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# MEMOIRS OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE, VOLUME 12.

By LOUIS ANTOINE FAUVELET DE BOURRIENNE

His Private Secretary

Edited by R. W. Phipps
Colonel, Late Royal Artillery

1891

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1813.

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A considerable time before Napoleon left Paris to join the army, the bulk of which was in Saxony, partial insurrections occurred in many places. The interior of France proper was indeed still in a state of tranquillity, but it was not so in the provinces annexed by force to the extremities of the Empire, especially in the north, and in the unfortunate Hanse Towns, for which, since my residence at Hamburg, I have always felt the greatest interest. The intelligence I received was derived from such unquestionable sources that I can pledge myself for the truth of what I have to state respecting the events which occurred in those provinces at the commencement of 1813; and subsequently I obtained a confirmation of all the facts communicated by my correspondence when I was sent to Hamburg by Louis XVIII. in 1815.

M. Steuve, agent from the Court of Russia, who lived at Altona apparently as a private individual, profited by the irritation produced by the measures adopted at Hamburg. His plans were so well arranged that he was promptly informed of the route of the Grand Army from Moscow, and the approach of the Allied troops. Aided by the knowledge and activity of Sieur Hanft of Hamburg, M. Steuve profited by the discontent of a people so tyrannically governed, and seized the opportunity for producing an explosion. Between eight and nine o'clock on the morning of the 24th of February 1813 an occurrence in which the people were concerned was the signal for a revolt. An individual returning to Hamburg by the Altona gate would not submit to be searched by a fiscal agent, who in consequence maltreated him and wounded him severely. The populace instantly rose, drove away the revenue guard, and set fire to the guard- house. The people also, excited by secret agents, attacked other French posts, where they committed the same excesses. Surprised at this unexpected movement, the French authorities retired to the houses in which they resided. All the respectable inhabitants who were unconnected with the tumult likewise returned to their homes, and no person appeared out of doors.

General Carry St. Cyr had the command of Hamburg after the Prince of Eckmuhl's departure for the Russian campaign.

—[General Carry St. Cyr is not to be contused with the Marshal Gonvion de St. Cyr; he fell into disgrace for his conduct at Hamburg at this time, and was not again employed by Napoleon. Under the Restoration he became Governor of French Guiana.]—

At the first news of the revolt he set about packing up his papers, and Comte de Chaban, M. Konning, the Prefect of Hamburg, and M. Daubignosc, the Director of Police, followed his example. It was not till about four o'clock in the afternoon that a detachment of Danish hussars arrived at Hamburg, and the populace: was then speedily dispersed. All the respectable citizens and men of property assembled the next morning and adopted means for securing internal tranquillity, so that the Danish troops were enabled to return to Altona. Search was then made for the ringleaders of the disturbance. Many persons were arrested, and a military commission, ad hoc; was appointed to try them. The commission, however, condemned only one individual, who, being convicted of being one of the most active voters, was sentenced to be shot, and the sentence was carried into execution.

On the 26th February a similar commotion took place at Lubeck. Attempts were made to attack the French Authorities. The respectable citizens instantly assembled, protected them against outrage, and escorted them in safety to Hamburg, where they arrived on the 27th. The precipitate flight of these persons from Lubeck spread some alarm in Hamburg. The danger was supposed to be greater than it was because the fugitives were accompanied by a formidable body of troops.

But these were not the only attempts to throw off the yoke of French domination, which had become insupportable. All the left bank of the Elbe was immediately in a state of insurrection, and all the official persons took refuge in Hamburg. During these partial insurrections everything was neglected.

Indecision, weakness, and cupidity were manifested everywhere. Instead of endeavours to soothe the minds of the people, which had been, long exasperated by intolerable tyranny, recourse was had to rigorous measures. The prisons were crowded with a host of persons declared to be suspected upon the mere representations of the agents of the police. On the 3d of March a special military commission condemned six householders of Hamburg and its neighbourhood to be shot on the glacis for no other offence than having been led, either by chance or curiosity, to a part of the town which was the scene of one of the riots. These executions excited equal horror and indignation, and General Carra St. Cyr was obliged to issue a proclamation for the dissolution of the military commission by whom the men had been sentenced.

The intelligence of the march of the Russian and Prussian troops; who were descending the Elbe, increased the prevailing agitation in Westphalia, Hanover, Mecklenburg, and Pomerania, and all the French troops cantoned between Berlin and Hamburg, including those who occupied the coast of the Baltic, fell back upon Hamburg. General Carra St. Cyr and Baron Konning, the Prefect of Hamburg, used to go every evening to Altona. The latter, worn out by anxiety and his unsettled state of life, lost his reason; and on his way to Hamburg, on the 5th of May, he attempted to cut his throat with a razor. His 'valet de chambre' saved his life by rushing upon him before he had time to execute his design. It was given out that he had broken a blood-vessel, and he was conveyed to Altona, where his wound was cured, and he subsequently recovered from his derangement. M. Konning, who was a native of Holland, was a worthy man, but possessed no decision of character, and but little ability.

At this juncture exaggerated reports were circulated respecting the approach of a Russian corps. A retreat was immediately ordered, and it was executed on the 12th of March. General Carra St. Cyr having no money for the troops, helped himself to 100,000 francs out of the municipal treasury. He left Hamburg at the head of the troops and the enrolled men of the custom-house service. He was escorted by the Burgher Guard, which protected him from the insults of the populace; and the good people of Hamburg never had any visitors of whom they were more happy to be rid.

This sudden retreat excited Napoleon's indignation. He accused General St. Cyr of pusillanimity, in an article inserted in the 'Moniteur', and afterwards copied by his order into all the journals. In fact, had General St. Cyr been better informed, or less easily alarmed, he might have kept Hamburg, and prevented its temporary occupation by the enemy, to dislodge whom it was necessary to besiege the city two months afterwards. St. Cyr had 3000 regular troops, and a considerable body of men in the custom-house service. General Morand could have furnished him with 5000 men from Mecklenburg. He might, therefore, not only have kept possession of Hamburg two months longer, but even to the end of the war, as General Lexnarrois retained possession of Magdeburg. Had not General St. Cyr so hastily evacuated the Elbe he would have been promptly aided by the corps which General Vandamme soon brought from the Wesel, and afterwards by the very, corps with which Marshal Davoust recaptured Hamburg.

The events just described occurred before Napoleon quitted Paris. In the month of August all negotiation was broken off with Austria, though that power, still adhering to her time-serving policy, continued to protest fidelity to the cause of the Emperor Napoleon until the moment when her preparations were completed and her resolution formed. But if there was duplicity at Vienna was there not folly, nay, blindness, in the Cabinet of the Tuileries? Could we reasonably rely upon Austria? She had seen the Russian army pass the Vistula and advance as far as the Saale without offering any remonstrance. At that moment a single movement of her troops, a word of declaration, would have prevented everything. As, therefore, she would not avert the evil when she might have done so with certainty and safety, there must have been singular folly and blindness in the Cabinet who saw this conduct and did not understand it.

I now proceed to mention the further misfortunes which occurred in the north of Germany, and particularly at Hamburg. At fifteen leagues east of Hamburg, but within its territory, is a village named Bergdorf. It was in that village that the Cossacks were first seen. Twelve or fifteen hundred of them arrived there under the command of Colonel Tettenborn. But for the retreat of the French troops, amounting to 3000, exclusive of men in the customhouse service, no attempt would have been made upon Hamburg; but the very name of the Cossacks inspired a degree of terror which must be fresh in the recollection of every one. Alarm spread in Hamburg, which, being destitute of troops and artillery, and surrounded with dilapidated fortifications, could offer no defence. The Senator Bartch and Doctor Know took upon themselves to proceed to Bergdorf to solicit Colonel Tettenborn to take possession of Hamburg, observing that they felt sure of his sentiments of moderation, and that they trusted they would grant protection to a city which had immense commercial relations with Russia. Tettenborn did not place reliance on these propositions because he could not suppose that there had been such a precipitate evacuation; he thought they were merely a snare to entrap him, and refused to accede to them. But a Doctor Von Hess, a Swede, settled. in Hamburg some years, and known to Tettenborn as a decided partisan of England and Russia, persuaded the Russian Commander to comply with the wishes

of the citizens of Hamburg. However, Tettenborn consented only on the following conditions:—That the old Government should be instantly re-established; that a deputation of Senators in their old costume should invite him to take possession of Hamburg, which he would enter only as a free and Imperial Hanse Town; that if those conditions were not complied with he would regard Hamburg as a French town, and consequently hostile. Notwithstanding the real satisfaction with which the Senators of Hamburg received those propositions they were restrained by the fear of a reverse of fortune. They, however, determined to accept them, thinking that whatever might happen they could screen themselves by alleging that necessity had driven them to the step they took. They therefore declared their compliance with the conditions, and that night and the following day were occupied in assembling the Senate, which had been so long dissolved, and in making the preparations which Tettenborn required.

At four o'clock in the afternoon of the 17th of March a picket of Cossacks, consisting of only forty men, took possession of a town recently flourishing, and containing a population of 124,000, but ruined and reduced to 80,000 inhabitants by the blessing of being united to the French Empire. On the following day, the 18th, Colonel Tettenborn entered Hamburg at the head of 1000 regular and 200 irregular Cossacks. I have described the military situation of Hamburg when it was evacuated on the 12th of March, and Napoleon's displeasure may be easily conceived. Tettenborn was received with all the honours usually bestowed upon a conqueror. Enthusiasm was almost universal. For several nights the people devoted themselves to rejoicing. The Cossacks were gorged with provisions and drink, and were not a little astonished at the handsome reception they experienced.

It was not until the expiration of three or four days that the people began to perceive the small number of the allied troops. Their amount gradually diminished. On the day after the arrival of the Cossacks a detachment was sent to Lubeck, where they were received with the same honours as at Hamburg. Other detachments were sent upon different places, and after four days' occupation there remained in Hamburg only 70 out of the 1200 Cossacks who had entered on the 18th March.

The first thing their commander did was to take possession of the post- office and the treasuries of the different public offices. All the movable effects of the French Government and its agents were seized and sold. The officers evinced a true Cossack disregard of the rights of private property. Counts Huhn, Buasenitz, and Venechtern, who had joined Tettenborn's staff, rendered themselves conspicuous by plundering the property of M. Pyonnier, the Director of the Customs, and M. Gonae, the Postmaster, and not a bottle of wine was left in their cellars. Tettenborn laid hands upon a sum of money, consisting of upwards of 4000 Louis in gold, belonging to M. Gonse, which had been lodged with M. Schwartz, a respectable banker in Hamburg, who filled the office of Prussian Consul. M. Schwartz, with whom this money had been deposited for the sake of security, had also the care of some valuable jewels belonging to Mesdames Carry St. Cyr and Daubignoac; Tettenborn carried off these as well as the money. M. Schwartz remonstrated in his character of Prussian Consul, Prussia being the ally of Russia, but he was considered merely as a banker, and could obtain no redress. Tettenborn, like most of the Cossack chiefs, was nothing but a man for blows and pillage, but the agent of Russia was M. Steuve, whose name I have already mentioned.

Orders were speedily given for a levy of troops, both in infantry and cavalry, to be called Hanseatic volunteers. A man named Hanft, who had formerly been a butcher, raised at his own expense a company of foot and one of lancers, of which he took the command. This undertaking, which cost him 130,000 francs, may afford some idea of the attachment of the people of Hamburg to the French Government! But money, as well as men, was wanting, and a heavy contribution was imposed to defray the expense of enrolling a number of workmen out of employment and idlers, of various kinds. Voluntary donations were solicited, and enthusiasm was so general that even servant-maids gave their rings. The sums thus collected were paid into the chest of Tettenborn's staff, and became a prey to dishonest appropriation. With respect to this money a Sieur Oswald was accused of not having acted with the scrupulous delicacy which Madame de Stael attributes to his namesake in her romance of Corinne.

Between 8000 and 10,000 men were levied in the Hanse Towns and their environs, the population of which had been so greatly reduced within two years. These undisciplined troops, who had been for the most part levied from the lowest classes of society, committed so many outrages that they soon obtained the surname of the Cossacks of the Elbe; and certainly they well deserved it.

Such was the hatred which the French Government had inspired in Hamburg that the occupation of Tettenborn was looked upon as a deliverance. On the colonel's departure the Senate, anxious to give high a testimonial of gratitude, presented him with the freedom of the city, accompanied by 5000 gold fredericks (105,000 francs), with which he was doubtless much more gratified than with the honour of the citizenship.

The restored Senate of Hamburg did not long survive. The people of the Hanse Towns learned, with no small alarm, that the Emperor was making immense preparations to fall upon Germany, where his lieutenants could not fail to take cruel revenge on those who had disavowed his authority. Before he quitted Paris on the 15th of April Napoleon had recalled under the banners of the army 180,000 men, exclusive of the guards of honour, and it was evident that with such a force he might venture on a great game, and probably win it. Yet the month of April passed away without the occurrence of any event important to the Hanse Towns, the inhabitants of which vacillated between hope and fear. Attacks daily took place between parties of Russian and French troops on the territory between Lunenburg and Bremen. In one of these encounters General Morand was mortally wounded, and was conveyed to Lunenburg. His brother having been taken prisoner in the same engagement, Tettenborn, into whose hands he had fallen, gave him leave on parole to visit the General; but he arrived in Lunenburg only in time to see him die.

The French having advanced as far as Haarburg took up their position on the plateau of Schwartzenberg, which commands that little town and the considerable islands situated in that part of the river between Haarburg and Hamburg. Being masters of this elevated point they began to threaten Hamburg and to attack Haarburg. These attacks were directed by Vandamme, of all our generals the most redoubtable in conquered countries. He was a native of Cassel, in Flanders, and had acquired a high reputation for severity. At the very time when he was attacking Hamburg Napoleon said of him at Dresden, "If I were to lose Vandamme I know not what I would give to have him back again; but if I had two such generals I should be obliged to shoot one of them." It must be confessed that one was quite enough.

As soon as he arrived Vandamme sent to inform Tettenborn that if he did not immediately liberate the brother and brother-in-law of Morand, both of whom were his prisoners, he would burn Hamburg. Tettenborn replied that if he resorted to that extremity he would hang them both on the top of St. Michael's Tower, where he might have a view of them. This energetic answer obliged Vandamme to restrain his fury, or at least to direct it to other objects.

Meanwhile the French forces daily augmented at Haarburg. Vandamme, profiting by the negligence of the new Hanseatic troops, who had the defence of the great islands of the Elbe, attacked them one night in the month of May. This happened to be the very night after the battle of Lutzsn, where both sides claimed the victory; and Te Deum was sung in the two hostile camps. The advance of the French turned the balance of opinion in favour of Napoleon, who was in fact really the conqueror on a field of battle celebrated nearly two centuries before by the victory and death of Gustavus Adolphus. The Cossacks of the Elbe could not sustain the shock of the French; Vandamme repulsed the troops who defended Wilhelmsburg, the largest of the two islands, and easily took possession of the smaller one, Fidden, of which the point nearest the right bank of the Elbe is not half a gunshot distant from Hamburg. The 9th of May was a fatal day to the people of Hamburg; for it was then that Davoust, having formed his junction with Vandamme, appeared at the head of a corps of 40,000 men destined to reinforce Napoleon's Grand Army. Hamburg could not hold out against the considerable French force now assembled in its neighbourhood. Tettenborn had, it is true, received a reinforcement of 800 Prussians and 2000, Swedes, but still what resistance could he offer to Davoust's 40,000 men? Tettenborn did not deceive himself as to the weakness of the allies on this point, or the inutility of attempting to defend the city. He yielded to the entreaties of the inhabitants, who represented to him that further resistance must be attended by certain ruin. He accordingly evacuated Hamburg on the 29th of May, taking with him his Hanseatic legions, which had not held out an hour in the islands of the Elbe, and accompanied by the Swedish Doctor Von Hess, whose imprudent advice was the chief cause of all the disasters to which the unfortunate city lied been exposed.

Davoust was at Haarburg, where he received the deputies from Hamburg with an appearance of moderation; and by the conditions stipulated at this conference on the 30th of May a strong detachment of Danish troops occupied Hamburg in the name of the Emperor. The French made their entrance the same evening, and occupied the posts as quietly as if they had been merely changing guard. The inhabitants made not a shadow of resistance. Not a drop of blood was issued; not a threat nor an insult was interchanged. This is the truth; but the truth did not suit Napoleon. It was necessary to getup a pretext for revenge, and accordingly recourse was had to a bulletin, which proclaimed to France and Europe that Hamburg had been taken by main force, with a loss of some hundred men. But for this imaginary resistance, officially announced, how would it have been possible to justify the spoliations and exactions which ensued?

The Dutch General, Hogendorff, became Governor of Hamburg in lieu of Carra St. Cyr, who had been confined at Osnabruck since his precipitate retreat. General Hogendorff had been created one of the Emperor's aides de camp, but he was neither a Rapp, a Lauriston, nor a Duroc. The inhabitants were required to pay all the arrears of taxes due to the different public offices during the seventy days that the French had been absent; and likewise all the allowances that would have been paid to the troops of

the garrison had they remained in Hamburg. Payment was also demanded of the arrears for the quartering of troops who were fifty leagues off. However, some of the heads of the government departments, who saw and understood the new situation of the French at Hamburg, did not enforce these unjust and vexatious measures. The duties on registrations were reduced. M. Pyonnier, Director of the Customs, aware of the peculiar difficulty of his situation in a country where the customs were held in abhorrence, observed great caution and moderation in collecting the duties: Personal examination, which is so revolting and indecorous, especially with respect to females, was suppressed. But these modifications did not proceed from the highest quarter; they were due to the good sense of the subordinate agents, who plainly saw that if the Empire was to fall it would not be owing to little infractions in the laws of proscription against coffee and rhubarb.

If the custom-house regulations became less vexatious to the inhabitants of Hamburg it was not the same with the business of the post-office. The old manoeuvres of that department were resumed more actively than ever. Letters were opened without the least reserve, and all the old post-office clerks who were initiated in these scandalous proceedings were recalled. With the exception of the registrations and the customs the inquisitorial system, which had so long oppressed the Hanse Towns, was renewed; and yet the delegates of the French Government were the first to cry out, "The people of Hamburg are traitors to Napoleon: for, in spite of all the blessings he has conferred upon them they do not say with the Latin poet, 'Deus nobis haec otia fecit."

But all that passed was trifling in comparison with what was to come. On the 18th of June was published an Imperial decree, dated the 8th of the same month, by virtue of which were to be reaped the fruits of the official falsehood contained in the bulletin above mentioned. To expiate the crime of rebellion Hamburg was required to pay an extraordinary contribution of 48,000,000 francs, and Lubeck a contribution of 6,000,000. The enormous sum levied on Hamburg was to be paid in the short space of a month, by six equal instalments, either in money, or bills on respectable houses in Paris. In addition to this the new Prefect of Hamburg made a requisition of grain and provisions of every kind, wines, sailcloth, masts, pitch, hemp, iron, copper, steel, in short, everything that could be useful for the supply of the army and navy.

But while these exactions were made on property in Hamburg, at Dresden the liberties of individuals and even lives were attacked. On the 15th of June Napoleon, doubtless blinded by the false reports that were laid before him, gave orders for making out a list of the inhabitants of Hamburg who were absent from the city. He allowed them only a fortnight to return home, an interval too short to enable some of them to come from the places where they had taken refuge. They consequently remained absent beyond the given time. Victims were indispensable but assuredly it was not Bonaparte who conceived the idea of hostages to answer for the men whom prudence kept absent. Of this charge I can clear his memory. The hostages, were, however, taken, and were declared to be also responsible for the payment of the contribution of 48,000,000. In Hamburg they were selected from among the most respectable and wealthy men in the city, some of them far advanced in age. They were conveyed to the old castle of Haarburg on the left bank of the Elbe, and these men, who had been accustomed to all the comforts of life, were deprived even of necessaries, and had only straw to lie on. The hostages from Lubeck were taken to, Hamburg: they were placed between decks on board an old ship in the port: this was a worthy imitation of the prison hulks of England. On the 24th of July there was issued a decree which was published in the Hamburg Correspondent of the 27th. This decree consisted merely of a proscription list, on which were inscribed the names of some of the wealthiest men in the Hanse Towns, Hanover, and Westphalia.

# CHAPTER XXIX.

1813.

> Napoleon's second visit to Dresden—Battle of Bantzen—The Congress at Prague—Napoleon ill advised—Battle of Vittoria—General Moreau Rupture of the conferences at Prague—Defection of Jomini—Battles of Dresden and Leipsic—Account of the death of Duroc—An interrupted conversation resumed a year after—Particulars respecting Poniatowski—His extraordinary courage and death— His monument at Leipsic and tomb in the cathedral of Warsaw.

