# WALTER SCOTT

## LIFE OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. VOLUME V

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# Sir Walter Scott
# Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, Volume V

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The sword was now again brandished, not to be sheathed or reposed, until the one party or the other should be irretrievably defeated.

The situation of Buonaparte, even after the victory of Montereau, and capture of Troyes, was most discouraging. If he

advanced on the grand army of the allies which he had in front, there was every likelihood that they would retire before him, wasting his force in skirmishes, without a possibility of his being able to force them to a general action; while, in the meantime, it might be reckoned for certain that Blucher, master of the Marne, would march upon Paris. On the contrary, if Napoleon moved with his chief force against Blucher, he had, in like manner, to apprehend that Schwartzenberg would resume the route upon Paris by way of the valley of the Seine. Thus, he could make no exertion upon the one side, without exposing the capital to danger on the other.

After weighing all the disadvantages on either side, Napoleon determined to turn his arms against Blucher, as most hostile to his person, most rapid in his movements, and most persevering in his purposes. He left Oudinot, Macdonald, and Gerard in front of the grand army, in hopes that, however inferior in numbers, they might be able to impose upon Schwartzenberg a belief that Napoleon was present in person, and thus either induce the Austrian to continue his retreat, or at least prevent him from resuming the offensive. For this purpose the French troops were to move on Bar-sur-Aube, and occupy, if practicable, the heights in that neighbourhood. The soldiers were also to use the cry of *Vive l'Empereur*, as if Napoleon had been present. It was afterwards seen, that as the maréchals did not command 40,000 men in all, including a force under Macdonald, it was impossible for them to discharge effectually the part assigned them. In the

meanwhile, Napoleon himself continued his lateral march on Blucher, supposing it possible for him, as formerly, to surprise his flank, as the Prussians marched upon Paris. For this purpose he moved as speedily as possible to La Ferté-Gauchère, where he arrived 1st March; but Sacken and D'Yorck, who would have been the first victims of this manœuvre, as their divisions were on the left bank of the Marne, near to Meaux, crossed the river at La Ferté Jouarre, and formed a junction with Blucher, who now resolved to fall back on the troops of Bulow and Winzengerode. These generals were, it will be remembered, advancing from the frontiers of Belgium.

A sudden hard frost rendered the country passable, which had before been in so swampy a condition as to render marching very difficult. This was much to the advantage of the Prussians. Napoleon detached the forces under Marmont and Mortier, whom he had united with his own, to press upon and harass the retreat of the Prussian field-maréchal; while he himself, pushing on by a shorter line, possessed himself of the town of Fismes, about half way betwixt Rheims and Soissons. The occupation of this last place was now a matter of the last consequence. If Blucher should find Soissons open to him, he might cross the Marne, extricate himself from his pursuers without difficulty, and form his junction with the army of the North. But if excluded from this town and bridge, Blucher must have hazarded a battle on the most disadvantageous terms, having Mortier and Marmont on his front, Napoleon on his left flank, and in his rear,

a town, with a hostile garrison and a deep river.

It was almost a chance, like that of the dice, which party possessed this important place. The Russians had taken it on 15th February;[1] but, being immediately evacuated by them, it was on the 19th occupied by Mortier, and garrisoned by 500 Poles, who were imagined capable of the most determined defence. On the 2d March, however, the commandant, intimidated by the advance of Bulow's army of 30,000 men, yielded up Soissons to that general, upon a threat of an instant storm, and no quarter allowed. The Russian standards then waved on the ramparts of Soissons, and Blucher, arriving under its walls, acquired the full power of uniting himself with his rear-guard, and giving or refusing battle at his pleasure, on the very moment when Buonaparte, having turned his flank, expected to have forced on him a most disadvantageous action.

The Emperor's wrath exhaled in a bulletin against the inconceivable baseness of the commandant of Soissons, who was said to have given up so important a place when he was within hearing of the cannonade on the 2d and 3d, and must thereby have known the approach of the Emperor.[2] In the heat of his wrath, he ordered Soissons to be assaulted and carried by storm at all risks; but it was defended by General Langeron with 10,000 Russians. A desperate conflict ensued, but Langeron retained possession of the town.

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[1] See *ante*, vol. iv., p. 356.

[2] Moniteur, March 11.

## BATTLE OF CRAONNE

Abandoning this project, Napoleon crossed the Aisne at Béry-au-Bac, with the purpose of attacking the left wing of Blucher's army, which, being now concentrated, was strongly posted betwixt the village of Craonne and the town of Laon, in such a manner as to secure a retreat upon the very strong position which the latter town affords. Blucher imagined a manœuvre, designed to show Buonaparte that his favourite system of turning an enemy's flank had its risks and inconveniences. He detached ten thousand horse under Winzengerode, by a circuitous route, with orders that when the French commenced their march on Craonne, they should move round and act upon their flank and rear. But the state of the roads, and other impediments, prevented this body of cavalry from getting up in time to execute the intended manœuvre.

Meanwhile, at eleven in the morning of the 7th March, the French began their attack with the utmost bravery. Ney assaulted the position on the right flank, which was defended by a ravine, and Victor, burning to show the zeal which he had been accused of wanting, made incredible exertions in front. But the assault was met by a defence equally obstinate, and the contest became one of the most bloody and best-sustained during the war. It was four in the afternoon, and the French had not yet been able to dislodge the Russians on any point, when the latter received

orders from Blucher to withdraw from the disputed ground, and unite with the Prussian army on the splendid position of Laon, which the maréchal considered as a more favourable scene of action. There were no guns lost, or prisoners made. The Russians, in despite of a general charge of the French cavalry, retreated as on the parade. As the armies, considering the absence of Winzengerode with the detachment of cavalry, and of Langeron with the garrison of Soissons, were nearly equal, the indecisive event of the battle was the more ominous. The slain and wounded were about the same number on both sides, and the French only retained as a mark of victory the possession of the field of battle.[3]

Napoleon himself followed the retreat of the Russians as far as an inn between Craonne and Laon, called L'Ange Gardien, where he reposed for the night. He, indeed, never more needed the assistance of a guardian angel, and his own appears to have deserted his charge. It was here that Rumigny found him when he presented the letter of Caulaincourt, praying for final instructions from the Emperor; and it was here he could only extract the ambiguous reply, that if he must submit to the bastinado, it should be only by force. At this cabaret, also, he regulated his plan for attacking the position of Blucher on the next morning; and thus ridding himself finally, if possible, of that Silesian army, which had been his object of disquietude for forty-two days, during the

[3] "This was the best fought action during the campaign: the numbers engaged on both sides were nearly equal; the superiority, if any, being on the side of the French." – Lord Burghersh, *Operations*, &c., p. 196.

course of which, scarce two days had passed without their being engaged in serious conflict, either in front or rear. He received valuable information for enabling him to make the projected attack, from a retired officer, M. Bussy de Bellay, who had been his schoolfellow at Brienne, who lived in the neighbourhood, and was well acquainted with the ground, and whom he instantly rewarded with the situation of an aide-de-camp, and a large appointment. When his plan for the attack was finished, he is said to have exclaimed, "I see this war is an abyss without a bottom, but I am resolved to be the last whom it shall devour."

The town of Laon is situated upon a table-land, or eminence, flattened on the top, which rises very abruptly above a plain extending about a league in length. The face of the declivity is steep, shelving, almost precipitous, and occupied by terraces serving as vineyards. Bulow defended this town and bank. The rest of the Silesian army was placed on the plain below; the left wing, composed of Prussians, extending to the village of Athies; the right, consisting of Russians, resting on the hills between Thiers and Semonville.

## BATTLE OF LAON – RHEIMS

Only the interval of one day elapsed between the bloody battle of Craonne and that of Laon. On the 9th, availing himself of a thick mist, Napoleon pushed his columns of attack to the very foot of the eminence on which Laon is situated,

possessed himself of two of the villages, termed Semilly and Ardon, and prepared to force his way up the hill towards the town. The weather cleared, the French attack was repelled by a tremendous fire from terraces, vineyards, windmills, and every point of advantage. Two battalions of Yagers, the impetus of their attack increased by the rapidity of the descent, recovered the villages, and the attack of Laon in front seemed to be abandoned. The French, however, continued to retain possession, in that quarter, of a part of the village of Clacy. Thus stood the action on the right and centre. The French had been repulsed all along the line. On the left Maréchal Marmont had advanced upon the village of Athies, which was the key of Blucher's position in that point. It was gallantly defended by D'Yorck and Kleist, supported by Sacken and Langeron. Marmont made some progress, notwithstanding this resistance, and night found him bivouacking in front of the enemy, and in possession of part of the disputed village of Athies. But he was not destined to remain there till daybreak.

Upon the 10th, at four in the morning, just as Buonaparte, arising before daybreak, was calling for his horse, two dismounted dragoons were brought before him, with the unpleasing intelligence that the enemy had made a *hourra* upon Marmont, surprised him in his bivouac, and cut to pieces, taken, or dispersed his whole division, and they alone had escaped to bring the tidings. All the maréchal's guns were lost, and they believed he was himself either killed or prisoner. Officers sent

to reconnoitre, brought back a confirmation of the truth of this intelligence, excepting as to the situation of the maréchal. He was on the road to Rheims, near Corbeny, endeavouring to rally the fugitives. Notwithstanding this great loss, and as if in defiance of bad fortune, Napoleon renewed the attack upon Clacy and Semilly; but all his attempts being fruitless, he was induced to relinquish the undertaking, under the excuse that the position was found impregnable. On the 11th, he withdrew from before Laon, having been foiled in all his attempts, and having lost thirty guns, and nearly 10,000 men. The allies suffered comparatively little, as they fought under cover.

Napoleon halted at Soissons, which, evacuated by Langeron when Blucher concentrated his army, was now again occupied by the French. Napoleon directed its defences to be strengthened, designing to leave Mortier to defend the place against the advance of Blucher, which, victorious as he was, might be instantly expected.

While at Soissons, Napoleon learned that Saint Priest, a French emigrant, and a general in the Russian service, had occupied Rheims, remarkable for the venerable cathedral in which the kings of France were crowned. Napoleon instantly saw that the possession of Rheims would renew the communication betwixt Schwartzenberg and Blucher, besides neutralizing the advantages which he himself expected from the possession of Soissons. He moved from Soissons to Rheims, where, after an attack which lasted till late in the night, the Russian general

being wounded, his followers were discouraged, and evacuated the place. The utmost horrors might have been expected during a night attack, when one army forced another from a considerable town. But in this instance we have the satisfaction to record, that the troops on both sides behaved in a most orderly manner.[4] In his account of the previous action, Napoleon threw in one of those strokes of fatality which he loved to introduce. He endeavoured to persuade the public, or perhaps he himself believed, that Saint Priest was shot by a ball from the same cannon which killed Moreau.[5]

During the attack upon Rheims, Marmont came up with such forces as he had been able to rally after his defeat at Athies, and contributed to the success of the assault. He was, nevertheless, received by Napoleon with bitter reproaches, felt severely by a chief, of whose honour and talents no doubt had been expressed through a long life of soldiership.

Napoleon remained at Rheims three days, to repose and recruit his shattered army, which was reinforced from every quarter where men could be collected. Janssens, a Dutch officer, displayed a particular degree of military talent in bringing a body of about 4000 men, draughted from the garrisons of the places on the Moselle, to join the army at Rheims; a movement of great difficulty, considering he had to penetrate through a country

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[4] Baron Fain, p. 193.

[5] Moniteur, March 14.

which was in a great measure possessed by the enemy's troops.[6]

The halt of Napoleon at Rheims was remarkable, as affording the last means of transacting business with his civil ministers. Hitherto, an auditor of the council of state had weekly brought to the Imperial headquarters the report of the ministers, and received the orders of the Emperor.[7] But a variety of causes rendered this regular communication during the rest of the campaign, a matter of impossibility. At Rheims, also, Napoleon addressed to Caulaincourt, a letter, dated 17th March, by which he seems to have placed it in the power of that plenipotentiary to comply in full with the terms of the allies. But the language in which it is couched is so far from bearing the precise warrant necessary for so important a concession, that there must remain a doubt whether Caulaincourt would have felt justified in acting upon it, or whether so acting, Napoleon would have recognised his doing so, if circumstances had made it convenient for him to disown the treaty.[8]

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[6] Baron Fain, p. 194.

[7] "Whatever might have been the hardships of the campaign, and the importance of occasional circumstances, Napoleon superintended and regularly provided for everything; and, up to the present moment, showed himself adequate to direct the affairs of the interior, as well as the complicated movements of the army." – Baron Fain, p. 195.

[8] The words alleged to convey such extensive powers as totally to recall and alter every former restriction upon Caulaincourt's exercise of his own opinion, are contained, as above stated, in a letter from Rheims, dated 17th March, 1814. "I have charged the Duke of Bassano to answer your letter in detail. I give you directly the authority to make such concessions as shall be indispensable to maintain the

# OUDINOT AND GERARD

While Napoleon was pursuing, fighting with, and finally defeated by Blucher, his lieutenant-generals were not more fortunate in front of the allied grand army. It will be recollected that the Maréchals Oudinot and Gerard were left at the head of 25,000 men exclusive of the separate corps under Macdonald, with orders to possess themselves of the heights of Bar-sur-Aube, and prevent Schwartzenberg from crossing that river. They made the movement in advance accordingly, and after a sharp action, which left the town in their possession, they were so nigh to the allied troops, who still held the suburbs, that a battle became unavoidable, and the maréchals had no choice save of making the attack, or of receiving it. They chose the former, and gained at first some advantages from the very audacity of their attempt; but the allies had now been long accustomed to stand their ground under greater disasters. Their numerous reserves were brought up, and their long train of artillery got into line. The French, after obtaining a temporary footing on the heights of Vernonfait, were charged and driven back in disorder. Some fine cavalry, which had been brought from the armies in Spain,

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continuance (*activité*) of the negotiations, and to arrive at a knowledge of the ultimatum of the allies; it being distinctly understood that the treaty shall have for its immediate result the evacuation of our territory, and the restoring prisoners on both sides." – Napoleon, *Mémoires*, tom. ii., p. 399.

was destroyed by the overpowering cannonade. The French were driven across the Aube, the town of Bar-sur-Aube was taken, and the defeated maréchals could only rally their forces at the village of Vandœuvres, about half-way between Bar and Troyes.

The defeat of Oudinot and Gerard obliged Maréchal Macdonald, who defended the line of the river above Bar, to retreat to Troyes, from his strong position at La Ferté-sur-Aube. He therefore fell back towards Vandœuvres. But though these three distinguished generals, Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard, had combined their talents, and united their forces, it was impossible for them to defend Troyes, and they were compelled to retreat upon the great road to Paris. Thus, the headquarters of the allied monarchs were, for the second time during this changeful war, established in the ancient capital of Champagne; and the allied grand army recovered, by the victory of Bar-sur-Aube, all the territory which they had yielded up in consequence of Buonaparte's success at Montereau. They once more threatened to descend the Seine upon Paris, being entitled to despise any opposition offered by a feeble line, which Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard, endeavoured to defend on the left bank.

But Schwartzenberg's confidence in his position was lowered, when he heard that Napoleon had taken Rheims; and that, on the evening of the 17th, Ney, with a large division, had occupied Chalons-sur-Marne. This intelligence made a deep impression on the Austrian council of war. Their tactics being rigidly those of

the old school of war, they esteemed their army turned whenever a French division occupied such a post as interposed betwixt them and their allies. This, indeed, is in one sense true; but it is equally true, that every division so interposed is itself liable to be turned, if the hostile divisions betwixt which it is interposed take combined measures for attacking it. The catching, therefore, too prompt an alarm, or considering the consequences of such a movement as irretrievable, belongs to the pedantry of war, and not to its science.

At midnight a council was held for the purpose of determining the future motions of the allies. The generalissimo recommended a retreat behind the line of the Aube. The Emperor Alexander opposed this with great steadiness. He observed, with justice, that the protracted war was driving the country people to despair, and that the peasantry were already taking up arms, while the allies only wanted resolution, certainly neither opportunity nor numbers, to decide the affair by a single blow.

So many were the objections stated, and so difficult was it to bring the various views and interests of so many powers to coincide in the same general plan, that the Emperor informed one of his attendants, he thought the anxiety of the night must have turned half his hair grey. Lord Castlereagh was against the opinion of Schwartzenberg, the rather that he concluded that a retreat behind the Aube would be a preface to one behind the Rhine. Taking it upon him, as became the Minister of Britain at such a crisis, he announced to the allied powers, that, so soon

as they should commence the proposed retreat, the subsidies of England would cease to be paid to them.[9]

## THE MARCH UPON PARIS

It was, therefore, finally agreed to resume offensive operations, for which purpose they proposed to diminish the distance betwixt the allied grand army and that of Silesia, and resume such a communication with Blucher as might prevent the repetition of such disasters as those of Montmirail and Montereau. With this view it was determined to descend the Aube, unite their army at Arcis, offer Napoleon battle, should he desire to accept it, or move boldly on Paris if he should refuse the proffered action. What determined them more resolutely, from this moment, to approach the capital as soon as possible, was the intelligence which arrived at the headquarters by Messieurs de Polignac.[10] These gentlemen brought an encouraging account of the progress of the Royalists in the metropolis, and of the general arrangements which were actively pursued for uniting with the interests of the Bourbons that of all others, who, from dislike to

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[9] Lord Burghersh, in his memoranda previously quoted, states that Lord Castlereagh was not at Troyes upon this occasion, that he made no such declaration as Sir Walter Scott ascribes to him: and that any such declaration would have been uncalled for, as Prince Schwartzenberg was bent on concentrating his forces at Arcis – which he did. Compare "*Operations*," &c., p. 179. – Ed. (1842.)

[10] For *Messieurs de Polignac*, we should read *Monsieur de Vitrolles*. – See Lord Burghersh's "Operations," p. 266. *Note.*– Ed. (1842.)

Buonaparte's person and government, or fear that the country, and they themselves, must share in his approaching ruin, were desirous to get rid of the Imperial government. Talleyrand was at the head of the confederacy, and all were resolved to embrace the first opportunity of showing themselves, which the progress of the allies should permit. This important intelligence, coming from such unquestionable authority, strengthened the allies in their resolution to march upon Paris.

In the meantime, Napoleon being at Rheims, as stated, on the 15th and 16th March, was alarmed by the news of the loss of the battle of Bar, the retreat of the three maréchals beyond the Seine, and the demonstrations of the grand army to cross that river once more. He broke up, as we have seen, from Rheims on the 17th, and sending Ney to take possession of Chalons, marched himself to Epernay, with the purpose of placing himself on the right flank, and in the rear of Schwartzenberg, in case he should advance on the road to Paris. At Epernay, he learned that the allies, alarmed by his movements, had retired to Troyes, and that they were about to retreat upon the Aube, and probably to Langres. He also learned that the maréchals, Macdonald and Oudinot, had resumed their advance so soon as their adversaries began to retreat. He hastened to form a junction with these persevering leaders, and proceeded to ascend the Aube as high as Bar, where he expected to throw himself into Schwartzenberg's rear, having no doubt that his army was retiring from the banks of the Aube.

In these calculations, accurate as far as the information permitted, Buonaparte was greatly misled. He conceived himself to be acting upon the retreat of the allies, and expected only to find a rear-guard at Arcis; he was even talking jocularly of making his father-in-law prisoner during his retreat. If, contrary to his expectation, he should find the enemy, or any considerable part of them, still upon the Aube, it was, from all he had heard, to be supposed his appearance would precipitate their retreat towards the frontier. It has also been asserted, that he expected Maréchal Macdonald to make a corresponding advance from the banks of the Seine to those of the Aube; but the orders had been received too late to admit of the necessary space being traversed so as to arrive on the morning of the day of battle.

Napoleon easily drove before him such bodies of light cavalry, and sharp-shooters, as had been left by the allies, rather for the purpose of reconnoitring than of making serious opposition. He crossed the Aube at Plancey, and moved upwards along the left bank of the river, with Ney's corps, and his whole cavalry, while the infantry of his guard advanced upon the right; his army being thus, according to the French military phrase, *à cheval* upon the Aube. The town of Arcis had been evacuated by the allies upon his approach, and was occupied by the French on the morning of the 20th March. That town forms the outlet of a sort of defile, where a succession of narrow bridges cross a number of drains, brooks, and streamlets, the feeders of the river Aube, and a bridge in the town crosses the river itself. On the other

side of Arcis is a plain, in which some few squadrons of cavalry, resembling a reconnoitring party, were observed manœuvring.

Behind these horse, at a place called Clermont, the Prince Royal of Wirtemberg, whose name has been so often honourably mentioned, was posted with his division, while the elite of the allied army was drawn up on a chain of heights still farther in the rear, called Mesnil la Comtesse. But these forces were not apparent to the vanguard of Napoleon's army. The French cavalry had orders to attack the light troops of the allies; but these were instantly supported by whole regiments, and by cannon, so that the attack was unsuccessful; and the squadrons of the French were repulsed and driven back on Arcis at a moment, when, from the impediments in the town and its environs, the infantry could with difficulty debouche from the town to support them. Napoleon showed, as he always did in extremity, the same heroic courage which he had exhibited at Lodi and Brienne. He drew his sword, threw himself among the broken cavalry, called on them to remember their former victories, and checked the enemy by an impetuous charge, in which he and his staff-officers fought hand to hand with their opponents, so that he was in personal danger from the lance of a Cossack, the thrust of which was averted by his aide-de-camp, Girardin. His Mameluke Rustan fought stoutly by his side, and received a gratuity for his bravery. These desperate exertions afforded time for the infantry to debouche from the town. The Imperial Guards came up, and the combat waxed very warm. The superior numbers of the allies rendered

them the assailants on all points. A strongly situated village in front, and somewhat to the left of Arcis, called Grand Torcy, had been occupied by the French. This place was repeatedly and desperately attacked by the allies, but the French made good their position. Arcis itself was set on fire by the shells of the assailants, and night alone separated the combatants, by inducing the allies to desist from the attack.

In the course of the night, Buonaparte was joined by Macdonald, Oudinot, and Gerard, with the forces with which they had lately held the defensive upon the Seine; and the anxious question remained, whether, thus reinforced, he should venture an action with the grand army, to which he was still much inferior in numbers. Schwartzenberg, agreeably to the last resolution of the allies, drew up on the heights of Mesnil la Comtesse, prepared to receive battle. On consideration of the superior strength of the enemy, and of the absence of some troops not yet come up, Napoleon finally determined not to accept a battle under such disadvantageous circumstances. He therefore commenced a retreat, the direction of which was doomed to prove the crisis of his fate. He retired as he had advanced, along both sides of the Aube; and though pursued and annoyed in this movement (which was necessarily executed through Arcis and all its defiles,) his rear-guard was so well conducted, that he sustained little loss. A late author,[11] who has composed an excellent and scientific work

[11] Memoir of the Operations of the Allied Armies in 1813 and 1814. By Lord Burghersh.

on this campaign, has remarked – "In concluding the account of the two days thus spent by the contending armies in presence of each other, it is equally worthy of remark, that Buonaparte, with a force not exceeding 25,000 or 30,000 men, should have risked himself in such a position in front of 80,000 of the allies, as that the latter should have allowed him to escape them with impunity." The permitting him to retreat with so little annoyance has been censured in general by all who have written on this campaign.[12]

[12] Jomini, tom. iv., 564.

# CHAPTER LXXVI

Plans of Buonaparte – Military and Political Questions regarding Paris – Napoleon crosses the Marne on 22d March – Retrospect of Events in the vicinity of Lyons, &c. – Defeats of the French in various quarters – Marmont and Mortier retreat under the walls of Paris – Joseph Buonaparte – Maria Louisa, with the Civil Authorities, leave the City – Attack of Paris on the 30th – A Truce accorded – Joseph flies.

## PLANS OF BUONAPARTE

The decline of Napoleon's waning fortunes having been such, as to turn him aside from an offered field of battle, and to place him betwixt two armies, each superior in number to his own, called now for a speedy and decisive resolution.

The manœuvres of Schwartzenberg and Blucher tended evidently to form a junction; and when it is considered that Buonaparte had felt it necessary to retreat from the army of Silesia before Laon, and from the grand army before Arcis, it would have been frenzy to wait till they both closed upon him. Two courses, therefore, remained; – either to draw back within the closing circle which his enemies were about to form around him, and, retreating before them until he had collected his whole

forces, make a stand under the walls of Paris, aided by whatever strength that capital possessed, and which his energies could have called out; or, on the contrary, to march eastward, and breaking through the same circle, to operate on the rear of the allies, and on their lines of communication. This last was a subject on which the Austrians had expressed such feverish anxiety, as would probably immediately induce them to give up all thoughts of advancing, and march back to the frontier. Such a result was the rather to be hoped, because the continued stay of the allies, and the passage and repassage of troops through an exhausted country, had worn out the patience of the hardy peasantry of Alsace and Franche Comté, whom the exactions and rapine, inseparable from the movements of a hostile soldiery, had now roused from the apathy with which they had at first witnessed the invasion of their territory. Before Lyons, Napoleon might reckon on being reinforced by the veteran army of Suchet, arrived from Catalonia; and he would be within reach of the numerous chain of fortresses, which had garrisons strong enough to form an army, if drawn together.

