too weak, and perhaps too unlucky, to resist its violence. This conviction led to a conspiracy, perhaps one of the most universally known in history.

The unfortunate king was seized upon and made prisoner in March, 1809, without any other resistance than his own unassisted sword could maintain; and so little were the conspirators afraid of his being able to find a party in the state desirous of replacing him in the government, that they were content he should have his liberty and a suitable pension on his agreeing to consider himself as an exile from Sweden;[72] in which sentence of banishment, with little pretence to justice, his wife, sister of the Empress of Russia, and his children, comprehending the heir of his crown, were also included.[73]

The Duke of Sudermania, uncle of the dethroned prince, was

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[72] Annual Register, vol. li., p. 475.

[73] "A conspiracy of no common kind tore him from the throne, and transported him out of his states. The unanimity evinced against him is, no doubt, a proof of the wrongs he had committed. I am ready to admit, that he was inexcusable and even mad; but it is, notwithstanding, extraordinary and unexampled, that, in that crisis a single sword was not drawn in his defence, whether from affection, from gratitude, from virtuous feeling, or even from mere simplicity, if it must be so; and truly, it is a circumstance which does little honour to the atmosphere of kings." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iii., p. 169.

called to the throne, and the succession of the kingdom was destined to Christian of Augustenberg, a prince of the house of Holstein. Peace was made by the new King with Russia, at the expense of ceding Finland and the isle of Aland to that power. Soon afterwards a treaty was signed at Paris, by which Charles XIII. promised to adhere to the Continental System, and to shut his ports against all British commerce, with certain indulgences on the articles of salt and colonial produce. In requital, Napoleon restored to Sweden her continental province of Pomerania, with the isle of Rugen, reserving, however, such dotations or pensions as he had assigned to his soldiers or followers, upon those territories. But though the politics of Sweden were thus entirely changed, its revolution was destined to proceed.

The King being aged, the eyes of the people were much fixed on the successor, or Crown Prince, who took upon himself the chief labour of the government, and appears to have given satisfaction to the nation. But his government was of short duration. On the 28th of May, 1810, while reviewing some troops, he suddenly fell from his horse, and expired on the spot, leaving Sweden again without any head excepting the old King. This event agitated the whole nation, and various candidates were proposed for the succession of the kingdom.

Among these was the King of Denmark, who, after the sacrifices he had made for Buonaparte, had some right to expect his support. The son of the late unfortunate monarch, rightful heir of the crown, and named like him Gustavus, was also

proposed as a candidate. The Duke of Oldenburg, brother-in-law of the Emperor of Russia, had partisans. To each of these candidates there lay practical objections. To have followed the line of lawful succession, and called Gustavus to the throne (which could not be forfeited by his father's infirmity, so far as he was concerned,) would have been to place a child at the head of the state, and must have inferred, amid this most arduous crisis, all the doubts and difficulties of choosing a regent. Such choice might, too, be the means, at a future time, of reviving his father's claim to the crown. The countries of Denmark and Sweden had been too long rivals for the Swedes to subject themselves to the yoke of the King of Denmark; and to choose the Duke of Oldenburg would have been, in effect, to submit themselves to Russia, of whose last behaviour towards her Sweden had considerable reason to complain.

BERNADOTTE

In this embarrassment they were thought to start a happy idea, who proposed to conciliate Napoleon by bestowing the ancient crown of the Goths upon one of his own field-marshals, and a high noble of his empire, namely, John Baptiste Julian Bernadotte, Prince of Ponte Corvo. This distinguished officer was married to a sister of Joseph Buonaparte's wife (daughter of a wealthy and respectable individual, named Cléry,) through whom he had the advantage of an alliance with the Imperial

family of Napoleon, and he had acquired a high reputation in the north of Europe, both when governor of Hanover, and administrator of Swedish Pomerania. On the latter occasion, Bernadotte was said to have shown himself in a particular manner the friend and protector of the Swedish nation; and it was even insinuated, that he would not be averse to exchange the errors of Popery for the reformed tenets of Luther. The Swedish nation fell very generally into the line of policy which prompted this choice. Humiliating as it might, at another period, have been to a people proud of their ancient renown, to choose for their master a foreign soldier, differing from them in birth and religious faith, such an election yet promised to place at the head of the nation a person admirably qualified to comprehend and encounter the difficulties of the time; and it was a choice, sure, as they thought, to be agreeable to him upon whose nod the world seemed to depend.

Yet, there is the best reason to doubt, whether, in preferring Bernadotte to their vacant throne, the Swedes did a thing which was gratifying to Napoleon. The name of the Crown Prince of Sweden elect, had been known in the wars of the Revolution, before that of Buonaparte had been heard of. Bernadotte had been the older, though certainly not therefore the better soldier. On the 18th Brumaire, he was so far from joining Buonaparte in his enterprise against the Council of Five Hundred, notwithstanding all advances made to him, that he was on the spot at St. Cloud armed and prepared, had circumstances

permitted, to place himself at the head of any part of the military, who might be brought to declare for the Directory. And although, like every one else, Bernadotte submitted to the Consular system, and held the government of Holland under Buonaparte, yet then, as well as under the empire, he was always understood to belong to a class of officers, whom Napoleon employed indeed, and rewarded, but without loving them, or perhaps relying on them, more than he was compelled to do, although their character was in most instances a warrant for their fidelity.

These officers formed a comparatively small class yet comprehending some of the most distinguished names in the French army, who, in seeing the visionary Republic glide from their grasp, had been, nevertheless, unable to forget the promises held out to them by the earlier dawn of the Revolution. Reconciled by necessity to a state of servitude which they could not avoid, this party considered themselves as the soldiers of France, not of Napoleon, and followed the banner of their country rather than the fortunes of the Emperor. Without being personally Napoleon's enemies, they were not the friends of his despotic power; and it was to be expected, should any opportunity occur, that men so thinking would make a stand, for the purpose of introducing some modifications into the arbitrary system which the Emperor had established.

Napoleon, always deeply politic, unless when carried off by sudden bursts of temperament, took, as already mentioned, great care, in his distribution of duties and honours, at once to conceal

from the public the existence of a difference in opinion among his general officers, and also to arm the interests of those patriots themselves against their own speculative opinions, by rendering the present state of things too beneficial to them for their being easily induced to attempt any change. Still it may nevertheless be conceived, that it was not out of this class of lukewarm adherents he would have voluntarily selected a candidate for a kingdom, which, being removed at some distance from the influence of France, he would more willingly have seen conferred on some one, whose devotion to the will of his Emperor was not likely to be disturbed by any intrusion of conscientious patriotism.

But, besides the suspicion entertained by Napoleon of Bernadotte's political opinions, subjects of positive discord had recently arisen between them. Bernadotte had been blamed by the Emperor for permitting the escape of Romana and the Spaniards, as already mentioned. At a later period, he was commander of the Saxon troops in the campaign of Wagram; and, notwithstanding a set of very scientific manœuvres, by which he detained General Bellegarde on the frontiers of Bohemia, when his presence might have been essentially useful to the Archduke Charles, he was censured by Napoleon as tardy in his movements.

The landing of the English at Walcheren induced Fouché, as has been already said, with the concurrence of Clarke, then minister at war, to intrust Bernadotte with the charge of the defence of Flanders and Holland. But neither in this service

had he the good fortune to please the Emperor. Fouché, at whose instance he had accepted the situation, was already tottering in office; and the ill-selected expression, "that however necessary Napoleon was to the glory of France, yet his presence was not indispensable to repel invasion,"[74] was interpreted into a magnifying of themselves at the expense of the Emperor. Napoleon made his displeasure manifest by depriving Bernadotte of the command in Belgium, and sending him back to the north of Germany; and it is said that the general, on his part, was so little inclined to make a secret of his resentment, that he was remarked as a fiery Gascon, who, if he should ever have an opportunity, would be likely to do mischief.

SWEDEN

But while such were the bad terms betwixt the Emperor and his general, the Swedes, unsuspicious of the true state of the case, imagined, that in choosing Bernadotte for successor to their throne, they were paying to Buonaparte the most acceptable tribute. And notwithstanding that Napoleon was actually at variance with Bernadotte, and although, in a political view, he would much rather have given his aid to the pretensions of the King of Denmark,[75] he was under the necessity of reflecting, that

[74] Fouché, tom. i., p. 337.

[75] "The real king," he said, "according to my political system and the true interests of France, was the king of Denmark; because I should then have governed Sweden by

Sweden retained a certain degree of independence; that the sea separated her shores from his armies; and that, however willing to conciliate him, the Swedes were not in a condition absolutely to be compelled to receive laws at his hand. It was necessary to acquiesce in their choice, since he could not dictate to them; and by doing so he might at the same time exhibit another splendid example of the height to which his service conducted his generals, of his own desire to assist their promotion, and of that which might be much more doubtful than the two first propositions – of his willingness to pay deference to the claims of a people in electing their chief magistrate. When, therefore, Bernadotte, protesting that he would be exclusively guided by Napoleon's wishes in pursuing or relinquishing this important object, besought him for his countenance with the States of Sweden, who were to elect the Crown Prince, Buonaparte answered, that he would not interfere in the election by any solicitations or arguments, but that he gave the Prince of Ponte Corvo his permission to be a candidate, and should be well pleased if he proved a successful one. Such is Napoleon's account of the transaction.[76] We have, however, been favoured with some

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the influence of my simple contact with the Danish provinces."

[76] "I, the elected monarch of the people, had to answer, that I could not set myself against the elections of other people. It was what I told Bernadotte, whose whole attitude betrayed the anxiety excited by the expectation of my answer. I added, that he had only to take advantage of the good-will of which he had been the object; that I wished to be considered as having had no weight in his election, but that it had my approbation and my best wishes. I felt, however, shall I say it, a secret instinct, which made the thing disagreeable and painful. Bernadotte was, in fact, the serpent which I

manuscript observations, in which a very different colour is given to Napoleon's proceedings, and which prove distinctly, that while Napoleon treated the Crown Prince Elect of Sweden with fair language, he endeavoured by underhand intrigues to prevent the accomplishment of his hopes.[77]

The Swedes, however, remained fixed in their choice, notwithstanding the insinuations of Desaugier, the French envoy, whom Napoleon afterwards affected to disown and recall, for supporting in the diet of Orebro, the interest of the King of Denmark, instead of that of Bernadotte.

Napoleon's cold assent, or rather an assurance that he would not dissent, being thus wrung reluctantly from him, Bernadotte, owing to his excellent character among the Swedes, and their opinion of his interest with Napoleon, was chosen Crown Prince of Sweden, by the States of that kingdom, 21st August, 1810. Napoleon, as he himself acknowledges, was enabled to resist, though with difficulty, a strong temptation to retract his consent, and defeat the intended election. Perhaps this unfriendly disposition might be in some degree overcome by the expectation, that by their present choice the Emperor of France would secure the accession of Sweden to the anti-commercial system; whereas, by attempting a game which he was not equally sure of winning, he might, indeed, have disappointed a man

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nourished in my bosom." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. iii., p. 171.

[77] See Reflections on the Conduct of Napoleon towards the Crown Prince of Sweden, in the Appendix to this Volume, No. I.

whom he loved not, but by doing so must run the risk of throwing the States of Sweden, who were not likely to be equally unanimous in behalf of any other French candidate, into the arms of England, his avowed foe; or of Russia, who, since the treaty of Schoenbrun, and Napoleon's union with the House of Austria, could only be termed a doubtful and cloudy friend.

But he endeavoured to obtain from Bernadotte some guarantee of his dependence upon France and its Emperor. He took the opportunity of making the attempt when Bernadotte applied to him for letters of emancipation from his allegiance to France, which could not decently be withheld from the Prince Royal of another country. "The expediting of the letters patent," said Napoleon, "has been retarded by a proposal made by the Council, that Bernadotte should previously bind himself never to bear arms against Napoleon." Bernadotte exclaimed against a proposal which must have left him in the rank of a French general. The Emperor was ashamed to persist in a demand so unreasonable, and dismissed him with the almost prophetic words – "Go – our destinies must be accomplished." He promised the Prince Royal two millions of francs as an indemnity for the principality of Ponte Corvo, and other possessions which had been assigned to him in Holland, and which he restored on ceasing to be a subject of France. It is singular enough that Napoleon, while at St. Helena, permitted himself to assert that he had made a present of this money (of which only one million was ever paid,) to enable Bernadotte to take possession of his

new dignity with becoming splendour.