On the 2d of May Napoleon won the battle of Lutzen. A week after he was at Dresden, not as on his departure for the Russian campaign, like the Sovereign of the West surrounded by his mighty vassals:

he was now in the capital of the only one of the monarchs of his creation who remained faithful to the French cause, and whose good faith eventually cost him half his dominions. The Emperor stayed only ten days in Dresden, and then went in pursuit of the Russian army, which he came up with on the 19th, at Bautzen. This battle, which was followed on the two succeeding days by the battles of Wurtchen and Oclikirchen, may be said to have lasted three days—a sufficient proof that it was obstinately disputed. It ended in favour of Napoleon, but he and France paid dearly for it: while General Kirschner and Duroc were talking together the former was killed by a cannon-ball, which mortally wounded the latter in the abdomen.

The moment had now arrived for Austria to prove whether or not she. intended entirely to desert the cause of Napoleon.

> —[There is a running attack in Erreurs (tome, ii. pp, 289-325) on all this part of the Memoirs, but the best account of the negotiations between France, Austria, and the Allies will be found in Metternich, Vol. i. pp. 171-215. Metternich, with good reason, prides himself on the skill with which he gained from Napoleon the exact time, twenty days, necessary for the concentration of the Austrian armies. Whether the negotiations were consistent with good faith on the part of Austria is another matter; but, one thing seems clear—the Austrian marriage ruined Napoleon. He found it impossible to believe that the monarch who had given him his daughter would strike the decisive blow against him. Without this belief there can be no doubt that he would have attacked Austria before she could have collected her forces, and Metternich seems to have dreaded the result. "It was necessary, therefore to prevent Napoleon from carrying out his usual system of leaving an army of observation before the Allied armies, and himself turning to Bohemia to deal a great blow at us, the effect of which it would be impossible to foresee in the present depressed state of the great majority of our men" (Metternich, Vol. i, p. 177). With our knowledge of how Napoleon held his own against the three armies at Dresden we may safely assume that he would have crushed Austria if she had not joined him or disarmed. The conduct of Austria was natural and politic, but it was only successful because Napoleon believed in the good faith of the Emperor Francis, his father-in- law. It is to be noted that Austria only succeeded in getting Alexander to negotiate on the implied condition that the negotiations were not to end in a peace with France. See Metternich, Vol. i. p. 181, where, in answer to the Czar's question as to what would become of their cause if Napoleon accepted the Austrian mediation, he says that if Napoleon declines Austria will join the Allies. If Napoleon accepts, "the negotiations will most certainly show Napoleon to be neither wise nor just, and then the result will be the same. In any case we shall have gained the necessary time to bring our armies into such positions that we need not again fear a separate attack on any one of them, and from which we may ourselves take the offensive."]—

All her amicable demonstrations were limited to an offer of her intervention in opening negotiations with Russia. Accordingly, on the 4th of June, an armistice was concluded at Pleiswitz, which was to last till the 8th of July, and was finally prolonged to the 10th of August.

The first overtures after the conclusion of the armistice of Pleiswitz determined the assembling of a Congress at Prague. It was reported at the time that the Allies demanded the restoration of all they had lost since 1805; that is to say, since the campaign of Ulm. In this demand Holland and the Hanse Towns, which had become French provinces, were comprehended. But we should still have retained the Rhine, Belgium, Piedmont, Nice, and Savoy. The battle of Vittoria,

> —The news of this decisive battle increased the difficulty of the French plenipotentiaries at Prague, and raised the demands of the Allies. It also shook the confidence of those who remained faithful to us.—Bourrienne.]—

which placed the whole of Spain at the disposal of the English, the retreat of Suchet upon the Ebro, the fear of seeing the army of Spin annihilated, were enough to alter the opinions of those counsellors who still recommended war. Notwithstanding Napoleon's opposition and his innate disposition to acquire glory by his victories, probably he would not have been inaccessible to the reiterated representations of sensible men who loved their country, France, therefore, has to reproach his advisers. At this juncture General Moreau arrived; it has been said that he came at the solicitation of Bernadotte. This is neither true nor probable. In the first place, there never was any intimacy between Bernadotte and Moreau; and, in the next, how can it be imagined that Bernadotte wished to see Moreau Emperor! But this question is at once put at rest by the fact, that in the interview at Abo the Emperor of Russia hinted to Bernadotte the possibility of his succeeding Napoleon. It was generally reported at the time, and I have since learnt that it was true, that the French Princes of the House of

Bourbon had made overtures to Moreau through the medium of General Willot, who had been proscribed on the 18th Fructidor; and I have since learned from an authentic source that General Moreau, who was then at Baltimore, refused to support the Bourbon cause. Moreau yielded only to his desire of being revenged on Napoleon; and he found death where he could not find glory.

At the end of July the proceedings of the Congress at Prague were no. further advanced than at the time of its assembling. Far from cheering the French with the prospect of a peace, the Emperor made a journey to Mayence; the Empress went there to see him, and returned to Paris immediately after the Emperor's departure. Napoleon went back to Dresden, and the armistice not being renewed, it died a natural death on the 17th of August, the day appointed for its expiration. A fatal event immediately followed the rupture of the conferences. On the 17th of August Austria, wishing to gain by war as she had before gained by alliances, declared that she would unite her forces with those of the Allies. On the very opening of this disastrous campaign General Jomini went over to the enemy. Jomini belonged to the staff of the unfortunate Marshal Ney, who was beginning to execute with his wonted ability, the orders he had received. There was much surprise at his eagerness to profit by a struggle, begun under such melancholy auspices, to seek a fresh fortune, which promised better than what he had tried under our flag. Public opinion has pronounced judgment on Jomini.

> —[It was on the 11th of August, not the 17th, that Metternich announced to Caulaincourt, Napoleon's plenipotentiary at Prague, that Austria had joined the Allies and declared war with France; At midnight on 10th August Metternich had despatched the passports for the Comte Louis de Narbonne, Napoleon's Ambassador, and the war manifesto of the Emperor Francis; then he had the beacons lighted which had been prepared from Prague to the Silesian frontier, as a sign of the breech of the negotiations, and the right (i.e. power) of the Allied armies to cross the Silesian frontier (Metternich, vol. i, p. 199).]—

The first actions were the battle of Dresden, which took place seven days after the rupture of the armistice, and the battle in which Vandamme was defeated, and which rendered the victory of Dresden unavailing. I have already mentioned that Moreau was killed at Dresden. Bavaria was no sooner rid of the French troops than she raised the mask and ranged herself among our enemies.

In October the loss of the battle of Leipsic decided the fate of France. The Saxon army, which had long remained faithful to us, went over to the enemy during the battle. Prince Poniatowski perished at the battle of Leipsic in an attempt to pass the Aster.

I will here mention a fact which occurred before Duroc's departure for the campaign of 1812. I used often to visit him at the Pavilion Marsan, in the Tuileries, where he lodged. One forenoon, when I had been waiting for him a few minutes, he came from the Emperor's apartments, where he had been engaged in the usual business, He was in his court-dress. As soon as he entered he pulled off his coat and hat and laid them aside. "I have just had a conversation with the Emperor about you," said he. "Say nothing to anybody. Have patience, and you will be—" He had, no sooner uttered these words than a footman entered to inform him that the Emperor, wished to see him immediately. "Well," said Duroc, "I must go." No sooner was the servant gone than Duroc stamped violently on the floor, and exclaimed, "That ——- ——- never leaves me a moment's rest. If he finds I have five minutes to myself in the course of the morning he is sure to send for me." He then put on his coat and returned to the Emperor, saying, "Another time you shall hear what I have to tell you."

From that time I did not see Duroc until, the month of January 1813. He was constantly absent from Paris, and did not return until the end of 1812. He was much affected at the, result of the campaign, but his confidence in Napoleon's genius kept up his spirits. I turned the conversation from this subject and reminded him of his promise to tell me what had passed between the Emperor and himself relative tome. "You shall hear," said he. "The Emperor and I had been playing at billiards, and, between ourselves, he plays very badly. He is nothing at a game which depends on skill. While negligently rolling his balls about he muttered these words: 'Do you ever see Bourrienne now?'—'Yes, Sire, he sometimes dines with me on diplomatic reception-days, and he looks so droll in his old-fashioned court-dress, of Lyons manufacture, that you would laugh if you saw him.'—'What does he say respecting the new regulation for the court-dresses?'—'I confess he says it is very ridiculous; that it will have no other result than to enable the Lyons manufacturers to get rid of their old-fashioned goods; that forced innovations on the customs of a nation are never successful.'—'Oh, that is always the way with Bourrienne; he is never pleased with anything.'— 'Certainly, Sire, he is apt to grumble; but he says what he thinks.'— 'Do you know, Duroc, he served me very well at Hamburg. He raised a good deal of money for me. He is a man who understands business. I will not leave him unemployed. Time must hang heavily on his hands. I will see what I can do for him. He has many enemies.'—`And who has not, Sire?'— 'Many complaints against him were transmitted to me from Hamburg, but the letter which he

wrote to me in his justification opened my eyes, and I begin to think that Savary had good motives for defending him. Endeavours are made to dissuade me from employing him, but I shall nevertheless do so at last. I remember that it was he who first informed me of the near approach of the war which we are now engaged in. I forget all that has been said against him for the last two years, and as soon as peace is concluded, and I am at leisure, I will think of him.'"

After relating to me this conversation Duroc said, "you must, of course, feel assured that I said all I think of you, and I will take an opportunity of reminding him of you. But we must we patient. Adieu, my dear friend; we must set off speedily, and Heaven knows when we shall be back again!" I wished him a successful campaign and a speedy return. Alas! I was doomed to see my excellent friend only once again.

Next to the death of Duroc the loss most sincerely regretted during the campaign of 1813 was that of Prince Poniatowski. Joseph Poniatowaki, a nephew of Stanislas Augustus, King of Poland, was born at Warsaw on the 7th of May 1763: At an early age he was remarkable for his patriotic spirit; but his uncle's influence gave him an apparent irresolution, which rendered him suspected by some of the parties in Poland. After his uncle had acceded to the Confederation of Targowitz, Poniatowski left the service accompanied by most of his principal officers. But when, in 1794, the Poles endeavoured to repulse the Russians, he again repaired to the Polish camp and entered the army as a volunteer. His noble conduct obtained for him the esteem of his countrymen. Kosciusko gave him the command of a division, with which he rendered useful services during the two sieges of Warsaw. Immediately after the surrender of that capital Poniatowski went to Vienna. He refused the offers of Catherine and Paul to bear arms in the service of Russia.

Poniatowaki retired to his estate year Warsaw, where he lived like a private gentleman until the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw revived the hopes of the Polish patriots. He then became War Minister. The Archduke Ferdinand having come, in 1809, with Austrian troops to take possession of the Duchy of Warsaw, Poniatowski, who commanded the Polish troops, which were very inferior in numbers to the Austrian force, obliged the latter, rather by dint of skillful maneuvering than by fighting, to evacuate the Grand Duchy. He pursued them into Galicia as far as Cracow.

After this honourable campaign he continued to exercise his functions as Minister until 1812. The war against Russia again summoned him to the head of the Polish army. After taking part in all the events of that war, which was attended by such various chances, Poniatowaki was present at the battle of Leipsic. That battle, which commenced on the 14th of October, the anniversary of the famous battles of Ulm and of Jena, lasted four days, and decided the fate of Europe. Five hundred thousand men fought on a surface of three square leagues.

Retreat having become indispensable, Napoleon took leave at Leipsic of the King of Saxony and his family, whom he had brought with him from Dresden. The Emperor then exclaimed in a loud voice, "Adieu; Saxons," to the people who filled the market-place, where the King of Saxony resided. With some difficulty, and after passing through many turnings and windings, he gained the suburb of Runstadt and left Leipsic by the outer gate of that suburb which leads to the bridge of the Elster, and to Lindenau. The bridge was blown up shortly after he had passed it, and that event utterly prevented the retreat of the part of the army which was on the left bank of the Easter, and which fell into the power of the enemy. Napoleon was at the time accused of having ordered the destruction of the bridge immediately after he had himself passed it in order to secure his own personal retreat, as he was threatened by the active pursuit of the enemy. The English journals were unanimous on this point, and to counteract this opinion, which was very general, an article was inserted in the 'Moniteur'.

Before passing the bridge of the Elster Napoleon had directed Poniatowski, in concert with Marshal Macdonald, to cover and protect the retreat, and to defend that part of the suburb of Leipsic which is nearest to the Borne road. For the execution of these orders he had only 2000 Polish infantry. He was in this desperate situation when he saw the French columns in full retreat and the bridge so choked up with their artillery and waggons that there was no possibility of passing it. Then drawing his sword, and turning to the officers who were near him, he said, "Here we must fall with honour!" At the head of a small party of cuirassiers and Polish officers he rushed on the columns of the Allies. In this action he received a ball in his left arm: he had already been wounded on the 14th and 16th. He nevertheless advanced, but he found the suburb filled with Allied troops.

> —[The Allies were so numerous that they scarcely perceived the losses they sustained. Their masses pressed down upon us in every direction, and it was impossible that victory could fail to be with them. Their success, however, would have been less decisive had it not been for the defection of the Saxons. In the midst of the battle, these troops having moved towards the enemy, as if intending to make an attack, turned suddenly around, and opened a heavy fire of artillery and musketry on the columns by the aids of which they had a few

moments before been fighting. I do not know to what page of history such a transaction is recorded. This event immediately produced a great difference in our affairs, which were before in a bad enough train. I ought here mention that before the battle the Emperor dismissed a Bavarian division which still remained with him. He spoke to the officers in terms which will not soon be effaced from their memory. He told them, that, "according to the laws of war, they were his prisoners, since their Government had taken part against him; but that he could not forget the services they had rendered him, and that they were therefore at liberty to return home." These troops left the army, where they were much esteemed, and marched for Bavaria.]—

He fought his way through them and received another wound. He then threw himself into the Pleisse, which was the first river he came to. Aided by his officers, he gained the opposite bank, leaving his horse in the river. Though greatly exhausted he mounted another, and gained the Elster, by passing through M. Reichenbach's garden, which was situated on the side of that river. In spite of the steepness of the banks of the Elster at that part, the Prince plunged with his horse into the river: both man and horse were drowned, and the same fate was shared by several officers who followed Poniatawski's example. Marshal Macdonald was, luckily, one of those who escaped. Five days after a fisherman drew the body of the Prince, out of the water. On the 26th of October it was temporarily interred at Leipsic, with all the honours due to the illustrious deceased. A modest stone marks the spot where the body of the Prince was dragged from the river. The Poles expressed a wish to. erect a monument to the memory of their countryman in the garden of M. Reichenbach, but that gentleman declared he would do it at his own expense, which he did. The monument consists of a beautiful sarcophagus, surrounded by weeping willows. The body of the Prince, after bring embalmed, was sent in the following year to Warsaw, and in 1816 it was deposited in the cathedral, among the remains of the Kings and great men of Poland. The celebrated Thorwaldsen was commissioned to execute a monument for his tomb. Prince Poniatowski left no issue but a natural son, born in 1790. The royal race, therefore existed only in a collateral branch of King Stanislas, namely, Prince Stanislas, born in 1754.

## CHAPTER XXX.

1813

Amount of the Allied forces against Napoleon—Their advance towards the Rhine—Levy of 280,000 men—Dreadful situation of the French at Mayence—Declaration of the Allies at Frankfort—Diplomatic correspondents—The Due de Bassano succeeded by the Duke of Vicenza —The conditions of the Allies vaguely accepted—Caulaincourt sent to the headquarters of the Allies—Manifesto of the Allied powers to the French people.—Gift of 30,000,000 from the Emperor's privy purse—Wish to recall M. de Talleyrand—Singular advice relative to Wellington—The French army recalled from Spain—The throne resigned Joseph—Absurd accusation against M. Laine—Adjournment of the Legislative Body—Napoleon's Speech to the Legislative Body—Remarks of Napoleon reported by Cambaceres.

When the war resumed its course after the disaster of Leipsic I am certain that the Allied sovereigns determined to treat with Napoleon only in his own capital, as he, four years before, had refused to treat with the Emperor of Austria except at Vienna. The latter sovereign now completely raised the mask, and declared to the Emperor that he would make common cause with Russia and Prussia against him. In his declaration he made rise of the singular pretext, that the more enemies there were against Napoleon there would be the greater chance of speedily obliging him to accede to conditions which would at length restore the tranquillity of which Europe stood so much in need. This declaration on the part of Austria was an affair of no little importance, for she had now raised an army of 260,000 men. An equal force was enrolled beneath the Russian banners, which were advancing towards the Rhine. Prussia had 200,000 men; the Confederation of the Rhine 150,000: in short, including the Swedes and the Dutch, the English troops in Spain and in the Netherlands, the Danes, who had abandoned us, the Spaniards and Portuguese, whose courage and hopes were revived by our reverses, Napoleon had arrayed against him upwards of a million of armed men. Among them, too, were the Neapolitans, with Murat at their head!

The month of November 1813 was fatal to the fortune of Napoleon. In all parts the French armies were repulsed and driven back upon the Rhine, while-in every direction, the Allied forces advanced towards that river. For a considerable time I had confidently anticipated the fall of the Empire; not

because the foreign sovereigns had vowed its destruction, but because I saw the impossibility of Napoleon defending himself against all Europe, and because I knew that, however desperate might be his fortune, nothing would induce him to consent to conditions which he considered disgraceful. At this time every day was marked by a new defection. Even the Bavarians, the natural Allies of France, they whom the Emperor had led to victory at the commencement of the second campaign of Vienna, they whom he had, as it were, adopted on the field of battle, were now against us, and were the bitterest of our enemies.

Even before the battle of Leipsic, the consequences of which were so ruinous to Napoleon, he had felt the necessity of applying to France for a supply of troops; as if France had been inexhaustible. He directed the Empress Regent to make this demand; and accordingly Maria Louisa proceeded to the Senate, for the first time, in great state: but the glories of the Empire were now on the decline. The Empress obtained a levy of 280,000 troops, but they were no sooner enrolled than they were sacrificed. The defection of the Bavarians considerably augmented the difficulties which assailed the wreck of the army that had escaped from Leipsic. The Bavarians had got before us to Hanau, a town four leagues distant from Frankfort; there they established themselves, with the view of cutting off our retreat; but French valour was roused, the little town was speedily carried, and the Bavarians were repulsed with considerable loss. The French army arrived at Mayence; if, indeed, one may give the name of army to a few masses of men destitute, dispirited, and exhausted by fatigue and privation. On the arrival of the troops at Mayence no preparation had been made for receiving them: there were no provisions, or supplies of any kind; and, as the climax of misfortune, infectious epidemics broke out amongst the men. All the accounts I received concurred in assuring me that their situation vas dreadful:

However; without counting the wreck which escaped from the disasters of Leipsic, and the ravages of disease; without including the 280,000 men which had been raised by a 'Senatus-consulte, on the application of Maria Louisa, the Emperor still possessed 120,000 good troops; but they were in the rear, scattered along the Elbe, shut up in fortresses such as Dantzic, Hamburg, Torgau, and Spandau. Such was the horror of our situation that if, on the one hand, we could not resolve to abandon them, it was at the same time impossible to aid them. In France a universal cry was raised for peace, at whatever price it could be purchased. In this state of things it may be said that the year 1813 was more fatal to Napoleon than the year 1812. The disasters of Moscow were repaired by his activity and the sacrifices of France; but the disasters of Leipsic were irreparable.

I shall shortly speak of some negotiations in which, if I had chosen, I might have taken a part. After the battle of Leipsic, in which France lost, for the second time, a formidable army, all the powers allied against Napoleon declared at Frankfort, on the 9th of November, that they would never break the bonds which united them; that henceforth it was not merely a Continental peace, but a general peace, that would be demanded; and that any negotiation not having a general peace for its object would be rejected. The Allied powers declared that France was to be confined within her natural limits, the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. This was all that was to remain of the vast Empire founded by Napoleon; but still it must be allowed it was a great deal, after the many disasters France had experienced, and when she was menaced with invasion by numerous and victorious armies. But Napoleon could not accede to such proposals, for he was always ready to yield to illusion when the truth was not satisfactory to him.

According to the proposals of the Allies at Frankfort, Germany; Italy, and Spain were to be entirely withdrawn from the dominion of France. England recognised the freedom of trade and navigation, and there appeared no reason to doubt the sincerity of her professed willingness to make great sacrifices to promote the object proposed by the Allies. But to these offers a fatal condition was added, namely, that the Congress should meet in a town, to be declared neutral, on the right bank of the Rhine, where the plenipotentiaries of all the belligerent powers were to assemble; but the course of the war was not to be impeded by these negotiations.