The preparations for arranging such a force, and for arming the peasantry, had been in progress for some time. Trusty agents, bearing orders concealed in the sheaths of their knives, the collars of their dogs, or about their persons, had been detached to warn the various commandants of the Emperor's pleasure. Several were taken by the blockading troops of the allies, and hanged as spies, but others made their way. While at Rheims,

Buonaparte had issued an order for rousing the peasantry, in which he not only declared their arising in arms was an act of patriotic duty, but denounced as traitors the mayors of the districts who should throw obstructions in the way of a general levy. The allies, on the contrary, threatened the extremity of military execution on all the peasantry who should obey Napoleon's call to arms. It was, as we formerly observed, an excellent exemplification, how much political opinions depend on circumstances; for, after the second capture of Vienna, the Austrians were calling out the levy-en-masse, and Napoleon, in his turn, was threatening to burn the villages, and execute the peasants, who should dare to obey.

While Napoleon was at Rheims, the affairs of the north-east frontier seemed so promising, that Ney offered to take the command of the insurrectionary army; and, as he was reckoned the best officer of light troops in Europe, it is not improbable he might have brought the levies-en-masse on that warlike border, to have fought like the French national forces in the beginning of the Revolution. Buonaparte did not yield to this proposal. Perhaps he thought so bold a movement could only succeed under his own eye.

## PARIS

But there were two especial considerations which must have made Napoleon hesitate in adopting this species of back-game,

designed to redeem the stake which it was impossible to save by the ordinary means of carrying on the bloody play. The one was the military question, whether Paris could be defended, if Napoleon was to move to the rear of the allied army, instead of falling back upon the city with the army which he commanded. The other question was of yet deeper import, and of a political nature. The means of the capital for defence being supposed adequate, was it likely that Paris, a town of 700,000 inhabitants, divided into factions unaccustomed to the near voice of war, and startled by the dreadful novelty of their situation, would submit to the sacrifices which a successful defence of the city must in every event have required? Was, in short, their love and fear of Buonaparte so great, that without his personal presence, and that of his army, to encourage, and at the same time overawe them, they would willingly incur the risk of seeing their beautiful metropolis destroyed, and all the horrors of a sack inflicted by the mass of nations whom Napoleon's ambition had been the means of combining against them, and who proclaimed themselves the enemies, not of France, but of Buonaparte?

Neither of these questions could be answered with confidence. Napoleon, although he had embodied 30,000 national guards, had not provided arms for a third part of the number. This is hinted at by some authors, as if the want of these arms ought to be imputed to some secret treason. But this accusation has never been put in any tangible shape. The arms never existed, and never were ordered; and although Napoleon had nearly three

months' time allowed him, after his return to Paris, yet he never thought of arming the Parisians in general. Perhaps he doubted their fidelity to his cause. He ordered, it is said, 200 cannon to be provided for the defence of the northern and eastern line of the city, but neither were these obtained in sufficient quantity. The number of individuals who could be safely intrusted with arms, was also much limited. Whether, therefore, Paris was, in a military point of view, capable of defence or not, must have, in every event, depended much on the strength of the military force left to protect it. This Napoleon knew must be very moderate. His hopes were therefore necessarily limited by circumstances, to the belief that Paris, though incapable of a protracted defence, might yet hold out for such a space as might enable him to move to its relief.

But, secondly, as the means of holding out Paris were very imperfect, so the inclination of the citizens to defend themselves at the expense of any considerable sacrifice, was much doubted. It was not in reason to be expected that the Parisians should imitate the devotion of Zaragossa. Each Spanish citizen, on that memorable occasion, had his share of interest in the war which all maintained – a portion, namely, of that liberty and independence for which it was waged. But the Parisians were very differently situated. They were not called on to barricade their streets, destroy their suburbs, turn their houses into fortresses, and themselves into soldiers, and expose their property and families to the horrors of a storm; and this not for any advantage to France

or themselves, but merely that they might maintain Napoleon on the throne. The ceaseless, and of late the losing wars, in which he seemed irretrievably engaged, had rendered his government unpopular; and it was plain to all, except perhaps himself, that he did not stand in that relation to the people of Paris, when citizens are prepared to die for their sovereign. It might have been as well expected that the frogs in the fable would, in case of invasion, have risen in a mass to defend King Serpent. It is probable that Buonaparte did not see this in the true point of view; but that, with the feelings of self-importance which sovereigns must naturally acquire from their situation, and which, from his high actions and distinguished talents, he of all sovereigns, was peculiarly entitled to indulge – it is probable that he lost sight of the great disproportion betwixt the nation and an individual; and forgot, amid the hundreds of thousands which Paris contains, what small relation the number of his own faithful and devoted followers bore, not only to those who were perilously engaged in factions hostile to him, but to the great mass, who, in Hotspur's phrase, loved their own shops or barns better than his house.[13]

Thirdly, the consequences of Paris being lost, either from not possessing, or not employing, the means of defence, were sure to be productive of irretrievable calamity. Russia, as had been shown, could survive the destruction of its capital, and perhaps Great Britain's fate might not be decided by the capture of London. But the government of France had, during all the phases

[13] Henry IV., act ii., scene ii.

of the Revolution, depended upon the possession of Paris – a capital which has at all times directed the public opinion of that country. Should the military occupation of this most influential of all capitals, bring about, as was most likely, a political and internal revolution, it was greatly to be doubted, whether the Emperor could make an effectual stand in any other part of his dominions.

It must be candidly admitted, that this reasoning, as being subsequent to the fact, has a much more decisive appearance than it could have had when subjected to the consideration of Napoleon. He was entitled, from the feverish anxiety hitherto shown by the Austrians, upon any approach to flank movements, and by the caution of their general proceedings, to think, that they would be greatly too timorous to adopt the bold step of pressing onward to Paris. It was more likely that they would follow him to the frontier, with the purpose of preserving their communications. Besides, Napoleon at this crisis had but a very slender choice of measures. To remain where he was, between Blucher and Schwartzenberg, was not possible; and, in advancing to either flank, he must have fought with a superior enemy. To retreat upon Paris, was sure to induce the whole allies to pursue in the same direction; and the encouragement which such a retreat must have given to his opponents, might have had the most fatal consequences. Perhaps his partisans might have taken more courage during his absence, from the idea that he was at the head of a conquering army, in the rear of the allies, than during

his actual presence, if he had arrived in Paris in consequence of a compulsory retreat.

Buonaparte seems, as much from a sort of necessity as from choice, to have preferred breaking through the circle of hunters which hemmed him in, trusting to strengthen his army with the garrisons drawn from the frontier fortresses, and with the warlike peasantry of Alsace and Franche Comté, and, thus reinforced, to advance with rapidity on the rear of his enemies, ere they had time to execute, or perhaps to arrange, any system of offensive operations. The scheme appeared the more hopeful, as he was peremptory in his belief that his march could not fail to draw after him, in pursuit, or observation at least, the grand army of Schwartzenberg; the general maxim, that the war could only be decided where he was present in person, being, as he conceived, as deeply impressed by experience upon his enemies as upon his own soldiers.

Napoleon could not disguise from himself, what indeed he had told the French public, that a march, or, as he termed it, a *hourra* upon Paris, was the principal purpose of the allies. Every movement made in advance, whether by Blucher or Schwartzenberg, had this for its object. But they had uniformly relinquished the undertaking, upon his making any demonstration to prevent it; and therefore he did not suspect them of a resolution so venturous as to move directly upon Paris, leaving the French army unbroken in their rear, to act upon their line of communication with Germany. It is remarked, that

those chess-players who deal in the most venturous gambits are least capable of defending themselves when attacked in the same audacious manner; and that, in war, the generals whose usual and favourite tactics are those of advance and attack, have been most frequently surprised by the unexpected adoption of offensive operations on the part of their enemy. Napoleon had been so much accustomed to see his antagonists bend their attention rather to parry blows than to aim them, and was so confident in the dread impressed by his rapidity of movement, his energy of assault, and the terrors of his reputation, that he seems to have entertained little apprehension of the allies adopting a plan of operations which had no reference to his own, and which, instead of attempting to watch or counteract his movements in the rear of their army, should lead them straight forward to take possession of his capital. Besides, notwithstanding objections have been stated, which seemed to render a *permanent* defence impossible, there were other considerations to be taken into view. The ground to the north of Paris is very strong, the national guard was numerous, the lower part of the population of a military character, and favourable to his cause. A defence, if resolute, however brief, would have the double effect of damping the ardour of the assailants, and of detaining them before the walls of the capital, until Buonaparte should advance to its relief, and thus place the allies between two fires. It was not to be supposed that the surrender of Paris would be the work of a single day. The unanimous voice of the journals, of the ministers of the police,

and of the thousands whose interest was radically and deeply entwisted with that of Buonaparte, assured their master on that point. The movement to the rear, therefore, though removing him from Paris, which it might expose to temporary alarm, might not, in Buonaparte's apprehension, seriously compromise the security of the capital.

The French Emperor, in executing this decisive movement, was extremely desirous to have possessed himself of Vitry, which lay in the line of his advance. But as this town contained a garrison of about 5000 men, commanded by an officer of resolution, he returned a negative to the summons; and Napoleon, in no condition to attempt a *coup-de-main* on a place of some strength, passed the Marne on the 22d of March, over a bridge of rafts constructed at Frigincour, and continued his movement towards the eastern frontier, increasing the distance at every step betwixt him and his capital, and at the same time betwixt him and his enemies.

In the meantime, events had taken place in the vicinity of Lyons, tending greatly to limit any advantages which Napoleon might have expected to reap on the south-eastern part of the frontier towards Switzerland, and also to give spirits to the numerous enemies of his government in Provence, where the Royalists always possessed a considerable party.

The reinforcements despatched by the Austrians under General Bianchi, and their reserves, brought forward by the Prince of Hesse-Homberg, had restored their superiority over

Augereau's army. He was defeated at Macon on the 11th of March, in a battle which he had given for the purpose of maintaining his line on the Saone. A second time, he was defeated on the 18th at St. George, and obliged to retire in great disorder, with scarce even the means of defending the Isère, up which river he retreated. Lyons, thus uncovered, opened its gates to Bianchi; and, after all that they had heard concerning the losses of the allies, the citizens saw with astonishment and alarm an untouched body of their troops, amounting to 60,000 men, defile through their streets. This defeat of Augereau was probably unknown to Napoleon, when he determined to march to the frontiers, and thought he might reckon on co-operation with the Lyonnese army. Though, therefore, the Emperor's movement to St. Dizier was out of the rules of ordinary war, and though it enabled the allies to conceive and execute the daring scheme which put an end to the campaign, yet it was by no means hopeless in its outset; or, we would rather say, was one of the few alternatives which the crisis of his affairs left to Buonaparte, and which, judging from the previous vacillation and cautious timidity displayed in the councils of the allies, he had no reason to apprehend would have given rise to the consequences that actually followed.

## THE ALLIES ADVANCE

The allies, who had in their latest councils wound up their

resolution to the decisive experiment of marching on Paris, were at first at a loss to account for Napoleon's disappearance, or to guess whither he had gone. This occasioned some hesitation and loss of time. At length, by the interception of a French courier, they found despatches addressed by Buonaparte to his government at Paris, from which they were enabled to conjecture the real purpose and direction of his march. A letter,[14] in the Emperor's own hand, to Maria Louisa, confirmed the certainty of the information.[15] The allies resolved to adhere, under this unexpected change of circumstances, to the bold resolution they had already formed. To conceal the real direction of his march, as well as to open communications with the Silesian army, Schwartzenberg, moving laterally, transferred his headquarters to Vitry, where he arrived on the 24th, two days after it had been summoned by Napoleon. Blucher, in the meantime, approached his army from Laon to Chalons, now entirely re-organised after

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[14] "Mon Amie, j'ai été tous les jours à cheval; le 20 j'ai pris Arcis-sur-Aube. L'ennemi m'y attaqua à 8 heures du soir: le même soir je l'ai battu, et lui ai fait 4000 morts: je lui ai pris 2 pieces de canon et même repris 2: ayant quitté le 21, l'armée ennemie s'est mise, en battaille pour protéger la marche de ses armées, sur Brienne, et sur Bar-sur-Aube, j'ai décidé de me porter sur la Marne et ses environs afin de la pousser plus loin de Paris, en me rapprochant de mes *places*. Je serai ce soir à St. Dizier. Adieu, mon amie, embrassez mon fils."

[15] "General Muffling told me that the word *St. Dizier*, of so much importance, was so badly written, that they were several hours in making it out. Blucher forwarded the letter to Maria Louisa, with a letter in German, saying, that as she was the daughter of a *respectable* sovereign, who was fighting in the same cause with himself, he had sent it to her." —*Memorable Events*, p. 98.

the two bloody battles which it had sustained. As a necessary preparation for the advance, General Ducca was left on the Aube, with a division of Austrians, for the purpose of defending their depôts, keeping open their communications, and guarding the person of the Emperor Francis, who did not perhaps judge it delicate to approach Paris in arms, with the rest of the sovereigns, while the city was nominally governed by his own daughter as Regent. Ducca had also in charge, if pressed, to retreat upon the Prince of Hesse-Homberg's army, which was in triumphant possession of Lyons.

This important arrangement being made, another was adopted equally necessary to deceive and observe Napoleon. Ten thousand cavalry were selected, under the enterprising generals, Winzengerode and Czernicheff, who, with fifty pieces of cannon, were despatched to hang on Buonaparte's march, to obstruct his communications with the country he had left, intercept couriers from Paris, or information respecting the motions of the allied armies, and to present on all occasions such a front, as, if possible, might impress him with the belief, that their corps formed the vanguard of the whole army of Schwartzenberg. The Russian and Prussian light troops meanwhile scoured the roads, and intercepted, near Sommepuix, a convoy of artillery and ammunition belonging to Napoleon's rear-guard, when twenty pieces of cannon, with a strong escort, fell into their hands. They also cut off several couriers, bringing important despatches to Napoleon from Paris. One of these

was loaded with as heavy tidings as ever were destined to afflict falling greatness. This packet informed Napoleon of the descent of the English in Italy; of the entry of the Austrians into Lyons, and the critical state of Augereau; of the declaration of Bourdeaux in favour of Louis; of the demonstrations of Wellington towards Toulouse; of the disaffected state of the public mind, and the exhausted condition of the national resources. Much of these tidings was new to the allied sovereigns and generals; but it was received by them with very different sensations from those which the intelligence was calculated to inflict upon him for whom the packet was intended.

Blucher, in the meantime, so soon as he felt the opposition to his movements diminished by the march of Buonaparte from Chalons to Arcis, had instantly resumed the offensive, and driven the corps of Mortier and Marmont, left to observe his motions, over the Marne. He passed the Aisne, near Béry-le-Bac, repossessed himself of Rheims by blowing open the gates and storming the place, and, having gained these successes, moved towards Chalons and Vitry. His course had hitherto been south-eastward, in order to join with Schwartzenberg; but he now received from the King of Prussia the welcome order to turn his march westward, and move straight upon Paris. The grand army adopted the same direction, and thus they moved on in corresponding lines, and in communication with each other.

While Buonaparte, retiring to the east, prepared for throwing himself on the rear of the allies, he was necessarily, in person,

exposed to the same risk of having his communications cut off, and his supplies intercepted, which it was the object of his movement to inflict upon his enemy. Marmont and Mortier, who retreated before Blucher over the Marne, had orders to move upon Vitry, probably because that movement would have placed them in the rear of Schwartzenberg, had he been induced to retreat from the line of the Aube, as Napoleon expected he would. But as a very different course had been adopted by the allies, from that which Napoleon had anticipated, the two maréchals found themselves unexpectedly in front of their grand army near Fère-Champenoise. They were compelled to attempt a retreat to Sezanne, in which, harassed by the numerous cavalry of the allies, they sustained heavy loss.

While the cavalry were engaged in pursuit of the maréchals, the infantry of the allies were approaching the town of Fère-Champenoise, when a heavy fire was heard in the vicinity, and presently appeared a large column of infantry, advancing checker-wise and by intervals, followed and repeatedly charged by several squadrons of cavalry, who were speedily recognised as belonging to the Silesian army. The infantry, about 5000 in number, had left Paris with a large convoy of provisions and ammunition. They were proceeding towards Montmirail, when they were discovered and attacked by the cavalry of Blucher's army. Unable to make a stand, they endeavoured, by an alteration of their march, to reach Fère-Champenoise, where they expected to find either the Emperor, or Marmont and Mortier. It was thus

their misfortune to fall upon Scylla in seeking to avoid Charybdis. The column consisted entirely of young men, conscripts, or national guards, who had never before been in action. Yet, neither the necessity of their condition, nor their unexpected surprise in meeting first one, and then a second army of enemies, where they looked only for friends, could induce these spirited young men to surrender. Rappatel, the aide-de-camp of Moreau, and entertained in the same capacity by the Emperor Alexander, was shot, while attempting, by the orders of the Emperor, to explain to them the impossibility of resistance. The French say, that the brother of Rappatel served in the company from which the shot came which killed the unfortunate officer. The artillery at length opened on the French on every side; they were charged by squadron after squadron; the whole convoy was taken, and the escort were killed, wounded, or made prisoners.[16]

## ALLIES APPROACH PARIS

Thus the allies continued to advance upon Paris, while the shattered divisions of Mortier and Marmont, hard pressed by the cavalry, lost a rear-guard of 1500 men near Ferté Gauchère. At Crecy they parted into two bodies, one retreating on Meaux, the other on Lagny. They were still pursued and harassed; and at length, the soldiers becoming desperate, could hardly be kept

[16] Lord Burghersh, Observations, &c., p. 232; Baron Fain, p. 222.

together, while the artillerymen cut the traces of their guns, and mounted their draught-horses, to effect their escape. It is computed that the French divisions, between Fère-Champenoise and Lagny, lost 8000 men, and eighty guns, besides immense quantities of baggage and ammunition. Indeed, surrounded as they were by overpowering numbers, it required no little skill in the generals, as well as bravery and devotion in the soldiers, to keep the army from dissolving entirely. The allies, gaining advantages at every step, moved on with such expedition, that when, on the 27th March, they took up their headquarters at Collomiers, they had marched upwards of seventy miles in three days.

An effort was made, by about 10,000 men of the national guards, to stop a column of the army of Silesia, but it totally failed; General Horne galloping into the very centre of the French mass of infantry, and making prisoner the general who commanded them with his own hand. When Blucher approached Meaux, the garrison (a part of Mortier's army) retreated, blowing up a large powder magazine. This was on the 28th of March, and on the evening of the same day, the vanguard of the Silesian army pushed on as far as Claye, from whence, not without a sharp action, they dislodged a part of the divisions of Marmont and Mortier. These maréchals now retreated under the walls of Paris, their discouraged and broken forces forming the only regular troops, excepting those of the garrison, which could be reckoned on for the defence of the capital.

The allied armies moved onward, on the same grand point, leaving, however, Generals Wrede and Sacken, with a corps d'armée of 30,000 men, upon the line of the Marne, to oppose any attempt which might be made for annoying the rear of the army, and thus relieving the metropolis.

Deducing this covering army, the rest of the allied forces moved in columns along the three grand routes of Meaux, Lagny, and Soissons, thus threatening Paris along all its north-eastern quarter. The military sovereigns and their victorious armies were now in sight of that metropolis, whose ruler and his soldiers had so often and so long lorded it in theirs; of that Paris, which, unsatisfied with her high rank among the cities of Europe, had fomented constant war until all should be subjugated to her empire; of that proud city, who boasted herself the first in arms and in science, the mistress and example of the civilized world, the depositary of all that is wonderful in the fine arts, and the dictatress as well of taste as of law to continental Europe.

## PARIS

The position of Paris, on the north-eastern frontier, which was thus approached, is as strongly defensible, perhaps, as can be said of any unfortified town in the world. Art, however, had added little to the defence of the city itself, except a few wretched redoubts (called by the French *tambours*,) erected for protection of the barriers. But the external line was very

strong, as will appear from the following sketch. The heights which environ the city on the eastern side, rise abruptly from an extensive plain, and form a steep and narrow ridge, which sinks again as suddenly upon the eastern quarter of the town, which it seems to screen as with a natural bulwark. The line of defence which they afford is extremely strong. The southern extremity of the ridge, which rests upon the wood of Vincennes, extending southward to the banks of the river Marne, is called the heights of Belleville and Romainville, taking its name from two delightful villages which occupy it, Belleville being nearest, and Romainville most distant from Paris. The heights are covered with romantic groves, and decorated by many pleasant villas, with gardens, orchards, vineyards, and plantations. These, which, in peaceful times, are a favourite resort of the gay Parisians, on their parties of pleasure, were now to be occupied by other guests, and for far different purposes. In advance of these heights, and protected by them, is the village of Pantin, situated on the great road from Bondy. To the left of Romainville, and more in front of Belleville, is a projecting eminence, termed the Butte de Saint Chaumont. The ridge there sinks, and admits a half-finished aqueduct, called the canal de l'Ourcq. The ground then again rises into the bold and steep eminence, called Montmartre, from being the supposed place of the martyrdom of St. Denis, the patron of France. From the declivity of this steep hill is a level plain, extending to the river Seine, through which runs the principal northern approach to Paris, from the town of Saint

Denis. The most formidable preparations had been made for maintaining this strong line of defence, behind which the city lay sheltered. The extreme right of the French forces occupied the wood of Vincennes, and the village of Charenton upon the Marne, and was supported by the troops stationed on the heights of Belleville, Romainville, and on the Butte de Chaumont, which composed the right wing. Their centre occupied the line formed by the half-finished canal de l'Ourcq, was defended by the village of La Villette, and a strong redoubt on the farm of Rouvroi, mounted with eighteen heavy guns, and by the embankments of the canal, and still farther protected by a powerful artillery planted in the rear, on the heights of Montmartre. The left wing was thrown back from the village called Monceaux, near the north-western extremity of the heights, and prolonged itself to that of Neuilly, on the Seine, which was strongly occupied by the extreme left of their army. Thus, with the right extremity of the army resting upon the river Marne, and the left upon the Seine, the French occupied a defensive semicircular line, which could not be turned, the greater part of which was posted on heights of uncommon steepness, and the whole defended by cannon, placed with the utmost science and judgment, but very deficient in point of numbers.

The other side of Paris is almost defenceless; but, in order to have attacked it on that side, the allies must have previously crossed the Seine; an operation successfully practised in the following year, but which at that period, when their work, to be

executed at all, must be done suddenly, they had no leisure to attempt, considering the great probability of Napoleon's coming up in their rear, recalled by the danger of the capital. They were therefore compelled to prefer a sudden and desperate attack upon the strongest side of the city, to the slower, though more secure measure of turning the formidable line of defence which we have endeavoured to describe.

Three times, since the allies crossed the Rhine, the capital of France had been menaced by the approach of troops within twenty miles of the city, but it had uniformly been delivered by the active and rapid movements of Napoleon. Encouraged by this recollection, the citizens, without much alarm, heard, for the fourth time, that the Cossacks had been seen at Meaux. Stifled rumours, however, began to circulate, that the divisions of Marmont and Mortier had sustained severe loss, and were in full retreat on the capital; a fact speedily confirmed by the long train of wounded who entered the barriers of the city, with looks of consternation and words of discouragement. Then came crowds of peasants, flying they knew not whither, before an enemy whose barbarous rapacity had been so long the theme of every tongue, bringing with them their half-naked and half-starved families, their teams, their carts, and such of their herds and household goods as they could remove in haste. These unfortunate fugitives crowded the Boulevards of Paris, the usual resort of the gay world, adding, by exaggerated and contradictory reports, to the dreadful ideas which the Parisians

already conceived of the approaching storm.

The government, chiefly directed by Joseph Buonaparte, in the name of his sister-in-law Maria Louisa, did all they could to encourage the people, by exaggerating their means of defence, and maintaining with effrontery, that the troops which approached the capital, composed but some isolated column which by accident straggled towards Paris, while the Emperor was breaking, dividing, and slaughtering, the gross of the confederated army. The light could not be totally shut out, but such rays as were admitted were highly coloured with hope, having been made to pass through the medium of the police and public papers. A grand review of the troops destined for the defence of the capital was held upon the Sunday preceding the assault. Eight thousand troops of the line, being the garrison of Paris, under Gerard, and 30,000 national guards, commanded by Hulin, governor of the city, passed in order through the stately court of the Tuileries, followed by their trains of artillery, their corps of pioneers, and their carriages for baggage and ammunition. This was an imposing and encouraging spectacle, until it was remembered that these forces were not designed to move out to distant conquest, the destination of many hundreds of thousands which in other days had been paraded before that palace; but that they were the last hope of Paris, who must defend all that she contained by a battle under her walls. The remnants of Marmont and Mortier's corps d'armée made no part of this parade. Their diminished battalions, and disordered

state of equipment, were ill calculated to inspire courage into the public mind. They were concentrated and stationed on the line of defence already described, beyond the barriers of the city. But the maréchals themselves entered Paris, and gave their assistance to the military councils of Joseph Buonaparte.