To bring the affairs of Sweden to a close for the present, we may here add, that, though that nation were desirous to escape the renewal of the desperate and hopeless struggle with France, they were most unwilling, nevertheless, to lose the advantages of their commerce with England. The conduct of the national business soon devolved entirely upon the Crown Prince, the age and infirmities of the King not permitting him to conduct them any longer. It became Bernadotte's, or, as he was now named, Charles John's difficult and delicate task, to endeavour at once to propitiate France, and to find excuses which might dispose Buonaparte to grant some relaxation on the subject of the Continental System. But as it was impossible for the Prince of Sweden to disguise his motive for evading a cordial co-operation in Napoleon's favourite measure, so the latter, about three months after the accession of his former companion in arms to supreme power, grew impatient enough to overwhelm the Swedish minister, Baron Lagerbjelke, with a tirade similar to his celebrated attack on Lord Whitworth. He discoursed with the utmost volubility for an hour and a quarter, leaving the astonished ambassador scarce an opening to thrust in a word by way of observation, defence, or answer. "Do they believe in Sweden that I am to be so easily duped? Do they think I will be satisfied with this half state of things? Give me no sentiments! it is from facts we form our opinions. You signed the peace with me in the beginning of the year, and engaged yourself then to break

off all communication with Britain; yet you retained an English agent till late in the summer, and kept the communication open by way of Gottenburg. Your small islands are so many smuggling magazines; your vessels meet the English and exchange freights. I have not slept an hour to-night on account of your affairs; yet you ought to suffer me to take repose, I have need of it. You have vessels in every port in England. You talk of the necessity of buying salt, forsooth. Is it for salt you go into the Thames? – You talk of suffering, by superseding the trade. Do you not believe that I suffer? That Germany, Bourdeaux, Holland, and France suffer? But it must all be ended. You must fire on the English, and you must confiscate their merchandise, or you must have war with France. Open war, or constant friendship – this is my last word, my ultimate determination. Could they think in Sweden that I would modify my system, because I love and esteem the Prince Royal? Did I not love and esteem the King of Holland? He is my brother, yet I have broken with him: I have silenced the voice of nature to give ear to that of the general interest." These, and many violent expressions to the same purpose, Buonaparte poured out in an elevation of voice that might be heard in the adjoining apartments.

The Emperor's remonstrances, transmitted by the ambassador, were seconded at the Court of Stockholm by the arguments of Denmark and Russia; and the Crown Prince was at last obliged to give the national adherence of Sweden to the

Continental System, and to declare war against England.[78] The British Government were fully sensible of the constraint under which Sweden acted, and, so far from acting hostilely towards that kingdom, did not seem to make any perceptible change in the relations which had before subsisted between the countries.

In the meantime, Bernadotte and Napoleon, for a time, veiled under the usual forms of courtesy their mutual dislike and resentment. But the Crown Prince could not forgive the Emperor for an attempt to lord it over him like a superior over a vassal, and compelling him, notwithstanding his entreaties, to distress his subjects, and to render his government unpopular, by sacrificing a lucrative trade. Napoleon, on the other hand, was incensed that Bernadotte, whose greatness he considered as existing only by his own permission, should affect to differ in opinion from him, or hesitate betwixt obliging France and injuring Sweden.

On other occasional differences betwixt the sovereigns, it appeared that there was no eager desire on the part of the Crown Prince of Sweden to oblige the Emperor of France. Repeated demands for sailors and soldiers to be engaged in the French service, were made by Napoleon. These Bernadotte always contrived to evade, by referring to the laws of Sweden, as a limited monarchy, which did not permit him, like the absolute Majesty of Denmark, to dispose of her sailors at pleasure; and by enlarging on the nature of the Swedes, who, bold and willing soldiers at home, were too much attached to their own climate

[78] Annual Register, vol. lii., p. 518.

and manners, to endure those of any other country. In these, and such like excuses, no one could read more readily than Napoleon, a fixed resolution on the part of his old companion in arms, not to yield to the influence of France in any point in which he could avoid it. And though an outward show of friendship was maintained between the countries, and even between the sovereigns, yet it was of that insincere kind which was sure to be broken off on the slightest collision of their mutual interests. It remained, however, undisturbed till the eventful year of 1812. – We return to the affairs of France.

TOUR THROUGH BELGIUM

The Emperor undertook a tour through the provinces of Flanders and Holland with his young Empress, with the view of enforcing his views and purposes in church and state. In the course of this journey, one or two remarkable circumstances took place. The first was his furious reproaches to the clergy of Brabant, who, more rigorous Papists than in some other Catholic countries, had circulated among their congregations the bull of excommunication fulminated by the Pope against Napoleon. The provocation was certainly considerable, but the mode of resenting it was indecently violent. He was especially angry that they appeared without their canonical dresses. "You call yourselves priests," he said; "where are your vestments? Are you attorneys, notaries, or peasants? You begin by forgetting

the respect due to me; whereas, the principle of the Christian Church, as these gentlemen" (turning to the Protestant deputies) "can teach you, is, as they have just professed, to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's. But you – you will not pray for your sovereign, because a Romish priest excommunicated me. But who gave him such a right? Perhaps it is your wish to bring back tortures and scaffolds, but I will take care to baffle you. I bear the temporal sword, and know how to use it. I am a monarch of God's creation, and you reptiles of the earth dare not oppose me. I render an account of my government to none save God and Jesus Christ. Do you think I am one formed to kiss the Pope's slipper? Had you the power, you would shave my head, clap a cowl on me, and plunge me in a cloister. But if you preach not the Gospel as the Apostles did, I will banish you from the empire, and disperse you like so many Jews. – And, Monsieur le Préfet, see that these men swear to the Concordat; and take care that the orthodox Gospel be taught in the ecclesiastical seminaries, that they may send out men of sense, and not idiots like these." Thus closed this edifying admonition.

The Dutch were under the necessity of assuming the appearance of great rejoicing; yet even the danger of indulging their blunt humour, could not altogether restrain these downright merchants. When the Emperor made a stir about establishing a Chamber of Commerce at Amsterdam, one of the burgomasters gravely observed, there was no need of a chamber, since a closet would hold all the commerce left them. In like manner, when

Napoleon was vaunting, that he would soon have a fleet of two hundred sail; "And when you have got them," said a plain-spoken citizen, "the English will have double the number."

But, more formidable than blunt truths and indifferent jests, there appeared, while Buonaparte was in Holland, one of those stern invocations exciting the people against foreign tyranny, which have often occasioned the downfall of unjust power, and always rendered those who possess it unhappy and insecure. "People of Holland," said this singular paper (which may be compared to the tract called Killing no Murder, which drove sleep from Cromwell's pillow,) "why do you fear your oppressor? – he is one, you are many. Appeal to his very soldiers; their desertions in Spain show how they hate him; and even his generals would abandon him, could they secure their own rank and grandeur independent of his. But above all, arise to the task of your own redemption; rise in the fulness of national strength. A general revolt of the Continent will ensue; the oppressor will fall, and your triumph will be a warning to tyrants, and an example to the world." This address produced no perceptible effect at the time, but, with other papers of the kind, it made a profound impression on the public mind.

On his return to Paris, Napoleon set himself still farther to impose the extension of the Continental System, which he was induced to attempt by the appropriation of Holland, and the revolution in Sweden. Holding his plan as much more decisive than it could have been, even if his power and his spleen had been

adequate to effect his purpose, he cast his eyes in every direction, to close every aperture, however small, through which British commerce, the victim he hoped entirely to smother, might draw ever so slight a gasp of breath.

It was a feature of Buonaparte's ambition – as indeed it is of inordinate ambition in general – that whatever additions were made to his Empire extended his wish of acquisition. Holland, whose traders were princes, and she herself the Queen of Commerce, had been already devoured, with her ample sea-coast and far-famed harbours. But other cities, less wealthy and famed, yet still venerable from their ancient importance, must become a part of France, ere Buonaparte thought his blockade against British commerce complete and impervious.

The seizure of the poor regions called the Valais, which had hitherto been suffered to exist as a free republic, gave France the absolute command of the road over the Simplon; the property, and perhaps the command of which passage, it being the great means of communication betwixt France and Italy, Napoleon did not incline should remain with a petty republic. It was a sufficient reason, at this unhappy period, for depriving any country of its independence, that France was to be benefited by the change. It was not in this case a bloodless one. The poor mountaineers drew to arms, and it required some fighting before they were compelled to submission, and their barren mountains were annexed to France.

But it was of much greater importance, in Napoleon's eye,

to prevent the commerce which he had expelled from Holland from shifting its residence to the trading towns of the north of Germany, composing what was called the Hanseatic League. A new appropriation of territory, therefore, united to France the whole sea-coast along the German Ocean, comprehending the mouths of the Scheldt, the Meuse, and the Rhine; the Ems, the Weser, and the Elbe. And it was the Emperor's proposal to unite these maritime territories to France by a canal, which was to join the Baltic ocean to the Seine. A considerable proportion of the kingdom of Westphalia, and of the Grand Duchy of Berg, both principalities of Napoleon's own creation, fell under this appropriation, and formed another example, had not that of Holland been sufficient, to show how little respect Napoleon was disposed to pay even to those rights which emanated from himself, when they interfered with fresher plans and wider prospects of ambition.

Had Prussia retained her ancient influence as protector of the North, Hamburgh, Bremen, and Lubeck, would not have been thus unceremoniously melted down and confounded with the French Empire. But while these venerable and well-known free cities sunk without protection or resistance under a despotism which threatened to become universal, a petty state of far less consequence, scarce known as having an independent existence by any who was not intimate with the divisions of the north of Germany, found a patron, and a powerful one. This was Oldenburg, a dukedom, the present prince of which was related

to the Emperor of Russia, as both were descended of the House of Holstein Gottorp, and was, moreover, Alexander's brother-in-law. This state of Oldenburg had been studiously excepted from the changes made in the North of Germany, after the treaty of Tilsit, which made the present confiscation of its territory an act of more marked slight towards the court of Russia. A formal expostulation being transmitted to Napoleon, he proposed to repair the injury of the Duke of Oldenburg, by assigning to him the town and territory of Erfurt, with the lordship of Blankenheim. But the duke felt himself too strongly supported to be under the necessity of surrendering his dominions, and receiving others in exchange. The offer of indemnity was haughtily rejected; France persevered in her purpose of usurping Oldenburg; and the Emperor Alexander, in a protest, gravely but temperately worded, a copy of which was delivered to every member of the diplomatic body, intimated that he did not acquiesce in the injury done to a prince of his family, although he continued to adhere to that great line of political interest which had occasioned the alliance between France and Russia.

The real truth was, that Napoleon, secure of the friendship of Austria by the late alliance, had not, it would seem, regarded Russia as any longer worthy of the same observance which he had originally found it politic to pay to the Emperor Alexander. The Czar himself felt this; and the very large proportion of his subjects, composing the party of Old Russians, as they termed

themselves, who were favourable to the English alliance, and detested the connexion with France, improved the opportunity by pointing out the evils which all classes in the country endured, from the Czar's having, in complaisance to the plans of Napoleon, decreed the abolition of English commerce. They showed that this compliance with the views of France had been attended with great detriment to his own subjects, who could neither sell their commodities, and the produce of their estates, for which Britain always offered a market, nor acquire the colonial produce and British manufactured goods, which the consumption of Russia almost peremptorily demanded.

RUSSIAN PROTEST

An ukase was issued on the 31st of December, 1810, which was drawn up with considerable art; for while in words it seemed to affirm the exclusion of British manufactures from the empire in general, it permitted importations to be made at Archangel, Petersburgh, Riga, Revel, and five or six other seaports, where various articles of merchandise, and, in particular, colonial produce, unless proved to belong to Britain, might be freely imported. So that, while appearing to quote and respect the Continental System, Napoleon could not but be sensible that Russia virtually renounced it. But as Alexander had not ventured to avail himself of the seizure of Oldenburg as a reason for breaking off his alliance with France, so Napoleon, on his part,

though the changed tone of Russian policy could not escape him, paused, nevertheless, in coming to a final rupture with an enemy so powerful, upon the subject of the ukase of December 1810.

EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS

Meantime, the French Emperor became probably sensible that peace with England was the surest ground upon which he could secure his throne. In the month of April, 1810, some attempt at obtaining terms of pacification had been made during the mission of Mr. Mackenzie, who was sent to Morlaix as agent on the part of the British Government. It had been not the least cruel peculiarity of this inveterate war, that no cartel for exchange of prisoners had been effected on either side, and, of course, that those unhappy persons whom chance had thrown into the power of the enemy, had no visible alternative but to linger out their lives in a distant and hostile country, or at least remain captives till the conclusion of hostilities, to which no one could presume to assign a date. The original impediment to such an exchange, which has in all civilized countries been considered as a debt indispensably due to soften the rigours of war and lessen the sufferings of its victims, was a demand of Napoleon that the persons possessing no military character, whom he had made prisoners contrary to the law of nations at the commencement of hostilities, should be exchanged against French sailors and soldiers. The British ministers for a long time resisted so unusual

an application, to which policy, indeed, forbade them to accede. At length, however, the sufferings of individuals, and of their families, induced the British government to allow the French Emperor the advantage of his oppressive act in detaining these unfortunate persons, and agree that they should be included in the proposed cartel. But when the commissioners met at Morlaix, Mr. Mackenzie found himself as far from approaching an agreement as ever. The number of French prisoners in Britain was more by many thousands than that of the British in France; and Buonaparte, who seldom made a bargain in which he did not secure the advantage to himself, insisted that the surplus of French prisoners should be exchanged for Germans, Spaniards, Portuguese, or others who should be captive in France.