> —[This, system of negotiating and advancing was a realization of Metternich's idea copying Napoleon's own former procedure. "Let us hold always the sword in one head, and the olive branch in the other; always ready to negotiate, but only negotiating whilst advancing. Here is Napoleon's system: may he find enemies who will carry on war . . . as he would carry it on himself." (Metternich vol. ii. p. 346).]—

The Due de Bassano (Maret), who was still Minister for Foreign Affairs, replied, by order of Napoleon, to the overtures wade by the Allies for a general Congress; and stated that the Emperor acceded to them, and wished Mannheim to be chosen as the neutral town. M. Metternich replied in a note, dated Frankfort, the 25th of November, stating that the Allies felt no difficulty in acceding to Napoleon's choice of Mannheim for the meeting of the Congress; but as M. de Bassano's letter contained no mention of the general and summary bases I have just mentioned, and which had been communicated to M. de St. Aignan at Frankfort, M. Metternich stated that the Allies wished the

Emperor Napoleon to declare his determination respecting those bases, in order that insurmountable difficulties might not arrest the negotiations at their very outset. The Duke of Vicenza (Caulaincourt), who had just succeeded the Due de Bassano, received this letter. Trusting to the declaration of Frankfort he thought he would be justified in treating on those bases; he confidently relied on the consent of Napoleon. But the Allies had now determined not to grant the limits accorded by that declaration. Caulaincourt was therefore obliged to apply for fresh powers, which being granted, he replied, on the 2d of December, that Napoleon accepted the fundamental and summary bases which had been communicated by M. de St. Aignan. To this letter M. Metternich answered that the Emperors of Russia and Austria were gratified to find that the Emperor of France recognised the bases judged necessary by the Allies; that the two sovereigns would communicate without delay the official document to their Allies, and that they were convinced that immediately on receiving their reply the negotiations might be opened without any interruption of the war.

We shall now see the reason why these first negotiations came to no result. In the month of October the Allies overthrew the colossal edifice denominated the French Empire. When led by victory to the banks of the Rhine they declared their wish to abstain from conquest, explained their intentions, and manifested an unalterable resolution to abide by them. This determination of the Allies induced the French Government to evince pacific intentions. Napoleon wished, by an apparent desire for peace, to justify, if I may so express myself, in the eyes of his subjects, the necessity of new sacrifices; which, according to his proclamations, he demanded only to enable him to obtain peace on as honourable conditions as possible. But the truth is, he was resolved not even to listen to the offers made at Frankfort. He always represented the limits of the Rhine as merely a compensation for the dismemberment of Poland and the immense aggrandisement of the English possessions in Asia. But he wanted to gain time, and, if possible, to keep the Allied armies on the right bank of the Rhine.

The immense levies made in France, one after the other, had converted the conscription into a sort of pressgang. Men employed in agriculture and manufactures were dragged from their labours; and the people began to express their dissatisfaction at the measures of Government more loudly than they had hitherto ventured to do; yet all were willing to make another effort, if they could have persuaded themselves that the Emperor would henceforth confine his thoughts to France alone. Napoleon sent Caulaincourt to the headquarters of the Allies; but that was only for the sake of gaining time, and inducing a belief that he was favourably disposed to peace.

The Allies having learned the immense levies of troops which Napoleon was making, and being well acquainted with the state of feeling in France, published the famous manifesto, addressed to the French people, which was profusely circulated, and may be referred to as a warning to subjects who trust to the promises of Governments.

The good faith with which the promises in the manifesto were kept may be judged of from the Treaty of Paris. In the meantime the manifesto did not a little contribute to alienate from Napoleon those who were yet faithful to his cause; for, by believing in the declarations of the Allies, they saw in him the sole obstacle to that peace which France so ardently desired. On this point, too, the Allies were not wrong, and I confess that I did not see without great surprise that the Duc de Rovigo, in that part of his Memoirs where he mentions this manifesto, reproaches those who framed it for representing the Emperor as a madman, who replied to overtures of peace only by conscription levies: After all, I do not intend to maintain that the declaration was entirely sincere; with respect to the future it certainly was not. Switzerland was already tampered with, and attempts were made to induce her to permit the Allied troops to enter France by the bridge of Bale. Things were going on no better in the south of France, where the Anglo-Spanish army threatened our frontiers by the Pyrenees, and already occupied Pampeluna; and at the same time the internal affairs of the country were no less critical than its external position. It was in vain to levy troops; everything essential to an army was wanting. To meet the most pressing demands the Emperor drew out 30,000,000 from the immense treasure which he had accumulated in the cellars and galleries of the Pavillion Marsan, at the Tuileries. These 30,000,000 were speedily swallowed up. Nevertheless it was an act of generosity on the part of Napoleon, and I never could understand on what ground the Legislative Body complained of the outlay, because, as the funds did not proceed from the Budget, there needed no financial law to authorise their application. Besides, why did these rigid legislators, who, while fortune smiled on Bonaparte, dared not utter a word on the subject, demand, previously to the gratuitous gift just mentioned, that the 350,000,000 in the Emperor's privy puree should be transferred to the Imperial treasury and carried to the public accounts? Why did they wink at the accumulation in the Tuileries of the contributions and exactions levied in, conquered countries? The answer is plain: because there would have been danger in opposing it.

Amidst the difficulties which assailed the Emperor he cast his eyes on M. de Talleyrand. But it being required, as a condition of his receiving the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, that he should resign his office of Vice-Grand-Elector, M. de Talleyrand preferred a permanent post to a portfolio, which the caprice of

a moment might withdraw. I have been informed that, in a conversation with the Emperor, M. de Talleyrand gave him the extraordinary advice of working upon the ambition of the English family of Wellesley, and to excite in the mind of Wellington, the lustre of whose reputation was now dawning, ambitious projects which would have embarrassed the coalition. Napoleon, however, did not adopt this proposition, the issue of which he thought too uncertain, and above all, too remote, in the urgent circumstances in which it stood. Caulaincourt was then made Minister for Foreign Affairs, in lieu of M. Maret, who was appointed Secretary of State, an office much better suited to him.

Meanwhile the Emperor was wholly intent on the means of repelling the attack which was preparing against him. The critical circumstances in which he was placed seemed to restore the energy which time had in some measure robbed him of. He turned his eyes towards Spain, and resolved to bring the army from that country to oppose the Allies, whose movements indicated their intention of entering France by Switzerland. An event occurred connected with this subject calculated to have a decided influence on the affairs of the moment, namely, the renunciation by Joseph, King of Spain, of all right to the crown, to be followed by the return; as had been agreed on; of Ferdinand to his dominions. Joseph made this sacrifice at the instigation of his brother. The treaty was signed, but an inconceivable delay occurred in its execution, while the torrent, which was advancing upon France, rushed forward so rapidly that the treaty could not be carried into execution. Ferdinand, it is true, re-ascended his throne, but from other causes.

The Emperor was deeply interested in the march of the Allies. It was important to destroy the bridge of Bale, because the Rhine once crossed masses of the enemy would be thrown into France. At this time I had close relations with a foreign diplomat whom I am forbidden by discretion to name. He told me that the enemy was advancing towards the frontier, and that the bridge of Bale would not be destroyed, as it had been so agreed at Berne, where the Allies had gained the day. This astonished me, because I knew, on the other hand, from a person who ought, to have been equally well informed,—that it was hoped the bridge would be blown up. Being much interested in knowing the truth, I sent on my own account, an agent to Bale who on his return told me that the bridge would remain.

On the 19th of December the Legislative Body was convoked. It was on a Wednesday. M. Laine was Vice-President under M. Regnier. A committee was appointed to examine and report on the communications of the Emperor. The report and conclusions of the committee were not satisfactory; it was alleged that they betrayed a revolutionary tendency, of which M. Laine was absurdly accused of having been one of the promoters; but all who knew him must have been convinced of the falsehood of the charge. The Emperor ordered the report to be seized, and then adjourned the Legislative Body. Those who attentively observed the events of the time will recollect the stupor which prevailed in Paris on the intelligence of this seizure and of the adjournment of the Legislative Body. A thousand conjectures were started as to what new occurrences had taken place abroad, but nothing satisfactory was learned.

I considered this a great mistake. Who can doubt that if the Legislative Body had taken the frank and noble step of declaring that France accepted the conditions of Frankfort they would not have been listened to by the Allies? But the words, "You are dishonoured if you cede a single village acquired by a 'Senatus-consulte'," always, resounded in Napoleon's ears: they flattered his secret thoughts, and every pacific proposal was rejected.

The members of the adjourned Legislative Body went as usual to take leave of the Emperor, who received them on a Sunday, and after delivering to them the speech, which is very well known, dismissed the rebels with great ill-humour, refusing to hear any explanation. "I have suppressed your address," he began abruptly: "it was incendiary. I called you round me to do good—you have done ill. Eleven-twelfths of you are well- intentioned, the others, and above all M. Laine, are factious intriguers, devoted to England, to all my enemies, and corresponding through the channel of the advocate Deseze with the Bourbons. Return to your Departments, and feel that my eye will follow you; you have endeavoured to humble me, you may kill me, but you shall not dishonour me. You make remonstrances; is this a time, when the stranger invades our provinces, and 200,000 Cossacks are ready to overflow our country? There may have been petty abuses; I never connived at them. You, M. Raynouard, you said that. Prince Massena robbed a man at Marseilles of his house. You lie! The General took possession of a vacant house, and my Minister shall indemnify the proprietor. Is it thus that you dare affront a Marshal of France who has bled for his country, and grown gray in victory? Why did you not make your complaints in private to me? I would have done you justice. We should wash our dirty linen at home, and not drag it out before the world. You, call yourselves Representatives of the Nation. It is not true; you are only Deputies of the Departments; a small portion of the State, inferior to the Senate, inferior even to the Council of State. The Representatives of the People! I am alone the Representative of the People. Twice have 24,000,000 of French called me to the throne: which of you durst undertake such a burden? It had already overwhelmed (ecrase), your Assemblies, and your Conventions, your Vergniauds and your Guadets, your Jacobins and your Girondins. They are all dead! What, who are you? nothing—

all authority is in the Throne; and what is the Throne? this wooden frame covered with velvet?—no, I am the Throne! You have added wrong to reproaches. You have talked of concessions— concessions that even my enemies dared not ask! I suppose if they asked Champaigne you would have had me give them La Brie besides; but in four months I will conquer peace, or I shall be dead! You advise! how dare you debate of such high matters (de si graves interets)! You have put me in the front of the battle as the cause of war—it is infamous (c'est une atrocite). In all your committees you have excluded the friends of Government—extraordinary commission—committee of finance—committee of the address, all, all my enemies. M. Laine, I repeat it, is a traitor; he is a wicked man, the others are mere intriguers. I do justice to the eleven-twelfths; but the factions I know, and will pursue. Is it, I ask again, is it while the enemy is in France that you should have done this? But nature has gifted me with a determined courage—nothing can overcome me. It cost my pride much too—I made that sacrifice; I—but I am above your miserable declamations—I was in need of consolation, and you would mortify me—but, no, my victories shall crush your clamours! In three months we shall have peace, and you shall repent your folly. I am one of those who triumph or die.

"Go back to your Departments if any one of you dare to print your address I shall publish it in the Moniteur with notes of my own. Go; France stands in more need of me than I do of France. I bear the eleven- twelfths of you in my heart—I shall nominate the Deputies to the two series which are vacant, and I shall reduce the Legislative Body to the discharge of its proper duties. The inhabitants of Alsace and Franche Comte have more spirit than you; they ask me for arms, I send them, and one of my aides de camp will lead them against the enemy."

In after conversations he said of the Legislative Body that "its members never came to Paris but to obtain some favours. They importuned the Ministers from morning till night, and complained if they were not immediately satisfied. When invited to dinner they burn with envy at the splendour they see before them." I heard this from Cambaceres, who was present when the Emperor made these remarks.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

1813.

> The flag of the army of Italy and the eagles of 1813—Entrance of the Allies into Switzerland—Summons to the Minister of Police— My refusal to accept a mission to Switzerland—Interviews with M. de Talleyrand and the Due de Picence—Offer of a Dukedom and the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour—Definitive refusal—The Duc de Vicence's message to me in 1815—Commencement of the siege of Hamburg—A bridge two leagues long—Executions at Lubeck—Scarcity of provisions in Hamburg—Banishment of the inhabitants—Men bastinadoed and women whipped—Hospitality of the inhabitants of Altona.

I am now arrived at the most critical period in Napoleon's career. What reflections must he have made, if he had had leisure to reflect, in comparing the recollections of his rising glory with the sad picture of his falling fortune? What a contrast presents itself when we compare the famous flag of the army of Italy, which the youthful conqueror, Bonaparte, carried to the Directory, with those drooping eagles who had now to defend the aerie whence they had so often taken flight to spread their triumphant wings over Europe! Here we see the difference between liberty and absolute power! Napoleon, the son of liberty, to whom he owed everything, had disowned his mother, and was now about to fall. Those glorious triumphs were now over when the people of Italy consoled themselves for defeat and submitted to the magical power of that liberty which preceded the Republican armies. Now, on the contrary, it was to free themselves from a despotic yoke that the nations of Europe had in their turn taken up arms and were preparing to invade France.

With the violation of the Swiss territory by the Allied armies, after the consent of the Cantons, is connected a fact of great importance in my life, and which, if I had chosen, might have made a great difference in my destiny. On Tuesday, the 28th of December, I dined with my old friend, M. Pierlot, and on leaving home I was in the habit of saying where I might be found in case I should be wanted. At nine o'clock at night an express arrived from the Minister of Police desiring me to come immediately to his office. I confess, considering the circumstances of the times, and knowing the Emperor's prejudices against me, such a request coming at such an hour made me feel some uneasiness, and I expected nothing less then a journey to Vincennes. The Due de Rovigo, by becoming responsible for me, had as yet warded off the blow, and the supervision to which the Emperor had subjected me—thanks to the

good offices of Davoust—consisted in going three times a week to show myself to Savory.

I accordingly, having first borrowed a night-cap, repaired to the hotel of the Minister of Police. I was ushered into a well-lighted room, and when I entered I found Savary waiting for me. He was in full costume, from which I concluded he had just come from the Emperor. Advancing towards me with an air which showed he had no bad news to communicate, he thus addressed me:

"Bourrienne, I have just come from the Emperor, who asked me where you were? I told him you were in Paris, and that I saw you often. 'Well,' continued the Emperor, 'bid him come to me, I want to employ him. It is three years since he has had anything to do. I wish to send him as Minister to Switzerland, but he must set off directly. He must go to the Allies. He understands German well. The King of Prussia expressed by letter satisfaction at his conduct towards the Prussians whom the war forced to retire to Hamburg. He knows Prince Witgenstein, who is the friend of the King of Prussia, and probably is at Lorrach. He will see all the Germans who are there. I confidently rely on him, and believe his journey will have a good result. Caulaincourt will give him his instructions."

Notwithstanding my extreme surprise at this communication I replied without hesitation that I could not accept the mission; that it was offered too late. "It perhaps is hoped;" said I, "that the bridge of Bale will be destroyed, and that Switzerland will preserve her neutrality. But I do not believe any such thing; nay, more, I know positively to the contrary. I can only repeat the offer comes much too late."—"I am very sorry for this resolution," observed Savory, "but Caulaincourt will perhaps persuade you. The Emperor wishes you to go the Duo de Vicence to-morrow at one o'clock; he will acquaint you with all the particulars, and give you your instructions."—"He may acquaint me with whatever be chooses, but I will not go to Lohraah."—"You know the Emperor better than I do, he wishes you to go, and he will not pardon your refusal."—"He may do as he pleases, but no consideration shall induce me to go to Switzerland."—"You are wrong: but you will reflect on the matter between this and tomorrow morning. Night will bring good counsel, At any rate, do not fail to go to-morrow at one o'clock to Caulaincourt, he expects you, and directions will be given to admit you immediately."

Next morning the first thing I did was to call on M. de Talleyrand. I told him what had taken place, and as he was intimately acquainted with Caulaincourt, I begged him to speak to that Minister in favour of my, resolution. M. de Talleyrand approved of my determination not to go to Switzerland, and at one o'clock precisely I proceeded to M. de Caulaincourt's. He told me all he had been instructed to say. From the manner in which he made the communication I concluded that he himself considered the proposed mission a disagreeable one, and unlikely to be attended by any useful result. I observed that he must have heard from Savory that I had already expressed my determination to decline the mission which the Emperor had been pleased to offer me. The Duc de Vicence then, in a very friendly way, detailed the reasons which ought to induce me to accept the offer, and did not disguise from me that by persisting in my determination I ran the risk of raising Napoleon's doubts as to my opinions and future intentions. I replied that, having lived for three years as a private individual, unconnected with public affairs, I should have no influence at the headquarters of the Allies, and that whatever little ability I might be supposed to possess, that would not counterbalance the difficulties of my situation, and the opinion that I was out of favour. I added that I should appear at the headquarters without any decoration, without even that of the Cordon of the Legion of Honour to which the Emperor attached so much importance, and the want of which would almost have the appearance of disgrace; and I said that these trifles, however slightly valued by reasonable men, were not, as he well knew, without their influence on the men with whom I should have to treat. "If that be all," replied. Caulaincourt, "the obstacle will speedily be removed. I am authorised by the Emperor to tell you that he will create you a Duke, and give you the Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honour."

After these words I thought I was dreaming, and I was almost inclined to believe that Caulaincourt was jesting with me. However, the offer was serious, and I will not deny that it was tempting; yet I nevertheless persisted in the refusal I had given. At length, after some further conversation, and renewed, but useless, entreaties on the part of M. de Caulaincourt, he arose, which was a signal that our interview was terminated. I acknowledge I remained for a moment in doubt how to act, for I felt we had come to no understanding. M. de' Caulaincourt advanced slowly towards the door of his cabinet: If I went away without knowing his opinion I had done nothing; addressing him, therefore, by his surname, "Caulaincourt;" said I, "you have frequently assured me that you would never forget the services I rendered to you and your family at a time when I possessed some influence. I know you, and therefore speak to you without disguise. I do not now address myself to the Emperor's Minister, but to Caulaincourt. You are a man of honour, and I can open my heart to you frankly. Consider the embarrassing situation of France, which you know better than I do. I do not ask you for your secrets, but I myself know enough. I will tell you candidly that I am convinced the enemy will pass the Rhine in a few days. The Emperor has been deceived: I should not have time to reach my destination, and I should be laughed at. My correspondents in Germany have made me acquainted with every particular. Now, Caulaincourt, tell me honestly, if you were in my place, and I in yours, and I should make this

proposition to you, what determination would you adopt?"

I observed from the expression of Caulaincourt's countenance that my question had made an impression on him, and affectionately pressing my hand he said, "I would do as you do: Enough. I will arrange the business with the Emperor." This reply seemed to remove a weight from my mind, and I left Caulaincourt with feelings of gratitude. I felt fully assured that he would settle the business satisfactorily, and in this conjecture I was not deceived, for I heard no more of the matter.

I must here go forward a year to relate another occurrence in which the Due de Vicence and I were concerned. When, in March 1815, the King appointed me Prefect of Police, M. de Caulaincourt sent to me a confidential person to inquire whether he ran any risk in remaining in Paris, or whether he had better remove. He had been told that his name was inscribed in a list of individuals whom I had received orders to arrest. Delighted at this proof of confidence, I returned the following answer by the Due de Vicence's messenger: "Tell M. de Caulaincourt that I do not know where he lives. He need be under no apprehension: I will answer for him."

During the campaign of 1813 the Allies, after driving the French out of Saxony and obliging them to retreat towards the Rhine, besieged Hamburg, where Davoust was shut up with a garrison of 30,000 men, resolutely determined to make it a second Saragossa. From the month of September every day augmented the number of the Allied troops, who were already making rapid progress on the left bank of the Elbe. Davoust endeavoured to fortify Hamburg an so extended a scale that, in the opinion of the most experienced military men, it would have required a garrison of 60,000 men to defend it in a regular and protracted siege. At the commencement of the siege Davoust lost Vandamme, who was killed in a sortie at the head of a numerous corps which was inconsiderately sacrificed.

It is but justice to admit that Davoust displayed great activity in the defence, and began by laying in large supplies.

> —[Vandamme fought under Grouchy in 1815, and died several years afterwards. This killing him at Hamburg is one of the curious mistakes seized on by the Bonapartists to deny the authenticity of these Memoirs.]—

General Bertrand was directed to construct a bridge to form a communication between Hamburg and Haarburg by joining the islands of the Elbe to the Continent along a total distance of about two leagues. This bridge was to be built of wood, and Davoust seized upon all the timber- yards to supply materials for its construction. In the space of eighty- three days the bridge was finished. It was a very magnificent structure, its length being 2529 toises, exclusive of the lines of junction, formed on the two islands.

The inhabitants were dreadfully oppressed, but all the cruel measures and precautions of the French were ineffectual, for the Allies advanced in great force and occupied Westphalia, which movement obliged the Governor of Hamburg to recall to the town the different detachments scattered round Hamburg.