Preparations were made by the government to remove beyond the Loire, or at least in that direction. Maria Louisa had none of the spirit of an Amazon, though graced with all the domestic virtues. She was also placed painfully in the course of a war betwixt her husband and father. Besides, she obeyed, and probably with no lack of will, Napoleon's injunctions to leave the capital, if danger should approach. She left Paris,[17] therefore, with her son, who is said to have shown an unwillingness to depart, which, in a child, seemed to have something ominous in it.[18] Almost all the civil authorities of Buonaparte's government left the city at the same time, after destroying the private records of the high police, and carrying with them the crown jewels, and much of the public treasure. Joseph Buonaparte remained, detaining with him, somewhat, it is said, against his inclination, Cambacérès, the chancellor of the Emperor, whom, though somewhat too unwieldy for the character, Napoleon had, in one of his latest councils, threatened with the honours and dangers

[17] "At half past ten on the morning of the 29th, the Empress, in a brown cloth riding-habit, with the King of Rome, in one coach, surrounded by guards, and followed by several other coaches, with attendants, quitted the palace; the spectators observing the most profound silence." —*Memorable Events in Paris in 1814*, p. 50.

[18] Souvenirs de Mad. Durand, tom. i., p. 205.

of the Colonelcy of a battalion. Joseph himself had the talents of an accomplished man, and an amiable member of society, but they do not seem to have been of a military description. He saw his sister-in-law depart, attended by a regiment of seven hundred men, whom some writers have alleged had been better employed in the defence of the city; forgetting of what importance it was to Napoleon, that the person of the Empress should be protected alike against a roving band of Hulans, or Cossacks, or the chance of some civic mutiny. These arrangements being made, Joseph published, on the morning of the 29th, a proclamation, assuring the citizens of Paris, that "he would remain with them;" he described the enemy as a single straggling column which had approached from Meaux, and required them by a brief and valorous resistance to sustain the honour of the French name, until the arrival of the Emperor, who, he assured the Parisians, was on full march to their succour.[19]

Between three and four o'clock on the next eventful morning, the drums beat to arms, and the national guards assembled in force. But of the thousands which obeyed the call, a great part were, from age, habits, and want of inclination, unfit for the

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[19] "I saw the proclamation of *Roi Joseph* selling for a sous, on the Boulevards, where groups of people were assembled. The flight of the Empress caused considerable alarm. Many loudly expressed their discontent at the national guard, for permitting her to leave Paris, as they entertained a dastardly hope that her presence would preserve them from the vengeance of the allies. For the first time I heard the people openly dare to vent complaints against the Emperor, as the sole cause of their impending calamity; but I witnessed no patriotic feeling to repulse the enemy." —*Memorable Events*, p. 53.

service demanded from them. We have also already alluded to the scarcity of arms, and certainly there were very many of those citizen-soldiers, whom, had weapons been more plenty, the government of Buonaparte would not have intrusted with them.

Most of the national guards, who were suitably armed, were kept within the barrier until about eleven o'clock, and then, as their presence became necessary, were marched to the scene of action, and arrayed in a second line behind the regular troops, so as rather to impose upon the enemy, by an appearance of numbers, than to take a very active share in the contest. The most serviceable were, however, draughted to act as sharp-shooters, and several battalions were stationed to strengthen particular points of the line. The whole of the troops, including many volunteers, who actively engaged in the defence of the city, might be between 10,000 and 20,000.

The proposed assault of the allies was to be general and simultaneous, along the whole line of defence. The Prince Royal of Wirtemberg was to attack the extreme right of the French, in the wood of Vincennes, drive them from the banks of the Marne and the village of Charenton, and thus turn the heights of Belleville. The Russian general, Rayefski, making a flank movement from the public road to Meaux, was to direct three strong columns, with their artillery and powerful reserves, in order to attack in front the important heights of Belleville and Romainville, and the villages which give name to them. The Russian and Prussian body-guards had charge to attack the centre

of the enemy, posted upon the canal de l'Ourcq, the reserves of which occupied the eminence called Montmartre. The army of Silesia was to assail the left of the French line, so as to turn and carry the heights of Montmartre from the north-east. The third division of the allied army, and a strong body of cavalry, were kept in reserve. Before the attack commenced, two successive flags of truce were despatched to summon the city to capitulate. Both were refused admittance; so that the intention of the defenders of Paris appeared fixed to hazard an engagement.

It was about eight o'clock, when the Parisians, who had assembled in anxious crowds at the barriers of St. Denis and of Vincennes, the outlets from Paris, corresponding with the two extremities of the line, became sensible, from the dropping succession of musket shots, which sounded like the detached pattering of large drops of rain before a thunder-storm, that the work of destruction was already commenced. Presently platoons of musketry, with a close and heavy fire of cannon, from the direction of Belleville, announced that the engagement had become general on that part of the line.

## BELLEVILLE – MESNILMONTANT

General Rayefski had begun the attack by pushing forward a column, with the purpose of turning the heights of Romainville on the right; but its progress having been arrested by a heavy fire of artillery, the French suddenly became the assailants, and

under the command of Marmont, rushed forward and possessed themselves of the village of Pantin,[20] in advance of their line; an important post, which they had abandoned on the preceding evening, at the approach of the allied army. It was instantly recovered by the Russian grenadiers, at the point of the bayonet; and the French, although they several times attempted to resume the offensive, were driven back by the Russians on the villages of Belleville and Mesnilmontant, while the allies pushed forward through the wood of Romainville, under the acclivity of the heights. The most determined and sustained fire was directed upon them from the French batteries along the whole line. Several of these were served by the youths of the Polytechnic school, boys from twelve to sixteen years of age, who showed the greatest activity and the most devoted courage. The French infantry rushed repeatedly in columns from the heights, where opportunities occurred to check the progress of the allies. They were as often repulsed by the Russians, each new attempt giving rise to fresh conflicts and more general slaughter, while a continued and dispersed combat of sharpshooters took place among the groves, vineyards, and gardens of the villas, with which the heights are covered. At length, by order of General de Tolli, the Russian commander-in-chief, the front attack on the heights was suspended until the operations of the allies on the other points should permit it to be resumed at a cheaper

[20] Lord Burghersh's account states, that the village of Pantin was attacked, but never retaken by the French. – "Operations," p. 240. – Ed. (1842.)

risk of loss. The Russian regiments which had been dispersed as sharpshooters, were withdrawn, and again formed in rank, and it would seem that the French seized this opportunity to repossess themselves of the village of Pantin, and to assume a momentary superiority in the contest.

Blucher had received his orders late in the morning, and could not commence the attack so early as that upon the left. About eleven o'clock, having contented himself with observing and blockading a body of French troops, who occupied the village of St. Denis, he directed the columns of General Langeron against the village of Aubervilliers, and, having surmounted the obstinate opposition which was there made, moved them by the road of Clichy, right against the extremity of the heights of Montmartre, whilst the division of Kleist and D'Yorck marched to attack in flank the villages of La Villette and Pantin, and thus sustain the attack on the centre and right of the French. The defenders, strongly intrenched and protected by powerful batteries, opposed the most formidable resistance, and, as the ground was broken and impracticable for cavalry, many of the attacking columns suffered severely. When the divisions of the Silesian army, commanded by Prince William of Prussia, first came to the assistance of the original assailants upon the centre, the French concentrated themselves on the strong post of La Villette, and the farm of Rouvroy, and continued to offer the most desperate resistance in defence of these points. Upon the allied left wing the Prussian guards, and those of Baden, threw

themselves with rival impetuosity into the village of Pantin, and carried it at the point of the bayonet. During these advantages, the Prince Royal of Wirtemberg, on the extreme left of the allies, had forced his way to Vincennes, and threatened the right of the French battalions posted at Belleville, as had been projected in the plan of the attack. General Rayefski renewed the suspended assault upon these heights in front, when he learned that they were thus in some measure turned in flank, and succeeded in carrying those of Romainville, with the village. Marmont and Oudinot in vain attempted a charge upon the allied troops, who had thus established themselves on the French line of defence. They were repulsed and pursued by the victors, who, following up their advantage, possessed themselves successively of the villages of Belleville and Mesnilmontant, the Butte de St. Chaumont, and the fine artillery which defended this line.

About the same time the village of Charonne, on the right extremity of the heights, was also carried, and the whole line of defence occupied by the right wing of the French fell into possession of the allies. Their light horse began to penetrate from Vincennes as far as the barriers of Paris, and their guns and mortars upon the heights were turned upon the city. The centre of the French army, stationed upon the canal de l'Ourcq, had hitherto stood firm, protected by the redoubt at Rouvroy, with eighteen heavy pieces of cannon, and by the village of La Villette, which formed the key of the position. But the right flank of their line being turned by those troops who had become

possessed of Romainville, the allies overwhelmed this part of the line also; and, carrying by assault the farm of Rouvroy, with its strong redoubt, and the village of La Villette, drove the centre of the French back upon the city. A body of French cavalry attempted to check the advance of the allied columns, but were repulsed and destroyed by a brilliant charge of the black hussars of Brandenburgh. Meanwhile, the right wing of the Silesian army approached close to the foot of Montmartre, and Count Langeron's corps were preparing to storm this last remaining defensible post, when a flag of truce appeared, to demand a cessation of hostilities.

It appears that, in the morning, Joseph Buonaparte had shown himself to the defenders riding along the lines, accompanied by his staff, and had repeated to all the corps engaged, the assurance that he would live and die with them. There is reason to think, that if he did not quite credit that such extensive preparations for assault were made by a single division of the allies, yet he believed he had to do with only one of their two armies, and not with their united force. He was undeceived by a person named Peyre, called, by some, an engineer officer attached to the staff of the Governor of Paris, and, by others, a superintendent belonging to the corps of firemen in that city. Peyre, it seems, had fallen into the hands of a party of Cossacks the night before, and was carried in the morning to the presence of the Emperor Alexander, at Bondy. In his route, he had an opportunity of calculating the immense force of the armies now under the walls of Paris.

Through the medium of this officer, the Emperor Alexander explained the intentions of the allied sovereigns, to allow fair terms to the city of Paris, provided it was proposed to capitulate ere the barriers were forced; with the corresponding intimation, that if the defence were prolonged beyond that period, it would not be in the power either of the Emperor, the King of Prussia, or the allied generals, to prevent the total destruction of the town.

## FALL OF PARIS

Mons. Peyre, thus erected into a commissioner and envoy of crowned heads, was set at liberty, and with danger and difficulty found his way into the French lines, through the fire which was maintained in every direction. He was introduced to Joseph, to whom he delivered his message, and showed proclamations to the city of Paris, with which the Emperor Alexander had intrusted him. Joseph hesitated, at first inclining to capitulate, then pulling up resolution, and determining to abide the chance of arms. He continued irresolute, blood flowing fast around him, until about noon, when the enemy's columns, threatening an attack on Montmartre, and the shells and bullets from the artillery, which was in position to cover the attempt, flying fast over the heads of himself and his staff, he sent Peyre to General Marmont, who acted as commander-in-chief, with permission to the maréchal to demand a cessation of arms. At the same time, Joseph himself fled with his whole attendants; thus abandoning the troops,

whom his exhortations had engaged, in the bloody and hopeless resistance of which he had solemnly promised to partake the dangers.[21] Marmont, with Moncey, and the other generals who conducted the defence, now saw all hopes of making it good at an end. The whole line was carried, excepting the single post of Montmartre, which was turned, and on the point of being stormed on both flanks, as well as in front; the Prince Royal of Wirtemberg had occupied Charenton, with its bridge over the Marne, and pushing forward on the high-road from thence to Paris, his advanced posts were already skirmishing at the barriers called the Trône; and a party of Cossacks had been with difficulty repulsed from the faubourg St. Antoine, on which they made a *Hourra*. The city of Paris is merely surrounded by an ordinary wall, to prevent smuggling. The barriers are not much stronger than any ordinary turnpike gate, and the stockade with which they had been barricaded, could have been cleared away by a few blows of the pioneers' axes. Add to this, that the heights commanding the city, Montmartre excepted, were in complete possession of the enemy; that a bomb or two, thrown probably to intimidate the citizens, had already fallen in the faubourg Montmartre, and the chaussée d'Antin; and that it was evident that any attempt to protract the defence of Paris, must be attended with utter ruin to the

[21] "Prince Joseph, observing the vast number of the enemy's troops that had arrived at the foot of Montmartre, was convinced that the capitulation could be no longer delayed. He gave the necessary powers to the Duke of Ragusa; and immediately proceeded to join the government at Blois." – Baron Fain, p. 232.

town and its inhabitants. Marshal Marmont, influenced by these considerations, despatched a flag of truce to General Barclay de Tolli, requesting a suspension of hostilities, to arrange the terms on which Paris was to be surrendered. The armistice was granted, on condition that Montmartre, the only defensible part of the line which the French still continued to occupy, should be delivered up to the allies. Deputies were appointed on both sides, to adjust the terms of surrender. These were speedily settled. The French regular troops were permitted to retire from Paris unmolested, and the metropolis was next day to be delivered up to the allied sovereigns, to whose generosity it was recommended.

Thus ended the assault of Paris, after a bloody action, in which the defenders lost upwards of 4000 in killed and wounded; and the allies, who had to storm well-defended batteries, redoubts, and intrenchments, perhaps about twice the number. They remained masters of the line at all points, and took nearly one hundred pieces of cannon. When night fell, the multiplied and crowded watch-fires that occupied the whole chain of heights on which the victors now bivouacked, indicated to the astonished inhabitants of the French metropolis, how numerous and how powerful were the armies into whose hands the fate of war had surrendered them.[22]

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[22] "During the battle, the Boulevards des Italiens, and the Caffé Tortoni, were thronged with fashionable loungers of both sexes, sitting as usual on the chairs placed there, and appearing almost uninterested spectators of the number of wounded French, and prisoners of the allies which were brought in. About two o'clock, a general cry of *sauve qui peut* was heard on the Boulevards; this caused a general and confused flight,

which spread like the undulations of a wave, even beyond the Pont Neuf. During the whole of the battle, wounded soldiers crawled into the streets, and lay down to die on the pavement. The *Moniteur* of this day was a full sheet; but no notice was taken of the war or the army. Four columns were occupied by an article on the dramatic works of Denis, and three with a dissertation on the existence of Troy." —*Memorable Events*, pp. 90-93.

# CHAPTER LXXVII

State of Parties in Paris – Royalists – Revolutionists – Buonapartists – Talleyrand – Chateaubriand – Mission to the Allied Sovereigns – Their answer – Efforts of the Buonapartists – Feelings of the lowest classes – of the middling ranks – Neutrality of the National Guard – Growing confidence of the Royalists – Proclamations and White Cockades – Crowds assemble at the Boulevards – The Allies are received with shouts of welcome – Their Army retires to quarters – and the Cossacks bivouac in the Champs Elysées.

The battle was fought and won; but it remained a high and doubtful question in what way the victory was to be improved, so as to produce results of far greater consequence than usually follow from the mere military occupation of an enemy's capital. While the mass of the inhabitants were at rest, exhausted by the fatigues and anxieties of the day, many secret conclaves, on different principles, were held in the city of Paris, upon the night after the assault. Some of these even yet endeavoured to organise the means of resistance, and some to find out what modern policy has called a *Mezzo-termine*, some third expedient, between the risk of standing by Napoleon, and that of recalling the banished family.

The only middle mode which could have succeeded, would

have been a regency under the Empress; and Fouché's Memoirs state, that if he had been in Paris at the time, he might have succeeded in establishing a new order of things upon such a basis. The assertion may be safely disputed. To Austria such a plan might have had some recommendations; but to the sovereigns and statesmen of the other allied nations, the proposal would only have appeared a device to obtain immediate peace, and keep the throne, as it were, in commission, that Buonaparte might ascend it at his pleasure.[23]

[23] The passage is curious, whether we regard it as really emanating from Fouché, or placed in the mouth of that active revolutionist by some one who well understood the genius of the party. "Had I been at Paris at that time," (the period of the siege, namely,) "the weight of my influence, doubtless, and my perfect acquaintance with the secrets of every party, would have enabled me to give these extraordinary events a very different direction. My preponderance, and the promptness of my decision, would have predominated over the more slow and mysterious influence of Talleyrand. That elevated personage could not have made his way unless we had been harnessed to the same car. I would have revealed to him the ramifications of my political plan, and, in spite of the odious policy of Savary, the ridiculous government of Cambacérès, the lieutenancy of the puppet Joseph, and the base spirit of the Senate, we would have breathed new life into the carcase of the Revolution, and these degraded patricians would not have thought of acting exclusively for their own interests. By our united impulse, we would have pronounced before the interference of any foreign influence, the dethronement of Napoleon, and proclaimed the Regency, of which I had already traced the basis. This conclusion was the only one which could have preserved the Revolution and its principles." —*Mémoires*, tom. ii., p. 229.

## PARTIES IN PARIS

We have the greatest doubts whether, among the ancient chiefs of the Revolution, most of whom had, as hackneyed tools, lost credit in the public eye, both by want of principle and political inconsistency, there remained any who could have maintained a popular interest in opposition to that of the Royalists on the one hand, and the Buonapartists on the other. The few who remained steady to their democratic principles, Napoleon had discredited and thrown into the shade; and he had rendered many of the others still more inefficient, by showing that they were accessible to bribery and to ambition, and that ancient demagogues could, without much trouble, be transmuted into supple and obsequious courtiers. Their day of power and interest was past, and the exaggerated vehemence of their democratic opinions had no longer any effect on the lower classes, who were in a great proportion attached to the empire.

The Royalists, on the other hand, had been long combining and extending their efforts and opinions, which gained, chiefly among the higher orders, a sort of fashion which those of the democrats had lost. Talleyrand was acceptable to them as himself noble by birth; and he knew better than any one how to apply the lever to unfasten the deep foundations of Napoleon's power. Of his address, though not successful in the particular instance, Las Cases gives us a curious specimen. Talleyrand desired to sound

the opinion of Decrès, about the time of the crisis of which we are treating. He drew that minister towards the chimney, and opening a volume of Montesquieu, said, as if in the tone of an ordinary conversation, "I found a passage here this morning, which struck me in an extraordinary manner. Here it is, in such a book and chapter, page so and so: *When a prince has raised himself above all laws, when his tyranny becomes insupportable, there remains nothing to the oppressed subject except —*"

"It is quite enough," said Decrès, placing his hand upon Talleyrand's mouth, "I will hear no more. Shut your book." And Talleyrand closed the book, as if nothing remarkable had happened.[24]

An agent of such extraordinary tact was not frequently baffled, in a city, and at a time, when so many were, from hope, fear, love, hatred, and all the other strongest passions, desirous, according to the Roman phrase, of a new state of things. He had been unceasingly active, and eminently successful, in convincing the Royalists, that the King must purchase the recovery of his authority by consenting to place the monarchy on a constitutional footing; and in persuading another class, that the restoration of the Bourbons was the most favourable chance for the settlement of a free system of government. Nor did this accomplished politician limit his efforts to those who had loyalty to be awakened, and a love of liberty to be rekindled, but extended them through a thousand ramifications, through every

[24] Las Cases, tom. ii., p. 251.

class of persons. To the bold he offered an enterprise requiring courage; to the timid (a numerous class at the time) he showed the road of safety; to the ambitious, the prospect of gaining power; to the guilty, the assurance of indemnity and safety. He had inspired resolution even into the councils of the allies. A note from him to the Emperor Alexander, in the following words, is said to have determined that prince to persevere in the march upon Paris. "You venture nothing," said this laconic billet, "when you may safely venture every thing – Venture once more."

It is not to be supposed that Talleyrand wrought in this deep intrigue without active coadjutors. The Abbé de Pradt, whose lively works have so often given some interest to our pages, was deeply involved in the transactions of that busy period, and advocated the cause of the Bourbons against that of his former master. Bournonville and other senators were engaged in the same cabals.

## PROCLAMATION OF THE ALLIES

The Royalists, on their own part, were in the highest state of activity, and prepared to use their utmost exertions to obtain the mastery of the public spirit. At this most critical moment all was done, by Monsieur de Chateaubriand, which eloquence could effect, to appeal to the affections, perhaps even the prejudices of the people, in his celebrated pamphlet, entitled, "Of Buonaparte and the Bourbons." This vigorous and affecting

comparison between the days when France was in peace and honour under her own monarchs, contrasted with those in which Europe appeared in arms under her walls, had been written above a month, and the manuscript was concealed by Madame de Chateaubriand in her bosom. It was now privately printed. So was a proclamation by Monsieur, made in the name of his brother, the late King of France. Finally, in a private assembly of the principal Royalists, amongst whom were the illustrious names of Rohan, Rochefoucault, Montmorency, and Noailles, it was resolved to send a deputation to the allied sovereigns, to learn, if possible, their intention. Monsieur Douhet, the gentleman intrusted with this communication, executed his mission at the expense of considerable personal danger, and returned into Paris with the answer, that the allies had determined to avoid all appearance of dictating to France respecting any family or mode of government, and that although they would most joyfully and willingly acknowledge the Bourbons, yet it could only be in consequence of a public declaration in their favour. At the same time Monsieur Douhet was furnished with a proclamation of the allies, signed Schwartzenberg, which, without mentioning the Bourbons, was powerfully calculated to serve their cause. It declared the friendly intention of the allies towards France, and represented the power of the government which now oppressed them, as the only obstacle to instant peace. The allied sovereigns, it was stated, sought but to see a salutary government in France, who would cement the friendly union of all nations. It belonged

to the city of Paris to pronounce their opinion, and accelerate the peace of the world.[25]

Furnished with this important document, which plainly indicated the private wishes of the allies, the Royalists resolved to make an effort on the morning of March 31st. It was at first designed they should assemble five hundred gentlemen in arms; but this plan was prudently laid aside, and they determined to relinquish all appearance of force, and address the citizens only by means of persuasion.

In the meantime, the friends of the imperial government were not idle. The conduct of the lower classes, during the battle on the heights, had assumed an alarming character. For a time they had listened with a sort of stupified terror to the distant thunders of the fight, beheld the wounded and fugitives crowd in at the barriers, and gazed in useless wonder on the hurried march of troops moving out in haste to reinforce the lines. At length, the numerous crowds which assembled in the Boulevards and, particularly in the streets near the Palais Royal, assumed a more active appearance. There began to emerge from the suburbs and lanes those degraded members of the community, whose slavish labour is only relieved by coarse debauchery, invisible for the most part to the more decent classes of society, but whom periods of public calamity or agitation bring into view, to add to

[25] London Gazette, April 5. – "Early in the morning of the 31st March, before the barriers, were open, the soldiers of the allied army climbed up the pallisades of the barrier Rochechouard to look into Paris. They threw this proclamation over the wall, and through the iron gates." —*Memorable Events*, p. 124.

the general confusion and terror. They gather in times of public danger, as birds of ill omen and noxious reptiles are said to do at the rising of a tropical hurricane; and their fellow-citizens look with equal disgust and dread upon faces and figures, as strange to them as if they had issued from some distant and savage land. Paris, like every great metropolis, has her share, and more than her share, of this unwholesome population. It was the frantic convocations of this class which had at once instigated and carried into effect the principal horrors of the Revolution, and they seemed now resolved to signalize its conclusion by the destruction of the capital. Most of these banditti were under the influence of Buonaparte's police, and were stimulated by the various arts which his emissaries employed. At one time horsemen galloped through the crowd, exhorting them to take arms, and assuring them that Buonaparte had already attacked the rear of the allies. Again they were told that the King of Prussia was made prisoner, with a column of 10,000 men. At other times, similar emissaries, announcing that the allies had entered the suburbs, and were sparing neither sex nor age, exhorting the citizens, by placards pasted on the walls, to shut their shops, and prepare to defend their houses.

This invitation to make the last earthly sacrifices in behalf of a military despot, to which Zaragossa had submitted in defence of her national independence, was ill received by the inhabitants. A free state has millions of necks, but a despotic government is in the situation desired by the Imperial tyrant – it has but one.

When it was obvious that the Emperor Napoleon had lost his ascendency, no shop-keeper in Paris was fool enough to risk, in his cause, his shop, his family, and his life, or to consent to measures for preserving the capital, which were to commence by abandoning to the allied troops, and the scum of their own population, all that was, to him individually, worth fighting for. The placards we have mentioned were pulled down, therefore, as fast as they were pasted up; and there was an evident disposition, on the part of the better class of citizens and the national guards, to discourage all counsels which tended to stimulate resistance to the desperate extremity therein recommended.