This was readily agreed to, so far as regarded foreign troops in British pay; but it was equally unreasonable and contrary to usage to require that we should restore to France her native subjects, whose services she might use to augment her military force, while we received in exchange foreigners, unconnected with us by service or allegiance, and who, perhaps, when set at liberty, might be as apt to join the French ranks, as those of the nation in whose name they had obtained freedom.

After much wrangling and dispute, Mr. Mackenzie, to show the sincere desire which the British government entertained of releasing the prisoners on both sides, made a proposal that the exchange should commence by liberating as many French prisoners as could be balanced by British captives in the French

prisons; that after this, captives of every nation should be exchanged indifferently on both sides; and whatever number of prisoners might remain on either side, after the general balance had been struck, should also be set at liberty, upon an engagement not to serve till regularly exchanged. To this proposal – a more liberal one could hardly be made – the French only answered by starting new demands, and making new objections. Among these, perhaps, it will scarcely be believed, that Moustier, the French commissioner, had the modesty to propose that Lord Wellington and his army, lying in the lines at Torres Vedras, should be reckoned as French prisoners in the proposed cartel! Mr. Mackenzie answered with becoming spirit, that he would neither be the medium through which his Government should be insulted by such a proposal, nor would he proceed in the negotiation until this impertinence were atoned for.

It is needless to proceed farther in the elusory detail of a treaty, which Napoleon had previously determined should be brought to no useful issue. He had calculated which country could best support the absence of their prisoners, or rather to whom their services were of most consequence. He felt that he himself, by the conscription, as well as by the auxiliary troops which he could summon at pleasure from his neighbours or dependents, could always command a sufficiency of men even for his gigantic undertakings; while to Britain, whose soldiers could only be obtained by a high bounty, the deliverance of

her prisoners was proportionally more valuable. Whatever was his view in establishing the negotiation, which was probably only to satisfy the French army, by evincing a seeming interest in the unfortunate portion of their brethren in arms who were immured in English prisons, they gave way to the consideration, that while things remained as they were, Britain suffered more in proportion than France.

Some proposals for a general peace had been made during the conferences at Morlaix; and the British Government had stated three different principles, any of which they expressed themselves willing to admit as a basis. These were, first, the state of possession before the war; or, secondly, the present state of possession; or, thirdly, a plan of reciprocal compensations. But none of these principles suited the French Government to act upon; so that the treaty for a general peace, and that for restoring, taking into calculation the prisoners on both sides, upwards of a hundred thousand human beings to liberty, their country, and their home, proved both of them altogether nugatory.

The note of defiance was therefore resumed, so soon as it had been ascertained that Britain would reject any terms of peace which were not founded on equal and liberal principles. An oration of Count Semonville demonstrated, that it was all owing to the persevering ambition of England that Buonaparte had been obliged to possess himself of the sea-coast of Europe – that all his encroachments on the land were the necessary consequences of her empire of the seas. He then demanded, in prophetic fury,

to know what in future would be the bounds of possibility. "It is the part of England," he said, "to reply. Let her turn her eyes on the past, and learn to judge from thence the events of the future. France and Napoleon will never change."

CHAPTER LIV

View of Napoleon's gigantic Power – The Empress Maria Louisa delivered of a Son – Criticism on the Title given him, of King of Rome – Speculations in regard to the advantages or disadvantages arising from this Event – Retrospect – Ex-Queen of Etruria – Her severe and unjustifiable Treatment by Napoleon – Lucien Buonaparte is invited to England, where he writes Epic Poetry – Attempt to deliver Ferdinand, defeated – Operations in Portugal – Retreat of Massena – Battles of Fuentes d'Onoro fought by Lord Wellington – On the South Frontier of Portugal, by Lord Beresford – Of Barossa, by General Graham – Enterprise of Arroyo-Molinas – Spaniards defeated under Blake – Valencia captured by the French, and he and his Army made Prisoners of War – Disunion among the French Generals – Joseph wishes to abdicate the Throne of Spain.

ACTUAL DOMINIONS

The natural consequences of an overgrown empire were already sapping that of Napoleon; for extent of territory does not constitute power, any more than corpulence in the human frame constitutes strength or health; and Napoleon's real authority was

in truth greater some years before, than now when his dominion was so much enlarged. The war in Spain, maintained at such an expense of blood and treasure, was a wasting and consuming sore. The kingdom of Holland had afforded him supplies more readily, and had more the means of doing so, when under the dominion of his brother Louis, than the Dutch now either showed or possessed, when ranked as a constituent part of the French empire. The same might be said of the states and free towns in the north of Germany; where, in many instances, strong bands of smugglers, dressed and armed as guerilla parties, maintained a desultory war with the officers of the French customs; and, moved equally by national hatred and the love of gain won by desperate risks, made in some districts a kind of petty civil war. Yet, though such cankerworms gnawed the root of the tree, the branches and foliage, to all outward appearance, extended a broader shade than ever. It was especially when a formal annunciation, both in France and Austria, called the good subjects of both realms to rejoice in the prospect that Maria Louisa would soon give an heir to Napoleon, that men who opened the map of Europe saw with fear and wonder the tremendous inheritance to which the expected infant was likely to succeed.

The actual dominions of France, governed by Napoleon in his own proper right as Emperor of the French, had gradually attained the following extravagant dimensions. They extended, from north-east to south-west, from Travemunde, on the Baltic

ocean, to the foot of the Pyrenees; and, from north-west to south-east, from the port of Brest to Terracina, on the confines of the Neapolitan territories. A population of forty-two millions of people, fitted in various ways to secure the prosperity of a state, and inhabiting, for wealth, richness of soil, and felicity of climate, by far the finest portion of the civilized earth, formed the immediate liege subjects of this magnificent empire.

Yet, to stop here were greatly to undervalue the extent of Napoleon's power. We have to add to his personal empire Carniola and the Illyrian provinces, and also the fine kingdom of Italy. Then, in his character of Mediator of the Helvetian Republic, the Emperor exercised an almost absolute authority in Switzerland, which furnished him, though unwillingly, with several fine regiments of auxiliaries. The German confederation of the Rhine, though numbering kings among their league, were at the slightest hint bound to supply him each with his prescribed quota of forces, with a readiness and an affectation of zeal very different from the slack and reluctant manner in which they formerly supplied their paltry contingents to the Emperor of Germany.

Murat, with his kingdom of Naples, was at his brother-in-law's disposal; and if, as Buonaparte's hopes whispered, the Peninsula should ultimately prove unable to resist the war he waged, then Spain and Portugal would be added to his immense empire, being now in the state of sturdy and contumacious rebels, whose resistance seemed in the speedy prospect of being

finally subdued. Thus, an empire of 800,000 square miles, and containing a population of 85 millions, in territory one-fifth part, and in the number of inhabitants one-half, of united Europe, was either in quiet subjection to Napoleon's sceptre, or on the point, as was supposed, of becoming so.

Of those who shared amongst them the residue of Europe, and still maintained some claim to independence, Britain might make the proud boast, that she was diametrically in opposition to the Ruler of the world; that, in the long-continued strife, she had dealt him injuries as deep as she had ever received, and had disdained, under any circumstances, to treat with him on less terms than those of equality. Not to that fair land be the praise, though she supported many burdens and endured great losses; but to Providence, who favoured her efforts and strengthened her resolutions; who gave her power to uphold her own good cause, which, in truth, was that of European independence, and courage to trust in the justice of Heaven, when the odds mustered against her seemed, in earthly calculation, so dreadful as to deprive, the wise of the head to counsel; the brave, of the heart to resist!

Denmark, so powerful was the voice which France had in her councils, might almost be accounted humbled to one of the federative principalities.

Sweden had but a moderate and second-rate degree of power. She felt, as other German nations, the withering blight of the Continental, or Anti-social System; but, circumstanced as she was, with the possession of Swedish Pomerania dependent on

French pleasure, she had no other remedy than to wait her opportunity.

Still more was this the case with Prussia, through all her provinces the mortal enemy of the French name, but whom the large garrisons which France had planted in her dominions, and the numerous forces which she maintained there, compelled for the time to be as submissive as a handmaiden. It was true that the court were as noiselessly as possible, endeavouring to revive their military establishment; that they were dismissing the villains who had sold and betrayed their country, and replacing them by age which had been tried, or youth which had witnessed the agony of their country, and been trained up in thinking, that to avenge her was their dearest duty. True it was, also, that the people in Prussia, and many other parts of Germany, waited as for the day dawning, for the hope of winning back their freedom; but outward appearances indicated nothing of these smothered hopes, wishes, and preparations; and the general eye saw in Prussia only a nation resigned to her bondage, without, apparently, any hope of redemption.

Austria, besides the terrible losses which the last war had brought upon her, was now fettered to Napoleon by a link which gave the proud House of Hapsburg an apology for the submission, or at least the observance, which she paid to the son-in-law of her Emperor.

Turkey, though she would have had her turn, had the tide of fortune continued to keep the course in which it had so

long flowed, was not yet in the way of being comprehended in Napoleon's plan of politics.

Russia was waging with the Porte an impolitic war of acquisition, to realise some of the selfish plans of aggrandisement which Napoleon had assented to, or perhaps suggested, at Tilsit and Erfurt. But he now witnessed them without wishing them success, and listened to the complaints of Austria, who unwillingly saw the ambitious views of Russia in these provinces. Of all the continental states, therefore, assuming even the semblance of independence, Russia seemed alone to possess it in reality; and from late acts of estrangement – such as the protest on the subject of the Duchy of Oldenburg, and the reception of British ships and merchandise into her ports – it certainly appeared that a different spirit was in the councils of this great empire than had ruled them during the meetings at Tilsit and Erfurt. Yet there were but few who thought that Russia, in opposition to the whole continent of Europe, would dare confront Napoleon; and still fewer, even of the most sanguine politicians, had any deep-grounded hope that her opposition would be effectual. Out of such a Cimmerian midnight, to all human views, was the day-spring of European liberty destined to arise.

America, happy in the Atlantic which severed her from Europe, now an almost universal scene of war or slavery, looked on in conscious security, and by reviving at this crisis disputed claims upon Britain, seemed to listen more to the recollection of

recent enmity, than of mutual language, manners, and descent.

BIRTH OF THE KING OF ROME

Within a year after her marriage with Napoleon, the young Empress was announced to have been taken with the pains of labour. The case was a difficult and distressing one; and the professional person employed lost courage, and was afraid to do what was necessary. Napoleon appeared in the apartment, and commanded him to proceed as if the patient were the wife of an ordinary burgess. She was at length successfully and safely delivered of a fine boy, which Buonaparte, with feelings, doubtless, as highly strung as after a battle gained, carried into the next apartment, and exhibited in triumph to the great officers and courtiers, by whom he was unanimously hailed King of Rome, the dignity which had been destined to the heir of the French Republic.

The title did not, indeed, pass uncriticised. Some said, that taking the regal designation from a city where the very name of king had been accounted unlucky, had an ominous presage. Catholics objected to it, as it necessarily carried with it the recollection of the sacrilegious violence which had stripped the Pope of his temporal possessions. And lastly, it was asked, what chance there ever was of the execution of that part of the Italian constitution, which, after Napoleon's death, guaranteed the succession in the kingdom of Italy to some one different from

the Emperor of France, when the title of King of Rome was assumed as that of the heir of the French empire?[79]

Such ominous remarks, however, only circulated among the disaffected, or passed with anti-imperial jests, satires, and calembourgs, through such saloons of the Faubourg St. Germain, as were still tenanted by the ancient and faithful adherents of the House of Bourbon. The city of Paris made as general a show of rejoicing as they ever testified when an heir was born to one of their most beloved sovereigns; deputations with addresses came from public bodies of every description; and, that flattery might sound the very base string of humility, the fashionable colour of dress for the season bore a name alluding to the young King of Rome, which delicacy, if not pride, ought to have rejected. But, perhaps, the strangest circumstance of the whole was, that the old dethroned King of Spain, and his consort, undertook a journey, for the purpose of carrying their personal congratulations on the birth of an heir, to one who had deposed, and was detaining in prison their own lineage, and had laid Spain, their native dominions, in blood, from the Pyrenees to the Pillars of Hercules.