At Lubeck the departure of the French troops was marked by blood. Before they evacuated the town, an old man, and a butcher named Prahl, were condemned to be shot. The butcher's crime consisted in having said, in speaking of the French, "Der teufel hohle sie" (the devil take them). The old man fortunately escaped his threatened fate, but, notwithstanding the entreaties and tears of the inhabitants, the sentence upon Prahl was carried into execution.

The garrison of Hamburg was composed of French, Italian, and Dutch troops. Their number at first amounted to 30,000, but sickness made great-havoc among them. From sixty to eighty perished daily in the hospitals. When the garrison evacuated Hamburg in May 1814 it was reduced to about 15,000 men. In the month of December provisions began to diminish, and there was no possibility of renewing the supply. The poor were first of all made to leave the town, and afterwards all persons who were not usefully employed. It is no exaggeration to estimate at 50,000 the number of persons who were thus exiled. The colonel commanding the gendarmerie at Hamburg notified to the exiled inhabitants that those who did not leave the town within the prescribed time would receive fifty blows with a cane and afterwards be driven out. But if penance may be commuted with priests so it may with gendarmes. Delinquents contrived to purchase their escape from the bastinado by a sum of money, and French gallantry substituted with respect to females the birch for the cane. I saw an order directing all female servants to be examined as to their health unless they could produce certificates from their masters. On the 25th of December the Government granted twenty-four hours longer to persons who were ordered to quit the town; and two days after this indulgence an ordinance was published declaring that those who should return to the town after once leaving it were to be considered as rebels and accomplices of the enemy, and as such condemned to death by a prevotal court. But this was not enough. At the end of December people, without distinction of sex or age, were dragged from their beds and conveyed out of

the town on a cold night, when the thermometer was between sixteen or eighteen degrees; and it was affirmed that several old men perished in this removal. Those who survived were left on the outside of the Altona gates. At Altona they all found refuge and assistance. On Christmas-day 7000 of these unfortunate persons were received in the house of M. Rainville, formerly aide de camp to Dumouriez, and who left France together with that general. His house, which was at Holstein, was usually the scene of brilliant entertainments, but it was converted into the abode of misery, mourning, and death. All possible attention was bestowed on the unfortunate outlaws; but few profited by it, and what is worse, the inhabitants of Altona suffered for their generosity. Many of the unfortunate persons were affected with the epidemic disease which was raging in Hamburg, and which in consequence broke out at Altona.

All means of raising money in Hamburg being exhausted, a seizure was made of the funds of the Bank of that city, which yet contained from seven to eight millions of marks. Were those who ordered this measure not aware that to seize on the funds of some of the citizens of Hamburg was an injury to all foreigners who had funds in the Bank? Such is a brief statement of the vexations and cruelties which long oppressed this unfortunate city. Napoleon accused Hamburg of Anglomania, and by ruining her he thought to ruin England. Hamburg, feeble and bereft of her sources, could only complain, like Jerusalem when besieged by Titus: "Plorans, plorcatrit in nocte."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

1813-1814.

> Prince Eugene and the affairs of Italy—The army of Italy on the frontiers of Austria—Eugene's regret at the defection of the Bavarians—Murat's dissimulation and perfidy—His treaty with Austria—Hostilities followed by a declaration of war—Murat abandoned by the French generals—Proclamation from Paris—Murat's success—Gigantic scheme of Napoleon—Napoleon advised to join the Jacobins—His refusal—Armament of the National Guard—The Emperor's farewell to the officers—The Congress of Chatillon—Refusal of an armistice—Napoleon's character displayed in his negotiations— Opening of the Congress—Discussions—Rupture of the Conferences.

I wars now proceed to notice the affairs of Italy and the principal events of the Viceroyalty of Eugene. In order to throw together all that I have to say about the Viceroy I must anticipate the order of time.

After the campaign of 1812, when Eugene revisited Italy, he was promptly informed of the more than doubtful dispositions of Austria towards France. He then made preparations for raising an army capable of defending the country which the Emperor had committed to his safeguard. Napoleon was fully aware how much advantage he would derive from the presence on the northern frontiers of Italy of an army sufficiently strong to harass Austria, in case she should draw aside the transparent veil which still covered her policy. Eugene did all that depended on him to meet the Emperor's wishes; but in spite of his efforts the army of Italy was, after all; only an imaginary army to those who could compare the number of men actually enrolled with the numbers stated in the lists. When, in July 1813, the Viceroy was informed of the turn taken by the negotiations at the shadow of a Congress assembled at Prague, he had no longer any doubt of the renewal of hostilities; and foreseeing an attack on Italy he resolved as speedily as possible to approach the frontiers of Austria. He had succeeded in assembling an army composed of French and Italians, and amounting to 45,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry. On the renewal of hostilities the Viceroy's headquarters were at Udine. Down to the month of April 1814 he succeeded in maintaining a formidable attitude, and in defending the entrance of his kingdom by dint of that military talent which was to be expected in a man bred in the great school of Napoleon, and whom the army looked up to as one of its most skillful generals.

During the great and unfortunate events of 1813 all eyes had been fixed on Germany and the Rhine; but the defection of Murat for a time diverted attention to Italy. That event did not so very much surprise me, for I had not forgotten my conversation with the King of Naples in the Champs Elysees, with which I have made the reader acquainted. At first Murat's defection was thought incredible by every one, and it highly excited Bonaparte's indignation. Another defection which occurred about the same period deeply distressed Eugene, for although raised to the rank of a prince, and almost a sovereign, he was still a man, and an excellent man. He was united to the Princess Amelia of Bavaria, who was as amiable and as much beloved as he, and he had the deep mortification to count the subjects of his father-in-law among the enemies whom he would probably have to combat. Fearing lest he should

be harassed by the Bavarians on the side of the Tyrol, Eugene commenced his retrograde movement in the autumn of 1813. He at first fell back on the Tagliamento, and successively on the Adige. On reaching that river the army of Italy was considerably diminished, in spite of all Eugene's care of his troops. About the end of November Eugene learned that a Neapolitan corps was advancing upon Upper Italy, part taking the direction of Rome, and part that of Ancona. The object of the King of Naples was to take advantage of the situation of Europe, and he was duped by the promises held out to him as the reward of his treason. Murat seemed to have adopted the artful policy of Austria; for not only had he determined to join the coalition, but he was even maintaining communications with England and Austria, while at the same time he was making protestations of fidelity to his engagements with Napoleon.

When first informed of Murat's treason by the Viceroy the Emperor refused to believe it. "No," he exclaimed to those about him, "it cannot be! Murat, to whom I have given my sister! Murat, to whom I have given a throne! Eugene must be misinformed. It is impossible that Murat has declared himself against me!" It was, however, not only possible but true. Gradually throwing aside the dissimulation beneath which he had concealed his designs, Murat seemed inclined to renew the policy of Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the art of deceiving was deemed by the Italian Governments the most sublime effort of genius. Without any declaration of war, Murat ordered the Neapolitan General who occupied Rome to assume the supreme command in the Roman States, and to take possession of the country. General Miollis, who commanded the French troops in Rome, could only throw himself, with his handful of men, into the Castle of St. Angelo, the famous mole of Adrian, in which was long preserved the treasury of Sixtus V. The French General soon found himself blockaded by the Neapolitan troops, who also blockaded Civita Vecchia and Ancona.

The treaty concluded between Murat and Austria was definitively signed on the 11th of January 1814. As soon as he was informed of it the Viceroy, certain that he should soon have to engage with the Neapolitans, was obliged to renounce the preservation of the line of the Adige, the Neapolitan army being in the rear of his right wing. He accordingly ordered a retrograde movement to the other side of the Mincio, where his army was cantoned. In this position Prince Eugene, on the 8th of February, had to engage with the Austrians, who had come up with him, and the victory of the Mincio arrested, for some time, the invasion of the Austrian army and its junction with the Neapolitan troops.

It was not until eight days after that Murat officially declared war against the Emperor; and immediately several general and superior officers, and many French troops, who were in his service, abandoned him, and repaired to the headquarters of the Viceroy. Murat made endeavours to detain them; they replied, that as he had declared war against France, no Frenchman who loved his country could remain in his service. "Do you think," returned he, "that my heart is lees French than yours? On the contrary, I am much to be pitied. I hear of nothing but the disasters of the Grand Army. I have been obliged to enter into a treaty with the Austrians, and an arrangement with the English, commanded by Lord Bentinck, in order to save my Kingdom from a threatened landing of the English and the Sicilians, which would infallibly have excited an insurrection."

There could not be a more ingenuous confession of the antipathy which Joachim knew the Neapolitans to entertain towards his person and government. His address to the French was ineffectual. It was easy to foresee what would ensue. The Viceroy soon received an official communication from Napoleon's War Minister, accompanied by an Imperial decree, recalling all the French who were in the service of Joachim, and declaring that all who were taken with arms in their hands should be tried by a courtmartial as traitors to their country. Murat commenced by gaining advantages which could not be disputed. His troops almost immediately took possession of Leghorn and the citadel of Ancona, and the French were obliged to evacuate Tuscany.

The defection of Murat overthrew one of Bonaparte's gigantic conceptions. He had planned that Murat and Eugene with their combined forces should march on the rear of the Allies, while he, disputing the soil of France with the invaders, should multiply obstacles to their advance; the King of Naples and the Viceroy of Italy were to march upon Vienna and make Austria tremble in the heart of her capital before the timid million of her Allies, who measured their steps as they approached Paris, should desecrate by their presence the capital of France. When informed of the vast project, which, however, was but the dream of a moment, I immediately recognised that eagle glance, that power of discovering great resources in great calamities, so peculiar to Bonaparte.

Napoleon was yet Emperor of France; but he who had imposed on all Europe treaties of peace no less disastrous than the wars which had preceded them, could not now obtain an armistice; and Caulaincourt, who was sent to treat for one at the camp of the Allies, spent twenty days at Luneville before he could even obtain permission to pass the advanced posts of the invading army. In vain did Caulaincourt entreat Napoleon to sacrifice, or at least resign temporarily, a portion of that glory

acquired in so many battles, and which nothing could efface in history. Napoleon replied, "I will sign whatever you wish. To obtain peace I will exact no condition; but I will not dictate my own humiliation." This concession, of course, amounted to a determination not to sign or to grant anything.

In the first fortnight of January 1814 one-third of France was invaded, and it was proposed to form a new Congress, to be held at Chatillon-sur- Seine. The situation of Napoleon grew daily worse and worse. He was advised to seek extraordinary resources in the interior of the Empire, and was reminded of the fourteen armies which rose, as if by enchantment, to defend France at the commencement of the Revolution. Finally, a reconciliation with the Jacobins, a party who had power to call up masses to aid him, was recommended. For a moment he was inclined to adopt this advice. He rode on horseback through the surburbs of St. Antoine and St. Marceau, courted the populace, affectionately replied to their acclamations, and he thought he saw the possibility of turning to account the attachment which the people evinced for him. On his return to the Palace some prudent persons ventured to represent to him that, instead of courting this absurd sort of popularity it would be more advisable to rely on the nobility and the higher classes of society. "Gentlemen," replied he, "you may say what you please, but in the situation in which I stand my only nobility is the rabble of the faubourgs, and I know of no rabble but the nobility whom I have created." This was a strange compliment to all ranks, for it was only saying that they were all rabble together.

At this time the Jacobins were disposed to exert every effort to serve him; but they required to have their own way, and to be allowed freely to excite and foster revolutionary sentiments. The press, which groaned under the most odious and intolerable censorship, was to be wholly resigned to them. I do not state these facts from hearsay. I happened by chance to be present at two conferences in which were set forward projects infected with the odour of the clubs, and these projects were supported with the more assurance because their success was regarded as certain. Though I had not seen Napoleon since my departure for Hamburg, yet I was sufficiently assured of his feeling towards the Jacobins to be convinced that he would have nothing to do with them. I was not wrong. On hearing of the price they set on their services he said, "This is too much; I shall have a chance of deliverance in battle, but I shall have none with these furious blockheads. There can be nothing in common between the demagogic principles of '93 and the monarchy, between clubs of madmen and a regular Ministry, between a Committee of Public Safety and an Emperor, between revolutionary tribunals and established laws. If fall I must, I will not bequeath France to the Revolution from which I have delivered her."

These were golden words, and Napoleon thought of a more noble and truly national mode of parrying the danger which threatened him. He ordered the enrolment of the National Guard of Paris, which was placed under the command of Marshal Moncey. A better choice could not have been made, but the staff of the National Guard was a focus of hidden intrigues, in which the defence of Paris was less thought about than the means of taking advantage of Napoleon's overthrow. I was made a captain in this Guard, and, like the rest of the officers, I was summoned to the Tuileries, on the 23d of January, when the Emperor took leave of the National Guard previously to his departure from Paris to join the army.

Napoleon entered with the Empress. He advanced with a dignified step, leading by the hand his son, who was not yet three years old. It was long since I had seen him. He had grown very corpulent, and I remarked on his pale countenance an expression of melancholy and irritability.

The habitual movement of the muscles of his neck was more decided and more frequent than formerly. I shall not attempt to describe what were my feelings during this ceremony, when I again saw, after a long separation, the friend of my youth, who had become master of Europe, and was now on the point of sinking beneath the efforts of his enemies. There was something melancholy in this solemn and impressive ceremony. I have rarely witnessed such profound silence in so numerous an assembly. At length Napoleon, in a voice as firm and sonorous as when he used to harangue his troops in Italy or in Egypt, but without that air of confidence which then beamed on his countenance, delivered to the assembled officers an address which was published in all the journals of the time. At the commencement of this address he said, "I set out this night to take the command of the army. On quitting the capital I confidently leave behind me my wife and my son, in whom so many hopes are centred." I listened attentively to Napoleon's address, and, though he delivered it firmly, he either felt or feigned emotion. Whether or not the emotion was sincere on his part, it was shared by many present; and for my own part I confess that my feelings were deeply moved when he uttered the words, "I leave you my wife and my son." At that moment my eyes were fixed on the young Prince, and the interest with which he inspired me was equally unconnected with the splendour which surrounded and the misfortunes which threatened him. I beheld in the interesting child not the King of Rome but the son of my old friend. All day long afterwards I could not help feeling depressed while comparing the farewell scene of the morning with the day on which we took possession of the Tuileries. How many centuries seemed the fourteen years which separated the two events.

It may be worth while to remind those who are curious in comparing dates that Napoleon, the

successor of Louis XVI., and who had become the nephew of that monarch by his marriage with the niece of Marie Antoinette, took leave of the National Guard of Paris on the anniversary of the fatal 21st of January, after twenty-five years of successive terror, fear, hope, glory, and misfortune.

Meanwhile, a Congress was opened at Chatillon-sur-Seine, at which were assembled the Duke of Vicenza on the part of France, Lords Aderdeen and Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart as the representatives of England, Count Razumowsky on the part of Russia, Count Stadion for Austria, and Count Humboldt for Prussia. Before the opening of the Congress, the Duke of Vicenza, in conformity with the Emperor's orders, demanded an armistice, which is almost invariably granted during negotiations for peace; but it was now too late: the Allies had long since determined not to listen to any such demand. They therefore answered the Duke of Vicenza's application by requiring that the propositions for peace should be immediately signed. But these were not the propositions of Frankfort. The Allies established as their bases the limits of the old French monarchy. They conceived themselves authorised in so doing by their success and by their situation.

To estimate rightly Napoleon's conduct during the negotiations for peace which took place in the conferences at Chatillon it is necessary to bear in mind the organisation he had received from nature and the ideas with which that organisation had imbued him at an early period of life. If the last negotiations of his expiring reign be examined with due attention and impartiality it will appear evident that the causes of his fall arose out of his character. I cannot range myself among those adulators who have accused the persons about him with having dissuaded him from peace. Did he not say at St. Helena, in speaking of the negotiations at Chatillon, "A thunderbolt alone could have saved us: to treat, to conclude, was to yield foolishly to the enemy." These words forcibly portray Napoleon's character. It must also be borne in mind how much he was captivated by the immortality of the great names which history has bequeathed to our admiration, and which are perpetuated from generation to generation. Napoleon was resolved that his name should re- echo in ages to come, from the palace to the cottage. To live without fame appeared to him an anticipated death. If, however, in this thirst for glory, not for notoriety, he conceived the wish to surpass Alexander and Caesar, he never desired the renown of Erostratus, and I will say again what I have said before, that if he committed actions to be condemned, it was because he considered them as steps which helped him to place himself on the summit of immortality on which he wished to place his name. Witness what he wrote to his brother Jerome, "Better never, to have lived than to live without glory;" witness also what he wrote later to his brother Louis, "It is better to die as a King than to live as a Prince." How often in the days of my intimacy with Bonaparte has he not said to me, "Who knows the names of those kings who have passed from the thrones on which chance or birth seated them? They lived and died unnoticed. The learned, perhaps, may find them mentioned in old archives, and a medal or a coin dug from the earth may reveal to antiquarians the existence of a sovereign of whom they had never before heard. But, on the contrary, when we hear the names of Cyrus, Alexander, Caesar, Mahomet, Charlemagne, Henry IV., and Louis XIV., we are immediately among our intimate acquaintance." I must add, that when Napoleon thus spoke to me in the gardens of Malmaison he only repeated what had often fallen from him in his youth, for his character and his ideas never varied; the change was in the objects to which they were applied.

From his boyhood Napoleon was fond of reading the history of the great men of antiquity; and what he chiefly sought to discover was the means by which those men had become great. He remarked that military glory secures more extended fame than the arts of peace and the noble efforts which contribute to the happiness of mankind. History informs us that great military talent and victory often give the power, which, in its tern, procures the means of gratifying ambition. Napoleon was always persuaded that that power was essential to him, in order to bend men to his will, and to stifle all discussions on his conduct. It was his established principle never to sign a disadvantageous peace. To him a tarnished crown was no longer a crown. He said one day to M. de Caulaincourt, who was pressing him to consent to sacrifices, "Courage may defend a crown, but infamy never." In all the last acts of Napoleon's career I can retrace the impress of his character, as I had often recognised in the great actions of the Emperor the execution of a thought conceived by the General-in-Chief of the Army of Italy.

On the opening of the Congress the Duke of Vicenza, convinced that he could no longer count on the natural limits of France promised at Frankfort by the Allies, demanded new powers. Those limits were doubtless the result of reasonable concessions, and they had been granted even after the battle of Leipsic; but it was now necessary that Napoleon's Minister should show himself ready to make further concessions if he wished to be allowed to negotiate. The Congress was opened on the 5th of February, and on the 7th the Plenipotentiaries of the Allied powers declared themselves categorically. They inserted in the protocol that after the successes which had favoured their armies they insisted on France being restored to her old limits, such as they were during the monarchy before the Revolution; and that she should renounce all direct influence beyond her future limits.

This proposition appeared so extraordinary to M. de Caulaincourt that he requested the sitting might

be suspended, since the conditions departed too far from his instructions to enable him to give an immediate answer. The Plenipotentiaries of the Allied powers acceded to his request, and the continuation of the sitting was postponed till eight in the evening. When it was resumed the Duke of Vicenza renewed his promise to make the greatest sacrifices for the attainment of peace. He added that the amount of the sacrifices necessarily depended on the amount of the compensations, and that he could not determine on any concession or compensation without being made acquainted with the whole. He wished to have a general plan of the views of the Allies, and he requested that their Plenipotentiaries would explain themselves decidedly respecting the number and description of the sacrifices and compensations to be demanded. It must be acknowledged that the Duke of Vicenza perfectly fulfilled the views of the Emperor in thus protracting and gaining time by subtle subterfuges, for all that he suggested had already been done.

On the day after this sitting some advantages gained by the Allies, who took Chatillon-sur-Marne and Troves, induced Napoleon to direct Caulaincourt to declare to the Congress that if an armistice were immediately agreed on he was ready to consent to France being restored to her old limits. By securing this armistice Napoleon hoped that happy chances might arise, and that intrigues might be set on foot; but the Allies would not listen to any such proposition.

At the sitting of the 10th of March the Duke of Vicenza inserted in the protocol that the last courier he had received had been arrested and detained a considerable time by several Russian general officers, who had obliged him to deliver up his despatches, which had not been returned to him till thirty-six hours after at Chaumont. Caulaincourt justly complained of this infraction of the law of nations and established usage, which, he said, was the sole cause of the delay in bringing the negotiations to a conclusion. After this complaint he communicated to the Congress the ostensible instructions of Napoleon, in which he authorised his Minister to accede to the demands of the Allies. But in making this communication M. de Caulaincourt took care not to explain the private and secret instructions he had also received. The Allies rejected the armistice because it would have checked their victorious advance; but they consented to sign the definitive peace, which of all things was what the Emperor did not wish.