Nevertheless, the state of the capital continued very alarming, the lower classes exhibiting alternately the symptoms of panic terror, of fury, and of despair. They demanded arms, of which a few were distributed to them; and there is no doubt, that had Napoleon arrived among them in the struggle, there would have been a dreadful battle, in which Paris, in all probability, would have shared the fate of Moscow. But when the cannonade ceased, when the flight of Joseph, and the capitulation of the city became publicly known, this conflict of jarring passions died away into silence, and the imperturbable and impassive composure of the national guard maintained the absolute tranquillity of the metropolis.

On the morning of the 31st, the Royalists were seen in groups in the Place Louis Quinze, the Garden of the Tuileries, the Boulevards, and other public places. They distributed the

proclamations of the allies, and raised the long-forgotten cry of *Vive le Roi!* At first, none save those engaged in the perilous experiment, durst echo back a signal so dangerous; but by degrees the crowds increased, the leaders got on horseback, and distributed white cockades, lilies, and other emblems of loyalty, displaying banners, at the same time, made out of their own handkerchiefs. The ladies of their party came to their assistance. The Princess of Leon, Vicomtesse of Chateaubriand, Comtesse of Choiseuil, and other women of rank, joined the procession, distributing on all hands the emblems of their party, and tearing their dress to make white cockades, when the regular stock was exhausted. The better class of the bourgeois began to catch the flame, and remembered their old royalist opinions, and by whom they were defeated on the celebrated day of the Sections, when Buonaparte laid the foundation of his fame in the discomfiture of the national guard. Whole pickets began to adopt the white, instead of the three-coloured cockade; yet the voices were far from unanimous, and, on many points, parties of different principles met and skirmished together in the streets. But the tendency to discord was diverted, and the attention of the Parisians, of all classes and opinions, suddenly fixed upon the imposing and terrible spectacle of the army of the allies, which now began to enter the city.

# ENTRANCE OF THE ALLIES

The sovereigns had previously received, at the village of Pantin, the magistrates of Paris, and Alexander had expressed himself in language still more explicit than that of their proclamation. He made war, he said, on Napoleon alone; one who had been his friend, but relinquished that character to become his enemy, and inflict on his empire great evils. He was not, however, come to retaliate those injuries, but to make a secure peace with any government which France might select for herself. "I am at peace," said the Emperor, "with France, and at war with Napoleon alone."

These gracious expressions were received with the more gratitude by the citizens of Paris, that they had been taught to consider the Russian prince as a barbarous and vindictive enemy. The measure of restoring the Bourbons seemed now to be regarded by almost every one, not particularly connected with the dynasty of Napoleon, like a haven on the leeward, unexpectedly open to a tempest-tossed and endangered vessel. There was no loss of honour in adopting it, since the French received back their own royal family – there was no compulsion, since they received them upon their own free choice. They escaped from a great and imminent danger, as if it had been by a bridge of gold.

An immense crowd filled the Boulevards (a large wide open promenade, which, under a variety of distinctive names, forms

a circuit round the city,) in order to witness the entrance of the allied sovereigns and their army, whom, in the succession of four-and-twenty hours, this mutable people were disposed to regard as friends rather than enemies – a disposition which increased until it amounted to enthusiasm for the persons of those princes, against whom a bloody battle had been fought yesterday under the walls of Paris, in evidence of which mortal strife, there still remained blackening in the sun the unburied thousands who had fallen on both sides. There was in this a trait of national character. A Frenchman submits with a good grace, and apparent or real complaisance, to that which he cannot help; and it is not the least advantage of his philosophy, that it entitles him afterwards to plead, that his submission flowed entirely from good-will, and not from constraint. Many of those who, on the preceding day, were forced to fly from the heights which defend Paris, thought themselves at liberty next morning to maintain, that the allies had entered the capital only by their consent and permission, because they had joined in the plaudits which accompanied their arrival. To vindicate, therefore, their city from the disgrace of being entered by force, as well as giving way to the real enthusiasm which was suddenly inspired by the exchange of the worst evils which a conquered people have to dread for the promised blessings of an honourable peace and internal concord, the Parisians received the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia with such general and unremitting plaudits, as might have accompanied their triumphal entrance into their own capitals.

Even at their first entrance within the barriers, we learn from Sir Charles Stewart's official despatch,[26] the crowd was already so enormous, as well as the acclamations so great, that it was difficult to move forward; but before the monarchs had reached the porte St. Martin to turn on the Boulevards, there was a moral impossibility of proceeding; all Paris seemed to be assembled and concentrated in one spot – one spring evidently directed all their movements. They thronged around the monarchs, with the most unanimous shouts of "*Vive l'Empereur Alexandre!—Vive le Roi de Prusse!*" mingled with the loyal exclamations, "*Vive le Roi!—Vive Louis XVIII.!—Vivent les Bourbons!*" To such unexpected unanimity might be applied the words of Scripture, quoted by Clarendon on a similar occasion – "God had prepared the people, for the thing was done suddenly." The procession lasted several hours, during which 50,000 chosen troops of the Silesian and grand army filed along the Boulevards in broad and deep columns, exhibiting a whole forest of bayonets, mingled with long trains of artillery, and preceded by numerous regiments of cavalry of every description. Nothing surprised those who witnessed this magnificent spectacle, more than the high state of good order and regular equipment in which the men and horses appeared. They seemed rather to resemble troops drawn from peaceful quarters to some grand or solemn festival, than regiments engaged during a long winter campaign in constant marches and countermarches, as well as in a succession of the

[26] London Gazette Extraordinary, April 9.

fiercest and most sanguinary conflicts, and who had fought a general action but the day before.[27] After making the circuit of half of Paris by the interior Boulevards, the monarchs halted in the Champs Elysées, and the troops passed in review before them as they were dismissed to their quarters in the city. The Cossacks of the guard established their bivouac in the Champs Elysées themselves, which may be termed the Hyde Park of Paris, and which was thus converted into a Scythian encampment.

[27] "This magnificent pageant far surpassed any idea I had formed of military pomp. The cavalry were fifteen abreast, the artillery five, and the infantry thirty. All the men were remarkably clean, healthy, and well clothed. The bands of music were very fine. The people, astonished at the prodigious number of troops, repeatedly exclaimed, 'Oh! how we have been deceived.'" —*Memorable Events*, p. 106.

# CHAPTER LXXVIII

Fears of the Parisians – Proceedings of Napoleon – Operations of the French Cavalry in rear of the Allies – Capture of Weissemberg – The Emperor Francis is nearly surprised – Napoleon reaches Troyes on the night of the 29th March – Opinion of Macdonald as to the possibility of relieving Paris – Napoleon leaves Troyes, on the 30th, and meets Belliard, a few miles from Paris, in full retreat – Conversation betwixt them – He determines to proceed to Paris, but is at length dissuaded – and despatches Caulaincourt to receive terms from the Allied Sovereigns – He himself returns to Fontainbleau.

## FEARS OF THE PARISIANS

When the enthusiasm attending the entrance of the allies, which had converted a day of degradation into one of joy and festivity, began to subside, the perilous question occurred to those who found themselves suddenly embarked in a new revolution, Where were Napoleon and his army, and what means did his active and enterprising genius possess of still re-establishing his affairs, and taking vengeance on his revolted capital? That terrible and evil spirit, who had so long haunted their very dreams, and who had been well termed the nightmare

of Europe, was not yet conjured down, though for the present he exercised his ministry elsewhere. All trembled for the consequence of his suddenly returning in full force, combined either with the troops of Augereau, or with the garrisons withdrawn from the frontier fortresses. But their fears were without foundation; for, though he was not personally distant, his powers of inflicting vengeance were now limited. We proceed to trace his progress after his movement eastward, from the neighbourhood of Vitry to St. Dizier, which had permitted the union of the two allied armies.

Here he was joined by Caulaincourt, who had to inform him of the dissolution of the Congress at Chatillon, with the addition, that he had not received his instructions from Rheims, until the diplomatists had departed. Those subsequently despatched by Count Frochot, he had not received at all.

Meanwhile, Napoleon's cavalry commenced the proposed operations in the rear of the allies, and made prisoners some persons of consequence, who were travelling, as they supposed, in perfect security, between Troyes and Dijon. Among these was Baron Weissemberg, who had long been the Austrian envoy at the court of London. The Emperor Francis was nearly surprised in person by the French light troops. He was obliged to fly in a *drosky*, a Russian carriage, attended only by two domestics, from Bar-sur-Aube to Chatillon, and from thence he retreated to Dijon![28] Napoleon showed every civility to his prisoner,

[28] Sir Robert Wilson, Sketch of the Military and Political Power of Russia, p. 90.

Weissemberg, and despatched him to the Emperor of Austria, to solicit once more his favourable interference. The person of the present King of France[29] (then Monsieur) would have been a yet more important capture, but the forays of the light cavalry did not penetrate so far as to endanger him.

On the 24th March, Napoleon halted at Doulevent, to concentrate his forces, and gain intelligence. He remained there also on the 25th, and employed his time in consulting his maps, and dictating new instructions for Caulaincourt, by which he empowered him to make every cession. But the hour of safety was past. Upon the morning of the 26th, Napoleon was roused by the intelligence, that the allies had attacked the rear of his army under Macdonald, near St. Dizier. He instantly hastened to the support of the maréchal, concluding that his own scheme had been successful, and that his retreat to the eastward had drawn after him the grand army of the allies. The allies showed a great number of cavalry with flying guns, but no infantry. Napoleon ordered an attack on them, in which the French were successful, the allies falling back after slight opposition. He learned from the prisoners, that he had been engaged, not with Schwartzenberg, but with Blucher's troops. This was strange intelligence. He had left Blucher threatening Meaux, and now he found his army on the verge of Lorraine.

On the 27th, by pushing a reconnoitring party as far west as Vitry, Napoleon learned the real state of the case; that

[29] Charles X.

both the allied armies had marched upon Paris; and that the cavalry with which he had skirmished were 10,000 men, under Winzengerode, left behind by the allies as a curtain to screen their motions, and engage his attention. Every word in this news had a sting in it. To hasten after the allies, to surprise them, if possible, ere the cannon on Montmartre were yet silenced, was the most urgent thought that ever actuated the mind even of Napoleon, so accustomed to high and desperate risks. But the direct route on Paris had been totally exhausted of provision, by the march and countermarch of such large armies. It was necessary to go round by Troyes, and, for that purpose, to retrograde as far as Doulevent. Here he received a small billet in cipher, from the postmaster-general, La Valette, the first official communication he had got from the capital during ten days. "The partisans of the stranger," these were the contents, "are making head, seconded by secret intrigues. The presence of Napoleon is indispensable, if he desires to prevent his capital from being delivered to the enemy. There is not a moment to be lost."[30] The march was precipitated accordingly.

## DOULANCOURT – TROYES

At the bridge of Doulancourt, on the banks of the Aube, the Emperor received despatches, informing him that an assault

[30] Baron Fain, p. 227.

on Paris was hourly be expected. Napoleon dismissed his aide-de-camp, Dejean, to ride post to Paris, and spread the news of his speedy arrival. He gave him two bulletins, describing in extravagant colours a pretended victory at Arcis, and the skirmish at St. Dizier. He then advanced to Troyes, which he reached on that same night (29th March,) the imperial guard marching fifteen leagues in one day. On the 30th, Maréchal Macdonald gave to Berthier the following sound and striking opinion: – "It is too late," he said, "to relieve Paris; at least by the route we follow. The distance is fifty leagues; to be accomplished by forced marches, it will require at least four days; and then in what condition for combat is the army like to arrive, for there are no depôts, or magazines, after leaving Bar-sur-Seine. The allies being yesterday at Meaux, must have pushed their advanced guards up to the barriers by this time. There is no good reason to hope that the united corps of the Dukes of Treviso and Ragusa could check them long enough to allow us to come up. Besides, at our approach, the allies will not fail to defend the passage of the Marne. I am then of opinion, that if Paris fall under the power of the enemy, the Emperor should direct his march on Sens, in order to retreat upon Augereau, unite our forces with his, and, after having reposed our troops, give the enemy battle on a chosen field. If Providence has then decreed our last hour, we will at least die with honour, instead of being dispersed, pillaged, taken, and slaughtered by Cossacks." Napoleon's anxiety for the fate of his capital, did not permit him to hearken to this advice; though

it seems the best calculated to have placed him in a condition, either to make a composition with the allies, or to carry on a formidable war in their rear.

From Troyes, Napoleon despatched to Paris another aide-de-camp, General Girardin, who is said to have carried orders for defending the city to the last, and at all risks – an accusation, however, which, considering the mass of unimaginable mischief that such an order must have involved, is not to be received without more proof than we have been able to obtain.

On the 30th March, Napoleon left Troyes, and, finding the road entirely unoccupied by the enemy, threw himself into a post-carriage, and travelled on at full speed before his army, with a very slight attendance. Having in this way reached Villeneuve L'Archeveque, he rode to Fontainbleau on horseback, and though it was then night, took a carriage for Paris, Berthier and Caulaincourt accompanying him. On reaching an inn, called La Cour de France, at a few miles' distance from Paris, he at length met ample proof of his misfortune in the person of General Belliard, with his cavalry. The fatal intelligence was communicated.

## CONVERSATION WITH BELLIARD

Leaping from his carriage, Napoleon turned back with Belliard, exclaiming – "What means this? Why here with your cavalry, Belliard? And where are the enemy?" – "At the gates

of Paris." – "And the army?" – "It is following me." – "Where are my wife and son? – Where Marmont? – Where Mortier?" – "The Empress set out for Rambouillet, and thence for Orleans. The maréchals are busy completing their arrangements at Paris." He then gave an account of the battle; and Napoleon instantly ordered his carriage for Paris. They had already proceeded a mile and a half on the road. The same conversation proceeded, and we give it as preserved, because it marks the character of the principal personage, and the tone of his feeling, much better than these can be collected from his expressions upon more formal occasions, and when he had in view some particular purpose.[31]

General Belliard reminded him there were no longer any troops in Paris. "It matters not," said Napoleon; "I will find the national guard there. The army will join me to-morrow, or the day after, and I will put things on a proper footing." – "But I must repeat to your Majesty, you cannot go to Paris. The national guard, in virtue of the treaty, mount guard at the barriers, and though the allies are not to enter till seven o'clock in the morning, it is possible they may have found their way to the outposts, and that your Majesty may find Russian or Prussian parties at the gates, or on the Boulevards." – "It is all one – I am determined to go there – My carriage! – Follow me with your cavalry." – "But, Sire, your Majesty will expose Paris to the risk of storm or

[31] It is taken from a work which has remarkable traces of authenticity, General Koch's *Mémoires, pour servir à l'Histoire de la Campagne de 1814*. See also, *Memoirs of the Operations of the Allied Armies*, already quoted, p. 208. – S.

pillage. More than 20,000 men are in possession of the heights – for myself, I have left the city in consequence of a convention, and cannot therefore return." – "What is that convention? who has concluded it?" – "I cannot tell, Sire; I only know from the Duke of Treviso that such exists, and that I must march to Fontainbleau." – "What is Joseph about? – Where is the minister at war?" – "I do not know; we have received orders from neither of them during the whole day. Each maréchal acted on his own responsibility. They have not been seen to-day with the army – At least not with the Duke of Treviso's corps." – "Come, we must to Paris – nothing goes right when I am absent – they do nothing but make blunders."

Berthier and Caulaincourt joined in trying to divert the Emperor from his purpose. He never ceased demanding his carriage. Caulaincourt announced it, but it did not come up. Napoleon strode on with hurried and unequal steps, asking repeated questions concerning what had been already explained. "You should have held out longer," he said, "and tried to wait for the arrival of the army. You should have raised Paris, which cannot surely like the entrance of the Russians. You should have put in motion the national guard, whose disposition is good, and intrusted to them the defence of the fortifications which the minister has caused to be erected, and which are well furnished with artillery. Surely the citizens could have defended these, while the troops of the line fought upon the heights and in the plain?" – "I repeat to you, Sire, that it was impossible. The

army of 15,000 or 18,000 men has resisted one of 100,000 for four hours, expecting your arrival. There was a report of it in the city, which spread to the troops. They redoubled their exertions. The national guard has behaved extremely well, both as sharpshooters and in defence of the wretched redoubts which protected the barriers." – "It is astonishing. How many cavalry had you?" – "Eighteen hundred horse, Sire, including the brigade of Dautencour." – "Montmartre, well fortified and defended by heavy cannon, should have been impregnable." – "Luckily, Sire, the enemy were of your opinion, and approached the heights with much caution. But there was no occasion, we had not above seven six-pounders." – "What can they have made of my artillery? I ought to have had more than two hundred guns, and ammunition to serve them for a month." – "The truth is, Sire, that we had only field-artillery, and at two o'clock we were obliged to slacken our fire for want of ammunition." – "Go, go – I see every one has lost their senses. This comes of employing people who have neither common sense nor energy. Well! Joseph imagines himself capable of conducting an army; and Clarke, a mere piece of routine, gives himself the airs of a great minister; but the one is no better than a fool, and the other a – , or a traitor, for I begin to believe what Savary said of him." – The conversation going on in this manner, they had advanced a mile farther from the Cour de France, when they met a body of infantry under General Curial. Napoleon inquired after the Duke of Treviso, to whose corps d'armée they belonged, and was informed he was still at

Paris.

It was then, that on the pressing remonstrances of his officers, who saw that in going on to Paris he was only rushing on death or captivity, Napoleon at length turned back; and having abandoned the strong inflexible impulse which would have carried him thither at all adventures, he seems to have considered his fate as decided, or at least to have relaxed considerably in the original vehemence which he opposed to adversity.

He returned to the Cour de France, and gave orders for disposing the forces, as they should come up, on the heights of Longjumeau, behind the little river of Essonne. Desirous at the same time of renewing the negotiation for peace, which, on successes of an ephemeral description, he had broken off at Chatillon, Napoleon despatched Caulaincourt to Paris, no longer to negotiate, but to receive and submit to such terms as the allied sovereigns might be inclined to impose upon him. He returned to Fontainbleau the same night. He did not take possession of any of the rooms of state, but chose a private and more retired apartment. Among the many strange transactions which had taken place in that venerable and ancient palace, its halls were now to witness one the most extraordinary.

# CHAPTER LXXIX

The Allied Sovereigns issue a Proclamation that they will not treat with Buonaparte – A Provisional Government is named by the Conservative Senate, who also decree the forfeiture of Napoleon – This decree is sanctioned by all the Public Bodies in Paris – The legality of these proceedings discussed – Feelings towards Napoleon, of the Lower Classes, and of the Military – On 4th April, Buonaparte issues a document abdicating the Throne of France – His subsequent agitation, and wish to continue the war – The deed is finally despatched.

While Napoleon breathed nothing save the desire of recovering by war what war had taken from him, or at least that of making such a peace as should leave him at the head of the French government, political events were taking place in Paris which pointed directly at the overthrow of his power.

His great military talents, together with his extreme inflexibility of temper, had firmly impressed the allied monarchs with the belief, that no lasting peace could be made in Europe while he remained at the head of the French nation. Every concession which he had seemed willing to make at different times, had been wrung from him by increasing difficulties, and was yielded with such extreme reluctance, as to infer the strongest suspicion that they would all be again resumed,

should the league of the allies be dissolved, or their means of opposing his purposes become weaker. When, therefore, Caulaincourt came to Paris on the part of his master, with power to subscribe to all and each of the demands made by the allies, he was not indeed explicitly refused audience; but, before he was admitted to a conference with the Emperor Alexander, to whom his mission was addressed, the sovereigns had come under engagements which precluded them altogether from treating with Napoleon.[32]

When the Emperor of Russia halted, after the progress of the allied sovereigns through the city, it was at the hotel of Talleyrand. He was scarcely arrived there ere the principal Royalists, and those who had acted with them, waited on him to crave an audience. Besides the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, and Prince Schwartzenberg, were present General Pozzo di Borgo, Nesselrode, Lichtenstein, the Duke Dalberg, Baron Louis, the Abbé de Pradt, and others. Three points were discussed, 1st, The possibility of a peace with Napoleon, upon sufficient guarantees; 2d, The plan of a regency; 3d, The restoration of the Bourbons.

## PROCLAMATION OF THE ALLIES

The first proposition seemed inadmissible. The second was

[32] According to Lord Burghersh, (Operations, p. 249,) Caulaincourt saw the Emperor Alexander at his headquarters, *before* he entered Paris. – Ed. (1842.)

carefully considered. It was particularly urged that the French were indifferent to the cause of the Bourbons – that the allied monarchs would observe no mark of recollection of them exhibited by the people of France – and that the army seemed particularly averse to them. The united testimony of the French gentlemen present was offered to repel these doubts; and it was at length agreed, that the third proposition – the restoration of the ancient family, and the ancient limits – should be the terms adopted for the settlement of France.[33] A proclamation was immediately dispersed, by which the sovereigns made known their determination not to treat with Buonaparte or any of his family.[34]

But more formal evidence, in the shape of legal procedure, was necessary to establish the desire of the French people to coincide in the proposed change of government. The public body which ought naturally to have taken the lead on such an important affair, was the Legislative Assembly, in whom Napoleon's constitution vested some ostensible right of interference when

[33] De Pradt, Précis Hist. de la Restauration, p. 54.

[34] Dated Paris, March 31, three o'clock in the afternoon. "After some discussion, the Emperor of Russia agreed not to treat with Napoleon, and, at the suggestion of Abbé Louis, nor with any of his family. De Pradt told me he retired into a corner of the apartment, with Roux Laborie, to whom he dictated the Emperor's declaration, which was hastily written with a pencil, and shown to Alexander, who approved of it. Michaud, who was in waiting, caused it immediately to be printed, putting, under the name of the Emperor, '*Michaud, Imprimeur du Roi*,' and two hours afterwards it was stuck up in Paris. It was read by the people with great eagerness, and I saw many of them copying it." —*Memorable Events*, p. 128.

the state was in danger; but so far had the Emperor been from recognising such a power in practice, that the instant when the Assembly assumed the right of remonstrating with him, though in the most respectful terms, he suspended their functions, and spurned them from the footstool of his throne, informing them, that not they, but He, was the representative of the people, from whom there lay no appeal, and besides whom, no body in the state possessed power and efficacy. This legislative council, therefore, being dispersed and prorogued, could not take the initiative upon the present occasion.

The searching genius of Talleyrand sought an organ of public opinion where few would have looked for it – in the Conservative Senate, namely, whose members had been so long the tools of Buonaparte's wildest projects, and the echoes of his most despotic decrees – that very body, of which he himself said, with equal bitterness and truth, that they were more eager to yield up national rights than he had been to demand the surrender, and that a sign from him had always been an order for the Senate, who hastened uniformly to anticipate and exceed his demands. Yet when, on the summons of Talleyrand, who knew well with whom he was dealing, this Senate was convoked, in a meeting attended by sixty-six of their number, forming a majority of the body, they at once, and without hesitation, named a Provisional Government, consisting of Talleyrand, Bournonville, Jaucourt, Dalberg, and the Abbé de Montesquieu; men recommended by talents and moderation, and whose names, known in the

Revolution, might, at the same time, be a guarantee to those who dreaded a renovation of the old despotic government with the restoration of the ancient race of kings.

## DECREE OF FORFEITURE

On the 2d and 3d of April the axe was laid to the roots. A decree of the Senate sent forth the following statement: – 1st, That Napoleon, after governing for some time with prudence and wisdom, had violated the constitution, by raising taxes in an arbitrary and lawless manner, contrary to the tenor of his oath. – 2d, That he had adjourned without necessity the Legislative Body, and suppressed a report of that assembly, besides disowning its right to represent the people. – 3d, That he had published several unconstitutional decrees, particularly those of 5th March last, by which he endeavoured to render national a war, in which his own ambition alone was interested. – 4th, That he had violated the constitution by his decrees respecting state prisons. – 5th, That he had abolished the responsibility of ministers, confounded together the different powers of the state, and destroyed the independence of judicial authorities. – 6th, That the liberty of the press, constituting one of the rights of the nation, had been uniformly subjected to the arbitrary censure of his police; while, at the same time, he himself had made use of the same engine to fill the public ear with invented fictions, false maxims, doctrines favourable to despotism, and

insults upon foreign governments. – 7th, That he had caused acts and reports, adopted by the Senate, to be altered by his own authority, before publication. – 8th, That instead of reigning, according to his oath, for the honour, happiness, and glory of the French nation, he had put the finishing stroke to the distresses of the country, by a refusal to treat on honourable conditions – by the abuse which he had made of the means intrusted to him, in men and money – by abandoning the wounded, without dressing or sustenance – and by pursuing measures of which the consequences have been the ruin of towns, the depopulation of the country, famine and pestilence. From all these inductive causes, the Senate, considering that the Imperial government, established by the decree of 28th Floreal, in the year XII., had ceased to exist, and that the manifest desire of all Frenchmen was to obtain an order of things, of which the first result should be peace and concord among the great members of the European family: Therefore, the Senate declared and decreed, 1st, That Napoleon Buonaparte had forfeited the throne, and the right of inheritance established in his family. – 2d, That the people and army of France were disengaged and freed from the oath of fidelity, which they had taken to Napoleon and his constitution.[35]

[35] On the 3d of April, the *Moniteur*, in which these documents are given, was declared, by the provisional government, the only official journal.