[79] Jests, as well as serious observations, were made on this occasion. "Have you any commands for France?" said a Frenchman at Naples to an English friend; "I shall be there in two days." – "In France?" answered his friend, "I thought you were setting off for Rome." – "True; but Rome, by a decree of the Emperor, is now indissolubly united to France." – "I have no news to burden you with," said his friend; "but can I do any thing for you in England? I shall be there in half an hour." – "In England?" said the Frenchman, "and in half an hour!" – "Yes," said his friend, "within that time I shall be at sea, and the sea has been indissolubly united to the British empire." – S.

Napoleon, and his more devoted admirers, rejoiced in this happy incident, as that which was most likely, in their eyes, to sustain the Empire of France, when fate should remove him by whom it was founded. The protection of the House of Austria, and the charm flung around the child by the high fame of the father, could not, it was thought, but ensure a peaceful accession to the throne, and an undisturbed security in possessing it. His life, too, was ensured in future against such fanatics as that of Schoenbrun; for what purpose would it serve to cut off the Emperor, when the empire was to survive, and descend in all its strength upon his son and heir?

Others there were, who pretended that the advantages arising from the birth of the King of Rome, were balanced by corresponding inconveniences. These asserted, that several of the French great generals had followed the fortunes of Napoleon, in hopes that, upon his death in battle, or upon his natural decease, they, or some of them, might, like the successors of Alexander the Great, share amongst them the ample succession of kingdoms and principalities which were likely to become the property of the strongest and bravest, in the lottery which might be expected to take place on the death of the great favourite of Fortune. These great soldiers, it was surmised, being cut short of this fair prospect, would no longer have the same motives for serving the living Napoleon, whose inheritance at his death was now to descend, like the patrimony of a peasant or burgess, in the regular and lawful line of inheritance. But the politicians who

argued thus, did not sufficiently regard the pitch of superiority which Napoleon had attained over those around him; his habit of absolute command, theirs of implicit obedience; and the small likelihood there was of any one who served under him venturing to incur his displeasure, and the risk of losing the rank and fortune which most had actually obtained, by showing any marks of coldness or dissatisfaction, on account of the disappointment of distant and visionary hopes.

There were others who augured different consequences, from the effect of the same event on the feelings of Buonaparte's enemies, both open and unavowed. It had been a general belief, and certainly was founded on probability, that the immense but ill-constructed empire which Napoleon had erected would fall to pieces, so soon as it was not kept steady and compact by the fear and admiration of his personal talents. Hence the damp cast by persons affecting a wise caution, upon the general desire to shake off the yoke of France. They enlarged upon the invincible talent, upon the inevitable destinies of Napoleon personally; but they consoled the more impatient patriots, by counselling them to await his death, before making a daring attempt to vindicate their freedom. Such counsels were favourably listened to, because men are, in spite of themselves, always willing to listen to prudent arguments, when they tend to postpone desperate risks. But this species of argument was ended, when the inheritance of despotism seemed ready to be transmitted from father to son in direct descent. There was no termination seen to the melancholy

prospect, nor was it easy for the most lukewarm of patriots to assign any longer a reason for putting off till Napoleon's death the resistance which to-day demanded. Under these various lights was the birth of the King of Rome considered; and it may after all remain a matter of doubt, whether the blessing of a son and heir, acceptable as it must necessarily have been to his domestic feelings, was politically of that advantage to him which the Emperor of France unquestionably expected.

And now, before we begin to trace the growing differences betwixt France and Russia, which speedily led to such important consequences, we may briefly notice some circumstances connected with Spain and with Spanish affairs, though the two incidents which we are to mention first, are rather of a detached and insulated nature.

THE EX-QUEEN OF ETRURIA

The first of these refers to the Ex-Queen of Etruria, a daughter, it will be remembered, of Charles, King of Spain, and a sister of Ferdinand. Upon this princess and her son, Buonaparte had settled the kingdom of Etruria, or Tuscany. Preparatory to the Bayonne intrigue, he had forcibly deprived her of this dignity, in order to offer it as an indemnification to Ferdinand for the cession, which he proposed to that unhappy prince, of the inheritance of Spain. Having contrived to obtain that cession without any compensation, Buonaparte reserved

Etruria to himself, and retained the late Queen as a hostage. For some time she was permitted to reside with her parents at Compeigne; but afterwards, under pretext of conducting her to Parma, she was escorted to Nice, and there subjected to the severe vigilance of the police. The princess appears to have been quicker in her feelings than the greater part of her family, which does not, indeed, argue any violent degree of sensibility. Terrified, however, and alarmed at the situation in which she found herself, she endeavoured to effect an escape into England. Two gentlemen of her retinue were sent to Holland, for the purpose of arranging her flight, but her project was discovered. On the 16th April, 1811, officers of police and gendarmes broke into the residence of the Queen at Nice, seized her person and papers, and, after detaining her in custody for two months, and threatening to try her by a military tribunal, they at length intimated to her a sentence, condemning her, with her daughter (her son had been left very much indisposed at Compeigne,) to be detained close prisoners in a monastery at Rome, to which she was compelled to repair within twenty-four hours after the notice of her doom. Her two agents, who had been previously made prisoners, were sent to Paris. They were condemned to death by a military commission, and were brought out for that purpose to the plain of Gresnelle. One was shot on the spot, and pardon was extended to his companion when he was about to suffer the same punishment. The mental agony of the poor man had, however, affected the sources of life, and he died

within a few days after the reprieve. The severity of this conduct towards a princess – a Queen indeed – who had placed her person in Napoleon's hands, under the expectation that her liberty at least should not be abridged, was equally a breach of justice, humanity, and gentlemanlike courtesy.[80]

LUCIEN BUONAPARTE

It is curious, that about the same time when Napoleon treated with so much cruelty a foreign and independent princess, merely because she expressed a desire to exchange her residence from France to England, his own brother, Lucien, was received with hospitality in that island, so heartily detested, so frequently devoted to the fate of a second Carthage. Napoleon, who was always resolute in considering the princes of his own blood as the first slaves in the state, had become of late very urgent with Lucien to dismiss his wife, and unite himself with some of the royal families on the continent, or at least to agree to bestow the hand of his daughter upon young Ferdinand of Spain, who had risen in favour by his behaviour on an occasion immediately to be mentioned. But Lucien, determined at this time not to connect himself or his family with the career of his relative's ambition, resolved to settle in America, and place the Atlantic betwixt himself and the importunities of his Imperial brother. He applied

[80] See Mémoires de Savary, tom. iii., part i., p. 37.

to the British minister at Sardinia for a pass, who was under the necessity of referring him to his Government. On this second application he was invited to England, where he was permitted to live in freedom upon his parole, one officer only having a superintendence of his movements and correspondence.[81] These were in every respect blameless; and the ex-statesman, who had played so distinguished a part in the great revolutionary game, was found able to amuse himself with the composition of an epic poem on the subject of Charlemagne;[82]– somewhat more

[81] Lucien landed at Portsmouth in December, 1810, and was conveyed to Ludlow, which he soon after quitted for an estate called Thorngrove, fifteen miles from that town. Restored to personal liberty by the peace of Paris in 1814, he reached Rome in May; and was received by the sovereign pontiff on the very night of his arrival. The holy father immediately conferred on him the dignity of a Roman prince; and on the next day all the nobles came to salute him, by the title of Prince of Canino.

[82] Lucien's poem of "Charlemagne, ou l'Eglise Delivrée," an epic in twenty-four books, commenced at Tusculum, continued at Malta, and completed in England, appeared in 1814. It was translated into English by Dr. Butler and Mr. Hodgson. From the eighteenth canto, which was written at Malta, and which opens with a digression personal to the poet, we shall make a short extract: —"Bella gerant alii, tu, felix Austria, nube," &c. – S."Je n'oublirai jamais ta bonté paternelleFavori du très-haut, Clermont, Pontife-roi!Au nouvel hémisphère entrainé loin de toi,Je t'y conserverai le cœur le plus fidèle:Confiant à la mer et ma femme et mes filsSur des bords ennemis,J'espérai vainement un asile éphémère,Par un triste refus rejetté sur les flots,Après avoir long temps erré loin de la terre,Mélite dans son port enferma nos vaisseaux."De la captivité je sens ici le poids!Rien ne plait en ces lieux à mon ame abbattue;Rien ne parle à mon cœur; rien ne s'offre à ma vueAccourez, mes enfants: viens, épouse chérie.Doux charme de ma vie,D'un seul de tes regards viens me rendre la paix.Il n'est plus de désert, ou brille ton sourire,Fuyez, sombres chagrins, souvenirs inquiets,Sur ce roc Africain, je resaissis ma lyre.""Prince Pontiff! loved of heaven – O, Clermont, say,What filial duties shall thy cares repay?E'en on the shores that

harmlessly than did his brother Napoleon, in endeavouring again to rebuild and consolidate the vast empire of the son of Pepin.

Another intrigue of a singular character, and which terminated in an unexpected manner, originated in an attempt of the English Ministry to achieve the liberty of Ferdinand, the lawful King of Spain. A royal and a popular party had begun to show themselves in that distracted country, and to divert the attention of the patriots from uniting their efforts to accomplish the object of most engrossing importance, the recovery, namely, of their country, from the intruding monarch and the French armies. The English Government were naturally persuaded that Ferdinand, to whose name his subjects were so strongly attached, would be desirous and capable of placing himself, were he at liberty, at their head, putting an end to their disputes by his authority, and giving their efforts an impulse, which could be communicated by no one but the King of Spain to the Spanish nation. It is no doubt true, that, had the Government of England known the real character of this prince, a wish for his deliverance

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skirt the western main,Still shall this heart its loyal faith maintain.My precious freight confiding to the deep,Children and wife, I left Frescati's steep,And ask'd a short retreat – I sought no more —But vainly sought it on a hostile shore.Thence by refusal stern and harsh repell'd,O'er the wide wat'ry waste my course I held,In sufferings oft, and oft in perils cast,Till Malta's port received our ships at last."Here sad captivity's dull weight I find;Nought pleases here, nought soothes my listless mind:Nought here can bid my sickening heart rejoice,Speak to my soul, or animate my voice.Run to my knees, my children! cherish'd wife,Come, softest charm and solace of my life,One look from thee shall all my peace restore:Where beams thy smile, the desert is no more.Hence, restless memory – hence, repinings vain! —On Afric's rock I seize my lyre again."

from France, or his presence in Spain, would have been the last which they would have formed. This misapprehension, however, was natural, and was acted upon.

A Piedmontese, of Irish extraction, called the Baron Kolli (or Kelly,) the selected agent of the British government, was furnished with some diamonds and valuable articles, under pretext of disposing of which he was to obtain admission to the Prince, then a prisoner at Valençay, where his chief amusement, it is believed, was embroidering a gown and petticoat, to be presented to the Virgin Mary. Kolli was then to have informed the Prince of his errand, effected Ferdinand's escape by means of confederates among the royalist party, and conveyed him to the coast, where a small squadron awaited the event of the enterprise, designed to carry the King of Spain to Gibraltar, or whither else he chose. In March 1810, Kolli was put ashore in Quiberon bay, whence he went to Paris, to prepare for his enterprise. He was discovered, however, by the police,[83] and arrested at the moment when he was setting out for Valençay. Some attempts were made to induce him to proceed with the scheme, of which his papers enabled the police to comprehend the general plan, keeping communication at the same time with the French minister. As he disdained to undertake this treacherous character, Kolli was committed close prisoner to the castle of Vincennes, while a

[83] "He was discovered by his always drinking a bottle of the best wine, which so ill corresponded with his dress and apparent poverty, that it excited a suspicion amongst some of the spies, and he was arrested, searched, and his papers taken from him." – Napoleon, *Voice, &c.*, vol. ii., p. 119.

person – the same who betrayed his principal, and whose exterior in some degree answered the description of the British emissary – was sent to represent him at the castle of Valençay.