Napoleon at length determined to make sacrifices, and the Duke of Vicenza submitted new propositions to the Congress. The Allies replied, in the same sitting, that these propositions contained no distinct and explicit declaration on the project presented by them on the 17th of February; that, having on the 28th of the same month, demanded a decisive answer within the term of ton days, they were about to break up the negotiations Caulaincourt then declared verbally:

1st. That the Emperor Napoleon was ready to renounce all pretension or influence whatever in countries beyond the boundaries of France.

2d. To recognise the independence of Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, and that as to England, France would make such concessions as might be deemed necessary in consideration of a reasonable equivalent.

Upon this the sitting was immediately broken up without a reply. It must be remarked that this singular declaration was verbal, and consequently not binding, and that the limits of France were mentioned without being specified. It cannot be doubted that Napoleon meant the limits conceded at Frankfort, to which he was well convinced the Allies would not consent, for circumstances were now changed. Besides, what could be meant by the reasonable equivalent from England? Is it astonishing that this obscurity and vagueness should have banished all confidence on the part of the Plenipotentiaries of the Allied powers? Three days after the sitting of the 10th of March they declared they could not even enter into a discussion of the verbal protocol of the French Minister. They requested that M. de Caulaincourt would declare whether he would accept or reject the project of a treaty presented by the Allied Sovereigns, or offer a counter-project.

The Duke of Vicenza, who was still prohibited, by secret instructions from coming to any conclusion on the proposed basis, inserted in the protocol of the sitting of the 13th of March a very ambiguous note. The Plenipotentiaries of the Allies; in their reply, insisted upon receiving another declaration from the French Plenipotentiary, which should contain an acceptance or refusal of their project of a treaty presented in the conference of the 7th of February, or a counter-project. After much discussion Caulaincourt agreed to draw up a counter-project, which he presented on the 15th, under the following title: "Project of a definitive Treaty between France and the Allies." In this extraordinary project, presented after so much delay, M. de Caulaincourt, to the great astonishment of the Allies, departed in no respect from the declarations of the 10th of March. He replied again to the ultimatum of the Allies, or what be wished to regard as such, by defending a multitude of petty interests, which were of no importance in so great a contest; but in general the conditions seemed rather those of a conqueror dictating to his enemies than of a man overwhelmed by misfortune: As may readily be imagined, they

were, for the most part, received with derision by the Allies.

Everything tends to prove that the French Plenipotentiary had received no positive instructions from the 5th of February, and that, after all the delay which Napoleon constantly created, Caulaincourt never had it in his power to answer, categorically, the propositions of the Allies. Napoleon never intended to make peace at Chatillon on the terms proposed. He always hoped that some fortunate event would enable him to obtain more favourable conditions.

On the 18th of March, that is to say, three days after the presentation of this project of a treaty, the Plenipotentiaries of the Allies recorded in the protocol their reasons for rejecting the extraordinary project of the French Minister. For my part, I was convinced, for the reasons I have mentioned, that the Emperor would never agree to sign the conditions proposed in the ultimatum of the Allies, dated the 13th of March, and I remember having expressed that opinion to M. de Talleyrand. I saw him on the 14th, and found him engaged in perusing some intelligence he had just received from the Duke of Vicenza, announcing, as beyond all doubt, the early signature of peace. Caulaincourt had received orders to come to a conclusion. Napoleon, he said, had given him a carte blanche to save the capital, and avoid a battle, by which the last resources of the nation would be endangered. This seemed pretty positive, to be sure; but even this assurance did not, for a moment, alter my opinion. The better to convince me, M. de Talleyrand gave me Caulaincourt's letter to read. After reading it I confidently said, "He will never sign the conditions." M. de Talleyrand could not help thinking me very obstinate in my opinion, for he judged of what the Emperor would do by his situation, while I judged by his character. I told M. de Talleyrand that Caulaincourt might have received written orders to sign; for the sake of showing them to the Plenipotentiaries of the Allies, but that I had no doubt he had been instructed to postpone coming to a conclusion, and to wait for final orders. I added, that I saw no reason to change my opinion, and that I continued to regard the breaking up of the Congress as nearer than appearances seemed to indicate. Accordingly, three days afterwards, the Allies grew tired of the delay and the conferences were broken up. Thus Napoleon sacrificed everything rather than his glory. He fell from a great height, but he never, by his signature, consented to any dismemberment of France.

The Plenipotentiaries of the Allies, convinced that these renewed difficulties and demands had no other object but to gain time, stated that the Allied powers, faithful to their principles, and in conformity with their previous declarations, regarded the negotiations at Chatillon as terminated by the French Government. This rupture of the conferences took place on the 19th of March, six days after the presentation of the ultimatum of the Allied powers. The issue of these long discussions was thus left to be decided by the chances of war, which were not very favourable to the man who boldly contended against armed Europe. The successes of the Allies during the conferences at Chatillon had opened to their view the road to Paris, while Napoleon shrunk from the necessity of signing his own disgrace. In these circumstances was to be found the sole cause of his ruin, and he might have said, "Tout est perdu, fors la gloire." His glory is immortal.

> —[The conviviality and harmony that reigned between the Ministers made the society and Intercourse at Chatillon most agreeable. The diplomatists dined alternately with each other; M. de Caulaincourt liberally passing for all the Ministers, through the French advanced posts, convoys of all the good cheer in epicurean wises, etc., that Paris could afford; nor was female society wanting to complete the charm and banish ennui from the Chatillon Congress, which I am sure will be long recollected with sensations of pleasure by all the Plenipotentiaries there engaged (Memoirs of Lord Burghersh).]—

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

1814

Curious conversation between General Reynier and the Emperor Alexander—Napoleon repulses the Prussians—The Russians at Fontainebleau—Battle of Brienne—Sketch of the campaign of France—Supper after the battle of Champ Aubert—Intelligence of the arrival of tho Duc d'Angouleme and the Comte d'Artois in France—The battle of the ravens and the eagle—Battle of Craonne—Departure of the Pope and the Spanish Princes—Capture of a convoy—Macdonald at the Emperor's headquarters—The inverted cipher.

I was always persuaded, and everything I have since seen has confirmed my opinion, that the Allies entering France had no design of restoring the House of Bourbon, or of imposing any Government whatever on the French people. They came to destroy and not to found. That which they wished to destroy from the commencement of their success was Napoleon's supremacy, in order to prevent the future invasions with which they believed Europe would still be constantly threatened. If, indeed, I had entertained any doubt on this subject it would have been banished by the account I heard of General Reynier's conversation with the Emperor Alexander. That General, who was made prisoner at Leipsic, was exchanged, and returned to France. In the beginning of February 1814 he passed through Troves, where the Emperor Alexander then was. Reynier expressed a desire to be allowed to pay his respects to the Emperor, and to thank him for having restored him to liberty. He was received with that affability of manner which was sometimes affected by the Russian monarch.

On his arrival at Paris General Reynier called at the Duc de Rovigo's, where I had dined that day, and where he still was when I arrived. He related in my hearing the conversation to which I have alluded, and stated that it had all the appearance of sincerity on the Emperor's part. Having asked Alexander whether he had any instructions for Napoleon, as the latter, on learning that he had seen his Majesty would not fail to ask him many questions, he replied that he had nothing particular to communicate to him. Alexander added that he was Napoleon's friend, but that he had, personally, much reason—to complain of his conduct; that the Allies would have nothing more to do with him; that they had no intention of forcing any Sovereign upon France; but that they would no longer acknowledge Napoleon as Emperor of the French. "For my part," said Alexander, "I can no longer place any confidence in him. He has deceived me too often." In reply to this Reynier made some remarks dictated by his attachment and fidelity to Bonaparte. He observed that Napoleon was acknowledged as Sovereign of France by every treaty. "But," added Reynier, "if you should persist in forcing him to resign the supreme power, whom will you put in his place?"—"Did you not choose him; why then can you not choose some one else to govern you? I repeat that we do not intend to force any one upon you but we will have no more to do with Napoleon."

Several Generals were then named; and after Reynier had explained the great difficulties which would oppose any such choice, Alexander interrupted him saying, "But, General, there is Bernadotte.' Has he not been voluntarily chosen Prince Royal of Sweden; may he not also be raised to the same rank in France? He is your countryman; surely then you may choose him, since the Swedes took him, though a foreigner." General Reynier, who was a man of firm character, started some objections, which I thought at the time well founded; and Alexander put an end to the conversation by saving, rather in a tone of dissatisfaction, "Well, General, the fate of arms will decide."

The campaign of France forced Napoleon to adopt a kind of operations quite new to him. He had been accustomed to attack; but he was now obliged to stand on his defence, so that, instead of having to execute a previously conceived plan, as when, in the Cabinet of the Tuileries, he traced out to me the field of Marengo, he had now to determine his movements according to those of his numerous enemies. When the Emperor arrived at Chalons-sur-Marne the Prussian army was advancing by the road of Lorraine. He drove it back beyond St. Dizier. Meanwhile the Grand Austro-Russian army passed the Seine and the Yonne at Montereau, and even sent forward a corps which advanced as far as Fontainebleau. Napoleon then made a movement to the right in order to drive back the troops which threatened to march on Paris, and by a curious chance he came up with the troops in the very place where he passed the boyish years in which he cherished what then seemed wild and fabulous dreams of his future fate. What thoughts and recollections must have crowded on his mind when he found himself an Emperor and a King, at the head of a yet powerful army, in the chateau of the Comte de Brienne, to whom he had so often paid his homage! It was at Brienne that he had said to me, thirty-four years before, "I will do these Frenchman all the harm I can." Since then he had certainly changed his mind; but it might be said that fate persisted in forcing the man to realise the design of the boy in spite of himself. No sooner had Napoleon revisited Brienne as a conqueror than he was repulsed and hurried to his fall, which became every moment more certain.'

I shall not enter into any details of the campaign of France, because the description of battles forms no part of my plan. Still, I think it indispensable briefly to describe Napoleon's miraculous activity from the time of his leaving Paris to the entrance of the Allies into the capital. Few successful campaigns have enabled our Generals and the French army to reap so much glory as they gained during this great reverse of fortune. For it is possible to triumph without honour, and to fall with glory. The chances of the war were not doubtful, but certainly the numerous hosts of the Allies could never have anticipated so long and brilliant a resistance. The theatre of the military operations soon approached so near to Paris that the general eagerness for news from the army was speedily satisfied, and when any advantage was gained by the Emperor his partisans saw the enemy already repulsed from the French territory. I was not for a moment deceived by these illusions, as I well knew the determination and the resources of the Allied sovereigns. Besides, events were so rapid and various in this war of

extermination that the guns of the Invalides announcing a victory were sometimes immediately followed by the distant rolling of artillery, denoting the enemy's near approach to the capital.

The Emperor left Paris on the 25th of January, at which time the Emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia were assembled at Langres. Napoleon rejoined his Guard at Vitry-le-Francais. On the second day after his departure he drove before him the Prussian army, which he had forced to evacuate St. Dizier. Two days after this the battle of Brienne was fought, and on the 1st of February between 70,000 and 80,000 French and Allied troops stood face to face. On this occasion the commanders on both sides were exposed to personal danger, for Napoleon had a horse killed under him, and a Cossack fell dead by the side of Marshal Blucher.

A few days after this battle Napoleon entered Troves, where he stayed but a short time, and then advanced to Champaubert. At the latter place was fought the battle which bears its name. The Russians were defeated, General Alsufieff was made prisoner, and 2000 men and 30 guns fell into the hands of the French. After this battle the Emperor was under such a delusion as to his situation that while supping with Berthier, Marmont, and his prisoner, General Alsufieff, the Emperor said, "Another such victory as this, gentlemen, and I shall be on the Vistula."

Finding that no one replied, and reading in the countenances of his Marshals that they did not share his hopes, "I see how it is," he added, "every one is growing tired of war; there is no more enthusiasm. The sacred fire is extinct." Then rising from the table, and stepping up to General Drouot, with the marked intention of paying him a compliment which should at the same time convey a censure on the Marshals, "General," said he, patting him on the shoulder, "we only want a hundred men like you, and we should succeed." Drouot replied, with great presence of mind and modesty, "Rather say a hundred thousand, Sire." This anecdote was related to me by the two principal persons who were present on the occasion.

Napoleon soon began to have other subjects of disquietude besides the fate of battles. He was aware that since the beginning of February the Duc d'Angouleme had arrived at St. Jean de Luz, whence he had addressed s proclamation to the French armies in the name of his uncle, Louis XVIII.; and he speedily heard of the Comte d'Artois' arrival at Yesoul, on the 21st of February, which place he did not leave until the 16th of March following.

Meanwhile hostilities were maintained with increased vigor over a vast line of operations. How much useless glory did not our soldiers gain in these conflicts! In spite of prodigies of valour the enemy's masses advanced, and gradually concentrated, so that this war might be compared to the battles of the ravens and the eagle in the Alps. The eagle slays hundreds of his assailants—every blow of his beak is the death of an enemy, but still the vultures return to the charge, and press upon the eagle until they destroy him.

As the month of February drew to its close the Allies were in retreat on several points, but their retreat was not a rout. After experiencing reverses they fell back without disorder, and retired behind the Aube, where they rallied and obtained numerous reinforcements, which daily arrived, and which soon enabled them to resume the offensive.

Still Napoleon continued astonishing Europe, leagued as it was against him. At Craonne, on the 7th of March, he destroyed Blucher's corps in a severe action, but the victory was attended by great loss to the conqueror. Marshal Victor was seriously wounded, as well as Generals Grouchy and La Ferriere.

While Napoleon was resisting the numerous enemies assembled to destroy him it might be said that he was also his own enemy, either from false calculation or from negligence with respect to his illustrious prisoners, who, on his departure from Paris, had not yet been sent to their States. The Pope was then at Fontainebleau, and the Princes of Spain at Valencay. The Pope, however, was the first to be allowed to depart. Surely Bonaparte could never have thought of the service which the Pope might have rendered him at Rome, into which Murat's troops would never have dared to march had his Holiness been present there. With regard to the Spanish Princes Napoleon must have been greatly blinded by confidence in his fortune to have so long believed it possible to retain in France those useless trophies of defeated pretensions. It was, besides, so easy to get rid of the exiles of Valencay by sending them back to the place from whence they had been brought! It was so natural to recall with all speed the troops from the south when our armies in Germany began to be repulsed on the Rhine and even driven into France! With the aid of these veteran troops Napoleon and his genius might have again turned the scale of fortune. But Napoleon reckoned on the nation, and he was wrong, for the nation was tired of him. His cause had ceased to be the cause of France.

The latter days of March were filled up by a series of calamities to Napoleon. On the 23d the rear-guard of the French army suffered considerable loss. To hear of attacks on his rear-guard must indeed have been mortifying to Napoleon, whose advanced guards had been so long accustomed to open the

path of victory! Prince Schwartzenberg soon passed the Aube and marched upon Vitry and Chalons. Napoleon, counting on the possibility of defending Paris, threw himself, with the velocity of the eagle, on Schwartzenberg's rear by passing by Doulevant and Bar- sur-Aube. He pushed forward his advanced guards to Chaumont, and there saw the Austrian army make a movement which he took to be a retreat; but it was no such thing. The movement was directed on Paris, while Blucher, who had re-occupied Chalons-sur-Maine, marched to meet Prince Schwartzenberg, and Napoleon, thinking to cut off their retreat, was himself cut off from the possibility of returning to Paris. Everything then depended on the defence of Paris, or, to speak more correctly, it seemed possible, by sacrificing the capital, to prolong for a few days the existence of the phantom of the Empire which was rapidly vanishing. On the 26th was fought the battle of Fere Champenoise, where, valour yielding to numbers, Marshals Marmont and Mortier were obliged to retire upon Sezanne after sustaining considerable loss.

It was on the 26th of March, and I beg the reader to bear this date in mind, that Napoleon suffered a loss which, in the circumstances in which he stood, was irreparable. At the battle of Fere Champenoise the Allies captured a convoy consisting of nearly all the remaining ammunition and stores of the army, a vast quantity of arms, caissons, and equipage of all kinds. The whole became the prey of the Allies, who published a bulletin announcing this important capture. A copy of this order of the day fell into the hands of Marshal Macdonald, who thought that such news ought immediately to be communicated to the Emperor. He therefore repaired himself to the headquarters of Napoleon, who was then preparing to recover Vitre-le-Francais, which was occupied by the Prussians. The Marshal, with the view of dissuading the Emperor from what he considered a vain attempt, presented him with the bulletin.

This was on the morning of the 27th: Napoleon would not believe the news. "No!" said he to the Marshal, "you are deceived, this cannot be true." Then perusing the bulletin with more attention. "Here," said he, "look yourself. This is the 27th, and the bulletin is dated the 29th. You see the thing is impossible. The bulletin is forged!" The Marshal, who had paid more attention to the news than to its date, was astounded. But having afterwards shown the bulletin to Drouot, that General said, "Alas! Marshal, the news is but too true. The error of the date is merely a misprint, the 9 is a 6 inverted!" On what trifles sometimes depend the most important events. An inverted cipher sufficed to flatter Bonaparte's illusion, or at least the illusions which he wished to maintain among his most distinguished lieutenants, and to delay the moment when they should discover that the loss they deplored was too certain. On that very day the Empress left Paris.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

1814.

The men of the Revolution and the men of the Empire—The Council of Regency—Departure of the Empress from Paris—Marmont and Mortier—Joseph's flight—Meeting at Marmont's hotel—Capitulation of Paris—Marmont's interview with the Emperor at Fontainebleau—Colonels Fabvier and Denys—The Royalist cavalcade—Meeting at the hotel of the Comte de Morfontaine—M. de Chateaubriand and his pamphlet—Deputation to the Emperor Alexander—Entrance of the Allied sovereigns into Paris—Alexander lodged in M. Talleyrand's hotel—Meetings held there—The Emperor Alexander's declaration—My appointment as Postmaster-General—Composition of the Provisional Government—Mistake respecting the conduct of the Emperor of Austria—Caulaincourt's mission from Napoleon—His interview with the Emperor Alexander—Alexander's address to the deputation of the Senate—M. de Caulaincourt ordered to quit the capital.

The grandees of the Empire and the first subjects of Napoleon were divided into two classes totally distinct from each other. Among these patronised men were many who had been the first patrons of Bonaparte and had favoured his accession to Consular power. This class was composed of his old friends and former companions-in-arms. The others, who may be called the children of the Empire, did not carry back their thoughts to a period which they had not seen. They had never known anything but Napoleon and the Empire, beyond which the sphere of their ideas did not extend, while among Napoleon's old brothers-in-arms it was still remembered that there was once a country, a France, before they had helped to give it a master. To this class of men France was not confined to the narrow circle of the Imperial headquarters, but extended to the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the two

oceans.

On the other hand, numbers of ardent and adventurous young men, full of enthusiasm for Bonaparte, had passed from the school to the camp. They were entirely opposed to Napoleon's downfall, because with his power would vanish those dreams of glory and fortune which had captivated their imaginations. These young men, who belonged to the class which I have denominated children of the Empire, were prepared to risk and commit everything to prolong the political life of their Emperor.

The distinction I have drawn between what may be called the men of France and the men of the Empire was not confined to the army, but was equally marked among the high civil functionaries of the State. The old Republicans could not possibly regard Napoleon with the same eyes as those whose elevation dated only from Napoleon; and the members of assemblies anterior to the 18th Brumaire could not entertain the same ideas as those whose notions of national franchises and public rights were derived from their seats as auditors in the Council of State. I know not whether this distinction between the men of two different periods has been before pointed out, but it serves to explain the conduct of many persons of elevated rank during the events of 1814. With regard to myself, convinced as I was of the certainty of Napoleon's fall, I conceived that the first duty of every citizen was claimed by his country; and although I may incur censure, I candidly avow that Napoleon's treatment of me during the last four years of his power was not without some influence on my prompt submission to the Government which succeeded his. I, however, declare that this consideration was not the sole nor the most powerful motive of my conduct. Only those who were in Paris at the period of the capitulation can form an idea of the violence of party feeling which prevailed there both for and against Napoleon, but without the name of the Bourbons ever being pronounced. They were almost unknown to the new generation, forgotten by many of the old, and feared by the conventionalists; at that time they possessed only the frail support of the coteries of the Faubourg St. Germain, and some remains of the emigration. But as it is certain that the emigrants could offer only vain demonstrations and wishes in support of the old family of our Kings, they did little to assist the restoration of the Bourbons. Another thing equally certain is, that they alone, by their follies and absurd pretensions, brought about the return of Bonaparte and the second exile of Louis XVIII. in the following year.