## DECLARATIONS OF PUBLIC BODIES

About eighty members of the Legislative Body, at the summons of the Provisional Government, assembled on the 3d April, and formally adhered to the above decree of forfeiture. The consequences of these bold measures showed, either that Napoleon had in reality never had more than a slight hold on the affections of the people of France, or that the interest they took in his fortunes had been in a great degree destroyed by the fears and passions excited by the immediate crisis. Even before the Senate could reduce its decree into form, the council-general of the department of the Seine had renounced Napoleon's authority, and imputed to him alone the present disastrous state of the country. The decree of the Senate was followed by declarations from all the public bodies in and around Paris, that they adhered to the Provisional Government, and acquiesced in the decree of forfeiture. Numerous individuals, who had been favoured and enriched by Buonaparte, were among the first to join the tide when it set against him. But it had been always his policy to acquire adherents, by addressing himself rather to men's interests than to their principles; and many of his friends so gained, naturally became examples of the politic observation, "that if a prince places men in wealthy circumstances, the first thing they think of, in danger, is how to preserve the advantages they have obtained, without regard to his fate to whom they owe them."

We do not believe that it occurred to any person while these events were passing, to question either the formality or the justice of the doom of forfeiture against Napoleon; but Time has called out many authors, who, gained by the brilliancy of Napoleon's reputation, and some of them bound to him by ties of gratitude or friendship, have impugned, more or less directly, the formality of the Senate's procedure, as well as the justice of their sentence. We, therefore, feel it our duty to bestow some consideration upon this remarkable event in both points of view.

The objection proposed against the legality of the Senate's acting as the organ of the people, in pronouncing the doom of forfeiture, rests upon the idea, that the right of dethroning the sovereign, who shall be guilty of oppression beyond endurance, can only be exercised in a peculiar and formal manner, or, as our law-phrase goes, "according to the statute made and provided in that case." This seems to take a narrow view of the subject. The right of redressing themselves under such circumstances, does not belong to, and is not limited by, any peculiar forms of civil government. It is a right which belongs to human nature under all systems whatever. It exists in every government under the sun, from that of the Dey of Algiers to the most free republic that ever was constructed. There is, indeed, much greater latitude for the exercise of arbitrary authority in some governments than in others. An Emperor of Morocco may, with impunity, bathe his hands to the elbows in the blood of his subjects shed by his own hand; but even in this the most absolute of despotisms, there are

peculiar limits which cannot be passed by the sovereign without the exercise of the natural right of resistance on the part of his subjects, although their system of government be as arbitrary as words can declare it to be, and the Emperor is frequently dethroned and slain by his own guards.

In limited governments, on the other hand, like that of Great Britain, the law imposes bounds, beyond which the royal authority shall not pass; but it makes no provision for what shall take place, should a monarch, as in the case of James II., transgress the social compact. The constitution averts its eyes from contemplating such an event – indeed it is pronounced impossible; and when the emergency did arrive, and its extrication became a matter of indispensable necessity, it was met and dealt with as a concurrence of circumstances which had not happened before, and ought never to be regarded as being possible to occur again. The foreigner who peruses our constitution for the forms of procedure competent in such an event as the Revolution, might as well look in a turnpike act for directions how to proceed in a case resembling that of Phaeton.

If the mode of shaking off an oppressive yoke, by declaring the monarchy abdicated or forfeited, be not a fixed form in a regular government, but left to be provided for by a convention or otherwise, as a case so calamitous and so anomalous should demand, far less was it to be supposed that a constitution like that of France, which Buonaparte had studiously deprived of every power and means of checking the executive, should contain

a regular form of process for declaring the crown forfeited. He had been as careful as despot could, to leave no bar in existence before which the public might arraign him; but will it be contended, that the public had therefore forfeited its natural right of accusing and of obtaining redress? If he had rendered the Senate the tame drudges which we have described, and prorogued the Legislative Body by an arbitrary *coup d'état*, was he therefore to escape the penalty of his misgovernment? On the contrary, the nation of France, like Great Britain at the time of the Revolution 1688, was to proceed as it best could in taking care, *Ne quid detrimenti respublica capiat*. The Senate was not, perhaps, the best organ for expressing public opinion, but it was the only one Napoleon had left within reach, and therefore it was seized upon and made use of. That it was composed of men who had so long gone on with Napoleon's interest, and now were able to keep up in course with him no longer, made his misrule even yet more glaring, and the necessity of the case more evident.

It is of far more importance to be enabled to form an accurate judgment respecting the *justice* of the sentence of forfeiture pronounced against this eminent man, than upon its mere formality. That we may examine this question with the impartiality it deserves, we must look upon it not only divested of our feelings as Britons, but as unconnected with the partisans either of the Bourbons or of Buonaparte. With these last there could be no room either for inquiry or conviction. The Royalist must have been convinced that Napoleon deserved, not

deprivation only, but death also, for usurping the throne of his rightful sovereign; and the Buonapartist, on the other hand, would hold it cowardly treason to desert the valiant Emperor, who had raised France to such a state of splendour by his victories, more especially to forsake him in the instant when Fortune was looking black upon his cause. There could be no argument between these men, save with their good swords in a fair field.

But such decided sentiments were not entertained upon the part of the great bulk of the French nation. A large number of the middle classes, in particular, remembering the first terrors of the Revolution, had showed their willingness to submit to the yoke which gradually assumed a despotic character, rather than, by a renewed struggle for their liberties, to run the risk of reviving the days of Terror and Proscription. It is in the person of such an individual, desirous of the honour and advantage of his country, and anxious at the same time for the protection of his own family and property, that we now endeavour to consider the question of Napoleon's forfeiture.

The mind of such a person would naturally revert to the period when Buonaparte, just returned from Egypt, appeared on the stage like a deity descending to unloose a perplexing knot, which no human ingenuity could extricate. Our citizen would probably admit, that Napoleon used the sword a little too freely in severing the intricacies of the noose; or, in plain words, that the cashiering the Council of Five Hundred, at the head of his grenadiers, was an awkward mode of ascending to power in a

country which still called itself free. This feeling, however, would be greatly overbalanced by recollecting the use which was made of the power thus acquired; the subjugation, to wit, of foreign enemies, the extinction of civil dissensions, the protection of property, and, for a time, of personal liberty also. Napoleon's having elevated France from the condition of a divided and depressed country, in the immediate apprehension of invasion, into that of arbitress of Europe, would at once justify committing the chief authority to such able hands, and excuse the means he had used for attaining it; especially in times when the violent and successive changes under which they had long suffered, had made the nation insensible to irregularities like those attached to the revolution of the 18th Brumaire. Neither would our citizens probably be much shocked at Napoleon's assuming the crown. Monarchy was the ancient government of France, and successive changes had served to show that they could not fix on any other form of constitution, labour how they would, which was endowed with the same degree of permanence. The Bourbons had, indeed, the claim by birth to mount that throne, were it to be again erected. But they were in exile, separated by civil war, party prejudices, the risk of reaction, and a thousand other difficulties, which seemed at the time absolutely insurmountable. Buonaparte was standing under the canopy, he grasped the regal sceptre in his hand, his assuming the royal seat passed almost as a matter of course.

Our supposed Parisian has next to review a course of years of

such brilliancy as to baffle criticism, and charm reason to silence, till the undertakings of the Emperor seem to rise above each other in wonder, each being a step towards the completion of that stupendous pyramid, of which the gradations were to be formed by conquered provinces, until the refractory and contumacious isle of Britain should be added to complete the pile, on the top of which was destined to stand the armed form of Napoleon, trampling the world under his foot. This is the noble work which France and her monarch were in the act of achieving. It requires the sacrifice of children or relatives to fill their ranks; they go where Honour calls, and Victory awaits them. These times, however, are overclouded; there come tidings that the stone heaved by such portentous exertion so high up the hill, has at length recoiled on him who laboured to give it a course contrary to nature. It is then that the real quality of the fetters, hitherto gilded over by success, begins to be felt, and the iron enters into the soul. The parent must not weep aloud for the child – the Emperor required his service; – the patriot must not speak a word on public affairs – the dungeon waits for him.

While news of fresh disasters from Spain and Moscow were every day arriving, what comfort could a citizen of France find in adverting to past victories? These had brought on France the hatred of Europe, the tears of families, the ruin of fortunes, general invasion, and wellnigh national bankruptcy. Every year had the children of France undergone decimation – taxes to the amount of fifteen hundred millions of francs yearly, had

succeeded to the four hundred millions imposed under the reign of the Bourbons – the few remaining ships of France rotted in her harbours – her bravest children were slaughtered on their native soil – a civil war was on the point of breaking out – one half of France was overrun by the foreign enemy. Was this most melancholy state of the country brought about in defending strongly, but unfortunately, any of the rights of France? No – she might have enjoyed her triumphs in the most profound peace. Two wars with Spain and Russia, which gave fire to this dreadful train of calamities, were waged for no national or reasonable object, but merely because one half of Europe could not satisfy the ambition of one man. Again, our citizen inquires, whether, having committed the dreadful error of commencing these wars, the Emperor has endeavoured to make peace with the parties injured? He is answered, that repeated terms of peace have been offered to Napoleon, upon condition of ceding his conquests, but that he had preferred hazarding the kingdom of France, to yielding up that which he termed his *glory*, a term which he successively conferred on whatever possession he was required to surrender; that even at Chatillon, many days passed when he might have redeemed himself by consenting that France should be reduced within the limits which she enjoyed under the Bourbons; but that the proposal when half admitted, had been retracted by him in consequence of some transient success; and finally, that in consequence of his intractability and obstinacy, the allied sovereigns had solemnly declared they would not enter

into treaty with him, or those who acted with him. Our citizen would naturally look about for some means of escaping the impending danger, and would be informed that the peace which the allied princes refused to Buonaparte, they held out with ready hand to the kingdom of France under any other government. He would learn that if these terms were accepted, there was every prospect that a secure and lasting peace would ensue; if refused, the inevitable consequence would be a battle between two large armies fought under the walls of Paris, which city was almost certain to be burnt, whichever party got the advantage.

In consequence of this information, the citizen of Paris would probably be able to decide for himself. But if he inquired at a jurist, he would be informed that Napoleon held the crown not by right of blood, but by the choice, or rather permission of the people, as an administrator bound to manage for their best advantage.

Now, every legal obligation may be unloosed in the same way in which it is formed. If, therefore, Napoleon's government was no longer for the advantage of France, but, on the contrary, tended plainly to her ruin, she had a right to rid herself of him, as of a servant unfit for duty, or as if mariners had taken aboard their vessel a comrade intended to act as pilot, but who had proved a second Jonas, whom it was necessary to sacrifice to appease a storm which had come upon them through his misconduct. Upon such reasoning, certainly neither unwise nor unpatriotic, the burghers of Paris, as well as all those who had

any thing to lose in the struggle, may be supposed to have acted.

The lower, or rather the lowest class of inhabitants, were not accessible to the same arguments. They had been bequeathed to Buonaparte as an heir-loom of the Republic, of which he has been truly called the heir. His police had industriously maintained connexions amongst them, and retained in pay and in dependence on the government, their principal leaders. Names had changed around men of that ignorant condition, without their feeling their situation much altered. The Glory of France was to them as inspiring a watchword as the Rights of Man had been; and their quantum of sous per day, when employed, as they frequently were, upon the public works, was no bad exchange for Liberty and Equality, after they had arrived at the discovery of the poor cobbler, who exclaimed – "Fine Liberty, indeed, that leaves me cobbling shoes as she found me!" Bulletins and Moniteurs, which trumpeted the victories of Napoleon, were as animating and entertaining to the inhabitants of the suburbs as the speeches of republican orators; for in such triumphs of a nation, the poor have a share as ample as their wealthier neighbours. The evils of the war were also less felt by the poor. Their very poverty placed them beneath taxation, and the children, of whom they were bereaved by the conscription, they must otherwise have parted with, in all probability, that they might seek subsistence elsewhere. In the present circumstances the hatred to foreigners, proper to persons of their class, came to aid their admiration of Buonaparte. In a

battle, they had something to gain and nothing to lose, saving their lives, of which their national gallantry induced them to take small heed. Had Napoleon been in Paris, he might have made much use of this force. But in his absence, the weight of property, prudently directed, naturally bore down the ebullitions of those who had only brute strength to throw into the balance, and the overwhelming force of the allied army kept the suburbs in subjection.

## THE MILITARY – FONTAINBLEAU

The disposition of the military was a question of deep importance. Accustomed to follow Napoleon through every climate, and every description of danger, unquestionably their attachment to his person was of the most devoted and enthusiastic kind. But this can only be said in general of the regimental officers, and the soldiers. The maréchals, and many of the generals, were tired of this losing war. These, with many also of the inferior officers, and even of the soldiers, began to consider the interest of their general, and that of France, as having become separated from each other. It was from Paris that the changes had emanated by which the army was governed during every revolutionary crisis; and they were now required to engage in an undertaking which was likely to be fatal to that metropolis. To advance upon the allies, and fight a battle under the capital, was to expose to destruction the city, whose

name to every Frenchman has a sacred and inviolable sound. The maréchals, in particular, were disgusted with a contest, in which each of them had been left successively without adequate means of resistance, to stem, or attempt to stem, a superior force of the enemy; with the certainty, at the same time, to be held up to public censure in the next bulletin, in case of failure, though placed in circumstances which rendered success impossible. These generals were more capable than the army at large of comprehending the nature of the war in which they were likely to be engaged, and of appreciating the difficulties of a contest which was to be maintained in future without money, ammunition, or supplies, excepting such as should be extorted from that part of the country over which they held military possession; and this, not only against all the allies now in France, and the insurgent corps of Royalists in the west, but also against a second, or reserved line of three or four hundred thousand Russians, Austrians, and other allied troops which had not yet crossed the frontier.

Besides, the soldiers with which an attack upon the allied army must have been undertaken, were reduced to a disastrous condition, by their late forced marches, and the want of succours and supplies of every description; the cavalry were in a great measure dismounted; the regiments not half complete; the horses unshod; the physical condition of the army bad, and its moral feelings depressed, and unfit for enterprise. The period seemed to have arrived, beyond which Napoleon could not maintain his

struggle, without destruction to himself, to Paris, and to France. These sentiments were commonly entertained among the French general officers. They felt their attachment to Napoleon placed in opposition to the duty they owed their country by the late decree of the Senate, and they considered the cause of France as the most sacred. They had received intelligence from Bournonville of what had passed at Paris, and considering the large proportion of the capital which had declared against Buonaparte, and that an assault on Paris must have occasioned much effusion of French blood, and have become the signal of civil war, the maréchals and principal general officers agreed they could not follow Napoleon in such an attack on the city, or against the allies' line of defence around it, both because, in a military point of view, they thought the attempt desperate, considering the state of the army, and because, in a political position, they regarded it as contrary to their duty as citizens.[36]

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[36] "Napoleon reached Fontainbleau at six in the morning of the 31st March. The large rooms of the castle were shut up, and he repaired to his little apartment on the first storey, parallel with the gallery of Francis I. There he shut himself up for the remainder of the day. Maret was the only one of his ministers who was with him. In the course of that evening, and the following morning, arrived the heads of the columns which Napoleon had brought from Champagne, and the advanced guard of the troops from Paris. These wrecks of the army assembled round Fontainbleau. Moncey, who commanded the national guard of Paris, Lafebvre, Ney, Macdonald, Oudinot, Berthier, Mortier, and Marmont, arrived at Napoleon's headquarters; so that he still had an army at his disposal." – Baron Fain, p. 355."Marmont arrived at Fontainbleau, at three in the morning of the 1st of April, and gave Napoleon a detailed account of what had passed at Paris. The maréchal told me he appeared undetermined whether to retire on the banks of the Loire, or give battle to the allies near Paris. In the

In the night betwixt the 2d and 3d of April, Caulaincourt returned from his mission to Paris. He reported, that the allies persisted in their determination to entertain no treaty with Buonaparte; but he was of opinion, that the scheme of a regency by the Empress, as the guardian of their son, might even yet be granted. Austria, he stated, was favourable to such an arrangement, and Russia seemed not irreconcilably averse to it. But the abdication of Buonaparte was a preliminary condition. As this news circulated among the maréchals, it fixed them in their resolution not to march against Paris, as, in their opinion, the war ought to be ended by this personal sacrifice on the part of Napoleon.

## FONTAINBLEAU

Buonaparte had not, probably, expected this separation between the duties of a soldier and of a citizen. On the 4th April, he reviewed a part of his troops, addressed them on the display of the white colours in France by some factious persons, reminded

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afternoon he went to inspect the position of Marmont's army at Essonne, with which he appeared to be satisfied, and determined to remain there and manœuvre, with a view to disengage Paris and give battle. With the greatest coolness he formed plans for the execution of these objects; but, while thus employed, the officers, whom the maréchal had left at Paris to deliver up that city to the allies, arrived, and informed them of the events of the day. Napoleon, hearing this, became furious: He raved about punishing the rebellious city, and giving it up to pillage. With this resolution he separated from Marmont, and returned to Fontainbleau." —*Memorable Events*, p. 201.

them that the three-coloured cockade was that of victory and honour, and that he intended to march on the capital, to punish the traitors by whom it had been vilified.[37] He was answered by shouts of "Paris, Paris!" and had no reason to fear that the troops would hesitate to follow him in his effort. The orders were given to advance the imperial quarters from Fontainbleau to Essonne.

But after the review was over, Berthier, Ney, Macdonald, Caulaincourt, Oudinot, Bertrand, and other officers of the highest rank, followed the Emperor into his apartment, and explained to him the sentiments which they entertained on the subject of the proposed movement, their opinion that he ought to negotiate on the principle of personal abdication, and the positive determination which most of them had formed, on no account to follow him in an attack upon Paris.[38]

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[37] "Soldiers! the enemy has stolen three marches upon us, and has made himself master of Paris. He must be driven out of it. Unworthy Frenchmen, emigrants, whom we had pardoned, have adopted the white cockade, and have joined our enemies. Wretches! they shall receive the reward of this new crime. Let us swear to conquer or to die, and to cause to be respected that tri-coloured cockade, which, during twenty years, has found us in the paths of glory and of honour." – Lord Burghersh, *Observations, &c.*, p. 274.

[38] "Ney produced the *Moniteur*, containing the decree of forfeiture, and advised him to acquiesce and abdicate. Napoleon feigned to read, turned pale, and appeared much agitated; but did not shed tears, as the newspapers reported. He seemed not to know in what manner to act. He then asked, 'Que voulez vous?' Ney answered, 'Il n'y a que l'abdication qui puisse vous tirer de là.' During this conference, Lefebvre came in; and upon Napoleon expressing astonishment at what had been announced to him, said, in his blunt manner, 'You see what has resulted from not listening to the advice of your friends to make peace: you remember the communication I made to you lately,

There is no doubt that, by an appeal to officers of an inferior rank and consideration, young Seids, who knew no other virtue than a determined attachment to their chief, through good or evil, Napoleon might have filled up, in a military point of view, the vacancy which the resignation of the maréchals must have created in his list of generals. But those who urged to him this unpleasant proposal, were the fathers of the war, the well-known brave and beloved leaders of large armies. Their names might be individually inferior to his own; but with what feelings would the public hear that he was deprived of those men, who had been so long the pride and dread of war? and what were likely to be the sentiments of the soldiery, upon whom the names of Ney, Macdonald, Oudinot, and others, operated like a war-trumpet.

With considerable reluctance, and after long debate, Napoleon assumed the pen, and acquiescing in the reasoning pressed upon him, wrote the following words, which we translate as literally as possible, as showing Napoleon's power of dignity of expression, when deep feeling predominated over his affectation of antithesis and Orientalism of composition:

"The allied powers having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon is the sole 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 quit France, and even to relinquish life, for the good of the country, which is inseparable

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therefore you may think yourself well off that affairs have terminated as they have.'" —*Memorable Events*, p. 206.

from the rights of his son, from those of the Regency in the person of the Empress, and from the maintenance of the laws of the empire. Done at our Palace of Fontainbleau, 4th April, 1814."

Caulaincourt and Ney were appointed to be bearers of this important document, and commissioners to negotiate with the allies, concerning the terms of accommodation to which it might be supposed to lead. Caulaincourt was the personal representative of Napoleon; and Ney, who had all along been zealous for the abdication, was a plenipotentiary proposed by the rest of the maréchals. Napoleon, it is said, wished to add Marmont; but he was absent with the troops quartered at Essonne, who, having been withdrawn in consequence of the treaty of Paris, were disposed of in that position. Macdonald was suggested as the third plenipotentiary, as an officer whose high character best qualified him to represent the army. Napoleon hesitated; for though he had employed Macdonald's talents on the most important occasions, he knew that the maréchal disliked, upon principle, the arbitrary character of his government; and they had never stood to each other in any intimate or confidential relation. He consulted his minister, Maret. "Send the Duke of Tarentum," replied the minister. "He is too much a man of honour not to discharge, with religious fidelity, any trust which he undertakes." Marshal Macdonald's name was added to the commission accordingly.[39]

[39] Baron Fain, p. 373.

When the terms were in the act of being adjusted, the maréchals desired to know upon what stipulations they were to insist on Napoleon's personal behalf. "Upon none," – said Buonaparte. "Do what you can to obtain the best terms for France: for myself, I ask nothing." They were instructed particularly to obtain an armistice until the treaty should be adjusted. Through the whole scene Buonaparte conducted himself with firmness, but he gave way to a natural emotion when he had finally signed the abdication. He threw himself on a sofa, hid his face for a few minutes, and then looking up, with that smile of persuasion which he had so often found irresistible, he implored his brethren of the field to annul the resolutions they had adopted, to destroy the papers, and follow him yet again to the contest. "Let us march," he said; "let us take the field once more! We are sure to beat them, and to have peace on our own terms."[40] The moment would have been invaluable to a historical painter. The maréchals were deeply affected, but could not give way. They renewed their arguments on the wretched state of the army – on the reluctance with which the soldiers would move against the Senate – on the certainty of a destructive civil war – and on the probability that Paris would be destroyed.

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[40] "He threw himself on a small yellow sofa, placed near the window, and striking his thigh with a sort of convulsive action, exclaimed, 'No, gentlemen, no! No regency! With my guard and Marmont's corps, I shall be in Paris to-morrow.'" – Bourrienne, tom. i., p. 87. – On the day of the entrance of the allies into Paris, Bourrienne, Napoleon's ex-private secretary, was appointed to the important office of Postmaster-General; a situation from which he was dismissed at the end of three weeks.

He acquiesced once more in their reasoning, and permitted them to depart on their embassy.[41]

[41] "Immediately after their departure, Napoleon despatched a courier to the Empress, from whom he had received letters, dated Vendome. He authorised her to despatch to her father, the Duke of Cadore (Champagny,) to solicit his intercession in favour of herself and her son. Overpowered by the events of the day, he shut himself up in his chamber." – Baron Fain, p. 374.

# CHAPTER LXXX

Victor, and other Maréchals give in their adhesion to the Provisional Government – Marmont enters into a separate Convention; but assists at the Conferences held at Paris, leaving Souham second in command of his Army – The Commanders have an interview with the Emperor Alexander – Souham enters with his Army, into the lines of the Allies; in consequence, the Allied Sovereigns insist upon the unconditional Submission of Napoleon – His reluctant acquiescence – The Terms granted to him – Disapprobation of Lord Castlereagh – General Desertion of Napoleon – Death of Josephine – Singular Statement made by Baron Fain, Napoleon's Secretary, of the Emperor's attempt to commit Suicide – After this he becomes more resigned – Leaves Fontainbleau, 28th April.

The plenipotentiaries of Napoleon had been directed to confer with Marmont at Essonne, in their road to the capital. They did so, and obtained information there, which rendered their negotiation more pressing. Several of the generals who had not been at Fontainbleau, and had not had an opportunity of acting in conjunction with the military council which assembled there, had viewed the act of the Senate, adhered to by the other public bodies, as decisively closing the reign of Buonaparte, or as indicating the commencement of a civil war. Most of them were

of opinion, that the interest of an individual, whose talents had been as dangerous to France as the virtues of Cæsar had been to Rome, ought not to be weighed against the welfare of the capital and the whole nation. Victor, Duke of Belluno, had upon these principles given in his personal adhesion to the Provisional Government, and his example was followed by many others.