But Ferdinand, either suspicious of the snare which was laid for him, or poor-spirited enough to prefer a safe bondage to a brave risk incurred for liberty, would not listen to the supposed agent of Britain, and indeed denounced the pretended Kolli to Barthemy, the governor of the castle. The false Kolli, therefore, returned to Paris, while the real one remained in the castle of Vincennes till the capture of Paris by the allies. Ferdinand took credit, in a letter to Buonaparte, for having resisted the temptation held out to him by the British Government, who had, as he pathetically observed, abused his name, and occasioned, by doing so, the shedding of much blood in Spain. He again manifested his ardent wish to become the adopted son of the Emperor; his hope that the author and abettors of the scheme to deliver him might be brought to condign punishment; and concluded with a hint, that he was extremely desirous to leave Valençay, a residence which had nothing about it but what was unpleasant, and was not in any respect fitted for him. The hint of Ferdinand about a union with Buonaparte's family, probably led to the fresh importunity on the Emperor's part, which induced Lucien to leave Italy. Ferdinand did not obtain the change of residence he desired, nor does he seem to have profited in any way by his candour towards his keeper, excepting that he evaded the strict confinement, or yet worse fate, to which he might have

been condemned, had he imprudently confided in the false Baron Kolli.[84]

MASSENA AND WELLINGTON

In Portugal, the great struggle betwixt Massena and Wellington, upon which, as we formerly observed, the eyes of the world were fixed, had been finally decided in favour of the English general. This advantage was attained by no assistance of the elements – by none of those casual occurrences which are called chances of war – by no dubious, or even venturous risks – by the decision of no single battle lost or won; but solely by the superiority of one great general over another, at the awful game in which neither had yet met a rival.

For more than four months, Massena, with as fine an army as had ever left France, lay looking at the impregnable lines with which the British forces, so greatly inferior in numerical strength, were covering Lisbon, the object of his expedition. To assail in such a position troops, whose valour he had felt at Busaco, would have been throwing away the lives of his soldiers; and to retreat, was to abandon the enterprise which his master had intrusted to him, with a confidence in his skill and his good fortune, which must, in that case, have been thereafter sorely abated. Massena tried every effort which military skill could supply,

[84] See "Report concerning Kolli's Plan for liberating Ferdinand, King of Spain," Annual Register, vol. lii., p. 497.

to draw his foe out of his place of advantage. He threatened to carry the war across the Tagus – he threatened to extend his army towards Oporto; but each demonstration he made had been calculated upon and anticipated by his antagonist, and was foiled almost without an effort. At length, exhausted by the want of supplies, and the interruption of his communications, after lying one month at Alenquer, Massena retreated to Santarem, as preferable winter-quarters; but, in the beginning of March, he found that these were equally untenable, and became fully sensible, that if he desired to save the remnant of a sickly and diminished army, it must necessarily be by a speedy retreat.

This celebrated movement, decisive of the fate of the campaign, commenced about the 4th of March. There are two different points in which Massena's conduct may be regarded, and they differ as light and darkness. If it be considered in the capacity of that of a human being, the indignant reader, were we to detail the horrors which he permitted his soldiers to perpetrate, would almost deny his title to the name. It is a vulgar superstition, that when the Enemy of mankind is invoked, and appears, he destroys in his retreat the building which has witnessed the apparition. It seemed as if the French, in leaving Portugal, were determined that ruins alone should remain to show they had once been there. Military license was let loose in its most odious and frightful shape, and the crimes which were committed embraced all that is horrible to humanity. But if a curtain is dropped on these horrors, and Massena is regarded merely as a

military leader, his retreat, perhaps, did him as much honour as any of the great achievements which formerly had made his name famous. If he had been rightly called Fortune's favourite, he now showed that his reputation did not depend on her smile, but could be maintained by his own talents, while she shone on other banners. In retreating through the north of Portugal, a rugged and mountainous country, he was followed by Lord Wellington, who allowed him not a moment's respite. The movements of the troops, to those who understood, and had the calmness to consider them, were as regular consequences of each other, as occur in the game of chess.[85]

The French were repeatedly seen drawn up on ground where it seemed impossible to dislodge them; and as often the bayonets of a British column, which had marched by some distant route, were observed twinkling in the direction of their flank, intimating that their line was about to be turned. But this was only the signal for Massena to recommence his retreat, which he did before the English troops could come up; nor did he fail again to halt where opportunity offered, until again dislodged by his sagacious and persevering pursuer. At length the French were fairly driven out of the Portuguese territory, excepting the garrison in the frontier town of Almeida, of which Lord Wellington formed first the blockade, and afterwards the siege.

[85] Savary, tom. iii., part i., p. 53.

BATTLE OF FUENTES D'ONORO

So soon as he escaped from the limits of Portugal, Massena hastened to draw together such reinforcements as he could obtain in Castile, collected once more a large force, and within about a fortnight after he had effected his retreat, resumed the offensive, with the view of relieving Almeida, which was the sole trophy remaining to show his triumphant advance in the preceding season. Lord Wellington did not refuse the battle, which took place on the 5th of May, near Fuentes d'Onoro. The conflict was well disputed, but the French general sustained a defeat, notwithstanding his superiority of numbers, and particularly of cavalry. He then retreated from the Portuguese frontier, having previously sent orders for the evacuation of Almeida by the garrison, which the French commandant executed with much dexterity.[86]

On the more southern frontier of Portugal, Lord Beresford fought also a dreadful and sanguinary battle. The action was in some measure indecisive, but Soult, who commanded the French, failed in obtaining such a success as enabled him to accomplish his object, which was the raising of the siege of

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[86] "The Emperor recalled Massena, who was quite exhausted by fatigue, and unable to bestow that attention to his troops which was necessary for restoring them to their former state of efficiency; and he selected for his successor in the command Marshal Marmont, the Governor of Illyria." – Savary, tom. iii., part i., p. 54.

Badajos. In Portugal, therefore, and along its frontiers, the British had been uniformly successful, and their countrymen at home began once more to open their ears to the suggestions of hope and courage.

Cadiz, also, the remaining bulwark of the patriots, had been witness to a splendid action. General Graham, with a body of British troops, had sallied out from the garrison in March 1811, and obtained a victory upon the heights of Barossa, which, had he been properly seconded by the Spanish General Lapena, would have been productive of a serious influence upon the events of the siege; and which, even though it remained imperfect, gave heart and confidence to the besieged, and struck a perpetual damp into the besiegers, who found themselves bearded in their own position. There had been much fighting through Spain with various results. But if we dare venture to use such an emblem, the bush, though burning, was not consumed, and Spain continued that sort of general resistance which seemed to begin after all usual means of regular opposition had failed, as Nature often musters her strength to combat a disease which the medical assistants have pronounced mortal.

Catalonia, though her strongholds were lost, continued, under the command of De Lacy and D'Eroles, to gain occasional advantages over the enemy; and Spain saw Figueras, one of her strongest fortresses, recovered by the bold stratagem of Rovira, a doctor of divinity, and commander of a guerilla party. Being instantly besieged by the French, and ill supplied with provisions,

the place was indeed speedily regained; but the possibility of its being taken, was, to the peculiarly tenacious spirit of the Spaniards, more encouraging than its recapture was matter of dismay.

But chiefly the auxiliary British, with the Portuguese, who, trained by the care of Lord Beresford, were fit to sustain their part in line by the side of their allies, showed that they were conducted in a different spirit from that which made their leaders in former expeditions stand with one foot on sea and one on land, never venturing from the sight of the ocean, as if they led amphibious creatures, who required the use of both elements to secure their existence; and the scheme of whose campaign was to rout and repel, as they best could, the attacks of the enemy, but seldom to venture upon anticipating or disconcerting his plans. To protect Galicia, for example, when invaded by the French, Lord Wellington, though with a much inferior army than he was well aware could be brought against him, formed the blockade of Ciudad Rodrigo; thus compelling the enemy to desist from their proposed attempt on that province, and to concentrate their forces for the relief of that important place. Such a concentration could not, in the condition of the French armies, be effected without much disadvantage. It afforded breathing space for all the guerillas, and an opportunity, which they never neglected, of acting with their usual courage and sagacity against small parties and convoys of the French, as well as that of seizing upon any posts which the enemy might have been obliged to leave

imperfectly defended. And when the French had collected their whole force to overwhelm the British general and his forces, Marmont had the mortification to see the former withdraw from the presence of a superior enemy, with as much calmness and security as if marching through a peaceful country.

Nothing remained for the French general, save to detail in the pages of the *Moniteur*, what must have been the fate of the English but for their hasty and precipitate flight, when the well-concerted and boldly-executed enterprise of Arroyo-Molinos, convinced him to his cost that a retreat was no rout. In this village upwards of 1400 French were taken prisoners, at a moment when they least expected to be attacked. This little action showed a spirit of hazard, a disposition to assume the offensive, which the French did not expect from the British forces; and they were, for the first time, foiled in their own military qualities of vigilance, enterprise, and activity. In Britain, also, the nation perceived that their army showed the same courage and the same superiority, which had been considered as the exclusive property of their gallant sailors. The French were defeated under the rock of Gibraltar by the Spanish General Ballasteros, and their general, Godinet, blew out his own brains, rather than face the account, to which Soult, his commander-in-chief, was about to summon him. Tarifa, in the same quarter, was defended successfully by a garrison of mingled Spaniards and British, and the French were computed to have lost before it about two thousand five hundred men.

On the other hand, the French discipline continued to render them superior over the patriots, wherever the latter could be brought to face them in any thing resembling a pitched battle. Thus Blake, after a gallant action, was totally defeated near Murviedro, and that town itself fell into possession of the enemy. A more severe consequence of the battle of Ocana, as that disastrous action was termed, was the capture of Valencia, where Blake and the remainder of his army were made prisoners.

But amid those vicissitudes of good or bad fortune, Spain continued to Buonaparte the same harassing and exhausting undertaking, which it had been almost from the commencement. Sickness and want made more ravages amongst the French troops than the sword of the enemy, though that did not lie idle. Many of the districts are unhealthy to strangers; but of these, as well as others, it was necessary for the invaders to retain possession. There, while numerous deaths happened among the troops, the guerillas watched the remnant, until sickness and fatigue had reduced the garrisons to a number insufficient for defence, and then pounced upon them like birds of prey on a fallen animal, upon whom they have been long in attendance.

JOSEPH WISHES TO ABDICATE

Besides, disunion continued to reign among the French generals. Joseph, although in point of power the very shadow of what a king ought to be, had spirit enough to resent the

condition in which he was placed amid the haughty military chiefs who acknowledged no superior beside the Emperor, and listened to no commands save those emanating from Paris. He wrote to his brother a letter, accompanying a formal abdication of the throne of Spain, unless he was to be placed in more complete authority than even the orders of Napoleon himself had hitherto enabled him to attain. But the prospect of a northern war approaching nearer and nearer, Napoleon was induced to postpone his brother's request, although so pressingly urged, and Spain was in some measure left to its fate during the still more urgent events of the Russian campaign.[87]

[87] Fouché, tom. ii., p. 71.

CHAPTER LV

Retrospect of the causes leading to the Rupture with Russia – originate in the Treaty of Tilsit – Russia's alleged Reasons of Complaint – Arguments of Napoleon's Counsellors against War with Russia – Fouché is against the War – Presents a Memorial to Napoleon upon the Subject – His Answer – Napoleon's Views in favour of the War, as urged to his various Advisers.

RUPTURE WITH RUSSIA

We are now approaching the verge of that fated year, when Fortune, hitherto unwearied in her partiality towards Napoleon, turned first upon himself, personally, a clouded and stormy aspect. Losses he had sustained both by land and sea, but he could still remark, as when he first heard of the defeat at Trafalgar – "I was not there – I could not be every where at once." But he was soon to experience misfortunes, to the narrative of which he could not apply this proud commentary. The reader must be first put in remembrance of the causes of the incipient quarrel betwixt the empire of France and that of Russia.

Notwithstanding the subsequent personal intimacy which took place betwixt the two sovereigns, and which for five years

prevented the springing up of any enmity betwixt Alexander and Napoleon, the seeds of that quarrel were, nevertheless, to be found in the treaty of pacification of Tilsit itself.[88] Russia, lying remote from aggression in every other part of her immense territory, is open to injury on that important western frontier by which she is united with Europe, and in those possessions by virtue of which she claims to be a member of the European republic. The partition of Poland, unjust as it was in every point of view, was a measure of far greater importance to Russia than either to Austria or Prussia; for, while that state possessed its former semi-barbarous and stormy independence, it lay interposed in a great measure betwixt Russia and the rest of Europe, or, in other words, betwixt her and the civilized world. Any revolution which might restore Poland to the independence, for which the inhabitants had not ceased to sigh, would have effectually thrust the Czar back upon his forests, destroyed his interest and influence in European affairs, and reduced him comparatively to the rank of an Asiatic sovereign. This liberation of their country, and the reunion of its dismembered provinces under a national constitution, was what the Poles expected from Buonaparte. For this they crowded to his standard after the battle of Jena; and although he was too cautious to promise any thing explicitly concerning the restoration of Poland to its rank among nations, yet most of his measures indicated a future purpose of accomplishing that work. Thus, when those Polish provinces

[88] Fouché, tom. ii., p. 71.

which had fallen to the portion of Prussia, were formed into the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, as an independent principality, and the sovereignty was conferred, not without a secret meaning, on the King of Saxony, a descendant of the ancient monarchs of Poland, what could this be supposed to indicate, save the commencement of an independent state, to which might be added, as opportunity occurred, the remaining districts of Poland which had been seized upon by Austria and Russia? "To what purpose," asked those statesmen, who belonged to the old Russian or anti-Gallican party in the empire, "are those stipulations for a free military road and passage of troops from Saxony to Warsaw and its territory, through Silesia, if it is not that France may preserve the means of throwing an overpowering force into the duchy, so soon as it shall be her pleasure to undo the work of the sage Catherine, by depriving Russia of those rich Polish provinces, which her policy had added to the empire? Wherefore," asked the same persons, "should there have been a special article in the same treaty of Tilsit, that France should retain Dantzic until a maritime peace, unless it was to serve as a place of arms in the event of a new war with Russia, the probability of which Napoleon, therefore, must certainly have calculated upon, even at the very moment when he cultivated such close personal intimacy with the Emperor Alexander?"