On the 28th of March was convoked an extraordinary Council of Regency, at which Maria Louisa presided. The question discussed was, whether the Empress should remain in Paris or proceed to Blois. Joseph Bonaparte strongly urged her departure, because a letter from the Emperor had directed that in case of Paris being threatened the Empress-Regent and all the Council of Regency should retire to Blois. The Arch-Chancellor and the majority of the Council were of the same opinion, but one of the most influential members of the Council observed to Joseph that the letter referred to had been written under circumstances very different from those then existing, and that it was important the Empress should remain in Paris, where she would, of course, obtain from the Emperor her father and the Allied sovereigns, more advantageous conditions than if she were fifty leagues from Paris. The adoption of this opinion would only have retarded for a few days a change which had become inevitable; nevertheless it might have given rise to great difficulties. It must be admitted that for the interests of Napoleon it was the wisest counsel that could be suggested. However, it was overruled by Joseph's advice.

M. de Talleyrand, as a member of the Council of Regency, also received the order to quit Paris on the 30th of March. At this period I was at his house every day. When I went to him that day I was told he had started. However I went up, and remained some time in his hotel with several of his friends who had met there. We soon saw him return, and for my part I heard with satisfaction that they had not allowed him to pass the barriers. It was said then, and it has been repeated since, that M. de Talleyrand was not a stranger to the gentle violence used towards him. The same day of this visit to M. de Talleyrand I also went to see the Duc de Rovigo (Savary), with the friendly object of getting him to remain, and to profit by his position to prevent disturbances. He refused without hesitating, as he only thought of the Emperor. I found him by his fireside, where there was a large file, in which he was burning all the papers which might have compromised every one who had served his ministry (Police). I congratulated him sincerely on this loyal occupation: fire alone could purify the mass of filth and denunciations which encumbered the police archives.

On the departure of the Empress many persons expected a popular movement in favour of a change of Government, but the capital remained tranquil. Many of the inhabitants, indeed, thought of defence, not for the sake of preserving Napoleon's government, but merely from that ardour of feeling which belongs to our national character. Strong indignation was excited by the thought of seeing foreigners masters of Paris—a circumstance of which there had been no example since the reign of Charles VII. Meanwhile the critical moment approached. On the 29th of March Marshals Marmont and Mortier fell back to defend the approaches to Paris. During the night the barriers were consigned to the care of the National Guard, and not a foreigner, not even one of their agents, was allowed to enter the capital.

At daybreak on the 30th of March the whole population of Paris was awakened by the report of cannon, and the plain of St. Denis was soon covered with Allied troops, who were debouching upon it from all points. The heroic valour of our troops was unavailing against such a numerical superiority. But the Allies paid dearly for their entrance into the French capital. The National Guard, under the command of Marshal Moncey, and the pupils of the Polytechnic School transformed into artillery men, behaved in a manner worthy of veteran troops. The conduct of Marmont on that day alone would suffice to immortalise him. The corps he commanded was reduced to between 7000 and 8000 infantry and 800 cavalry, with whom, for the space of twelve hours he maintained his ground against an army of 55,000 men, of whom it is said 14,000 were killed, wounded, and taken. Marshal Marmont put himself so forward in the heat of the battle that a dozen of men were killed by the bayonet at his side, and his hat was perforated by a ball. But what was to be done against overwhelming numbers!

In this state of things the Duke of Ragusa made known his situation to Joseph Bonaparte, who authorised him to negotiate.

Joseph's answer is so important in reference to the events which succeeded that I will transcribe it here.

> If the Dukes of Ragusa and Treviso can no longer hold out, they are authorised to negotiate with Prince Schwartzenberg and the Emperor of Russia, who are before them.
>
> They will fall back on the Loire.
>
> (Signed) JOSEPH
>
> Montmartre, 30th March 1814, 12 oclock

It was not until a considerable time after the receipt of this formal authority that Marmont and Mortier ceased to make a vigorous resistance against the Allied army, for the suspension of arms was not agreed upon until four in the afternoon. It was not waited for by Joseph; at a quarter past twelve—that is to say, immediately after he had addressed to Marmont the authority just alluded to Joseph repaired to the Bois de Boulogne to regain the Versailles road, and from thence to proceed to Rambouillet. The precipitate flight of Joseph astonished only those who did not know him. I know for a fact that several officers attached to his staff were much dissatisfied at his alacrity on this occasion.

In these circumstances what was to be done but to save Paris, which there was no possibility of defending two hours longer. Methinks I still see Marmont when, on the evening of the 30th of March, he returned from the field of battle to his hotel in the Rue de Paradis, where I was waiting for him, together with about twenty other persons, among whom were MM. Perregaua and Lafitte. When he entered he was scarcely recognisable: he had a beard of eight days' growth; the greatcoat which covered his uniform was in tatters, and he was blackened with powder from head to foot. We considered what was best to be done, and all insisted on the necessity of signing a capitulation. The Marshal must recollect that the exclamation of every one about him was, "France must be saved." MM. Perregaus and Lafitte delivered their opinions in a very decided way, and it will readily be conceived how great was the influence of two men who were at the head of the financial world. They alleged that the general wish of the Parisians, which nobody had a better opportunity of knowing than themselves, was decidedly averse to a protracted conflict, and that France was tired of the yoke of Bonaparte. This last declaration gave a wider range to the business under consideration. The question was no longer confined to the capitulation of Paris, but a change in the government was thought of, and the name of the Bourbons was pronounced for the first time. I do not recollect which of us it was who, on hearing mention made of the possible recall of the old dynasty, remarked how difficult it would be to bring about a restoration without retrograding to the past. But I think I am perfectly correct in stating that M. Lafitte said, "Gentlemen, we shall have nothing to fear if we have a good constitution which will guarantee the rights of all." The majority of the meeting concurred in this wise opinion, which was not without its influence on Marshal Marmont.

During this painful meeting an unexpected incident occurred. One of the Emperor's aides de camp arrived at Marmont's. Napoleon, being informed of the advance of the Allies on Paris, had marched with the utmost speed from the banks of the Marne on the road of Fontainebleau. In the evening he was in person at Froidmanteau, whence he despatched his envoy to Marshal Marmont. From the language of the aide de camp it was easy to perceive that the state of opinion at the Imperial headquarters was very different from that which prevailed among the population of Paris. The officer expressed indignation at the very idea of capitulating, and he announced with inconceivable confidence the approaching arrival of Napoleon in Paris, which he yet hoped to save from the occupation of the enemy. The officer informed us that Napoleon trusted to the people rising in spite of the capitulation, and that they would unpave the streets to stone the Allies on their entrance. I ventured to dissent from this absurd idea of defence, and I observed that it was madness to suppose that Paris could resist the

numerous troops who were ready to enter on the following day; that the suspension of arms had been consented to by the Allies only to afford time for drawing up a more regular capitulation, and that the armistice could not be broken without trampling on all the laws of honour. I added that the thoughts of the people were directed towards a better future; that the French were tired of a despotic Government and of the distress to which continual war had reduced trade and industry; "for," said I, "when a nation is sunk to such a state of misery its hopes can only be directed towards the future; it is natural they should be so directed, even without reflection." Most of the individuals present concurred in my opinion, and the decision of the meeting was unanimous. Marshal Marmont has since said to me, "I have been blamed, my dear Bourrienne: but you were with me on the 30th of March. You were a witness to the wishes expressed by a portion of the principal inhabitants of Paris. I acted as I was urged to do only because I considered the meeting to be composed of men entirely disinterested, and who had nothing to expect from the return of the Bourbons."

Such is a correct statement of the facts which some persons have perverted with the view of enhancing Napoleon's glory. With respect to those versions which differ from mine I have only one comment to offer, which is, that I saw and heard what I describe.

The day after the capitulation of Paris—Marmont went in the evening to see the Emperor at Fontainebleau. He supped with him. Napoleon praised his defence of Paris.. After supper the Marshal rejoined his corps at Essonne, and six hours after the Emperor arrived there to visit the lines. On leaving Paris Marmont had left Colonels Fabvier and Dent's to direct the execution of the capitulation. These officers joined the Emperor and the Marshal as they were proceeding up the banks of the river at Essonne. They did not disguise the effect which the entrance of the Allies had produced in Paris. At this intelligence the Emperor was deeply mortified, and he returned immediately to Fontainebleau, leaving the Marshal at Essonne.

At daybreak on the 31st of March Paris presented a novel and curious spectacle. No sooner had the French troops evacuated the capital than the principal streets resounded with cries of "Down with Bonaparte!"— "No conscription!"—"No consolidated duties (droits reunis)!" With these cries were mingled that of "The Bourbons for ever!" but this latter cry was not repeated so frequently as the others: in general I remarked that the people gaped and listened with a sort of indifference. As I had taken a very active part in all that had happened during some preceding days I was particularly curious to study what might be called the physiognomy of Paris. This was the second opportunity which had offered itself for such a study, and I now saw the people applaud the fall of the man whom they had received with enthusiasm after the 18th Brumaire. The reason was, that liberty was then hoped for, as it was hoped for in 1814. I went out early in the morning to see the numerous groups of people who had assembled in the streets. I saw women tearing their handkerchiefs and distributing the fragments as the emblems of the revived lily. That same morning I met on the Boulevards, and some hours afterwards on the Place Louis XV., a party of gentlemen who paraded the streets of the capital proclaiming the restoration of the Bourbons and shouting, "Vive le Roi!" and "Vive Louis XVIII!" At their head I recognised MM. Sosthenes de la Rochefoucauld, Comte de Froissard, the Duc de Luxembourg, the Duc de Crussol, Seymour, etc. The cavalcade distributed white cockades in passing along, and was speedily joined by a numerous crowd, who repaired to the Place Vendome. The scene that was acted there is well known, and the enthusiasm of popular joy could scarcely excuse the fury that was directed against the effigy of the man whose misfortunes, whether merited or not, should have protected him from such outrages. These excesses served, perhaps more than is generally supposed, to favour the plans of the leaders of the Royalist party, to whom M. Nesselrode had declared that before he would pledge himself to further their views he must have proofs that they were seconded by the population of Paris.

I was afterwards informed by an eye-witness of what took place on the evening of the 31st of March in one of the principal meetings of the Royalists, which was held in the hotel of the Comte de Morfontaine, who acted as president on the occasion. Amidst a chaos of abortive propositions and contradictory motions M. Sosthenes de la Rochefoucauld proposed that a deputation should be immediately sent to the Emperor Alexander to express to him the wish of the meeting. This motion was immediately approved, and the mover was chosen to head the deputation. On leaving the hotel the deputation met M. de Chateaubriand, who had that very day been, as it were, the precursor of the restoration, by publishing his admirable manifesto, entitled "Bonaparte and the Bourbons." He was invited to join the deputation; but nothing could overcome his diffidence and induce him to speak. On arriving at the hotel in the Rue St. Florentin the deputation was introduced to Count Nesselrode, to whom M. Sosthenes de la Rochefoucauld briefly explained its object; he spoke of the wishes of the meeting and of the manifest desire of Paris and of France. He represented the restoration of the Bourbons as the only means of securing the peace of Europe; and observed, in conclusion, that as the exertions of the day must have been very fatiguing to the Emperor, the deputation would not solicit the favour of being introduced to him, but would confidently rely on the good faith of his Imperial Majesty.

"I have just left the Emperor," replied M. Nesselrode, "and can pledge myself for his intentions. Return to the meeting and announce to the French people that in compliance with their wishes his Imperial Majesty will use all his influence to restore the crown to the legitimate monarch: his Majesty Louis XVIII. shall reascend the throne of France." With this gratifying intelligence the deputation returned to the meeting in the Rue d'Anjou.

There is no question that great enthusiasm was displayed on the entrance of the Allies into Paris. It may be praised or blamed, but the fact cannot be denied. I closely watched all that was passing, and I observed the expression of a sentiment which I had long anticipated when, after his alliance with the daughter of the Caesars, the ambition of Bonaparte increased in proportion as it was gratified: I clearly foresaw Napoleon's fall. Whoever watched the course of events during the last four years of the Empire must have observed, as I did, that from the date of Napoleon's marriage with Maria Louisa the form of the French Government became daily more and more tyrannical and oppressive. The intolerable height which this evil had attained is evident from the circumstance that at the end of 1813 the Legislative Body, throwing aside the mute character which it had hitherto maintained, presumed to give a lecture to him who had never before received a lecture from any one. On the 31st of March it was recollected what had been the conduct of Bonaparte on the occasion alluded to, and those of the deputies who remained in Paris related how the gendarmes had opposed their entrance into the hall of the Assembly. All this contributed wonderfully to irritate the public mind against Napoleon. He had become master of France by the sword, and the sword being sheathed, his power was at an end, for no popular institution identified with the nation the new dynasty which he hoped to found. The nation admired but did not love Napoleon, for it is impossible to love what is feared, and he had done nothing to claim the affections of France.

I was present at all the meetings and conferences which were held at M de Talleyrand's hotel, where the Emperor Alexander had taken up his residence. Of all the persons present at these meetings M. de Talleyrand was most disposed to retain Napoleon at the head of the Government, with restrictions on the exercise of his power. In the existing state of things it was only possible to choose one of three courses: first, to make peace with Napoleon, with the adoption of proper securities against him; second, to establish a Regency; and third, to recall the Bourbons.

On the 13th of March I witnessed the entrance of the Allied sovereigns into Paris, and after the procession had passed the new street of the Luxembourg I repaired straight to M. de Talleyrand's hotel, which I reached before the Emperor Alexander, who arrived at a quarter-past one. When his Imperial Majesty entered M. de Talleyrand's drawing-room most of the persons assembled, and particularly the Abbe de Pradt, the Abbe de Montesquieu, and General Dessolles, urgently demanded the restoration of the Bourbons. The Emperor did not come to any immediate decision. Drawing me into the embrasure of a window, which looked upon the street, he made some observations which enabled me to guess what would be his determination. "M. de Bourrienne," said he, "you have been the friend of Napoleon, and so have I. I was his sincere friend; but there is no possibility of remaining at peace with a man of such bad faith." These last words opened my eyes; and when the different propositions which were made came under discussion I saw plainly that Bonaparte, in making himself Emperor, had made up the bed for the Bourbons.

A discussion ensued on the three possible measures which I have above mentioned, and which were proposed by the Emperor Alexander himself. I thought, if I may so express myself, that his Majesty was playing a part, when, pretending to doubt the possibility of recalling the Bourbons, which he wished above all things, he asked M. de Talleyrand what means he proposed to employ for the attainment of that object? Besides the French, there were present at this meeting the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, Prince Schwartzenberg, M. Nesselrode, M. Pozzo-di-Borgo, and Prince Liechtenstein. During the discussion Alexander walked about with some appearance of agitation. "Gentlemen," said, he, addressing us in an elevated tone of voice, "you know that it was not I who commenced the war; you know that Napoleon came to attack me in my dominions. But we are not drawn here by the thirst of conquest or the desire of revenge. You have seen the precautions I have taken to preserve your capital, the wonder of the arts, from the horrors of pillage, to which the chances of war would have consigned it. Neither my Allies nor myself are engaged in a war of reprisals; and I should be inconsolable if any violence were committed on your magnificent city. We are not waging war against France, but against Napoleon, and the enemies of French liberty. William, and you, Prince" (here the Emperor turned towards the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzenberg, who represented the Emperor of Austria), "you can both bear testimony that the sentiments I express are yours." Both bowed assent to this observation of Alexander, which his Majesty several times repeated in different words. He insisted that France should be perfectly free; and declared that as soon as the wishes of the country were understood, he and his Allies would support them, without seeking to favour any particular government.

The Abbe de Pradt then declared, in a tone of conviction, that we were all Royalists, and that the

sentiments of France concurred with ours. The Emperor Alexander, adverting to the different governments which might be suitable to France, spoke of the maintenance of Bonaparte on the throne, the establishment of a Regency, the choice of Bernadotte, and the recall of the Bourbons. M. de Talleyrand next spoke, and I well remember his saying to the Emperor of Russia, " Sire, only one of two things is possible. We must either have Bonaparte or Louis XVIII. Bonaparte, if you can support him; but you cannot, for you are not alone.... We will not have another soldier in his stead. If we want a soldier, we will keep the one we have; he is the first in the world. After him any other who may be proposed would not have ten men to support him. I say again, Sire, either Bonaparte or Louis XVIII. Anything else is an intrigue." These remarkable words of the Prince de Benevento produced on the mind of Alexander all the effect we could hope for. Thus the question was simplified, being reduced now to only two alternatives; and as it was evident that Alexander would have nothing to do with either Napoleon or his family, it was reduced to the single proposition of the restoration of the Bourbons.

On being pressed by us all, with the exception of M. de Talleyrand, who still wished to leave the question undecided between Bonaparte and Louis XVIII., Alexander at length declared that he would no longer treat with Napoleon. When it was represented to him that that declaration referred only to Napoleon personally, and did not extend to his family, he added, "Nor with any member of his family." Thus as early as the 31st of March the restoration of the Bourbons might be considered as decided.

I cannot omit mentioning the hurry with which Laborie, whom M. de Talleyrand appointed Secretary to the Provisional Government, rushed out of the apartment as soon as he got possession of the Emperor Alexander's declaration. He got it printed with such expedition that in the space of an hour it was posted on all the walls in Paris; and it certainly produced an extraordinary effect. As yet nothing warranted a doubt that Alexander would not abide by his word. The treaty of Paris could not be anticipated; and there was reason to believe that France, with a new Government, would obtain more advantageous conditions than if the Allies had, treated with Napoleon. But this illusion speedily vanished.

On the evening of the 31st of March I returned to M. de Talleyrand's. I again saw the Emperor Alexander, who, stepping up to me, said, "M. de Bourrienne you must take the superintendence of the Post-office department." I could not decline this precise invitation on the part of the Czar; and besides, Lavalette having departed on the preceding day, the business would have been for a time suspended; a circumstance which would have been extremely prejudicial to the restoration which we wished to favour.

I went at once to the hotel in the Rue J. J. Rousseau, where, indeed, I found that not only was there no order to send out the post next day, but that it had been even countermanded. I went that night to the administrators, who yielded to my requests and, seconded by them, next morning I got all the clerks to be at their post. I reorganised the service, and the post went out on the 1st of April as usual. Such are my remembrances of the 31st of March.

A Provisional Government was established, of which M. de Talleyrand was appointed President. The other members were General Beurnonville, Comte Francois de Jaucourt, the Due Dalberg, who had married one of Maria Louisa's ladies of honour, and the Abby de Montesquieu. The place of Chancellor of the Legion of Honour was given to the Abbe de Pradt. Thus there were two abbes among the members of the Provisional Government, and by a singular chance they happened to be the same who had officiated at the mass which was performed in the Champ de Mars on the day of the first federation.

Those who were dissatisfied with the events of the 31st of March now saw no hope but in the possibility that the Emperor of Austria would separate from his Allies, or at least not make common cause with them in favour of the re-establishment of the Bourbons. But that monarch had been brought up in the old policy of his family, and was imbued with the traditional principles of his Cabinet. I know for a fact that the sentiments and intentions of the Emperor of Austria perfectly coincided with those of his Allies. Anxious to ascertain the truth on this subject, I ventured, when in conversation with the Emperor Alexander, to hint at the reports I had heard relative to the cause of the Emperor of Austria's absence. I do not recollect the precise words of his Majesty's answer, but it enabled me to infer with certainty that Francis II. was in no way averse to the overthrow of his son-in-law, and that his absence from the scene of the discussions was only occasioned by a feeling of delicacy natural enough in his situation.

Caulaincourt, who was sent by Napoleon to the headquarters of the Emperor Alexander, arrived there on the night of the 30th of March. He, however, did not obtain an interview with the Czar until after his Majesty had received the Municipal Council of Paris, at the head of which was M. de Chabrol. At first Alexander appeared somewhat surprised to see the Municipal Council, which he did not receive exactly in the way that was expected; but this coldness was merely momentary, and he afterwards

addressed the Council in a very gracious way, though he dropped no hint of his ulterior intentions.

Alexander, who entertained a personal regard for Caulaincourt, received him kindly in his own character, but not as the envoy of Napoleon. "You have come too late," said the Czar. "It is all over. I can say nothing to you at present. Go to Paris, and I will see you there." These words perfectly enlightened Caulaincourt as to the result of his mission. His next interview with the Emperor Alexander at M. de Talleyrand's did not take place until after the declaration noticed in my last chapter. The conversation they had together remained a secret, for neither Alexander nor the Duke of Vicenza mentioned it; but there was reason to infer, from some words which fell from the Emperor Alexander, that he had received Caulaincourt rather as a private individual than as the ambassador of Napoleon, whose power, indeed, he could not recognise after his declaration. The Provisional Government was not entirely pleased with Caulaincourt's presence in Paris, and a representation was made to the Russian Emperor on the subject. Alexander concurred in the opinion of the Provisional Government, which was expressed through the medium of the Abbe de Pradt. M. de Caulaincourt, therefore, at the wish of the Czar, returned to the Emperor, then at Fontainebleau.

## CHAPTER, XXXV.

1814.