## MARMONT'S CONVENTION

But the most important proselyte to the royal cause was the Maréchal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, who, lying at Essonne with ten or twelve thousand men, formed the advance of the French army. Conceiving himself to have the liberty of other Frenchmen to attend at this crisis to the weal of France, rather than to the interest of Napoleon alone, and with the purpose of saving France from the joint evils of a civil and domestic war, he made use of the position in which he was placed, to give a weight to his opinion, which that of no other individual could have possessed at the moment. Maréchal Marmont, after negotiation with the Provisional Government on the one hand, and Prince Schwartzenberg on the other, had entered into a convention on his own account, and that of his corps d'armée, by which he agreed to march the division which he commanded within the lines of cantonment held by the allies, and thus renounced all idea of further prosecuting the war. On the other hand, the maréchal stipulated for the freedom and honourable usage of Napoleon's

person, should he fall into the hands of the allies. He obtained also a guarantee, that his corps d'armée should be permitted to retreat into Normandy. This convention was signed at Chevilly, upon 3d April.[42]

This step has been considered as a defection on the part of Marmont;[43] but why is the choice of a side, betwixt the Provisional Government and the Emperor, more a desertion in that general than in any other of the maréchals or authorities who presently after took the very same step? And if the Duke of Ragusa by that means put further bloodshed out of question, ought it not to be matter of rejoicing (to borrow an expression of Talleyrand's on a similar occasion) that the maréchal's watch went a few minutes faster than those of his colleagues?

When Macdonald and Ney communicated to Marmont that they were bearers of Napoleon's abdication, and that he was joined with them in commission, that maréchal asked why he had not been summoned to attend with the others at Fontainbleau, and mentioned the convention which he had entered into, as acting for himself.[44] The Duke of Tarentum expostulated with

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[42] "Marmont was not guilty of treachery in defending Paris; but history will say, that had it not been for the defection of the sixth corps, after the allies had entered Paris, they would have been forced to evacuate that great capital; for they would never have given battle on the left bank of the Seine, with Paris in their rear, which they had only occupied for two days; they would never have thus violated every rule and principle of the art of war." – Napoleon, *Montholon*, tom. ii., p. 265.

[43] Lord Burghersh, Observations, p. 296; Savary, tom. iv., p. 76.

[44] There are some slight discrepancies between the account of Marmont's

him on the disadvantage which must arise from any disunion on the part of the principal officers of the army. Respecting the council at Fontainbleau, he stated it had been convened under circumstances of such sudden emergency, that there was no time to summon any other than those maréchals who were close at hand, lest Napoleon had in the meanwhile moved forward the army. The commissioners entreated Marmont to suspend the execution of the separate convention, and to come with them, to assist at the conferences to be held at Paris. He consented, and mounted into Maréchal Ney's carriage, leaving General Souham, who, with all the other generals of his division, two excepted, were privy to the convention, in command of his corps d'armée, which he gave orders should remain stationary.

When the maréchals arrived in Paris, they found the popular tide had set strongly in favour of the Bourbons; their emblems were everywhere adopted; and the streets resounded with *Vive le Roi!* The populace seemed as enthusiastic in their favour as they had been indifferent a few days before. All boded an unfavourable termination for their mission, so far as respected the proposed regency.

The names and characters of the commissioners instantly obtained their introduction to the Emperor Alexander, who received them with his natural courtesy. "On the general subject of their mission," he said, "he could not treat but in concert

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proceedings in the text, and that given by Lord Burghersh in his "Memoir on the Operations," pp. 298, 299. – Ed. (1842.)

with his allies." But he enlarged on the subject of Napoleon personally. "He was my friend," he said, "I loved and honoured him. His ambition forced me into a dreadful war, in which my capital was burnt, and the greatest evils inflicted on my dominions. But he is unfortunate, and these wrongs are forgotten. Have you nothing to propose on his personal account? I will be his willing advocate." The maréchals replied, that Napoleon had made no conditions for himself whatever. The Emperor would hardly believe this until they showed him their instructions, which entirely related to public affairs. The Emperor then asked if they would hear a proposal from him. They replied with suitable respect and gratitude. He then mentioned the plan, which was afterwards adopted, that Buonaparte should retain the imperial title over a small territory, with an ample revenue, guards, and other emblems of dignity. "The place," continued the Emperor of Russia, "may be Elba, or some other island." With this annunciation the commissioners of Buonaparte were dismissed for the evening.

Maréchal Marmont had done all in his power to stop the military movement which he had undertaken to execute, thinking it better, doubtless, to move hand in hand with his brethren, than to act singly in a matter of such responsibility; but accident precipitated what he desired to delay. Napoleon had summoned to his presence Count Souham, who commanded the division at Essonne in Marmont's absence. No reason was given for this command, nor could any thing be extracted from the messenger,

which indicated the purpose of the order. Souham was therefore induced to suspect that Napoleon had gained intelligence of the Convention of Chevilly. Under this apprehension, he called the other generals who were in the secret to a midnight council, in which it was determined to execute the convention instantly, by passing over with the troops within the lines of the allies, without awaiting any farther orders from Maréchal Marmont. The division was put in movement upon the 5th of April, about five o'clock, and marched for some time with much steadiness, the movement being, as they supposed, designed for a flank attack on the position of the allies, but when they perceived that their progress was watched, without being interrupted, by a column of Bavarian troops,[45] they began to suspect the real purpose. When this became known, a kind of mutiny took place, and some Polish lancers broke off from the main body, and rode back to Fontainbleau; but the instinct of discipline prevailed, and the officers were able to bring the soldiery into their new quarters at Versailles. They were not, however, reconciled to the measure in which they had been made partakers, and in a few days afterwards broke out into an actual mutiny, which was not appeased without considerable difficulty.[46]

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[45] Lord Burghersh's Memorandum says these were Wurtemberg and Austrian troops, commanded by the Prince Royal of Wurtemberg. – Ed. (1842.)

[46] Lord Burghersh, Observations, &c., p. 301.

## CONFERENCES AT PARIS

Meanwhile, the commissioners of Buonaparte were admitted to a conference with the allied sovereigns and ministers in full council, but which, it may be conjectured, was indulged to them more as a form, that the allies might treat with due respect the representatives of the French army, than with any purpose on the part of the sovereigns of altering the plan to which they had pledged themselves by a proclamation, upon the faith of which thousands had already acted. However, the question, whether to adopt the projected regency, or the restoration of the Bourbons, as a basis of agreement, was announced as a subject of consideration to the meeting. The maréchals pleaded the cause of the Regency. The Generals Bournonville and Dessolles, were heard in reply to the commissioners from Fontainbleau, when, ere the debate had terminated, news arrived of the march of Marmont's division to Versailles. The commissioners were astounded with this unexpected intelligence; and the Emperor took the opportunity to determine, that the allies would not treat with Buonaparte save on the footing of unconditional abdication. With this answer, mitigated with the offer of an independent principality for their ancient commander, the maréchals returned to Fontainbleau, while the Senate busied themselves to arrange the plan of a free constitution, under which the Bourbons were to be called to the throne.

Napoleon, in the retirement of Fontainbleau, mused on the future with little hope of advantage from the mission of the maréchals. He judged that the sovereigns, if they listened to the proposal of a regency, would exact the most formidable guarantees against his own interference with the government; and that under his wife, Maria Louisa, who had no talent for public business, France would probably be managed by an Austrian committee. He again thought of trying the chance of war, and might probably have settled on the purpose most congenial to his nature, had not Colonel Gourgaud brought him the news, that the division of Marmont had passed into the enemy's cantonments on the morning of the 5th April. "The ungrateful man!" he said, "But he is more to be pitied than I am."[47] He ought to have been contented with this reflection, for which, even if unjust to the maréchal, every one must have had sympathy and excuse. But the next day he published a sort of appeal to the army on the solemnity of a military engagement, as more sacred than the duty of a patriot to his country; which he might more gracefully have abstained from, since all knew already to what height he carried the sentiments of arbitrary power.

When the maréchals returned, he listened to the news of the failure of their negotiation, as a termination which he had expected. But to their surprise, recollecting his disinterested behaviour when they parted, he almost instantly demanded what provision had been made for him personally, and how he was

[47] Baron Fain, p. 375.

to be disposed of? They informed him that it was proposed he should reside as an independent sovereign, "in Elba, or somewhere else." Napoleon paused for a moment. "Somewhere else!" he exclaimed. "That must be Corsica. No, no. – I will have nothing to do with Corsica.[48]– Elba? Who knows any thing of Elba! Seek out some officer who is acquainted with Elba. Look out what books or charts can inform us about Elba."

In a moment he was as deeply interested in the position and capabilities of this little islet, as if he had never been Emperor of France, nay, almost of the world. But Buonaparte's nature was egotistical. He well knew how little it would become an Emperor resigning his crown, to be stipulating for his future course of life; and had reason to conclude, that by playing his part with magnanimity he might best excite a corresponding liberality in those with whom he treated. But when the die was cast, when his fate seemed fixed, he examined with minuteness what he must afterwards consider as his sole fortune. To turn his thoughts from France to Elba, was like the elephant, which can transport artillery, applying his trunk to gather pins. But Napoleon could do both easily, because he regarded these two objects not as they differed from each other, but as they belonged, or did not belong, to himself.

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[48] "From the way in which this is related, it would be thought that Napoleon despised his native country; but I must suggest a more natural interpretation, and one more conformable to the character of Napoleon, namely, that after his abdication he had no desire to remain in the French territories." – Louis Buonaparte.

## FINAL ACT OF ABDICATION

After a night's consideration, the fallen Chief took his resolution, and despatched Caulaincourt and Macdonald once more to Paris, to treat with the allies upon the footing of an unconditional abdication of the empire. The document was couched in these words: —

"The allied powers having proclaimed that the Emperor was the sole obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe, the Emperor, faithful to his oath, declares that he renounces for himself and his heirs the thrones of France and Italy, and that there is no personal sacrifice, not even that of life, which he is not ready to make to the interests of France."

Notwithstanding his having adopted this course, Napoleon, until the final adjustment of the treaty, continued to nourish thoughts of breaking it off. He formed plans for carrying on the war beyond the Loire – for marching to join Augereau – for penetrating into Italy, and uniting with Prince Eugene. At one time he was very near again summoning his troops to arms, in consequence of a report too hastily transmitted by a general much attached to him (General Alix, we believe,) stating that the Emperor of Austria was displeased at the extremities to which they urged his son-in-law, and was resolved to support him. On this report, which proved afterwards totally unfounded, Napoleon required the maréchals to give him back his letter of

abdication. But the deed having been formally executed, and duly registered and delivered, the maréchals held themselves bound to retain it in their own hands, and to act upon it as the only means of saving France at this dreadful crisis.

Buonaparte reviewed his Old Guard in the courtyard of the castle; for their numbers were so diminished that there was space for them in that narrow circuit. Their zealous acclamations gratified his ears as much as ever; but when he looked on their diminished ranks, his heart failed; he retired into the palace, and summoned Oudinot before him. "May I depend on the adhesion of the troops?" he said – Oudinot replied in the negative, and reminded Napoleon that he had abdicated. – "Ay, but under conditions," said Napoleon. – "Soldiers do not understand conditions," said the maréchal: "they look upon your power as terminated." – "Then on that side all is over," said Napoleon; "let us wait the news from Paris."

## TREATY OF FONTAINBLEAU

Macdonald, Caulaincourt, and Ney, soon afterwards arrived at Fontainbleau, with the treaty which they had concluded on the basis already announced by the Emperor of Russia, who had taken the principal share in drawing it up. Under his sanction the commissioners had obtained such terms as never before were granted to a dethroned monarch, and which have little chance to be conceded to such a one in future, while the

portentous consequences are preserved by history. By these conditions, Buonaparte was to remain Emperor, but his sway was to be limited to the island of Elba, in the Mediterranean, in extent twenty leagues, and containing about twelve thousand inhabitants. He was to be recognised as one of the crowned heads of Europe – was to be allowed body-guards, and a navy on a scale suitable to the limits of his dominions; and, to maintain this state, a revenue of six millions of francs, over and above the revenues of the isle of Elba, were settled on him. Two millions and a half were also assigned in pensions to his brothers, Josephine, and the other members of his family – a revenue more splendid than ever King of England had at his personal disposal. It was well argued, that if Buonaparte deserved such advantageous terms of retirement, it was injustice to dethrone him. In other points the terms of this treaty seemed as irreconcilable with sound policy as they are with all former precedents. The name, dignity, military authority, and absolute power of an Emperor, conferred on the potentate of such Liliputian domains, were ludicrous, if it was supposed that Napoleon would remain quiet in his retreat, and hazardous if he should seek the means of again agitating Europe.

It was no compliment to Buonaparte's taste to invest him with the poor shadow of his former fortune, since for him the most honourable retirement would have been one which united privacy with safety and competence, not that which maintained a vain parade around him, as if in mockery of what he had formerly been. But time fatally showed, what many

augured from the beginning, that so soon as his spirit should soar beyond the narrow circle into which it had been conjured, the imperial title and authority, the assistance of devoted body-guards and experienced counsellors, formed a stake with which, however small, the venturous gamester might again enter upon the hazardous game of playing for the kingdoms he had lost. The situation of Elba, too, as the seat of his new sovereignty, so near to Italy, and so little removed from France, seemed calculated on purpose to favour his resurrection at some future period as a political character.

The other stipulations of this extraordinary treaty divided a portion of revenue secured to Napoleon among the members of his family. The most rational was that which settled upon Maria Louisa and her son the duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla, in full sovereignty. Except this, all the other stipulations were to be made good at the expense of France, whose Provisional Government were never consulted upon the terms granted.[49]

It was not till the bad effects of this singular treaty had been experienced, that men inquired why and on what principle it was first conceded. A great personage has been mentioned as its original author. Possessed of many good and highly honourable qualities, and a steady and most important member of the great European confederacy, it is doing the memory of the Emperor Alexander no injury to suppose, that he remembered

[49] For the Treaty of Fontainbleau, see Parl. Debates, vol. xxviii., p. 201.

his education under his French tutor La Harpe, and was not altogether free from its effects. With these there always mingles that sort of showy sensibility which delights in making theatrical scenes out of acts of beneficence, and enjoying in full draughts the popular applause which they are calculated to excite. The contagious air of Paris – the shouts – the flattery – the success to a point hitherto unhoped for – the wish to drown unkindness of every sort, and to spread a feast from which no one should rise discontented – the desire to sum up all in one word, to show MAGNANIMITY in the hour of success, seems to have laid Alexander's heart more open than the rules of wisdom or of prudence ought to have permitted. It is generous to give, and more generous to pardon; but to bestow favours and forgiveness at the same moment, to secure the future fortune of a rival who lies prostrate at his feet, to hear thanks and compliments on every hand, and from the mouths even of the vanquished, is the most fascinating triumph of a victorious sovereign. It is only the consequences which teach him how thriftless and unprofitable a prodigality of beneficence often proves, and that in the attempt so to conduct great national measures that they shall please and satisfy every one, he must necessarily encroach on the rules both of justice and wisdom, and may occasion, by a thoughtless indulgence of romantic sensibility, new trains of misfortune to the whole civilized world. The other active parties in the treaty were the King of Prussia, who had no motive to scan with peculiar scrutiny a treaty planned by his ally the

Emperor Alexander, and the Emperor of Austria, who could not in delicacy object to stipulations in favour of his son-in-law.

The maréchals, on the other hand, gladly received what probably they never would have stipulated. They were aware that the army would be conciliated with every mark of respect, however incongruous, which could be paid to their late Emperor, and perhaps knew Buonaparte so well as to believe that he might be gratified by preserving the external marks of imperial honour, though upon so limited a scale. There was one power whose representative foresaw the evils which such a treaty might occasion, and remonstrated against them. But the evil was done, and the particulars of the treaty adjusted, before Lord Castlereagh came to Paris. Finding that the Emperor of Russia had acted for the best, in the name of the other allies, the English minister refrained from risking the peace which had been made in such urgent circumstances, by insisting upon his objections. He refused, however, on the part of his government, to become a party to the treaty farther than by acceding to it so far as the territorial arrangements were concerned; but he particularly declined to acknowledge, on the part of England, the title of Emperor, which the treaty conferred on Napoleon.[50]

Yet when we have expressed with freedom all the objections to which the treaty of Fontainbleau seems liable, it must be owned, that the allied sovereigns showed policy in obtaining an

[50] See Dispatch from Lord Castlereagh to Earl Bathurst, dated Paris, April 13, 1814, Parl. Papers, 1814.

accommodation on almost any terms, rather than renewing the war, by driving Napoleon to despair, and inducing the maréchals, from a sense of honour, again to unite themselves with his cause.

When the treaty was read over to Napoleon, he made a last appeal to his maréchals, inviting them to follow him to the Loire or to the Alps, where they would avoid what he felt an ignominious composition. But he was answered by a general silence. The generals whom he addressed, knew but too well that any efforts which he could make, must be rather in the character of a roving chieftain, supporting his condottieri by the plunder of the country, and that country their own, than that of a warlike monarch, waging war for a specific purpose, and at the head of a regular army. Napoleon saw their determination in their looks, and dismissed the council, promising an answer on an early day, but in the meantime declining to ratify the treaty, and demanding back his abdication from Caulaincourt; a request which that minister again declined to comply with.

Misfortunes were now accumulating so fast around Napoleon, that they seemed of force sufficient to break the most stubborn spirit.

## GENERAL DESERTION

Gradually the troops of the allies had spread as far as the banks of the Loire. Fontainbleau was surrounded by their detachments; on every side the French officers, as well as soldiers, were leaving

his service; he had no longer the power of departing from the palace in safety.

Paris, so late the capital in which his will was law, and where to have uttered a word in his disparagement would have been thought worse than blasphemy, was become the scene of his rival's triumph and his own disgrace. The shouts which used to wait on the Emperor, were now welcoming to the Tuileries Monsieur, the brother of the restored King, who came in character of Lieutenant-general of the kingdom; – the presses, which had so long laboured in disseminating the praises of the Emperor, were now exerting all their art and malice in exposing his real faults, and imputing to him such as had no existence. He was in the condition of the huntsman who was devoured by his own hounds.

It was yet more affecting to see courtiers, dependents, and even domestics, who had lived in his smiles, dropping off under different pretexts to give in their adhesion to the Bourbons, and provide for their own fortune in the new world which had commenced at Paris. It is perhaps in such moments, that human nature is seen in its very worst point of view; since the basest and most selfish points of the character, which, in the train of ordinary life, may never be awakened into existence, show themselves, and become the ruling principle, in such revolutions. Men are then in the condition of well-bred and decorous persons, transferred from an ordinary place of meeting to the whirlpool of a crowd, in which they soon demean themselves with all the

selfish desire of their own safety or convenience, and all the total disregard for that of others, which the conscious habits of politeness have suppressed but not eradicated.

Friends and retainers dropt from the unfortunate Napoleon, like leaves from the fading tree; and those whom shame or commiseration yet detained near his person, waited but some decent pretexts, like a rising breath of wind, to sweep them also away.

The defection included all ranks, from Berthier, who shared his bosom councils, and seldom was absent from his side, to the Mameluke Roustan, who slept across the door of his apartment, and acted as a body guard. It would be absurd to criticise the conduct of the poor African,[51] but the fact and mode of Berthier's departure must not escape notice. He asked permission to go to Paris about some business, saying he would return next day. "He will *not* return," said Napoleon, calmly, to the Duke of Bassano. – "What!" said the minister, "can these be the adieus of Berthier?" – "I tell you, yes – he will return no more."[52] The abdicated sovereign had, however, the consolation of seeing that the attachment of several faithful servants was only tried and

[51] The man had to plead his desire to remain with his wife and family, rather than return to a severe personal thraldom. – S. – "I was by no means astonished at Roustan's conduct he was imbued with the sentiments of a slave, and finding me no longer the master, he imagined that his services might be dispensed with." – Napoleon, *Las Cases*, tom. i., p. 336.

[52] Baron Fain, p. 400.

purified by adversity, as gold is by fire.[53]

The family connexions, and relatives of Napoleon, as well as his familiar friends, were separated from him in the general wreck. It will not be forgotten, that on the day before the battle of Paris, several members of Napoleon's administration set out with the Empress Maria Louisa, to escape from the approaching action. They halted at Blois, where they were joined by Joseph, and other members of the Buonaparte family. For some time this reunion maintained the character and language of a council of regency, dispersed proclamations, and endeavoured to act as a government. The news of the taking of Paris, and the subsequent events, disposed Joseph and Jerome Buonaparte to remove themselves to the provinces beyond the Loire. But Maria Louisa refused to accompany them, and while the point was yet contested, Count Schouwalow, one of the Austrian ministers,[54] arrived to take her under his protection. The ephemeral regency then broke up, and fled in different directions; the brothers of Buonaparte taking the direction of Switzerland, while Cardinal Fesch, and the mother of Napoleon retreated to Rome.

Maria Louisa made more than one effort to join her husband,

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[53] The faithful few were, the Duke of Bassano, the Duke of Vicenza, Generals Bertrand, Flahaut, Belliard, Fouler; Colonels Bassy, Anatole de Montesquiou, Gourgaud, Count de Turenne; Barons Fain, Mesgrigny, De la Place, and Lelorgne d'Ideville; the Chevalier Jouanne, General Kosakowski, and Colonel Vensowitch. The two last were Poles.

[54] Count Schouwalow was a Russian, not an Austrian minister. Prince Esterhazy, however, was there. —*From Lord Burghersh.*– Ed. (1842.)

but they were discouraged on the part of Napoleon himself, who, while he continued to ruminate on renewing the war, could not desire to have the Empress along with him in such an adventure.[55] Shortly afterwards, the Emperor of Austria visited his daughter and her son, then at Rambouillet, and gave her to understand that she was, for some time at least, to remain separate from her husband, and that her son and she were to return to Vienna along with him. She returned, therefore, to her father's protection.

## DEATH OF JOSEPHINE – FONTAINBLEAU

It must be also here mentioned, as an extraordinary addition to this tale of calamity, that Josephine, the former wife of Buonaparte, did not long survive his downfall. It seemed as if the Obi-woman of Martinico had spoke truth; for, at the time when Napoleon parted from the sharer of his early fortunes, his grandeur was on the wane, and her death took place but a few weeks subsequent to his being dethroned and exiled. The Emperor of Russia had visited this lady, and showed her some attention, with which Napoleon, for reasons we cannot conjecture, was extremely displeased. She was amply provided for by the treaty of Fontainbleau, but did not survive to reap any benefit from the provision, as she shortly after sickened and died at her beautiful villa of Malmaison. She was buried on the

[55] Savary, tom. iv., pp. 118-132.

3d of June, at the village of Ruel. A vast number of the lower class attended the obsequies; for she had well deserved the title of patroness of the poor.[56]

While we endeavour to sum the mass of misfortunes with which Buonaparte was overwhelmed at this crisis, it seems as if Fortune had been determined to show that she did not intend to reverse the lot of humanity, even in the case of one who had been so long her favourite, but that she retained the power of depressing the obscure soldier, whom she had raised to be almost king of Europe, in a degree as humiliating as his exaltation had been splendid. All that three years before seemed inalienable from his person, was now reversed. The victor was defeated, the monarch was dethroned, the ransomer of prisoners was in captivity, the general was deserted by his soldiers, the master abandoned by his domestics, the brother parted from his brethren, the husband severed from the wife, and the father torn from his only child. To console him for the fairest and largest empire that ambition ever lorded it over, he had, with the mock name of emperor, a petty isle to which he was to retire, accompanied by the pity of such friends as dared express their feelings, the unrepressed execrations of many of his former subjects, who refused to regard his present humiliation as an

[56] Her two grandsons walked as chief mourners; and in the procession were Prince Nesselrode, General Sacken and Czernicheffe, besides several other generals of the allied army, and some of the French maréchals and generals. The body has since been placed in a magnificent tomb of white marble, erected by her two children, with this inscription —"EUGENE ET HORTENSE A JOSEPHINE." – S

amends for what he had made them suffer during his power, and the ill-concealed triumph of the enemies into whose hands he had been delivered.

A Roman would have seen, in these accumulated disasters, a hint to direct his sword's point against his breast; a man of better faith would have turned his eye back on his own conduct, and having read, in his misuse of prosperity, the original source of those calamities, would have remained patient and contrite under the consequences of his ambition. Napoleon belonged to the Roman school of philosophy; and it is confidently reported, especially by Baron Fain, his secretary, though it has not been universally believed, that he designed, at this extremity, to escape from life by an act of suicide.

The Emperor, according to this account, had carried with him, ever since the retreat from Moscow, a packet containing a preparation of opium, made up in the same manner with that used by Condorcet for self-destruction. His valet-de-chambre, in the night betwixt the 12th and 13th of April, heard him arise and pour something into a glass of water, drink, and return to bed. In a short time afterwards, the man's attention was called by sobs and stifled groans – an alarm took place in the chateau – some of the principal persons were roused, and repaired to Napoleon's chamber. Yvan, the surgeon, who had procured him the poison, was also summoned; but hearing the Emperor complain that the operation of the potion was not quick enough, he was seized with a panic terror, and fled from the palace at full gallop.