These suspicions were considerably increased by the articles of peace concluded with Austria at Schoenbrun. By that treaty all Western Galicia, together with the city of Cracow, and

other territories, were disjoined from Austria, and added to the dukedom of Warsaw, marking, it was supposed, still farther, the intention of Napoleon, at one time or another, to restore in its integrity the ancient kingdom of Poland, of which Russia alone now held the full share allotted to her by the partition treaties.

Other causes led to the same conclusion. The old Russians, a numerous and strong party in the empire, which comprehended the greater part of the large landholders, felt, as they had done under the Emperor Paul, much distress, national and personal, from the interruption of the British trade by Buonaparte's Continental System. Their timber, their pitch, their potash, their hemp, and other bulky and weighty commodities, the chief produce of their estates, for which the British had been ready customers, remained on their hands, while they were deprived of the colonial produce and manufactures of Britain, which they were wont to receive in exchange for those articles, with mutual profit and convenience to both parties. It was in vain that, to reconcile them to this state of interdiction, they saw in the speeches and decrees of Buonaparte, tirades about the freedom of the seas, and the maritime tyranny of England. It seemed an ill-omened species of liberation, which began by the destruction of their commerce and impoverishment of their estates; and the Russian Boyards could no more comprehend the declamation of Buonaparte against the English, than the millers of the Ebro could be made to understand the denunciation of Don Quixote against their customers. These magnates only saw that

the Ruler of France wished them to submit to great commercial distress and inconvenience, in order to accelerate his plan of ruining Great Britain, after which achievement he might find it a more easy undertaking to destroy their own natural importance as a European power, by re-establishing Poland, and resuming the fertile provinces on the western boundary; thus leading the Russian Cabinet, if the French interest should remain paramount there, by a very disadvantageous road to a still more disastrous conclusion.

There was, besides, spread through the Russian nation generally, a sense that France was treating their Emperor rather on the footing of an inferior. It is a thing entirely unknown in diplomacy, that one government should pretend a right to dictate to another who is upon terms of equality, the conditions on which she should conduct her commerce; and the assuming such a right, seconded by threatening language in case of non-compliance, has been always held a legitimate cause of war. Indeed, the opinion that the French league disgraced the Russian nation, plunged their country into embarrassments, and was likely to occasion still farther misfortunes to them, became so general, that the Emperor must have paid some attention to the wishes of his people, even if his own friendship with Buonaparte had not been cooled by late occurrences.

The alliance with Austria was of a character calculated to alarm Alexander. Russia and Austria, though they had a common interest to withstand the overpowering strength of Buonaparte,

had been in ordinary times always rivals, and sometimes enemies. It was the interference of Austria, which, upon several occasions, checked the progress of the Russians in Turkey, and it was Austria also which formed a barrier against the increase of their power in the south of Europe. The family connexion, therefore, formed by Buonaparte with the House of Hapsburg, made him still more formidable to Russia, as likely to embrace the quarrels and forward the pretensions of that power against the Czar, even if France herself should have none to discuss with him.

But there was no need to have recourse to remote causes of suspicion. Russia had, and must always have had, direct and immediate cause of jealousy, while France or her Emperor claimed the permanent right of thinking and deciding for her, as well as other nations, in the relations of commerce and others, in which every independent state is most desirous of exercising the right of deliberating for herself. This was the true state of the case. To remain the ally of Buonaparte, Alexander must have become his vassal; to attempt to be independent of him, was to make him his enemy; and it can be no wonder that a sovereign so proud and powerful as the Czar, chose rather to stand the hazard of battle, than diminish the lustre, or compromise the independence, of his ancient crown.

The time, too, for resistance, seemed as favourable as Russia could ever expect. The war of Spain, though chequered in its fortune, was in no respect near a sudden end. It occupied 250,000 of the best and oldest French troops; demanded also an immense

expenditure, and diminished, of course, the power of the French Emperor to carry on the war on the frontiers of Russia. A conclusion of these wasting hostilities would have rendered him far more formidable with respect to the quality, as well as the number, of his disposable forces, and it seemed the interest of Russia not to wait till that period should arrive.

The same arguments which recommended to Russia to choose the immediate moment for resisting the extravagant pretensions of France, ought, in point of prudence, to have induced Napoleon to desist from urging such pretensions, and to avoid the voluntarily engaging in two wars at the same time, both of a character decidedly national, and to only one of which he could give the influence of his own talents and his own presence. His best and wisest generals, whom he consulted, or, to speak more properly, to whom he opened his purpose, used various arguments to induce him to alter, or at least defer his resolution. He himself hesitated for more than a year, and was repeatedly upon the point of settling with Russia the grounds of disagreement betwixt them upon amicable terms.

COMPLAINTS OF THE CZAR

The reasons of complaint, on the part of the Czar, were four in number.

I. The alarm given to Russia by the extension of the grand duchy of Warsaw by the treaty of Schoenbrun, as if

it were destined to be the central part of an independent state, or kingdom, in Poland, to which those provinces of that dismembered country, which had become part of Russia, were at some convenient time to be united. On this point the Czar demanded an explicit engagement, on the part of the French Emperor, that the kingdom of Poland should not be again established. Napoleon declined this form of guarantee, as it seemed to engage him to warrant Russia against an event which might happen without his co-operation; but he offered to pledge himself that he would not favour any enterprise which should, directly or indirectly, lead to the re-establishment of Poland as an independent state. This modified acquiescence in what was required by Russia fell considerably short of what the Czar wished; for the stipulation, as at first worded, would have amounted to an engagement on the part of France to join in opposing any step towards Polish independence; whereas, according to the modification which it received at Paris, it only implied that France should remain neuter if such an attempt should take place.

II. The wrong done by including the duchy of Oldenburg, though guaranteed by the treaty of Tilsit to its prince, the Czar's near relative and ally, in the territory annexed to France, admitted of being compensated by an indemnification. But Russia desired that this indemnification should be either the city of Dantzic, or some equally important territory, on the frontiers of the grand duchy of Warsaw, which might offer an additional guarantee

against the apprehended enlargement of that state. France would not listen to this, though she did not object to compensation elsewhere.

III. The third point in question, was the degree to which the Russian commerce with England was to be restricted. Napoleon proposed to grant some relaxation on the occasions where the produce of Russia was exported in exchange for that of England, to be effected by the way of mutual licenses.

IV. It was proposed to revise the Russian tariff of 1810, so as, without injuring the interests of Russia, it might relax the heavy duties imposed on the objects of French commerce.

From this statement, which comprehends the last basis on which Napoleon expressed himself willing to treat, it is quite evident, that had there not been a deeper feeling of jealousy and animosity betwixt the two Emperors, than those expressed in the subjects of actual debate betwixt them, these might have been accommodated in an amicable way. But as it was impossible for Napoleon to endure being called to account, like a sovereign of the second rate, or at least in the tone of an equal, by the Emperor of Russia; so the latter, more and more alarmed by the motions of the French armies, which were advancing into Pomerania, could not persuade himself, that, in agreeing to admit the present grounds of complaint, Napoleon meant more than to postpone the fatal struggle for superiority, until he should find a convenient time to commence it with a more absolute prospect of success.

In the meantime, and ere the negotiations were finally broken

off, Buonaparte's counsellors urged him with as much argument as they dared, to desist from running the hazard of an enterprise so remote, so hazardous, and so little called for. They contended, that no French interest, and no national point of honour, were involved in the disagreement which had arisen. The principles upon which the points of dispute might be settled, being in a manner agreed upon, they argued that their master should stop in their military preparations. To march an army into Prussia, and to call forth the Prussians as auxiliaries, would, they contended, be using measures towards Russia, which could not but bring on the war which they anxiously deprecated. To submit to menaces supported by demonstrations of open force, would be destructive of the influence of Russia, both at home and abroad. She could not be expected to give way without a struggle.

WAR WITH RUSSIA

These advisers allowed, that a case might be conceived for justifying an exertion to destroy the power of Russia, a case arising out of the transactions between France and the other states of Europe, and out of the apprehension that these states, aggrieved and irritated by the conduct of France, might be tempted to seek a leader, patron, and protector, in the Emperor Alexander. But this extremity, they alleged, could not exist so long as France had the means of avoiding a perilous war, by a mitigation of her policy towards her vassals and auxiliaries; for

if the states whose revolt (so to call it) was apprehended, could be reconciled to France by a more lenient course of measures to be adopted towards them, they would lose all temptation to fly to Russia as a protector. In such case the power of Russia would no longer give jealousy to France, or compel her to rush to a dubious conflict, for the purpose of diminishing an influence which could not then become dangerous to the southern empire, by depriving France of her clientage.

It might have been added, though it could not be so broadly spoken out, that in this point of view nothing would have been more easy for France, than to modify or soften her line of policy in favour of the inferior states, in whose favour the Russian interference was expected or apprehended. That policy had uniformly been a system of insult and menace. The influence which France had gained in Europe grew less out of treaty than fear, founded on the recollection of former wars. All the states of Germany felt the melancholy consequences of the existence of despotic power vested in men, who, like Napoleon himself, and the military governors whom he employed, were new to the exercise and enjoyment of their authority; and, on the other hand, the French Emperor and his satellites felt, towards the people of the conquered, or subjected states, the constant apprehension which a conscious sense of injustice produces in the minds of oppressors, namely, that the oppressed only watch for a safe opportunity to turn against them. There was, therefore, no French interest, or even point of honour, which called on Napoleon

to make war on Alexander; and the temptation seems to have amounted solely to the desire on Napoleon's part to fight a great battle – to gain a great victory – to occupy, with his victorious army, another great capital – and, in fine, to subject to his arms the power of Russia, which, of all the states on the continent, remained the only one that could be properly termed independent of France.

It was in this light that the question of peace and war was viewed by the French politicians of the day; and it is curious to observe, in the reports we have of their arguments, the total absence of principle which they display in the examination of it. They dwell on the difficulty of Napoleon's undertaking, upon its dangers, upon its expense, upon the slender prospect of any remuneration by the usual modes of confiscation, plunder, or levy of contributions. They enlarge, too, upon the little probability there was that success in the intended war would bring to a conclusion the disastrous contest in Spain; and all these various arguments are insinuated or urged with more or less vehemence, according to the character, the station, or the degree of intimacy with Napoleon, of the counsellor who ventured to use the topics. But among his advisers, none that we read or hear of, had the open and manly courage to ask, Where was the justice of this attack upon Russia? What had she done to merit it? The Emperors were friends by the treaty of Tilsit, confirmed by personal intimacy and the closest intercourse at Erfurt. How had they ceased to be such? What had happened

since that period to place Russia, then the friend and confessed equal of France, in the situation of a subordinate and tributary state? On what pretence did Napoleon confiscate to his own use the duchy of Oldenburg, acknowledged as the property of Alexander's brother-in-law, by an express article in the treaty of Tilsit? By what just right could he condemn the Russian nation to all the distresses of his Anti-commercial System, while he allowed them to be a free and independent state? – Above all, while he considered them as a sovereign and a people entitled to be treated with the usual respect due between powers that are connected by friendly treaties, with what pretence of justice, or even decency, could he proceed to enforce claims so unfounded in themselves, by introducing his own forces on their frontier, and arming their neighbours against them for the same purpose? Of these pleas, in moral justice, there was not a word urged; nor was silence wonderful on this fruitful topic, since to insist upon it would have been to strike at the fundamental principle of Buonaparte's policy, which was, never to neglect a present advantage for the sake of observing a general principle. "Let us hear of no general principles," said Buonaparte's favourite minister of the period. "Ours is a government not regulated by theory, but by emerging circumstances."