Situation of Bonaparte during the events of the 30th and 31st of March—His arrival at Fontainebleau—Plan of attacking Paris—Arrival of troops at Fontainebleau—The Emperor's address to the Guard—Forfeiture pronounced by the Senate—Letters to Marmont—Correspondence between Marmont and Schwartzenberg—Macdonald informed of the occupation of Paris—Conversation between the Emperor and Macdonald at Fontainebleau—Beurnonville's letter—Abdication on condition of a Regency—Napoleon's wish to retract his act of abdication—Macdonald Ney, and Caulaincourt sent to Paris—Marmont released from his promise by Prince Schwartzenberg.

On the morning of the 30th of March, while the battle before the walls of Paris was at its height, Bonaparte was still at Troyes. He quitted that town at ten o'clock, accompanied only by Bertrand, Caulaincourt, two aides de camp, and two orderly officers. He was not more than two hours in traveling the first ten leagues, and he and his slender escort performed the journey without changing horses, and without even alighting. They arrived at Sens at one o'clock in the afternoon. Everything was in such confusion that it was impossible to prepare a suitable mode of conveyance for the Emperor. He was therefore obliged to content himself with a wretched cariole, and in this equipage, about four in the morning, he reached Froidmanteau, about four leagues from Paris. It was there that the Emperor received from General Belliard, who arrived at the head of a column of artillery, the first intelligence of the battle of Paris. He heard the news with an air of composure, which was probably affected to avoid discouraging those about him. He walked for about a quarter of an hour on the high road, and it was after that promenade that he sent Caulaincourt to Paris. Napoleon afterwards went to the house of the postmaster, where he ordered his maps to be brought to him, and, according to custom, marked the different positions of the enemy's troops with pine, the heads of which were touched with wax of different colours. After this description of work, which Napoleon did every day, or sometimes several times a day, he repaired to Fontainebleau, where he arrived at six in the morning. He did not order the great apartments of the castle to be opened, but went up to his favourite little apartment, where he shut himself up, and remained alone during the whole of the 31st of March.

In the evening the Emperor sent for the Duke of Ragusa, who had just arrived at Essonne with his troops. The Duke reached Fontainebleau between three and four o'clock on the morning of the 1st of April. Napoleon then received a detailed account of the events of the 30th from Marmont, on whose gallant conduct before Paris he bestowed much praise.

All was gloom and melancholy at Fontainebleau, yet the Emperor still retained his authority, and I have been informed that he deliberated for some time as to whether he should retire behind the Loire, or immediately hazard a bold stroke upon Paris, which would have been much more to his taste than to resign himself to the chances which an uncertain temporising might bring about. This latter thought pleased him; and he was seriously considering his plan of attack when the news of the 31st, and the unsuccessful issue of Caulaincourt's mission, gave him to understand that his situation was more

desperate than he had hitherto imagined.

Meanwhile the heads of his columns, which the Emperor had left at Troves, arrived on the 1st of April at Fontainebleau, the troops having marched fifty leagues in less than three days, one of the most rapid marches ever performed. On the 2d of April Napoleon communicated the events of Paris to the Generals who were about him, recommending them to conceal the news lest it should dispirit the troops, upon whom he yet relied. That day, during an inspection of the troops, which took place in the court of the Palace, Bonaparte assembled the officers of his Guard, and harangued them as follows:

> Soldiers! the enemy has stolen three marches upon us, and has made himself master of Paris. We must drive him thence. Frenchmen, unworthy of the name, emigrants whom we have pardoned, have mounted the white cockade, and joined the enemy. The wretches shall receive the reward due to this new crime. Let us swear to conquer or die, and to enforce respect to the tri-coloured cockade, which has for twenty years accompanied us on the path of glory and honour.

He also endeavoured to induce the Generals to second his mad designs upon Paris, by making them believe that he had made sincere efforts to conclude peace. He assured them that he had expressed to the Emperor Alexander his willingness to purchase it by sacrifices; that he had consented to resign even the conquests made during the Revolution, and to confine himself within the old limits of France. "Alexander," added Napoleon, "refused; and, not content with that refusal, he has leagued himself with a party of emigrants, whom, perhaps, I was wrong in pardoning for having borne arms against France. Through their perfidious insinuations Alexander has permitted the white cockade to be mounted on the capital. We will maintain ours, and in a few days we will march upon Paris. I rely on you."

When the boundless attachment of the Guards to the Emperor is considered it cannot appear surprising that these last words, uttered in an impressive tone, should have produced a feeling of enthusiasm, almost electrical, in all to whom they were addressed. The old companions of the glory of their chief exclaimed with one voice, "Paris! Paris!" But, fortunately, during the night, the Generals having deliberated with each other saw the frightful abyss into which they were about to precipitate France. They therefore resolved to intimate in discreet terms to the Emperor that they would not expose Paris to destruction, so that on the 3d of April, prudent ideas succeeded the inconsiderate enthusiasm of the preceding day.

The wreck of the army assembled at Fontainebleau, which was the remnant of 1,000,000 of troops levied during fifteen months, consisted only of the corps of the Duke of Reggio (Oudinot), Ney, Macdonald, and General Gerard, which 'altogether did not amount to 25,000 men, and which, joined to the remaining 7000 of the Guard, did not leave the Emperor a disposable force of more than 32,000 men. Nothing but madness or despair could have suggested the thought of subduing, with such scanty resources, the foreign masses which occupied and surrounded Paris.

On the 2d of April the Senate published a 'Senatus-consulte', declaring that Napoleon had forfeited the throne, and abolishing the right of succession, which had been established in favour of his family. Furnished with this set, and without awaiting the concurrence of the Legislative Body, which was given next day, the Provisional Government published an address to the French armies. In this address the troops were informed that they were no longer the soldiers of Napoleon, and that the Senate released them from their oaths. These documents were widely circulated at the time, and inserted in all the public journals.

The address of the Senate was sent round to the Marshals, and was of course first delivered to those who were nearest the capital; of this latter number was Marmont, whose allegiance to the Emperor, as we have already seen, yielded only to the sacred interests of his country. Montessuis was directed by the Provisional Government to convey the address to Marmont, and to use such arguments as were calculated to strengthen those sentiments which had triumphed over his dearest personal affections. I gave Montessuis a letter to Marmont, in which I said:

> "MY DEAR FRIEND—An old acquaintance of mine will convey to you the remembrances of our friendship. He will, I trust, influence your resolution: a single word will suffice to induce you to sacrifice all for the happiness of your country. To secure that object you, who are so good a Frenchman and so loyal a knight, will not fear either dangers or obstacles. Your friends expect you, long for you, and I trust will soon embrace you."

Montessuis also took one from General Dessolles, whom the Provisional Government had appointed Governor of the National Guard in the room of Marshal Moncey, who had left Paris on the occupation of the Allies. General Dessolles and I did not communicate to each other our correspondence, but when I afterwards saw the letter of Deasolles I could not help remarking the coincidence of our appeal to Marmont's patriotism. Prince Schwartzenberg also wrote to Marmont to induce him to espouse a clause

which had now become the cause of France. To the Prince's letter Marmont replied, that he was disposed to concur in the union of the army and the people, which would avert all chance of civil war, and stop the effusion of French blood; and that he was ready with his troops to quit the army of the Emperor Napoleon on the condition that his troops might retire with the honours of war, and that the safety and liberty of the Emperor were guaranteed by the Allies.

After Prince Schwartzenberg acceded to these conditions Marmont was placed in circumstances which obliged him to request that he might be released from his promise.

I happened to learn the manner in which Marshal Macdonald was informed of the taking of Paris. He had been two days without any intelligence from the Emperor, when he received an order in the handwriting of Berthier, couched in the following terms: "The Emperor desires that you halt wherever you may receive this order." After Berthier's signature the following words were added as a postscript: "You, of course, know that the enemy is in possession of Paris." When the Emperor thus announced, with apparent negligence, an event which totally changed the face of affairs, I am convinced his object was to make the Marshal believe that he looked upon, that event as less important than it really was. However, this object was not attained, for I recollect having heard Macdonald say that Berthier's singular postscript, and the tone of indifference in which it was expressed, filled him with mingled surprise and alarm. Marshal Macdonald then commanded the rear-guard of the army which occupied the environs of Montereau. Six hours after the receipt of the order here referred to Macdonald received a second order directing him to put his troops in motion, and he learned the Emperor's intention of marching on Paris with all his remaining force.

On receiving the Emperor's second order Macdonald left his corps at Montereau and repaired in haste to Fontainebleau. When he arrived there the Emperor had already intimated to the Generals commanding divisions in the corps assembled at Fontainebleau his design of marching on Paris. Alarmed at this determination the Generals, most of whom had left in the capital their wives, children, and friends, requested that Macdonald would go with them to wait upon Napoleon and endeavour to dissuade him from his intention. "Gentlemen," said the Marshal, "in the Emperor's present situation such a proceeding may displease him. It must be managed cautiously. Leave it to me, gentlemen, I will go to the chateau."

Marshal Macdonald accordingly went to the Palace of Fontainebleau, where the following conversation ensued between him and the Emperor, and I beg the reader to bear in mind that it was related to me by the Marshal himself. As soon as he entered the apartment in which Napoleon was the latter stepped up to him and said, "Well, how are things going on?"— "Very badly, Sire."—"How? . . . badly! . . . What then are the feelings of your army?"—"My army, Sire, is entirely discouraged . . . appalled by the fate of Paris."—"Will not your troops join me in an advance on Paris?"—"Sire, do not think of such a thing. If I were to give such an order to my troops I should run the risk of being disobeyed."—"But what is to be done? I cannot remain as I am; I have yet resources and partisans. It is said that the Allies will no longer treat with me. Well! no matter. I will march on Paris. I will be revenged on the inconstancy of the Parisians and the baseness of the Senate. Woe to the members of the Government they have patched up for the return of their Bourbons; that is what they are looking forward to. But to-morrow I shall place myself at the head of my Guards, and to- morrow we shall be in the Tuileries."

The Marshal listened in silence, and when at length Napoleon became somewhat calm he observed, "Sire, it appears, then, that you are not aware of what has taken place in Paris—of the establishment of a Provisional Government, and—"—"I know it all: and what then?"—"Sire," added the Marshal, presenting a paper to Napoleon, "here is something which will tell you more than I can." Macdonald then presented to him a letter from General Beurnonville, announcing the forfeiture of the Emperor pronounced by the Senate, and the determination of the Allied powers not to treat with Napoleon, or any member of his family. "Marshal," said the Emperor, before he opened the letter, "may this be read aloud?"—"Certainly, Sire." The letter was then handed to Barre, who read it. An individual who was present on the occasion described to me the impression which the reading of the letter produced on Napoleon. His countenance exhibited that violent contraction of the features which I have often remarked when his mind was disturbed. However, he did not lose his self-command, which indeed never forsook him when policy or vanity required that he should retain it; and when the reading of Beurnonville's letter was ended he affected to persist in his intention of marching on Paris. "Sire," exclaimed Macdonald, "that plan must be renounced. Not a sword would be unsheathed to second you in such an enterprise." After this conversation between the Emperor and Macdonald the question of the abdication began to be seriously thought of. Caulaincourt had already hinted to Napoleon that in case of his abdicating personally there was a possibility of inducing the Allies to agree to a Council of Regency. Napoleon then determined to sign the act of abdication, which he himself drew up in the following terms:—

> The Allied powers having declared that the Emperor Napoleon is the only obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he is ready to descend from the throne, to leave France, and even to lay down his life for the welfare of the country, which is inseparable from the rights of his son, those of the Regency of the Empress, and the maintenance of the laws of the Empire. Given at our Palace of Fontainebleau, 2d April 1814. (Signed) NAPOLEON.

After having written this act the Emperor presented it to the Marshals, saying, "Here, gentlemen! are you satisfied?"

This abdication of Napoleon was certainly very useless, but in case of anything occurring to render it a matter of importance the act might have proved entirely illusory. Its meaning might appear unequivocal to the generality of people, but not to me, who was so well initiated in the cunning to which Napoleon could resort when it suited his purpose. It is necessary to observe that Napoleon does not say that "he descends from the throne," but that "he is ready to descend from the throne." This was a subterfuge, by the aid of which he intended to open new negotiations respecting the form and conditions of the Regency of his son, in case of the Allied sovereigns acceding to that proposition. This would have afforded the means of gaining time.

He had not yet resigned all hope, and therefore he joyfully received a piece of intelligence communicated to him by General Allix. The General informed the Emperor that he had met an Austrian officer who was sent by Francis II. to Prince Schwartzenberg, and who positively assured him that all which had taken place in Paris was contrary to the wish of the Emperor of Austria. That this may have been the opinion of the officer is possible, and even probable. But it is certain from the issue of a mission of the Duc de Cadore (Champagny), of which I shall presently speak, that the officer expressed merely his own personal opinion. However, as soon as General Allix had communicated this good news, as he termed it, to Napoleon, the latter exclaimed to the persons who were about him, "I told you so, gentlemen. Francis II. cannot carry his enmity so far as to dethrone his daughter. Vicenza, go and desire the Marshals to return my act of abdication. I will send a courier to the Emperor of Austria."

Thus Bonaparte in his shipwreck looked round for a saving plank, and tried to nurse himself in illusions. The Duke of Vicenza went to Marshals Ney and Macdonald, whom he found just stepping into a carriage to proceed to Paris. Both positively refused to return the act to Caulaincourt, saying, "We are sure of the concurrence of the Emperor of Austria, and we take everything upon ourselves." The result proved that they were better informed than General Allix.

During the conversation with Marshal Macdonald which has just been described the Emperor was seated. When he came to the resolution of signing the abdication he arose and walked once or twice up and down his cabinet. After he had written and signed the act he said, "Gentlemen, the interests of my son, the interests of the army, and above all, the interests of France, must be defended. I therefore appoint as my commissioners to the Allied powers the Duke of Vicenza, the Prince of the Moskowa, and the Duke of Ragusa . . . . Are you satisfied?" added he, after a pause. "I think these interests are consigned to good hands." All present answered, as with one voice. "Yes, Sire." But no sooner was this answer pronounced than the Emperor threw himself upon a small yellow sofa, which stood near the window, and striking his thigh with his hand with a sort of convulsive motion, he exclaimed, "No, gentlemen: I will have no Regency! With my Guards and Marmont's corps I shall be in Paris to-morrow." Ney and Macdonald vainly endeavoured to undeceive him respecting this impracticable design. He rose with marked ill-humour, and rubbing his head, as he was in the habit of doing when agitated, he said in a loud and authoritative tone, "Retire."

The Marshals withdrew, and Napoleon was left alone with Caulaincourt. He told the latter that what had most displeased him in the proceedings which had just taken place was the reading of Beurnonville's letter. "Sire," observed the Duke of Vicenza, "it was by your order that the letter was read."—"That is true . . . . But why was it not addressed directly to me by Macdonald?"—"Sire, the letter was at first addressed to Marshal Macdonald, but the aide de camp who was the bearer of it had orders to communicate its contents to Marmont on passing through Essonne, because Beurnonville did not precisely know where Macdonald would be found." After this brief explanation the Emperor appeared satisfied, and he said to Caulaincourt, "Vicenza, call back Macdonald."

The Duke of Vicenza hastened after the Marshal, whom he found at the end of the gallery of the Palace, and he brought him back to the Emperor. When Macdonald returned to the cabinet the Emperor's warmth had entirely subsided, and he said to him with great composure, "Well, Duke of Tarantum, do you think that the Regency is the only possible thing?"— "Yes, Sire."—"Then I wish you to go with Ney to the Emperor Alexander, instead of Marmont; it is better that he should remain with his corps, to which his presence is indispensable. You will therefore go with Ney. I rely on you. I hope you have entirely forgotten all that has separated us for so long a time."—"Yes, Sire, I have not thought of it

since 1809."—"I am glad of it, Marshal, and I must acknowledge to you that I was in the wrong." While speaking to the Marshal the Emperor manifested unusual emotion. He approached him and pressed his hand in the most affectionate way.

The Emperor's three Commissioners—that is to say, Marshals Macdonald and Ney and the Duke of Vicenza had informed Marmont that they would dine with him as they passed through Essonne, and would acquaint him with all that had happened at Fontainebleau. On their arrival at Essonne the three Imperial Commissioners explained to the Due of Ragusa the object of their mission, and persuaded him to accompany them to the Emperor Alexander. This obliged the Marshal to inform them how he was situated. The negotiations which Marmont had opened and almost concluded with Prince Schwartzenberg were rendered void by the mission which he had joined, and which it was necessary he should himself explain to the Commander of the Austrian army. The three Marshals and the Duke of Vicenza repaired to Petit Bourg, the headquarters of Prince Schwartzenberg, and there the Prince released Marmont from the promise he had given.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

1814.

> Unexpected receipts in the Post-office Department—Arrival of Napoleon's Commissioners at M. de Talleyrand's—Conference of the Marshals with Alexander—Alarming news from Essonne—Marmont's courage—The white cockade and the tri-coloured cockade— A successful stratagem—Three Governments in France—The Duc de Cadore sent by Maria Louisa to the Emperor of Austria—Maria Louisa's proclamation to the French people—Interview between the Emperor of Austria and the Duc de Cadore—The Emperor's protestation of friendship for Napoleon—M. Metternich and M. Stadion—Maria Louisa's departure for Orleans—Blucher's visit to me—Audience of the King of Prussia—His Majesty's reception of Berthier, Clarke, and myself—Bernadotte in Paris—Cross of the Polar Star presented to me by Bernadotte.

After my nomination as Director-General of the Post office the business of that department proceeded as regularly as before. Having learned that a great many intercepted letters had been thrown aside I sent, on the 4th of April, an advertisement to the 'Moniteur', stating that the letters to and from England or other foreign countries which had been lying at the Post-office for more than three years would be forwarded to their respective addresses. This produced to the Post-office a receipt of nearly 300,000 francs, a fact which may afford an idea of the enormous number of intercepted letters.

On the night after the publication of the advertisement I was awakened by an express from the Provisional Government, by which I was requested to proceed with all possible haste to M. de Talleyrand's hotel. I rose, and I set off immediately, and I got there some minutes before the arrival of the Emperor's Commissioners. I went up to the salon on the first floor, which was one of the suite of apartments occupied by the Emperor Alexander. The Marshals retired to confer with the monarch, and it would be difficult to describe the anxiety—or, I may rather say, consternation—which, during their absence, prevailed among some of the members of the Provisional Government and other persons assembled in the salon where I was.

While the Marshals were with Alexander, I learned that they had previously conversed with M. de Talleyrand, who observed to them, "If you succeed in your designs you will compromise all who have met in this hotel since the 1st of April, and the number is not small. For my part, take no account of me, I am willing to be compromised." I had passed the evening of this day with M. de Talleyrand, who then observed to the Emperor Alexander in my presence, "Will you support Bonaparte? No, you neither can nor will. I have already had the honour to tell your Majesty that we can have no choice but between Bonaparte and Louis XVIII.; anything else would be an intrigue, and no intrigue can have power to support him who may be its object. Bernadotte, Eugene, the Regency, all those propositions result from intrigues. In present circumstances nothing but a new principle is sufficiently strong to establish the new order of things which must be adopted. Louis XVIII. is a principle."

None of the members of the Provisional Government were present at this conference, for no one was willing to appear to influence in any way the determination of the chief of the coalition upon the subject of this important mission. General Dessolles alone, in quality of commander of the National Guard of Paris, was requested to be present. At length the Marshals entered the salon where we were, and their

appearance created a sensation which it is impossible to describe; but the expression of dissatisfaction which we thought we remarked in their countenances restored the hopes of those who for some hours had been a prey to apprehensions. Macdonald, with his head elevated, and evidently under the influence of strong irritation, approached Beurnonville, and thus addressed him, in answer to a question which the latter had put to him. "Speak not to me, sir; I have nothing to say to you. You have made me forget a friendship of thirty years!" Then turning to Dupont, "As for you, sir," he continued in the same tone, "your conduct towards the Emperor is not generous. I confess that he has treated you with severity, perhaps he may even have been unjust to you with respect to the affair of Baylen, but how long has it been the practice to avenge a personal wrong at the expense of one's country?"

These remarks were made with such warmth, and in so elevated a tone of voice, that Caulaincourt thought it necessary to interfere, and said, "Do not forget, gentlemen, that this is the residence of the Emperor of Russia." At this moment M. de Talleyrand returned from the interview with the Emperor which he had had after the departure of the Marshals, and approaching the group formed round Macdonald, "Gentlemen," said he, "if you wish to dispute and discuss, step down to my apartments."— "That would be useless," replied Macdonald; "my comrades and I do not acknowledge the Provisional Government." The three Marshals, Ney, Macdonald, and Marmont, then immediately retired with Caulaincourt, and went to Ney's hotel, there to await the answer which the Emperor Alexander had promised to give them after consulting the King of Prussia.