Napoleon took the remedies recommended, and a long fit of stupor ensued, with profuse perspiration. He awakened much exhausted, and surprised at finding himself still alive; he said aloud, after a few moments' reflection, "Fate will not have it so," and afterwards appeared reconciled to undergo his destiny, without similar attempts at personal violence.[57] There is, as we have already hinted, a difference of opinion concerning the cause of Napoleon's illness, some imputing it to indigestion. The fact of his having been very much indisposed is, however, indisputable. A general of the highest distinction transacted business with Napoleon on the morning of the 13th April. He seemed pale and dejected, as from recent and exhausting illness. His only dress was a night-gown and slippers, and he drank from time to time a quantity of tisan, or some such liquid, which was placed beside him, saying he had suffered severely during the night, but that his complaint had left him.

After this crisis, and having ratified the treaty which his maréchals had made for him, Napoleon appeared more at his ease than he had been for some time before, and conversed frankly with his attendants upon the affairs of France.

He owned, that, after all, the Government of the Bourbons would best suit France, as tending to reconcile all parties. "Louis," he said, "has talents and means; he is old and infirm; he

[57] "Dieu ne le veut pas." —*Manuscript de 1814*, p. 395. "Colonel Sir Niel Campbell told me, that in the course of conversation with him, on the 17th, Napoleon remarked – though many considered he ought to commit suicide, yet he thought it was more magnanimous to live." —*Memorable Events*, p. 235.

will not, I think, choose to give his name to a bad reign. If he is wise, he will occupy my bed, and content himself with changing the sheets. But," he continued, "he must treat the army well, and take care not to look back on the past, otherwise his reign will be of brief endurance."

He also mentioned the inviolability of the sale of the national domains, as the woof upon which the whole web depended; cut one thread of it, he said, and the whole will be unravelled. Of the ancient noblesse and people of fashion, he spoke in embittered language, saying they were an English colony in the midst of France, who desired only their own privileges, and would act as readily for as against him.

"If I were in Louis's situation," he said, "I would not keep up the Imperial Guard. I myself have treated them too well not to have insured their attachment; and it will be *his* policy to dismiss them, giving good pensions to such officers and soldiers as choose to retire from service, and preferment in the line to others who incline to remain. This done, he should choose another guard from the army at large."

After these remarkable observations, which, in fact, contained an anticipation of much that afterwards took place, Napoleon looked round upon his officers, and made them the following exhortation: – "Gentlemen, when I remain no longer with you, and when you have another government, it will become you to attach yourselves to it frankly, and serve it as faithfully as you have served me. I request, and even command you to do

this; therefore, all who desire leave to go to Paris have my permission to do so, and those who remain here will do well to send in their adhesion to the government of the Bourbons." Yet while Napoleon used this manful and becoming language to his followers, on the subject of the change of government, it is clear that there lurked in his bosom a persuasion that the Bourbons were surrounded with too many difficulties to be able to surmount them, and that Destiny had still in reserve for him a distinguished part in the annals of Europe.

In a private interview with Macdonald, whose part in the abdication we have mentioned, he expressed himself warmly satisfied with his conduct, regretting that he had not more early known his value, and proposed he should accept a parting gift. "It is only," he said, anticipating the maréchal's objections, "the present of a soldier to his comrade." And indeed it was chosen with great delicacy, being a beautiful Turkish sabre, which Napoleon had himself received from Ibrahim Bey while in Egypt.[58]

## LEAVES FONTAINBLEAU

Napoleon having now resigned himself entirely to his fate, whether for good or evil, prepared, on the 20th April, to depart for his place of retreat. But first he had the painful task of

[58] The following words were engraven on the blade: "Sabre que portait l'Empereur le jour de la bataille du Mont Thabor." – Bourrienne.

bidding farewell to the body in the universe most attached to him, and to which he was probably most attached – his celebrated Imperial Guard. Such of them as could be collected were drawn out before him in review. Some natural tears dropped from his eyes, and his features had the marks of strong emotion, while reviewing for the last time, as he must then have thought likely, the companions of so many victories. He advanced to them on horseback, dismounted, and took his solemn leave. "All Europe," he said, "had armed against him; France herself had deserted him, and chosen another dynasty. He might," he said, "have maintained with his soldiers a civil war of years, but it would have rendered France unhappy. Be faithful," he continued (and the words were remarkable,) "to the new sovereign whom France has chosen. Do not lament my fate; I will always be happy while I know you are so. I could have died – nothing was easier – but I will always follow the road of honour. I will record with my pen the deeds we have done together.[59] I cannot embrace you all, but I embrace your general," – (he pressed the general to his bosom.) – "Bring hither the eagle," – (he embraced the standard, and concluded,) – "Beloved eagle, may the kisses I bestow on you long resound in the hearts of the brave! – Adieu, my children – Adieu, my brave companions – Surround me once more – Adieu." Drowned in grief, the veteran soldiers heard the farewell of their dethroned leader; sighs and murmurs broke from their

[59] "He told M. de Caraman, that he had never had time to study; but that he now should, and meant to write his own memoirs." —*Memorable Events*, p. 232.

ranks, but the emotion burst out in no threats or remonstrances. They appeared resigned to the loss of their general, and to yield, like him, to necessity.

# CHAPTER LXXXI

Commissioners appointed to escort Napoleon – He leaves Fontainbleau on the 20th April – His interview with Augereau at Valence – Expressions of popular dislike towards Napoleon in the South of France – Fears for his personal safety – His own agitation and precautions – He arrives at Frejus, and embarks on board the Undaunted, with the British and Austrian Commissioners – Arrives at Elba on 4th May.

Upon his unpleasant journey, Napoleon was attended by Bertrand and Drouet, honourably faithful to the adverse fortunes of the master who had been their benefactor when in prosperity. Four delegates from the allied powers accompanied him to his new dominions. Their names were – General Schouwaloff, on the part of Russia; the Austrian General, Kohler; Colonel Sir Niel Campbell, as representing Great Britain; and the General Baron Truchsess Waldbourg, as the commissioner of Prussia. Napoleon received the three first with much personal civility, but seemed to resent the presence of the representative of Prussia, a country which had been at one time the subject of his scorn, and always of his hatred. It galled him that she should assume an immediate share in deciding upon his fate.

He received the English commissioner with particular expressions of esteem, saying he desired to pass to Elba in an

English vessel, and was pleased to have the escort of an English officer, "Your nation," he said, "has an elevated character, for which I have the highest esteem. I desired to raise the French people to such a pitch of sentiment, but – ." He stopt, and seemed affected. He spoke with much civility to the Austrian General Kohler, but expressed himself somewhat bitterly on the subject of Russia. He even hinted to the Austrian, that should he not be satisfied with his reception in Elba, he might possibly choose to retire to Great Britain;[60] and asked General Kohler, whether he thought he would not receive protection from them. "Yes, sire," replied the Austrian, "the more readily, that your Majesty has never made war in that country."

Napoleon proceeded to give a farewell audience to the Duke of Bassano, and seemed nettled when an aide-de-camp, on the part of General Bertrand, announced that the hour fixed for departing was arrived. "Good," he said. "This is something new. Since when is it that my motions have been regulated by the watch of the grand maréchal? I will not depart till it is my pleasure – perhaps I will not depart at all."[61] This, however, was only a momentary sally of impatience.

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[60] General Sir Edward Paget and Lord Louvain, both informed me that Lord Castlereagh told them, that Napoleon had written to him for permission to retire to England, "it being the only country possessing great and liberal ideas." —*Memorable Events*, p. 232.

[61] Memorable Events, p. 326; Bourrienne, tom. x., p. 217.

## LEAVES FONTAINBLEAU – AUGEREAU

Napoleon left Fontainbleau the 20th April, 1814, at eleven o'clock in the morning. His retinue occupied fourteen carriages, and required relays of thirty pairs of post horses. On the journey, at least during its commencement, he affected a sort of publicity, sending for the public authorities of towns, and investigating into the state of the place, as he was wont to do on former occasions. The cries of *Vive l'Empereur* were frequently heard, and seemed to give him fresh spirits. On the other hand, the mayors, and sub-prefects, whom he interrogated concerning the decay of many of the towns, displeased him, by ascribing the symptoms of dilapidation to the war, or the conscription; and in several places the people wore the white cockade, and insulted his passage with shouts of *Vive le Roi.*

In a small barrack, near Valence, Napoleon, upon 24th April, met Augereau, his old companion in the campaigns of Italy, and in some degree his tutor in the art of war. The maréchal had resented some of the reflections which occurred in the bulletins, censuring his operations for the protection of Lyons. When, therefore, he issued a proclamation to his army, on the recent change, he announced Napoleon as one who had brought on his own ruin, and yet dared not die. An angry interview took place, and the following words are said to have been exchanged between them: – "I have thy proclamation," said Napoleon. "Thou hast

betrayed me." – "Sire," replied the maréchal, "it is you who have betrayed France and the army, by sacrificing both to a frantic spirit of ambition." – "Thou hast chosen thyself a new master," said Napoleon. – "I have no account to render to you on that score," replied the general. – "Thou hast no courage," replied Buonaparte. – "'Tis thou hast none," replied the general, and turned his back, without any mark of respect, on his late master.[62]

At Montelimart, the exiled Emperor heard the last expressions of regard and sympathy. He was now approaching Provence, a region of which he had never possessed the affections, and was greeted with execrations and cries of – "Perish the Tyrant!" – "Down with the butcher of our children!" Matters looked worse as they advanced. On Monday, 25th April, when Sir Niel Campbell, having set out before Napoleon, arrived at Avignon, the officer upon guard anxiously inquired if the escort attending the Emperor was of strength sufficient to resist a popular disturbance, which was already on foot at the news of his arrival. The English commissioner entreated him to protect the passage of Napoleon by every means possible. It was agreed that the fresh horses should be posted at a different quarter of the town from that where it was natural to have expected the change. Yet the mob discovered and surrounded them, and it was with difficulty that Napoleon was saved from popular fury. Similar dangers

[62] Itineraire de Buonaparte, p. 235. – Augereau was an old republican, and had been ready to oppose Buonaparte on the day he dissolved the Legislative Body. He submitted to him during his reign, but was a severe censurer of his excessive love of conquest. – See *ante*, vol. iv., p. 256. – S.

attended him elsewhere; and, in order to avoid assassination, the Ex-Emperor of France was obliged to disguise himself as a postilion, or a domestic, anxiously altering from time to time the mode of his dress; ordering the servants to smoke in his presence; and inviting the commissioners, who travelled with him, to whistle or sing, that the incensed people might not be aware who was in the carriage. At Orgon, the mob brought before him his own effigy dabbled with blood, and stopped his carriage till they displayed it before his eyes; and, in short, from Avignon to La Calade, he was grossly insulted in every town and village, and, but for the anxious interference of the commissioners, he would probably have been torn to pieces. The unkindness of the people seemed to make much impression on him. He even shed tears. He showed also, more fear of assassination than seemed consistent with his approved courage; but it must be recollected, that the danger was of a new and peculiarly horrible description, and calculated to appal many to whom the terrors of a field of battle were familiar. The bravest soldier might shudder at a death like that of the De Witts. At La Calade he was equally nervous, and exhibited great fear of poison. When he reached Aix, precautions were taken by detachments of gendarmes, as well as by parties of the allied troops, to ensure his personal safety.[63] At a chateau called Bouillidou, he had an interview

[63] This, indeed, had been previously arranged, as troops in considerable numbers were posted for his protection at Grenoble, Gap, and Sisteron, being the road by which he was expected to have travelled; but, perhaps with a view to try an experiment on his popularity, he took the route we have detailed. – S.

with his sister Pauline. The curiosity of the lady of the house, and two or three females, made them also find their way to his presence. They saw a gentleman in an Austrian uniform. "Whom do you wish to see, ladies?" – "The Emperor Napoleon." – "I am Napoleon." – "You jest, sir," replied the ladies. – "What! I suppose you expected to see me look more mischievous? O yes – confess that, since fortune is adverse to me, I must look like a rascal, a miscreant, a brigand. But do you know how all this has happened? Merely because I wished to place France above England."

## FREJUS – VOYAGE TO ELBA

At length he arrived at Frejus, the very port that received him, when, coming from Egypt, he was on the verge of commencing that astonishing career, now about to terminate, to all earthly appearance, at the very point from which he had started. He shut himself up in a solitary apartment, which he traversed with impatient and hasty steps, sometimes pausing to watch from the window the arrival of the vessels, one of which was to transport him from France, as it then seemed, for ever. The French frigate, the Dryade, and a brig called the Inconstant, had come from Toulon to Frejus, and lay ready to perform this duty. But, reluctant perhaps to sail under the Bourbon flag, Napoleon preferred embarking on board his Britannic Majesty's ship the

Undaunted, commanded by Captain Usher.[64] This vessel being placed at the direction of the British commissioner, Sir Niel Campbell, he readily acquiesced in Napoleon's wish to have his passage in her to Elba. It was eleven at night on the 28th ere he finally embarked, under a salute of twenty-one guns. "Adieu, Cæsar, and his fortune," said the Russian envoy. The Austrian and British commissioners accompanied him on his voyage.[65]

During the passage, Buonaparte seemed to recover his spirits, and conversed with great frankness and ease with Captain Usher and Sir Niel Campbell. The subject chiefly led to high-coloured statements of the schemes which he had been compelled to leave unexecuted, with severe strictures on his enemies, and much contempt for their means of opposition. The following particulars are amusing, and, so far as we know, have never

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[64] When they came alongside of the Undaunted, Napoleon desired the captain to ascend, and then followed; the officers were on deck to receive him; they mutually bowed, and the Emperor instantly went forward alone among the men, most of whom spoke French, having been on this station for some years. They all kept their hats on; but he so fascinated them by his manner, that in a few minutes they, of their own accord, took them off. Captain Usher was very glad of this, as he was apprehensive the sailors might have thrown him overboard. —*Memorable Events*, p. 254.

[65] The Prussian commissioner wrote an account of their journey, called "Itineraire de Buonaparte, jusqu'à son embarquement à Frejus, Paris, 1815." The facts are amply confirmed by the accounts of his fellow-travellers. Napoleon always reckoned the pamphlet of General Truchsess Waldbourg, together with the account of De Pradt's Embassy to Poland, as the works calculated to do him most injury. Perhaps he was sensible that during this journey he had behaved beneath the character of a hero, or perhaps he disliked the publication of details which inferred his extreme unpopularity in the south of France. – S.

appeared:

He was inquisitive about the discipline of the vessel, which he commended highly, but assured Captain Usher, that had his power lasted for five years longer, he would have had three hundred sail of the line. Captain Usher naturally asked how they were to be manned. Napoleon replied, that he had resolved on a naval conscription in all the seaports and sea-coast frontier of France, which would man his fleet, which was to be exercised in the Zuyder Zee, until fit for going to the open sea. The British officer scarce suppressed a smile as he replied, that the marine conscripts would make a sorry figure in a gale of wind.

To the Austrian envoy, Napoleon's constant subject was the enlarged power of Russia, which, if she could by any means unite Poland into a healthful and integral part of her army, would, he stated, overwhelm Europe.

On a subsequent occasion, the Emperor favoured his auditors with a new and curious history of the renewal of the war with England. According to this edition, the isle of Malta was a mere pretext. Shortly after the peace of Amiens, he said, Mr. Addington, then the English Prime Minister, proposed to him a renewal of Mr. Pitt's commercial treaty with France; but that he, Napoleon, desirous to encourage the interior industry of France, had refused to enter into such a treaty, excepting upon terms of reciprocity; namely, that if France received so many millions of English import, England was to be obliged to take in return the same quantity of French productions. These terms were declined

by Mr. Addington, on which Napoleon declared there should be no treaty at all, unless his principles were adopted. "Then," replied Mr. Addington, as quoted by Buonaparte, "there must be hostilities; for, unless the people of England have the advantages of commerce on the terms they are accustomed to, they will force me to declare war." – And the war took place accordingly, of which, he again averred, England's determination to recover the advantages of the treaty of commerce between Vergennes and Pitt, was the real cause.

"*Now*," he continued, kindling as he spoke, "England has no power which can oppose her system. She can pursue it without limits. There will be a treaty on very unequal terms, which will not afford due encouragement to the manufactures of France. The Bourbons are poor devils" – he checked himself – "they are grand seigneurs, content to return to their estates and draw their rents; but if the people of France see that, and become discontented, the Bourbons will be turned off in six months." He seemed again to recollect himself, like one who thinks he has spoken too much, and was perceptibly more reserved for the rest of the day.

This curious ebullition was concocted according to Napoleon's peculiar manner of blending what might be true in his narrative, with what was intended to forward his own purpose, and mingling it with so much falsehood and delusion, that it resembled what the English poet says of the Catholic Plot,

"Some truth there was, but mix'd and dash'd with lies."

It is probable that, after the peace of Amiens, Lord Sidmouth might have wished to renew the commercial treaty; but it is absolutely false that Napoleon's declining to do so had any effect upon the renewal of hostilities. His prophecy that his own downfall would be followed by the English urging upon France a disadvantageous commercial treaty, has proved equally false; and it is singular enough that he who, on board the Undaunted, declared that entering into such a measure would be the destruction of the Bourbons, should, while at St. Helena, ridicule and censure Lord Castlereagh for not having secured to Britain that commercial supremacy, the granting of which he had represented as the probable cause of such a result.[66] Thus did his colouring, if not his facts, change according to the mood of the moment.

While on board the Undaunted, Napoleon spoke with great freedom of the facility with which he had outwitted and defeated the allies during the last campaign. "The Silesian army," he said, "had given him most trouble. The old devil, Blucher, was no sooner defeated than he was willing to fight again." But he considered his victory over Schwartzenberg as certain, save for the defection of Marmont. Much more he said, with great apparent frankness, and seemed desirous to make himself in every respect agreeable to his companions on board. Even the

[66] Las Cases, tom. iii., p. 92.

seamen, who at first regarded him with wonder, mixed with suspicion, did not escape the charm of his affability, by which they were soon won over, all excepting the boatswain Hinton, a tar of the old school, who could never hear the Emperor's praises without muttering the vulgar, but expressive phrase – "*Humbug.*"[67]

With the same good-humour, Napoleon admitted any slight jest which might be passed, even at his own expense. When off Corsica, he proposed that Captain Usher should fire a gun to bring-to a fishing-boat, from which he hoped to hear some news. Captain Usher excused himself, saying, such an act of hostility towards a neutral would *denationalize* her, in direct contradiction of Napoleon's doctrine concerning the rights of nations. The Emperor laughed heartily. At another time he amused himself by supposing what admirable caricatures his voyage would give rise to in London. He seemed wonderfully familiar with that species of satire, though so peculiarly English.

## LANDS AT PORTO FERRAJO

Upon the 4th of May, when they arrived within sight of Porto Ferrajo, the principal town of Elba, which has a very fine

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[67] The honest boatswain, however, could understand and value what was solid in Napoleon's merits. As he had to return thanks in name of the ship's company, for 200 louis with which the Emperor presented them, he wished "his honour good health, and better luck the next time." – S.

harbour, they found the island in some confusion. The inhabitants had been recently in a state of insurrection against the French, which had been quieted by the governor and the troops giving in their adhesion to the Bourbon government. This state of things naturally increased Napoleon's apprehensions, which had never entirely subsided since the dangers he underwent in Provence. Even on board the Undaunted, he had requested that a sergeant of marines might sleep each night on the outside of his cabin-door, a trusty domestic also mounting guard within. He now showed some unwillingness, when they made the island, to the ship running right under the batteries; and when he first landed in the morning, it was at an early hour, and in disguise, having previously obtained from Captain Usher, a sergeant's party of marines to attend him.

Having returned on board to breakfast, after his incognito visit to his island, the Emperor of Elba, as he may now be styled, went on shore in form, about two o'clock, with the commissioners, receiving, at leaving the Undaunted, a royal salute. On the beach, he was received by the governor, prefect, and other official persons, with such means of honour as they possessed, who conducted him to the Hôtel-de-Ville, in procession, preceded by a wretched band of fiddlers. The people welcomed him with many shouts. The name of Buonaparte had been unpopular among them as Emperor of France, but they anticipated considerable advantages from his residing among them as their own particular sovereign.

# CHAPTER LXXXII

Elba – Napoleon's mode of Life and occupation there – Effects of his residence at Elba upon the adjoining Kingdom of Italy – He is visited by his Mother and the Princess Pauline – and by a Polish lady – Sir Niel Campbell the only Commissioner left at Elba – Napoleon's Conversations on the State of Europe – His pecuniary Difficulties – and fears of Assassination – Symptoms of some approaching crisis – A part of the Old Guard disbanded – Napoleon escapes from Elba – Fruitless pursuit by Sir Niel Campbell.

## ELBA

Elba, to the limits of which the mighty empire of Napoleon was now contracted, is an island opposite to the coast of Tuscany, about sixty miles in circumference. The air is healthy, excepting in the neighbourhood of the salt marshes. The country is mountainous, and, having all the florid vegetation of Italy, is, in general, of a romantic character. It produces little grain, but exports a considerable quantity of wines; and its iron ore has been famous since the days of Virgil, who describes Elba as,

"Insula inexhaustis chalybum generosa metallis."

There are also other mineral productions. The island boasts two good harbours, and is liberally productive of vines, olives, fruits and maize. Perhaps, if an empire could be supposed to exist within such a brief space, Elba possesses so much both of beauty and variety, as might constitute the scene of a summer night's dream of sovereignty. Buonaparte seemed to lend himself to the illusion, as, accompanied by Sir Niel Campbell, he rode in his usual exploring mood, around the shores of his little state. He did not fail to visit the iron mines, and being informed the annual produce was 500,000 francs, "These, then," he said, "are mine." But being reminded that he had conferred that revenue on the Legion of Honour, he exclaimed, "Where was my head when I gave such a grant! But I have made many foolish decrees of that sort."

One or two of the poorer class of inhabitants, knelt, and even prostrated themselves when they met him. He seemed disgusted, and imputed this humiliating degree of abasement to the wretchedness of their education, under the auspices of the monks. On these excursions he showed the same apprehension of assassination which had marked his journey to Frejus. Two couriers, well armed, rode before him, and examined every suspicious spot. But as he climbed a mountain above Ferrajo, and saw the ocean approach its feet in almost every direction, the expression broke from him, accompanied with a good-humoured smile, "It must be confessed my isle is very little."

He professed, however, to be perfectly resigned to his fate;

often spoke of himself as a man politically dead, and claimed credit for what he said upon public affairs, as having no remaining interest in them. He professed his intentions were to devote himself exclusively to science and literature. At other times, he said he would live in his little island, like a justice of peace in a country town in England.

The character of Napoleon, however, was little known to himself, if he seriously thought that his restless and powerful mind could be satisfied with the investigation of abstract truths, or amused by the leisure of literary research. He compared his abdication to that of Charles V., forgetting that the Austrian Emperor's retreat was voluntary, that he had a turn towards mechanical pursuits, and that even with these means of solace, Charles became discontented with his retirement. The character of Buonaparte was, on the contrary, singularly opposed to a state of seclusion. His propensities continued to be exactly of the same description at Elba, which had so long terrified and disquieted Europe. To change the external face of what was around him; to imagine extensive alterations, without accurately considering the means by which they were to be accomplished; to work within his petty province such alterations as its limits permitted; to resume, in short, upon a small scale, those changes which he had attempted upon that which was most magnificent; to apply to Elba the system of policy which he had exercised so long in Europe, was the only mode in which he seems to have found amusement and exercise for the impatient energies of a

temper, accustomed from his early youth to work upon others, but apt to become lethargic, sullen, and discontented, when it was compelled, for want of other exercise, to recoil upon itself.

During the first two or three weeks of his residence in the island of Elba, Napoleon had already planned improvements, or alterations and innovations at least, which, had they been to be carried into execution with the means which he possessed, would have perhaps taken his lifetime to execute. It was no wonder, indeed, accustomed as he had been to speak the word, and to be obeyed, and to consider the improvements which he meditated as those which became the head of a great empire, that he should not have been able to recollect that his present operations respected a petty islet, where magnificence was to be limited, not only by utility, but by the want of funds.

In the course of two or three days' travelling, with the same rapidity which characterised his movements in his frequent progresses through France, and showing the same impatience of rest or delay, Napoleon had visited every spot in his little island, mines, woods, salt-marshes, harbours, fortifications, and whatever was worthy of an instant's consideration, and had meditated improvements and innovations respecting every one of them. Till he had done this he was impatient of rest, and having done so, he lacked occupation.

One of his first, and perhaps most characteristic proposals, was to aggrandize and extend his Liliputian dominions by occupation of an uninhabited island, called Rianosa, which had

been left desolate on account of the frequent descents of the corsairs. He sent thirty of his guards, with ten of the independent company belonging to the island, upon this expedition – (what a contrast to those which he had formerly directed!) – sketched out a plan of fortifications, and remarked, with complacency, "Europe will say that I have already made a conquest."