FOUCHÉ'S MEMORIAL

We ought not to omit to mention that Fouché, among others,

took up a testimony against the Russian war. He had been permitted to return to his chateau of Ferrières, near Paris, under the apology that the air of Italy did not agree with his constitution. But Napoleon distrusted him, and the police were commissioned to watch with the utmost accuracy the proceedings of their late master. Fouché was well aware of this; and, desirous that his remonstrance with the Emperor should have all the force of an unexpected argument, he shut himself up in the strictest seclusion while engaged in composing a production, which perhaps he hoped might be a means of recalling him to recollection, if not to favour.[89]

In an able and eloquent memorial, Fouché reminded Buonaparte, that he was already the absolute master of the finest empire the world had ever seen; and that all the lessons of history went to demonstrate the impossibility of attaining universal monarchy. The French empire had arrived, according to the reasoning of this able statesman, at that point when its ruler should rather think of securing and consolidating his present acquisitions, than of achieving farther conquests, since, whatever his empire might acquire in extent, it was sure to lose in solidity. Fouché stated the extent of the country which Napoleon was about to invade, the poverty of the soil, the rigour of the climate, and the distance which each fresh victory must remove him from his resources, annoyed as his communications were sure to be by nations of Cossacks and Tartars. He implored the Emperor

[89] Fouché, tom. ii., p. 80.

to remember the fate of Charles XII. of Sweden. "If that warlike monarch," he said, "had not, like Napoleon, half Europe in arms at his back, neither had his opponent, the Czar Peter, four hundred thousand soldiers, and fifty thousand Cossacks. The invader, it was stated, would have against him the dislike of the higher ranks, the fanaticism of the peasantry, the exertions of soldiers accustomed to the severity of the climate. There were, besides, to be dreaded, in case of the slightest reverse, the intrigues of the English, the fickleness of his continental allies, and even the awakening of discontent and conspiracy in France itself, should an idea generally arise, that he was sacrificing the welfare of the state to the insatiable desire of fresh enterprises and distant conquests."

Fouché presented himself at the Tuileries, and requested an audience of the Emperor, hoping, doubtless, that the unexpected circumstance of his appearing there, and the reasoning in his memorial, would excite Napoleon's attention. To his great surprise, Napoleon, with an air of easy indifference, began the audience. "I am no stranger, Monsieur le Duc, to your errand here. You have a memorial to present me – give it me; I will read it, though I know already its contents. The war with Russia is not more agreeable to you than that of Spain." – "Your Imperial Majesty will pardon my having ventured to offer some observations on this important crisis?" said the statesman, astonished to find himself anticipated, when he believed he had laboured in the most absolute secrecy.

"It is no crisis," resumed Napoleon; "merely a war of a character entirely political. Spain will fall when I have annihilated the English influence at St. Petersburgh. I have 800,000 men; and to one who has such an army, Europe is but an old prostitute, who must obey his pleasure. Was it not yourself who told me that the word *impossible* was not good French? I regulate my conduct more on the opinion of my army than the sentiments of you grandees, who are become too rich; and while you pretend anxiety for me, only are apprehensive of the general confusion which would follow my death. Don't disquiet yourself, but consider the Russian war as a wise measure, demanded by the true interests of France, and the general security. Am I to blame, because the great degree of power I have already attained forces me to assume the dictatorship of the world? My destiny is not yet accomplished – my present situation is but a sketch of a picture which I must finish. There must be one universal European code, one court of appeal. The same money, the same weights and measures, the same laws, must have currency through Europe. I must make one nation out of all the European states, and Paris must be the capital of the world. At present you no longer serve me well, because you think my affairs are in danger; but before a year is over you will assist me with the same zeal and ardour as at the periods of Marengo and Austerlitz. You will see more than all this – it is I who assure you of it. Adieu, Monsieur le Duc. Do not play the disgraced courtier, or the captious critic of public affairs; and be so good as to put a little confidence in

your Emperor."[90]

He then turned his back on Fouché, and left him to reflect by what means he, who so well knew all the machinations of the police, could himself have become exposed to their universal vigilance, with some cause, perhaps, to rejoice, that his secret employment, though unpleasing to Buonaparte, was not of a character to attract punishment as well as animadversion.[91]

RUPTURE WITH RUSSIA

As Napoleon discountenanced and bore down the remonstrances of the subtle Fouché, so he represented to his various advisers the war upon which he was unalterably determined, in the light most proper to bring them over to his own opinion. To the army in general the mere name of war was in itself a sufficient recommendation. It comprehended preferment, employment, plunder, distinction, and pensions. To the generals, it afforded mareschals' batons; to the mareschals,

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[90] Mémoires de Fouché, tom. ii., p. 90.

[91] Fouché afterwards remembered, that an individual in his neighbourhood, mayor of a municipality, and whom he himself had employed in matters of police, had one morning intruded rather hastily on him in his study, under pretext of pleading the cause of a distressed tenant; and concluded, that while he was searching for the papers concerning his visitor's ostensible business, Mr. Mayor had an opportunity to glance at the sheets on his scrutoire, where the repetition of V. M. I. and R. M. (intimating your Imperial and Royal Majesty,) betrayed that he was drawing up a memorial to Napoleon, and a word or two of the context explained its purport.

crowns and sceptres; to the civilians he urged, as to Fouché, that it was a war of policy – of necessity – the last act in the drama, but indispensably requisite to conclude the whole; to his most intimate friends he expressed his conviction that his fortune could not stand still – that it was founded on public opinion – and that, if he did not continue to advance, he must necessarily retrograde. To his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, he used a still more extraordinary argument. This prelate, a devout Catholic, had begun to have compunction about his nephew's behaviour towards the Pope; and these sentiments mingled like an ominous feeling with the alarms excited by the risks of this tremendous undertaking. With more than usual freedom, he conjured his kinsman to abstain from tempting Providence. He entreated him not to defy heaven and earth, the wrath of man, and the fury of the elements, at the same time; and expressed his apprehension that he must at length sink under the weight of the enmity which he incurred daily.[92] The only answer which Buonaparte vouchsafed, was to lead the cardinal to the window, and, opening the casement, and pointing upwards, to ask him, "If he saw yonder star?" – "No, Sire," answered the astonished cardinal. "But I see it," answered Buonaparte; and turned from his relation as if he had fully confuted his arguments.

[92] It is not unworthy of notice, that the Emperor's mother (Madame Mère, as she was termed) always expressed a presentiment, that the fortunes of her family, splendid as they were, would be altered before her death; and when ridiculed by her children for her frugal disposition, she used to allege she was saving money for them in their distress; and in fact she lived to apply her boards to that purpose. – S.

This speech might admit of two meanings; either that Napoleon wished in this manner to express that his own powers of penetration were superior to those of the cardinal, or it might have reference to a certain superstitious confidence in his predestined good fortune, which, we have already observed, he was known to entertain. But as it was not Napoleon's fashion, whatever reliance he might place on such auguries, to neglect any means of ensuring success within his power, we are next to inquire what political measures he had taken to carry on the proposed Russian war to advantage.

CHAPTER LVI

Allies on whose assistance Buonaparte might count – Causes which alienated from him the Prince-Royal of Sweden – who signs a Treaty with Russia – Delicate situation of the King of Prussia, whose alliance the Emperor Alexander on that account declines – A Treaty with France dictated to Prussia – Relations between Austria and France – in order to preserve them Buonaparte is obliged to come under an engagement not to revolutionize Poland – His error of policy in neglecting to cultivate the alliance of the Porte – Amount of Buonaparte's Army – Levies for the protection of France in the Emperor's absence – Storming of Ciudad Rodrigo by Lord Wellington – Buonaparte makes overtures of Peace to Lord Castlereagh – The Correspondence broken off – Ultimatum of Russia rejected – Napoleon sets out from Paris, 9th May, 1812 – and meets the Sovereigns his allies at Dresden – A last attempt of Napoleon to negotiate with Alexander proves unsuccessful.

The several powers, who might in their different degrees of strength aid or impede the last and most daring of Buonaparte's undertakings, were – Denmark, Saxony, Sweden, and Prussia, in the north of Europe; in the south, Austria, and the Turkish empire.

Denmark and Saxony were both devoted to the cause of France; but the former power, who had made over to Napoleon

her seamen, had no land troops to spare for his assistance. The few that she had on foot were scarce sufficient to protect her against any enterprise of Sweden or England.

Saxony was also the firm friend of Napoleon, who had enlarged her dominions, and changed her ruler's electoral bonnet into a royal crown. It is true, if Poland was to be regenerated, as seemed to be the natural consequence of a war with Russia, the King of Saxony must have reckoned upon losing his ducal interest in the grand duchy of Warsaw. But from this he derived little present advantage; and as he was secure of indemnification, the apprehension of that loss did not prevent him from following the banner of Napoleon, with the same good-will as ever.

PRINCE-ROYAL OF SWEDEN

Very different was the condition of Sweden. That kingdom, since the reign of Francis I., had been the ancient and natural ally of France against Russia; in acting against which last power her local advantages afforded great facility. Sweden was also governed at the moment by a Frenchman. But the Prince-Royal had received more injuries and affronts than favours at the hands of the Emperor Napoleon; and the violent policy which the latter was in the habit of using towards those of his allies and neighbours, who did not submit unresistingly to all his demands, had alienated from France the hearts of the Swedes, and from his own person the friendship of his old companion in arms. We

have mentioned the mode of argument, or rather declamation, which he had used to compel the Swedes into a total exclusion of English manufactures, contrary to a reservation made in a recent treaty, by which the Swedes had retained the right of importing colonial goods and salt, while consenting to exclude British commodities generally. With the same urgency and menaces, he had compelled the Crown Prince to declare war against Britain.

But although Napoleon succeeded in both points, he could not oblige Britain to treat Sweden as a belligerent power. On the contrary, England seemed not in the slightest degree to alter the relations of amity to a state whom she considered as having adopted the attitude of an enemy towards her, merely from compulsion too powerful to be resisted. This moderation on the part of Great Britain did not prevent Sweden from feeling all the evils of the anti-social system of Buonaparte. Her commerce was reduced to a mere coasting trade, and her vessels skulked from port to port, exposed to the depredations of Danish and French privateers, who seized upon and confiscated upwards of fifty Swedish ships, under pretence of enforcing the non-intercourse system. The Prince-Royal applied for redress at the court of Paris; but although vague promises were given, yet neither were the acts of piracy discontinued, nor any amends made for those daily committed. The Baron Alquier, who was the French envoy at Stockholm, used, according to Bernadotte's expression, the language of a Roman proconsul, without remembering that he

did not speak to slaves.[93]

When asked, for example, to state categorically what Napoleon expected from Sweden, and what he proposed to grant her in return, Alquier answered, that "the Emperor expected from Sweden compliance in every point conformable to his system; after which it would be time enough to inquire into what his Imperial Majesty might be disposed to do in favour of Sweden."

On another occasion, the French envoy had the assurance to decline farther intercourse with the Crown Prince on the subject of his mission, and to desire that some other person might be appointed to communicate with him. There can be no doubt, that, in this singular course of diplomacy, Baron Alquier obeyed his master's instructions, who was determined to treat the Prince-Royal of Sweden, emancipated as he was from his allegiance to France by letters-patent from the Imperial Chancery, as if he had still been his subject, and serving in his armies. Napoleon went so far as to say, before his courtiers, that he had a mind to make Bernadotte finish his lessons in the Swedish language in the Castle of Vincennes. It is even said, that the Emperor thought seriously of putting this threat into execution, and that a plot was actually formed to seize the person of the Prince-Royal, putting him on board a vessel, and bringing him prisoner to France. But he escaped this danger by the information of an officer named Salazar, formerly an aide-de-camp of Marmont,

[93] Meredith's Memorials of Charles John, King of Sweden and Norway, p. 25.

who conveyed to the Prince timely information of the outrage which was intended.[94]

With so many causes of mutual animosity between France and Sweden, all arising out of the impolitic vehemence by which Buonaparte endeavoured to drive, rather than lead, the Prince-Royal into the measures he desired, it can hardly be supposed that the last would neglect any opportunity to assert his independence, and his resolution not to submit to a superiority so degrading in itself, and so ungraciously and even unmercifully exercised.

Such was the state of matters betwixt the two countries, when, from the approaching war with Russia, the assistance of Sweden became essential to France. But what bait could Napoleon hold out to bring back an alienated friend? He might, indeed, offer to assist Bernadotte in regaining the province of Finland, which, by the connivance of Napoleon, had been conquered by Russia. But the Crown Prince concluded, that, to enter into a war with the view of recovering Finland, would occasion expenses which the country could not afford, and which the acquisition of Finland could not compensate, even supposing it sure to be accomplished. Besides, the repossession of Finland would engage Sweden in perpetual disputes with Russia, whereas the two nations, separated by the Gulf of Bothnia, had at present no cause of difference. On the other hand, by siding with Russia in the great contest which was impending, Sweden might expect the assistance of that empire, as well as of Britain, to achieve from

[94] See Appendix to this Volume, No. I.