Such was this night-scene; which possessed more dramatic effect than many which are performed on the stage. In it all was real: on its denouement depended the political state of France, and the existence of all those who had already declared themselves in favour of the Bourbons. It is a remarkable fact, and one which affords a striking lesson to men who are tempted to sacrifice themselves for any political cause, that most of those who then demanded the restoration of the Bourbons at the peril of their lives have successively fallen into disgrace.

When the Marshals and Caulaincourt had retired we were all anxious to know what had passed between them and the Emperor of Russia. I learned from Dessolles, who, as I have stated, was present at the conference in his rank of commander of the National Guard of Paris, that the Marshals were unanimous in urging Alexander to accede to a Regency. Macdonald especially supported that proposition with much warmth; and among the observations he made I recollect Dessolles mentioned the following:— "I am not authorised to treat in any way for the fate reserved for the Emperor. We have full powers to treat for the Regency, the army, and France; but the Emperor has positively forbidden us to specify anything personally regarding himself." Alexander merely replied, "That does not astonish me." The Marshals then, resuming the conversation, dwelt much on the respect which was due to the military glory of France. They strongly manifested their disinclination to abandon the family of a man who had so often led them to victory; and lastly, they reminded the Emperor Alexander of his own declaration, in which he proclaimed, in his own name as well as on the part of his Allies, that it was not their intention to impose on France any government whatever.

Dessolles, who had all along declared himself in favour of the Bourbons, in his turn entered into the discussion with as much warmth as the partisans of the Regency. He represented to Alexander how many persons would be compromised for merely having acted or declared their opinions behind the shield of his promises. He repeated what Alexander had already been told, that the Regency would, in fact, be nothing but Bonaparte in disguise. However, Dessolles acknowledged that such was the effect of Marshal Macdonald's powerful and persuasive eloquence that Alexander seemed to waver; and, unwilling to give the Marshals a positive refusal, he had recourse to a subterfuge, by which he would be enabled to execute the design he had irrevocably formed without seeming to take on himself alone the responsibility of a change of government. Dessolles accordingly informed us that Alexander at last gave the following answer to the Marshals: "Gentlemen, I am not alone; in an affair of such importance I must consult the King of Prussia, for I have promised to do nothing without consulting him. In a few hours you shall know my decision." It was this decision which the Marshals went to wait for at Ney's.

Most of the members of the Provisional Government attributed the evasive reply of the Emperor Alexander to the influence of the speech of Dessolles. For my part, while I do justice to the manner in which he declared himself on this important occasion, I do not ascribe to his eloquence the power of fixing Alexander's resolution, for I well know by experience how easy it is to make princes appear to adopt the advice of any one when the counsel given is precisely that which they wish to follow. From the sentiments of Alexander at this time I had not the slightest doubt as to the course he would finally pursue, and I considered what he said about consulting the King of Prussia to be merely a polite excuse, by which he avoided the disagreeable task of giving the Marshals a direct refusal.

I therefore returned home quite satisfied as to the result of the Emperor Alexander's visit to the King of Prussia. I knew, from the persons about the Czar, that he cherished a hatred, which was but too well justified, towards Bonaparte. Frederick William is of too firm a character to have yielded to any of the

considerations which might on this subject have been pressed on him as they had been on the Emperor of Russia. But, besides that the King of Prussia had legitimate reasons for disliking Napoleon, policy would at that time have required that he should appear to be his enemy, for to do so was to render himself popular with his subjects. But the King of Prussia did not need to act under the dictates of policy; he followed his own opinion in rejecting the propositions of the Marshals, which he did without hesitation, and with much energy.

While the Marshals had gone to Paris Bonaparte was anxious to ascertain whether his Commissioners had passed the advanced posts of the foreign armies, and in case of resistance he determined to march on Paris, for he could not believe that he had lost every chance. He sent an aide de camp to desire Marmont to come immediately to Fontainebleau: such was Napoleon's impatience that instead of waiting for the return of his aide de camp he sent off a second and then a third officer on the same errand. This rapid succession of envoys from the Emperor alarmed the general who commanded the different divisions of Marmont's corps at Essonne. They feared that the Emperor was aware of the Convention concluded that morning with Prince Schwartzenberg, and that he had sent for Marmont with the view of reprimanding him. The fact was, Napoleon knew nothing of the matter, for Marmont, on departing for Paris with Macdonald and Ney, had left orders that it should be said that he had gone to inspect his lines. Souham; Lebrun des Essarts, and Bordessoulle, who had given their assent to the Convention with Prince Schwartzenberg, deliberated in the absence of Marmont, and, perhaps being ignorant that he was released from his promise, and fearing the vengeance of Napoleon, they determined to march upon Versailles. On arriving there the troops not finding the Marshal at their head thought themselves betrayed, and a spirit of insurrection broke out among them. One of Marmont's aides de camp, whom he had left at Essonne, exerted every endeavour to prevent the departure of his general's corps, but, finding all his efforts unavailing, he hastened to Paris to inform the Marshal of what had happened. 'When Marmont received this news he was breakfasting at Ney's with Macdonald and Caulaincourt: they were waiting for the answer which the Emperor Alexander had promised to send them. The march of his corps on Versailles threw Marmont into despair. He said to the Marshals, "I must be off to join my corps and quell this mutiny;" and without losing a moment he ordered his carriage and directed the coachman to drive with the utmost speed. He sent forward one of his aides de camp to inform the troops of his approach.

Having arrived within a hundred paces of the place where his troops were assembled he found the generals who were under his orders advancing to meet him. They urged him not to go farther, as the men were in open insurrection. "I will go into the midst of them," said Marmont. "In a moment they shall either kill me or acknowledge me as their chief:" He sent off another aide de camp to range the troops in the order of battle. Then, alighting from the carriage and mounting a horse, he advanced alone, and thus harangued his troops: "How! Is there treason here? Is it possible that you disown me? Am I not your comrade? Have I not been wounded twenty times among you? . . . Have I not shared your fatigues and privations? And am I not ready to do so again?" Here Marmont was interrupted by a general shout of "Vive le Marechal! Vive le Marechal!"

The alarm caused among the members of the Provisional Government by the mission of the Marshals was increased by the news of the mutiny of Marmont's troops. During the whole of the day we were in a state of tormenting anxiety. It was feared that the insurrectionary spirit might spread among other corps of the army, and the cause of France again be endangered. But the courage of Marmont saved everything: It would be impossible to convey any idea of the manner in which he was received by us at Talleyrand's when he related the particulars of what had occurred at Versailles.

On the evening of the day on which Marmont had acted so nobly it was proposed that the army should adopt the white cockade. In reply to this proposition the Marshal said, "Gentlemen, I have made my troops understand the necessity of serving France before all things. They have, consequently, returned to order, and I can now answer for them. But what I cannot answer for is to induce them to abandon the colours which have led them to victory for the last twenty years. Therefore do not count upon me for a thing which I consider to be totally hostile to the interests of France. I will speak to the Emperor Alexander on the subject." Such were Marmont's words. Every one appeared to concur in his opinion, and the discussion terminated. For my own part, I find by my notes that I declared myself strongly in favour of Marmont's proposition.

The Marshal's opinion having been adopted, at least provisionally, an article was prepared for the Moniteur in nearly the following terms:

> The white cockade has been, during the last four days, a badge for the manifestation of public opinion in favour of the overthrow of an oppressive Government: it has been the only means of distinguishing the partisans of the restoration of the old dynasty, to which at length we are to be indebted for repose. But as the late Government is at an end, all colours differing from our national colours are useless: let us, therefore, resume those

which have so often led us to victory.

Such was the spirit of the article, though possibly the above copy may differ in a few words. It met with the unqualified approbation of every one present. I was therefore extremely surprised, on looking at the 'Moniteur' next day, to find that the article was not inserted. I knew not what courtly interference prevented the appearance of the article, but I remember that Marmont was very ill pleased at its omission. He complained on the subject to the Emperor Alexander, who promised to write, and in fact did write, to the Provisional Government to get the article inserted. However, it did not appear, and in a few days we obtained a solution of the enigma, as we might perhaps have done before if we had tried. The Emperor Alexander also promised to write to the Comte d'Artois, and to inform him that the opinion of France was in favour of the preservation of the three colours, but I do not know whether the letter was written, or, if it was, what answer it received.

Marshal Jourdan, who was then at Rouen, received a letter, written without the knowledge of Marmont, informing him that the latter had mounted the white cockade in his corps. Jourdan thought he could not do otherwise than follow Marmont's example, and he announced to the Provisional Government that in consequence of the resolution of the Duke of Ragusa he had just ordered his corps to wear the white cockade. Marmont could now be boldly faced, and when he complained to the Provisional Government of the non-insertion of the article in the Moniteur the reply was, "It cannot now appear. You see Marshal Jourdan has mounted the white cockade: you would not give the army two sets of colours!"

Marmont could make no answer to so positive a fact. It was not till some time after that I learned Jourdan had determined to unfurl the white flag only on the positive assurance that Marmont had already done so. Thus we lost the colours which had been worn by Louis XVI., which Louis XVIII., when a Prince, had adopted, and in which the Comte d'Artois showed himself on his return to the Parisians, for he entered the capital in the uniform of the National Guard. The fraud played off by some members of the Provisional Government was attended by fatal consequences; many evils might have been spared to France had Marmont's advice been adopted.

At the period of the dissolution of the Empire there might be said to be three Governments in France, viz. the Provisional Government in Paris, Napoleon's at Fontainebleau, and the doubtful and ambulatory Regency of "Maria Louisa." Doubtful and ambulatory the Regency might well be called, for there was so little decision as to the course to be adopted by the Empress that it was at first proposed to conduct her to Orleans, then to Tours, and she went finally to Blois. The uncertainty which prevailed respecting the destiny of Maria Louisa is proved by a document which I have in my possession, and of which there cannot be many copies in existence. It is a circular addressed to the prefects by M. de Montalivet, the Minister of the Interior, who accompanied the Empress. In it a blank is left for the seat of the Government, to which the prefects are desired to send their communications. In the copy I possess the blank is filled up with the word "Blois" in manuscript.

As soon as Maria Louisa was made acquainted with the events that had taken place around Paris she sent for the Duc de Cadore, and gave him a letter addressed to the Emperor of Austria, saying, "Take this to my father, who must be at Dijon. I rely on you for defending the interests of France, those of the Emperor, and above all those of my son." Certainly Maria Louisa's confidence could not be better placed, and those great interests would have been defended by the Duc de Cadore 'si defendi possent.'

After the departure of the Due de Cadore Maria Louisa published the following proclamation, addressed to the French people:

**BY THE EMPRESS REGENT.**

A Proclamation

> The events of the war have placed the capital in the power of foreigners. The Emperor has marched to defend it at the head of his armies, so often victorious. They are face to face with the enemy before the walls of Paris. From the residence which I have chosen, and from the Ministers of the Emperor, will emanate the only orders which you can acknowledge. Every town in the power of foreigners ceases to be free, and every order which may proceed from them is the language of the enemy, or that which it suits his hostile views to propagate. You will be faithful to your oaths. You will listen to the voice of a Princess who was consigned to your good faith, and whose highest pride consists in being s Frenchwoman, and in being united to the destiny of the sovereign whom you have freely chosen. My son was less sure of your affections in the time of our prosperity; his rights and his person are under your safeguard.

(By order) MONTALIVET. (Signed) MARIA LOUISA

BLOIS, 3d April 1814.

It is to be inferred that the Regency had within three days adopted the resolution of not quitting Blois, for the above document presents no blanks, nor words filled up in writing. The Empress' proclamation, though a powerful appeal to the feelings of the French people, produced no effect. Maria Louisa's proclamation was dated the 4th of April, on the evening of which day Napoleon signed the conditional abdication, with the fate of which the reader has already been made acquainted. M. de Montalivet transmitted the Empress' proclamation, accompanied by another circular, to the prefects, of whom very few received it.

M. de Champagny, having left Blois with the letter he had received from the Empress, proceeded to the headquarters of the Emperor of Austria, carefully avoiding those roads which were occupied by Cossack troops. He arrived, not without considerable difficulty, at Chanseaux, where Frances II. was expected. When the Emperor arrived the Duc de Cadore was announced, and immediately introduced to his Majesty. The Duke remained some hours with Francis II., without being able to obtain from him anything but fair protestations. The Emperor always took refuge behind the promise he had given to his Allies to approve whatever measures they might adopt. The Duke was not to leave the Emperor's headquarters that evening, and, in the hope that his Majesty might yet reflect on the critical situation of his daughter, he asked permission to take leave next morning. He accordingly presented himself to the Emperor's levee, when he renewed his efforts in support of the claims of Maria Louisa. "I have a great affection for my daughter, and also for my son-in law," said the Emperor. "I bear them both in my heart, and would shed my blood for them"—"Ah, Sire!" exclaimed M. de Champagny, "such a sacrifice is not necessary."—"Yes, Duke, I say again I would shed my blood, I would resign my life for them, but I have given my Allies a promise not to treat without them, and to approve all that they may do. Besides," added the Emperor, "my Minister, M. de Metternich, has gone to their headquarters, and I will ratify whatever he may sign."

When the Duc de Cadore related to me the particulars of his mission, in which zeal could not work an impossibility, I remarked that he regarded as a circumstance fatal to Napoleon the absence of M. de Metternich and the presence of M. Stadion at the headquarters of the Emperor of Austria. Though in all probability nothing could have arrested the course of events, yet it is certain that the personal sentiments of the two Austrian Ministers towards Napoleon were widely different. I am not going too far when I affirm that, policy apart, M. de Metternich was much attached to Napoleon. In support of this assertion I may quote a fact of which I can guarantee the authenticity:

When M. de Metternich was complimented on the occasion of Maria Louisa's marriage he replied, "To have contributed to a measure which has received the approbation of 80,000,000 men is indeed a just subject of congratulation." Such a remark openly made by the intelligent Minister of the Cabinet of Vienna was well calculated to gratify the ears of Napoleon, from whom, however, M. de Metternich in his personal relations did not conceal the truth. I recollect a reply which was made by M. de Metternich at Dresden after a little hesitation. "As to you," said the Emperor, "you will not go to war with me. It is impossible that you can declare yourself against me. That can never be."—" Sire, we are not now quite allies, and some time hence we may become enemies." This hint was the last which Napoleon received from Metternich, and Napoleon must have been blind indeed not to have profited by it. As to M. Stadion, he entertained a profound dislike of the Emperor. That Minister knew and could not forget that his preceding exclusion from the Cabinet of Vienna had been due to the all-powerful influence of Napoleon.

Whether or not the absence of Metternich influenced the resolution of Francis II., it is certain that that monarch yielded nothing to the urgent solicitations of a Minister who conscientiously fulfilled the delicate mission consigned to him. M. de Champagny rejoined the Empress at Orleans, whither she had repaired on leaving Blois. He found Maria Louisa almost deserted, all the Grand Dignitaries of the Empire having successively returned to Paris after sending in their submissions to the Provisional Government.

I had scarcely entered upon the exercise of my functions as Postmaster- General when, on the morning of the 2d of April, I was surprised to see a Prussian general officer enter my cabinet. I immediately recognised him as General Blucher. He had commanded the Prussian army in the battle which took place at the gates of Paris. "Sir," said he, "I consider it one of my first duties on entering Paris to thank you for the attention I received from you in Hamburg. I am sorry that I was not sooner aware of your being in Pains. I assure you that had I been sooner informed of this circumstance the capitulation should have been made without a blow being struck. How much blood might then have been spared!"—"General," said I, "on what do you ground this assurance?"—"If I had known that you were in Paris I would have given you a letter to the King of Prussia. That monarch, who knows the resources and intentions of the Allies, would, I am sure, have authorised you to decide a suspension of

arms before the neighbourhood of Paris became the theatre of the war."— "But," resumed I, "in spite of the good intentions of the Allies, it would have been very difficult to prevent resistance. French pride, irritated as it was by reverses, would have opposed insurmountable obstacles to such a measure."—"But, good heavens! you would have seen that resistance could be of no avail against such immense masses."— "You are right, General; but French honour would have been defended to the last."—"I am fully aware of that; but surely you have earned glory enough!"—"Yet our French susceptibility would have made us look upon that glory as tarnished if Paris had been occupied without defence … But under present circumstances I am well pleased that you were satisfied with my conduct in Hamburg, for it induces me to hope that you will observe the same moderation in Paris that I exercised there. The days are past when it could be said, Woe to the conquered."—" You are right; yet," added he, smiling, "you know we are called the northern barbarians."—" Then, General," returned I, "you have a fair opportunity of showing that that designation is a libel."

Some days after Blucher's visit I had the honour of being admitted to a private audience of the King of Prussia. Clarke and Berthier were also received in this audience, which took place at the hotel of Prince Eugene, where the King of Prussia resided in Paris. We waited for some minutes in the salon, and when Frederick William entered from his cabinet I remarked on his countenance an air of embarrassment and austerity which convinced me that he had been studying his part, as great personages are in the habit of doing on similar occasions. The King on entering the salon first noticed Berthier, whom he addressed with much kindness, bestowing praises on the French troops, and complimenting the Marshal on his conduct during the war in Germany. Berthier returned thanks for these well-merited praises, for though he was not remarkable for strength of understanding or energy of mind, yet he was not a bad man, and I have known many proofs of his good conduct in conquered countries.

After saluting Berthier the King of Prussia turned towards Clarke, and his countenance immediately assumed an expression of dissatisfaction. He had evidently not forgotten Clarke's conduct in Berlin. He reminded him that he had rendered the Continental system more odious than it was in itself, and that he had shown no moderation in the execution of his orders. "In short," said his Majesty, "if I have any advice to give you, it is that you never again return to Prussia." The King pronounced these words in so loud and decided a tone that Clarke was perfectly confounded. He uttered some unintelligible observations, which, however, Frederick William did not notice, for suddenly turning towards me he said, with an air of affability, "Ah! M. de Bourrienne, I am glad to see you, and I take this opportunity of repeating what I wrote to you from Gonigsberg. You always extended protection to the Germans, and did all you could to alleviate their condition. I learned with great satisfaction what you did for the Prussians whom the fate of war drove into Hamburg; and I feel pleasure in telling you, in the presence of these two gentlemen, that if all the French agents had acted as you did we should not, probably, be here." I expressed, by a profound bow, how much I was gratified by this complimentary address, and the king, after saluting us, retired.

About the middle of April Bernadotte arrived in Paris. His situation had become equivocal, since circumstances had banished the hopes he might have conceived in his interview with the Emperor Alexander at Abo. Besides, he had been represented in some official pamphlets as a traitor to France, and among certain worshippers of our injured glory there prevailed a feeling of irritation, and which was unjustly directed towards Bernadotte.

I even remember that Napoleon, before he had fallen from his power, had a sort of national protest made by the police against the Prince Royal of Sweden. This Prince had reserved an hotel in the Rue d'Anjou, and the words, "Down with the traitor! down with the perjurer," were shouted there; but this had no result, as it was only considered an outrage caused by a spirit of petty vengeance.

While Bernadotte was in Paris I saw him every day. He but faintly disguised from me the hope he had entertained of ruling France; and in the numerous conversations to which our respective occupations led I ascertained, though Bernadotte did not formally tell me so, that he once had strong expectations of succeeding Napoleon.

Pressed at last into his final intrenchments he broke through all reserve and confirmed all I knew of the interview of Abo.

I asked Bernadotte what he thought of the projects which were attributed to Moreau; whether it was true that he had in him a competitor, and whether Moreau had aspired to the dangerous honour of governing France: "Those reports," replied the Prince Royal of Sweden, "are devoid of foundation: at least I can assure you that in the conversations I have had with the Emperor Alexander, that sovereign never said anything which could warrant such a supposition. I know that the Emperor of Russia wished to avail himself of the military talents of Moreau in the great struggle that had commenced, and to enable the exiled general to return to his country, in the hope that, should the war prove fortunate, he

would enjoy the honours and privileges due to his past services."

Bernadotte expressed to me astonishment at the recall of the Bourbons, and assured me that he had not expected the French people would so readily have consented to the Restoration. I confess I was surprised that Bernadotte, with the intelligence I knew him to possess, should imagine that the will of subjects has any influence in changes of government!

During his stay in Paris Bernadotte evinced for me the same sentiments of friendship which he had shown me at Hamburg. One day I received from him a letter, dated Paris, with which he transmitted to me one of the crosses of the Polar Star, which the King of Sweden had left at his disposal. Bernadotte was not very well satisfied with his residence in Paris, in spite of the friendship which the Emperor Alexander constantly manifested towards him. After a few days he set out for Sweden, having first taken leave of the Comte d'Artois. I did not see him after his farewell visit to the Count, so that I know not what was the nature of the conversation which passed between the two Princes.

## ETEXT EDITOR'S BOOKMARKS:

Treaties of peace no less disastrous than the wars
Yield to illusion when the truth was not satisfactory

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