Denmark, the ally of France, the conquest of her kingdom of Norway, which, in its geographical situation, lay so conveniently for Sweden, and afforded her the whole range of sea-coast along the western shores of Scandinavia. It is said that the Prince-Royal offered to Napoleon to enter into a league, offensive and defensive, with France, providing Norway as well as Finland were added to his dominions; but the Emperor rejected the terms with disdain. The whole alleged negotiation, however, has been disputed and denied.[95]

So soon as Bonaparte found there was no hope of conciliating the Prince-Royal, which indeed he scarce seems seriously to have attempted, he proceeded, without waiting for the ceremony of declaring war, to strike against Sweden the most severe, or rather the only blow, in his power. In January 1812, General Davoust marched into Swedish Pomerania, the only possession of Sweden south of the Baltic sea, seized upon the country and its capital, and proceeded to menace the military occupation of Prussia, so far as that country was not already in the hands of France.

Receiving no satisfaction for this aggression, Sweden, 24th March, 1812, signed a treaty with Russia, declaring war against France, and proposing a diversion, with a joint force of 25 or 30,000 Swedes, together with 15 or 20,000 Russians, upon some point of Germany. And the Emperor of Russia became bound, either by negotiation or military co-operation, to unite the kingdom of Norway to that of Sweden, and to hold the

[95] See Meredith's Memorials, p. 38.

Russian army, which was at present in Finland, as disposable for that purpose. Thus was the force of Sweden, rendered yet more considerable by the high military character of its present chief, thrown into the scale against France, to whom, but for the passionate and impolitic character of Napoleon's proceedings towards her, she might, in all probability, have remained the same useful and faithful ally which she had been since the alliance of Francis I. with Gustavus Vasa.

No reason can be discovered for insulting Sweden at the precise moment when her co-operation would have been so useful, excepting the animosity of Napoleon against a prince, whom he regarded as an ancient rival before the 18th Brumaire, and now as a contumacious and rebellious vassal. A due regard to the honour and interest of France would have induced him to lay aside such personal considerations. But this does not appear to have been in Buonaparte's nature, who, if he remembered benefits, had also a tenacious recollection of enmities, said to be peculiar to the natives of Corsica. When this feeling obtained the ascendency, he was too apt to sacrifice his policy to his spleen.

PRUSSIA

The situation of the King of Prussia, at the breaking out of the dispute between the empires of France and Russia, was truly embarrassing. His position lying betwixt the contending parties, rendered neutrality almost impossible; and if he took

up arms, it was a matter of distracting doubt on which side he ought to employ them. Oppressed by French exactions and French garrisons; instigated, besides, by the secret influence of the Tugendbund, the people of Prussia were almost unanimous in their eager wish to seize the sword against France, nor was the King less desirous to redeem the independence, and revenge the sufferings, of his kingdom. The recollections of an amiable and beloved Queen, who had died in the prime of life, heart-broken with the distresses of her country, with her hands locked in those of her husband, called also for revenge on France, which had insulted her when living, and slandered her when dead.[96]

Accordingly it is now well understood, that the first impulse of the King of Prussia's mind was to throw himself into the arms of Russia, and offer, should it cost him his life and crown, to take share in the war as his faithful ally. But the Emperor Alexander was sensible that, in accepting this offered devotion, he would come under an obligation to protect Prussia in case of those reverses, which might be almost reckoned on as likely to occur in the early part of the campaign. The strongest fortresses in Prussia were in the hands of the French, the army of the

[96] In the *Moniteur*, a scandalous intrigue was repeatedly alluded to as existing between this princess and the Emperor Alexander, and both to M. Las Cases, and to others; Buonaparte affirmed the same personally; telling, at the same time, as a good jest, that he himself had kept the King of Prussia out of the way, to provide the lovers a stolen meeting [vol. ii., p. 213.] These averments are so inconsistent with the character universally assigned to this high-spirited and unhappy princess, that we have no hesitation to assign them directly to calumny; a weapon which Napoleon never disdained to wield, whether in private or national controversy. – S.

King did not amount to more than 40,000 men, and there was no time to arm or organise the national forces. In order to form a junction with these 40,000 men, or as many of them as could be collected, it would be necessary that Alexander should precipitate the war, and march a strong army into Silesia, upon which the Prussians might rally. But such an army, when it had attained its object, must have had in front the whole forces of France, Saxony, and the Confederacy of the Rhine, while the hostile troops of the grand duchy of Warsaw, with probably a body of Austrian auxiliaries, would have been in their rear. This premature movement in advance, would have resembled the conduct of Austria in the unhappy campaigns of 1805 and 1809; in both of which she precipitated her armies into Bavaria, in hopes of acquiring allies, but only exposed them to the decisive defeats of Ulm and Eckmühl. It would also have been like the equally ill-omened advance of the Prussian army in 1806, when hurrying forward to compel Saxony to join him, the Duke of Brunswick gave occasion to the unhappy battle of Jena.

Experience and reflection, therefore, had led the Russian Emperor and cabinet to be of opinion, that they ought to avoid encountering the French in the early part of the campaign; and, in consequence, that far from advancing to meet them, they should rather suffer the invaders to involve themselves in the immense wastes and forests of the territories of Russia itself, where supplies and provisions were not to be found by the invader, and where every peasant would prove an armed enemy.

The support which could be derived from an auxiliary army of Prussians, amounting only to 40,000 men, of whom perhaps the half could not be drawn together, was not, it appeared, an adequate motive for altering the plan of the campaign, which had been founded on the most mature consideration. The Emperor Alexander, therefore, declined accepting of the King of Prussia's alliance, as only tending to bring upon that Prince misfortunes, which Russia had not even the chance of averting, without entirely altering those plans of the campaign which had been deliberately adopted. Foreseeing at the same time that this refusal on his part must have made it necessary for Frederick, whose situation rendered neutrality impossible, to take part with France, the Emperor Alexander generously left him at liberty to take the measures, and form the connexions, which his circumstances rendered inevitable, assuring him, nevertheless, that if Russia gained the ascendant, Prussia should derive the same advantage from the victory, whatever part she might be compelled to adopt during the struggle.

While the King of Prussia saw his alliance declined by Russia, as rather burdensome than beneficial, he did not find France at all eager to receive him on her part as a brother of the war. He offered his alliance to Buonaparte repeatedly, and especially in the months of March, May, and August, 1811; but receiving no satisfaction, he began to be apprehensive that his destruction was intended. There was some reason for this fear, for Napoleon seems to have entertained a personal dislike towards Frederick,

and is said to have exclaimed, when he was looking over a map of the Prussian territories, "Is it possible I can have been simple enough to leave that man in possession of so large a kingdom?" There is great reason, besides, to suppose, that Napoleon may have either become acquainted with the secret negotiations betwixt Prussia and Russia, or may have been induced to assume from probability the fact that such had existed. He hesitated, certainly, whether or not he would permit Prussia to remain an independent power.

At length, however, on the 24th of February, 1812, a treaty was dictated to Frederick, under condition of subscribing which, the name and title of King of Prussia were to be yet left him; failing his compliance, Davoust, who had occupied Swedish Pomerania, was to march into Prussia, and treat it as a hostile country. In thus sparing for the time a monarch, of whom he had every reason to be jealous, Napoleon seems to have considered it more advisable to use Frederick's assistance, than to throw him into the arms of Russia. The conditions of this lenity were severe; Prussia was to place at the disposal of France about 20,000 men, with sixty pieces of artillery, the disposable part of the poor remnant of the standing army of the great Frederick. She was also to supply the French army with every thing necessary for their sustenance as they passed through her dominions; but the expense of these supplies was to be imputed as part of the contributions imposed on Prussia by France, and not yet paid. Various other measures were taken to render it easy for the

French, in case of necessity, to seize such fortresses belonging to Prussia as were not already in their hands, and to keep the Prussian people as much as possible disarmed, a rising amongst them being considered inevitable if the French arms should sustain any reverse. Thus, while Russia fortified herself with the assistance of France's old ally Sweden, France advanced against Russia, supported by the remaining army of Frederick of Prussia, who was at heart Alexander's best well-wisher.

RELATIONS WITH AUSTRIA

Napoleon had, of course, a weighty voice in the councils of his father-in-law of Austria. But the Austrian cabinet were far from regarding his plans of ambitious aggrandisement with a partial eye. The acute Metternich had been able to discover and report to his master, on his return to Vienna in the spring of 1811, that the marriage which had just been celebrated, would not have the effect of inducing Napoleon to sheathe his sword, or of giving to Europe permanent tranquillity. And now, although on the approach of the hostilities into which they were to be involved by their formidable ally, Austria agreed to supply an auxiliary army of 30,000 men, under Prince Schwartzenberg, it seems probable that she remembered, at the same time, the moderate and lenient mode of carrying on the war practised by Russia, when the ally of Napoleon during the campaign of Wagram, and gave her general secret instructions to be no further active in the campaign than

the decent supporting of the part of an auxiliary peremptorily required.

In one most material particular, the necessity of consulting the interests of Austria interfered with Napoleon's readiest and most formidable means of annoying Russia. We have repeatedly alluded to the re-establishment of Poland as an independent kingdom, as a measure which would have rent from Russia some of the finest provinces which connect her with Europe, and would have gone a certain length in thrusting her back into the character of an Asiatic sovereignty, unconnected with the politics of the civilized world. Such re-construction of Poland was however impossible, so long as Austria continued to hold Galicia; and that state, in her treaty of alliance with France against Russia, made it an express condition that no attempt should be made for the restoration of Polish independence by Napoleon, without the consent of Austria, or without making compensation to her for being, in the event supposed, deprived of her share of Poland. This compensation, it was stipulated, was to consist in the retrocession, on the part of France, of the Illyrian provinces, yielded up by his Imperial Majesty of Austria at the treaty of Schoenbrun.

By submitting to this embargo on his proceedings in Poland, Napoleon lost all opportunity of revolutionizing that military country, from which he drew therefore little advantage, unless from the duchy of Warsaw. Nothing but the tenacity with which Buonaparte retained every territory that fell into his

power, would have prevented him from at once simplifying this complicated engagement, by assigning to Austria those Illyrian provinces, which were entirely useless to France, but on which her ally set great value, and stipulating in return – what Austria would then have willingly granted – the power of disposing, according to his own pleasure, as well of Galicia, as of such parts of the Polish provinces as should be conquered from Russia; or in case, as De Pradt insinuates,[97] the Court of Austria were averse to the exchange, it was in the power of Napoleon to have certainly removed their objections, by throwing Venice itself into the scale. But we have good reason to believe that Illyria would have been a sufficient inducement to the transaction.

We cannot suppose Buonaparte blind to the importance of putting, as he expressed it, all Poland on horseback; but whether it was, that in reality he did not desire to establish an independent state upon any terms, or whether he thought it hard to give up the Illyrian provinces, ceded to France in property, in order to reconstruct a kingdom, which, nominally at least, was to be independent; or whether, in fine, he had an idea, that, by vague promises and hopes, he could obtain from the Poles all the assistance he desired – it is certain that he embarrassed himself with this condition in favour of Austria, in a manner which tended to render complex and difficult all that he afterwards attempted in Polish affairs; and lost the zealous co-operation and assistance of the Lithuanians, at a time when it would have been

[97] Histoire de l'Ambassade dans le Grand Duché de Varsovie en 1812.

invaluable to him.

TURKEY

Turkey remains to be noticed as the sole remaining power whom Buonaparte ought in prudence to have propitiated, previous to attacking Russia, of which empire she is the natural enemy, as she was also held the natural and ancient ally of France. Were it not that the talents of Napoleon were much better fitted to crush enemies than to gain or maintain friends, it would be difficult to account for his losing influence over the Porte at this important period. The Turkish Government had been rendered hostile to France by the memorable invasion of Egypt; but Sultan Selim, an admirer of Napoleon's valour and genius, had become the friend of the Emperor of France. Selim was cut off by a conspiracy, and his successor was more partial to the English interests. In the treaty of Tilsit, the partition of Turkey was actually agreed upon, though the term was adjourned;[98]

[98] The fact is now pretty generally admitted to have been as stated in the text. But in the public treaty, it appeared that France negotiated an armistice, called that of Slobodsea, by which it was stipulated, that the two disputed provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia were to be restored to the Turks. But the armistice, as had previously been settled between Napoleon and Alexander, broke up without any such restoration; and a congress, which was held at Jassy for the arrangement of the quarrel between the Porte and Court of St. Petersburgh, having been also dissolved without coming to an agreement, the war between the Turks and Russians recommenced upon the Danube. – S.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.