In an incredibly short time Napoleon had also planned several roads, had contrived means to convey water from the mountains to Porto Ferrajo,[68] designed two palaces, one for the country, the other in the city, a separate mansion for his sister Pauline, stables for one hundred and fifty horses, a lazaretto, buildings for accommodation of the tunny fishery, and salt-works on a new construction, at Porto Longone. The Emperor of Elba proposed, also, purchasing various domains, and had the price estimated; for the inclination of the proprietor was not reckoned essential to the transaction. He ended by establishing four places of residence in the different quarters of the island; and his amusement consisted in constant change and alteration. He travelled from one to another with the restlessness of a bird in a cage, which springs from perch to perch, since it is prevented from winging the air, its natural element. It seemed as if the magnitude of the

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[68] "One of Napoleon's first cares was to obtain a supply of water for the town of Porto-Ferrajo. Captain Usher accompanied him in a boat round the bay; they sailed every creek, and tasted the different rills. Seeing the English sailors watering, he said, 'Let us go to them; I am sure they will choose the best.' Napoleon made a sailor dip his hat into the water, and hold it for him to drink. 'It is excellent: I knew they would find it out.'" —*Memorable Events*, p. 259.

object was not so much the subject of his consideration, providing it afforded immediate scope for employing his constant and stimulated desire of activity. He was like the thorough-bred gamester, who, deprived of the means of depositing large stakes, will rather play at small game than leave the table.

Napoleon placed his court also upon an ambitious scale, having more reference to what he had so long been, than to what he actually now had been reduced to, while, at the same time, the furniture and internal accommodations of the imperial palace were meaner by far than those of an English gentleman of ordinary rank. The proclamation of the French governor on resigning his authority to Napoleon, was well and becomingly expressed; but the spiritual mandate of the Vicar-general Arrighi, a relation of Buonaparte's, which was designed to congratulate the people of Elba on becoming the subjects of the Great Napoleon, was extremely ludicrous. "Elevated to the sublime honour of receiving the anointed of the Lord," he described the exhaustless wealth which was to flow in upon the people, from the strangers who came to look upon the hero. The exhortation sounded as if the isle had become the residence of some nondescript animal, which was to be shown for money.

The interior of Napoleon's household, though reduced to thirty-five persons, still held the titles, and affected the rank, proper to an imperial court, of which it will be presently seen the petty sovereign made a political use. He displayed a national flag, having a red bend dexter in a white field, the bend bearing three

bees. To dignify his capital, having discovered that the ancient name of Porto Ferrajo, was Comopoli (*i. e.* the city of Como,) he commanded it to be called Cosmopoli, or the city of all nations.

His body-guard, of about 700 infantry, and 80 cavalry, seemed to occupy as much of Napoleon's attention as the grand army did formerly. They were constantly exercised, especially in throwing shot and shells; and, in a short time, he was observed to be anxious about obtaining recruits for them. This was no difficult matter, where all the world had so lately been in arms, and engaged in a profession which many, doubtless, for whom a peaceful life had few charms, laid aside with regret, and longed to resume.

As early as the month of July 1814, there was a considerable degree of fermentation in Italy, to which the neighbourhood of Elba, the residence of several members of the Buonaparte family, and the sovereignty of Murat, occasioned a general resort of Buonaparte's friends and admirers. Every day this agitation increased, and various arts were resorted to for disseminating a prospect of Napoleon's future return to power. Sundry parties of recruits came over to Elba from Italy to enlist in his guards, and two persons employed in this service were arrested at Leghorn, in whose possession were found written lists, containing the names of several hundred persons willing to serve Napoleon. The species of ferment and discontent thus produced in Italy, was much increased by the impolitic conduct of Prince Rospigliosi, the civil governor of Tuscany, who re-established in their full

force every form and regulation formerly practised under the Dukes of Tuscany, broke up the establishment of the museum, which had been instituted by Buonaparte's sister, and, while he returned to all the absurdities of the old government, relaxed none of the imposts which the French had laid on.

Napoleon's conduct towards the refugees who found their way to Elba, may be judged from the following sketch. On the 11th of July, Colomboni, commandant of a battalion of the 4th regiment of the line in Italy, was presented to the Emperor as newly arrived. "Well, Colomboni, your business in Elba?" – "First, to pay my duty to your Majesty; secondly, to offer myself to carry a musket among your guards." – "That is too low a situation, you must have something better," said Napoleon; and instantly named him to an appointment of 1200 francs yearly, though it appears the Emperor himself was then in great distress for money.

About the middle of summer, Napoleon was visited by his mother, and his sister the Princess Pauline.[69] At this time, too, he seems to have expected to be rejoined by his wife Maria Louisa, who, it was said, was coming to take possession of her Italian dominions. Their separation, with the incidents which happened before Paris, was the only subject on which he appeared to lose temper. Upon these topics he used strong and violent language.

[69] Napoleon's mother arrived on the 2d of August, and occupied a house on the quay at Porto Ferrajo. Pauline landed in October. She lived in the palace with her brother; who had a room built for her in the garden, in which she gave public balls every Sunday evening.

He said, that interdicting him intercourse with his wife and son, excited universal reprobation at Vienna – that no such instance of inhumanity and injustice could be pointed out in modern times – that the Empress was detained a prisoner, an orderly officer constantly attending upon her – finally, that she had been given to understand before she left Orleans, that she was to obtain permission to join him at the island of Elba, though it was now denied her. It was possible, he proceeded, to see a shade of policy, though none whatever of justice, in this separation. Austria had meant to unite the child of her sovereign with the Emperor of France, but was desirous of breaking off the connexion with the Emperor of Elba, as it might be apprehended that the respect due to the daughter of the House of Hapsburg would, had she resided with her husband, have reflected too much lustre on the abdicated sovereign.

The Austrian commissioner, General Kohler, on the other hand, insisted that the separation took place by the Empress Maria Louisa's consent, and even at her request; and hinted, that Napoleon's desire to have her society was dictated by other feelings than those of domestic affection. But allowing that Napoleon's views in so earnestly desiring the company of his wife might be political, we can see neither justice nor reason in refusing a request, which would have been granted to a felon condemned to transportation.

We have not thought it necessary to disturb the narrative of important events by noticing details which belong rather to

romance; but as we are now treating of Napoleon in his more private character, a mysterious circumstance may be mentioned. About the end of August 1814, a lady arrived at the Isle of Elba, from Leghorn, with a boy about five or six years old. She was received by Napoleon with great attention, but at the same time with an air of much secrecy, and was lodged in a small and very retired villa, in the most remote corner of the island; from whence, after remaining two days, she re-embarked for Naples. The Elbese naturally concluded that this must have been the Empress Maria Louisa and her son. But the individual was known by those near Napoleon's person to be a Polish lady from Warsaw, and the boy was the offspring of an intrigue betwixt her and Napoleon several years before.[70] The cause of her speedy departure might be delicacy towards Maria Louisa, and the fear of affording the Court of Vienna a pretext for continuing the separation, of which Napoleon complained. In fact, the Austrians, in defence of their own conduct, imputed irregularities to that of Buonaparte; but the truth of these charges would be no edifying subject of investigation.

About the middle of May, Baron Kohler took farewell of

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[70] "Our halt at Warsaw, in January 1807, was delightful. The Emperor and all the French officers paid their tribute of admiration to the charms of the fair Poles. There was one whose powerful fascinations made a deep impression on Napoleon's heart. He conceived an ardent affection for her, which she cordially returned. It is needless to name her, when I observe that her attachment remained unshaken amidst every danger, and that, at the period of Napoleon's reverses, she continued his faithful friend." – Savary, tom. iii., p. 16.

Napoleon, to return to Vienna. He was an Austrian general of rank and reputation; a particular friend and old schoolfellow of Prince Schwartzenberg. The scene of Napoleon's parting with this gentleman was quite pathetic on the Emperor's side. He wept as he embraced General Kohler, and entreated him to procure, if possible, his re-union with his wife and child – calling him the preserver of his life – regretted his poverty, which prevented his bestowing on him some valuable token of remembrance – finally, folding the Austrian general in his arms, he held him there for some time, repeating expressions of the warmest attachment. This sensibility existed all upon one side; for an English gentleman who witnessed the scene, having asked Kohler afterwards what he was thinking of while locked in the Emperor's embraces – "of Judas Iscariot," answered the Austrian.

After the departure of Baron Kohler, Colonel Sir Niel Campbell was the only one of the four commissioners who continued to remain at Elba by orders of the British Cabinet. It was difficult to say what his office really was, or what were his instructions. He had neither power, title, nor means, to interfere with Napoleon's motions. The Emperor had been recognised by a treaty – wise or foolish, it was too late to ask – as an independent sovereign. It was therefore only as an envoy that Sir Niel Campbell could be permitted to reside at his court; and as an envoy also, not of the usual character, for settling affairs concerning the court from which he was despatched, but in a capacity not generally avowed – the office, namely, of observing

the conduct of that at which he was sent to reside. In fact, Sir Niel Campbell had no direct or ostensible situation whatever, and of this the French minister of Elba soon took advantage. Drouet, the governor of Porto Ferrajo, made such particular inquiries into the character assumed by the British envoy, and the length of his stay, as obliged the latter to say that his orders were to remain in Elba till the breaking up of the Congress, which was now settling the affairs of Europe; but if his orders should direct him to continue there after that period, he would apply to have his situation placed on some recognised public footing, which he did not doubt would be respectable.

Napoleon did not oppose or murmur at the continued, though equivocal residence of Sir Niel Campbell at Elba; he affected, on the contrary, to be pleased with it. For a considerable time, he even seemed to seek the society of the British envoy, held frequent intercourse with him, and conversed with apparent confidence upon public affairs. The notes of such conversations are now before us; and though it is, on the one hand, evident that Napoleon's expressions were arranged, generally speaking, on a premeditated plan, yet, on the other, it is equally certain, that his ardent temperament, when once engaged in discourse, led him to discover more of his own private thoughts than he would, on cool reflection, have suffered to escape him.

On the 16th September 1814, for example, Sir Niel Campbell had an audience of three hours, during which, Napoleon, with his habitual impatience of a sedentary posture, walked from one

end of the room to the other, and talked incessantly. He was happy, he said, that Sir Niel remained in Elba, *pour rompre la chimère*, (to destroy, namely, the idea, that he, Buonaparte, had further intention of disturbing the peace of Europe.) "I think," he continued, "of nothing beyond the verge of my little isles. I could have supported the war for twenty years, if I had chosen. I am now a deceased person, occupied with nothing but my family, my retreat, my house, my cows, and my poultry." He then spoke in the highest terms of the English character, protesting it had always had his sincere admiration, notwithstanding the abuse directed against it in his name. He requested the British envoy to lose no time in procuring him an English grammar. It is a pity Mr. Hinton, the boatswain, was not present, to have accompanied this eulogy with his favourite ejaculation.

In the rest of the conversation, the Elbese Emperor was probably more serious. He inquired with eagerness after the real state of France. Sir Niel Campbell informed him, that all the information he had been able to collect, ascribed great wisdom and moderation to the sovereign and government; but allowed that those who had lost good appointments, the prisoners of war who had returned from abroad, and great part of the army who remained embodied, were still attached to Napoleon. In answer, Buonaparte seemed to admit the stability of the throne, supported as it was by the maréchals and great officers; but he derided the idea of affording France the benefit of a free constitution. He said, the attempt to imitate that of Great

Britain was a farce, a caricature. It was impossible, he observed, to imitate the two Houses of Parliament, for that respectable families like those composing the aristocracy of England, did not now exist in France. He talked with bitterness of the cession of Belgium, and of France being deprived of Antwerp. He himself spoke, he observed, as a spectator, without hopes or interest, for he had none; but thus to have mortified the French, showed an ignorance of the national character. Their chief feeling was for pride and glory, and the allies need not look forward to a state of satisfaction and tranquillity under such circumstances as France was now placed in. "The French," he said, "were conquered only by a great superiority of number, therefore were not humiliated; and the population had not suffered to the extent alleged, for he had always spared their lives, and exposed those of Italians, Germans, and other foreigners." He remarked that the gratitude of Louis XVIII. to Great Britain was offensive to France, and that he was called in derision the King of England's Viceroy.

In the latter months of 1814, Sir Niel Campbell began to become sensible that Napoleon desired to exclude him from his presence as much as he possibly could, without positive rudeness. He rather suddenly intrenched himself within all the forms of an imperial court; and without affording the British envoy any absolute cause of complaint, or even any title to require explanation, he contrived, in a great measure, to debar him from opportunities of conversation. His only opportunity of obtaining access to Napoleon, was on his return from short

absences to Leghorn and Florence, when his attendance on the levee was matter of etiquette.

On such occasions, the tenor of Napoleon's prophecies was minatory of the peace of Europe. He spoke perpetually of the humiliation inflicted upon France, by taking from her Belgium and his favourite object Antwerp. On the 30th of October, while enlarging on these topics, he described the irritable feelings of the nation, saying, every man in France considered the Rhine to be their natural boundary, and nothing could alter this opinion. There was no want, he said, of a population in France, martial beyond any other nation, by natural disposition, by the consequences of the Revolution, and by the idea of glory. Louis XIV., according to his account, notwithstanding all the misfortunes he had brought upon the nation, was still beloved on account of the eclat of his victories, and the magnificence of his court. The battle of Rosbach had brought about the Revolution. Louis XVIII. totally mistook the character of the French in supposing, that either by argument or by reasoning, or indulging them with a free constitution, he could induce them to sink into a state of peaceful industry. He insisted that the Duke of Wellington's presence at Paris was an insult on the French nation; that very strong discord prevailed in the country, and that the king had but few friends, either in the army or among the people. Perhaps the King might try to get rid of a part of the army by sending them to St. Domingo, but that, he observed, would be soon seen through; he himself had made a melancholy trial, with

the loss of 30,000 men, which had proved the inutility of such expeditions.

He then checked himself, and endeavoured to show that he had no personal feeling or expectation from the revolutions he foretold. "I am a deceased man," he said; "I was born a soldier; I have mounted a throne; I have descended from it; I am prepared for any fate. They may transport me to a distant shore, or they may put me to death here; I will spread my bosom open to the poniard. When merely General Buonaparte, I had property of my own acquiring – I am now deprived of all."

On another occasion he described the ferment in France, which he said he had learned from the correspondence of his guards with their native country, and so far forgot the character of a defunct person, as to say plainly, that the present disaffection would break out with all the fury of the former revolution, and require his own resurrection. "For *then*," he added, "the sovereigns of Europe will soon find it necessary, for their own repose, to call on ME to tranquillize matters."

This species of conversation was perhaps the best which could have been adopted, to conceal his secret purpose from the British commissioner. Sir Niel Campbell, though not without entertaining suspicions, judged it, upon the whole unlikely that he meditated any thing eccentric, unless a tempting opening should present itself on the part of France or Italy.

Napoleon held the same species of language to others as well as the British resident. He was affable, and even cordial

(in appearance,) to the numerous strangers whom curiosity led to visit him; spoke of his retirement as Dioclesian might have done in the gardens of Salonica; seemed to consider his political career as ended, and to be now chiefly anxious to explain such passages of his life as met the harsh construction of the world. In giving free and easy answers to those who conversed with him, and especially to Englishmen of rank, Buonaparte found a ready means of communicating to the public such explanations concerning his past life, as were best calculated to serve his wishes. In these he palliated, instead of denying, the scheme of poisoning his prisoners in Syria, the massacre at Jaffa, the murder of the Duke d'Enghien, and other enormities. An emperor, a conqueror, retired from war, and sequestered from power, must be favourably listened to by those who have the romantic pleasure of hearing him plead his own cause. Milder editions of his measures began to be circulated in Europe, and, in the curiosity to see and admire the captive sovereign, men forgot the ravages which he had committed while at liberty.

As the winter approached, a change was discernible in Napoleon's manners and habits. The alterations which he had planned in the island no longer gave him the same interest; he renounced, from time to time, the severe exercise in which he had at first indulged, used a carriage rather than his horse, and sunk occasionally into fits of deep contemplation, mingled with gloomy anxiety.

## PECUNIARY DIFFICULTIES

He became also subjected to uneasiness, to which he had hitherto been a stranger, being that arising from pecuniary inconveniences. He had plunged into expenses with imprudent eagerness, and without weighing the amount of his resources against the cost of the proposed alterations. The ready money which he brought from France seems to have been soon exhausted, and to raise supplies, he commanded the inhabitants of his island to pay up, in the month of June, the contributions of the last year. This produced petitions, personal solicitations, and discontent. It was represented to him, that so poor were the inhabitants of the island, in consequence of want of sale for their wine for months past, that they would be driven to the most extreme straits if the requisition should be persisted in. In some of the villages, the tax-gatherers of the Emperor were resisted and insulted. Napoleon, on his side, sent part of his troops to quarter upon the insurgent peasantry, and to be supported by them at free cost, till the contributions should be paid up.

Thus, we recognise, in the government of this miniature state, the same wisdom, and the same errors, by which Buonaparte won and lost the empire of the world. The plans of improvements and internal ameliorations which he formed, were probably very good in themselves, but he proceeded to the execution of that which he had resolved with too much and too reckless precipitation; too

much of a determination to work his own pleasure, and too little concern for the feelings of others.

The compositions proving a weak resource, as they were scarce to be extracted from the miserable islanders, Napoleon had recourse to others, which must have been peculiarly galling to a man of his haughty spirit. But as his revenue, so far as tangible, did not exceed 300,000 francs, and his expenditure amounted to at least a million, he was compelled to lower the allowances of most of his retinue; to reduce the wages of the miners to one-fourth; to raise money by the sale of the provisions laid up for the garrisons; nay, even by selling a train of brass artillery to the Duke of Tuscany. He disposed also of some property – a large house which had been used as a barrack, and he went the length of meditating the sale of the Town-house at Porto Ferrajo.

We have said, that Napoleon's impatience to execute whatever plans occurred to his fertile imagination, was the original cause of these pecuniary distresses. But they are not less to be imputed to the unfair and unworthy conduct of the French ministry. The French administration were, of all others, most intimately bound in conscience, honour, and policy, to see the treaty of Fontainbleau, as forming the footstool by which Louis XVIII. mounted his restored throne, distinctly observed towards Napoleon. The sixth article of that treaty provides an annuity, or revenue of two millions five hundred thousand francs, to be registered on the Great Book of France, and paid without

abatement or deduction to Napoleon Buonaparte. This annual provision was stipulated by the maréchals, Macdonald and Ney, as the price of Napoleon's resignation, and the French ministers could not refuse a declaration of payment without gross injustice to Buonaparte, and at the same time a severe insult to the allied powers. Nevertheless, so far from this pension being paid with regularity, we have seen no evidence that Napoleon ever received a single remittance to account of it. The British resident observing how much the Ex-Emperor was harassed by pecuniary straits, gave it, not once but repeatedly, as his opinion, "that if these difficulties pressed upon him much longer, so as to prevent him from continuing the external show of a court, he was perfectly capable of crossing over to Piombino with his troops, or committing any other extravagance." This was Sir Niel Campbell's opinion on 31st October, 1814, and Lord Castlereagh made strong remonstrances on the subject, although Great Britain was the only power among the allies, who, being no principal party to the treaty of Fontainbleau, might safely have left it to those states who were. The French were not ashamed to defend their conduct on the technical objection, that the pension was not due until the year was elapsed; a defence which we must consider as evasive, since such a pension is of an alimentary nature, the termly payments of which ought to be made in advance. The subject was mentioned again and again by Sir Niel Campbell, but it does not appear that the French administration desisted from a course, which, whether arising from a spirit

of mean revenge, or from avarice, or from being themselves embarrassed, was at once dishonourable and impolitic.

Other apprehensions agitated Buonaparte's mind. He feared the Algerine pirates, and requested the interference of England in his behalf. He believed, or affected to believe, that Brulart, the governor of Corsica, who had been a captain of Chouans, the friend of Georges, Pichegru, &c., was sent thither by Louis XVIII.th's administration for the purpose of having him assassinated, and that fitting agents were despatched from Corsica to Elba for that purpose.[71] Above all, he pretended to be informed of a design to dispense with the treaty of Fontainbleau, and to remove him from his place of refuge, to be imprisoned at St. Helena, or St. Lucie. It is not impossible that these fears were not altogether feigned; for though there is not an iota of evidence tending to show that there was reason for believing the allies entertained such an unworthy thought, yet the report was spread very generally through France, Italy, and the Mediterranean, and was encouraged, doubtless, by those who desired once more

[71] Buonaparte had particular reason to dread Brulart. This Chouan chief had been one of the numbers who laid down their arms on Napoleon assuming the Consulate, and who had been permitted to reside at Paris. A friend of Brulart, still more obnoxious than himself, was desirous of being permitted to return from England, to which he had emigrated. He applied to Napoleon through Brulart, who was directed by the Emperor to encourage his friend to come over. Immediately on his landing in France, he was seized and executed. Brulart fled to England in grief and rage, at being made the means of decoying his friend to death. In the height of his resentment he wrote to Napoleon, threatening him with death by his hand. The recollection of this menace alarmed Buonaparte, when he found Brulart so near him as Corsica.

to place Buonaparte in action.[72] He certainly expressed great anxiety on the subject, sometimes declaring he would defend his batteries to the last; sometimes affecting to believe that he was to be sent to reside in England, a prospect which he pretended not to dislike personally, while he held out sufficient reasons to prevent the course from being adopted. "He concluded," he said, "he should have personal liberty, and the means of removing prejudices entertained against his character, which had not yet been fully cleared up;" but ended with the insinuation, that, by residing in England he would have easier communication with France, where there were four of his party to every single Bourbonist. And when he had exhausted these topics, he returned to the complaints of the hardship and cruelty of depriving him of the society of his wife and child.

While Buonaparte, chafed by poverty, and these other subjects of complaint, tormented too by the restlessness of a mind impatient of restraint, gave vent to expressions which excited suspicion, and ought to have recommended precaution, his court began to assume a very singular appearance, quite the opposite of that usually exhibited in the courts of petty sovereigns upon the continent. In the latter there is an air of antiquated gravity, which pervades the whole establishment, and endeavours to supply the want of splendour, and of real power. The heavy apparatus designed for the government of an independent state, is

[72] Even Sir Niel Campbell said to Napoleon, "The newspapers say you are to be sent to St. Helena." – "Nous verrons cela," was the reply. —*Memorable Events*, p. 268.

applied to the management of a fortune not equal to that of many private gentlemen; the whole course of business goes slowly and cumbrously on, and so that appearances are maintained in the old style of formal grandeur, the sovereign and his counsellors dream neither of expeditions, conquest, nor any other political object.

The Court of Porto Ferrajo was the reverse of all this. Indeed, the whole place was, in one sense, deserving of the name of Cosmopoli, which Napoleon wished to impose on it. It was like the court of a great barrack, filled with military, gendarmes, police officers of all sorts, refugees of every nation, expectants and dependents upon the court, domestics and adventurers, all connected with Buonaparte, and holding or expecting some benefit at his hand. Rumours of every kind were buzzed about through this miscellaneous crowd, as thick as motes in the sunshine. Suspicious characters appeared and disappeared again, without affording any trace of their journey or object. The port was filled with ships from all parts of Italy. This indeed was necessary to supply the island with provisions, when crowded with such an unusual degree of population; and, besides, vessels of all nations visited Porto Ferrajo, from the various motives of curiosity or speculation, or being compelled by contrary winds. The four armed vessels of Napoleon, and seventeen belonging to the service of the miners, were constantly engaged in voyages to every part of Italy, and brought over or returned to the continent, Italians, Sicilians, Frenchmen, and Greeks, who seemed all active, yet gave no reason for their coming or

departure. Dominico Ettori, a monk who had escaped from his convent, and one Theologos, a Greek, were considered as agents of some consequence among this group.

The situation of Sir Niel Campbell was now very embarrassing. Napoleon, affecting to be more tenacious than ever of his dignity, not only excluded the British envoy from his own presence, but even threw obstacles in the way of his visiting his mother and sister. It was, therefore, only from interviews with Napoleon himself that he could hope to get any information, and to obtain these Sir Niel was, as already noticed, obliged to absent himself from the island of Elba occasionally, which gave him an opportunity of desiring an audience, as he went away and returned. At such times as he remained on the island he was discountenanced, and all attention withdrawn from him; but in a way so artful, as to render it impossible for him to make a formal complaint, especially as he had no avowed official character, and was something in the situation of a guest, whose uninvited intrusion has placed him at his landlord's mercy.

Symptoms of some approaching catastrophe could not, however, be concealed from the British resident. Napoleon had interviews with his mother, after which she appeared deeply distressed. She was heard also to talk of three deputations which he had received from France. It was besides accounted a circumstance of strong suspicion, that discharges and furloughs were granted to two or three hundred of Napoleon's Old Guard, by the medium of whom, as was too late discovered, the

allegiance of the military in France was corrupted and seduced, and their minds prepared for what was to ensue. We cannot suppose that such a number of persons were positively intrusted with the secret; but every one of them was prepared to sound forth the praises of the Emperor in his exile, and all entertained and disseminated the persuasion, that he would soon appear to reclaim his rights.

At length Mariotti, the French consul at Leghorn, and Spannoki, the Tuscan governor of that town, informed Sir Niel Campbell that it was certainly determined at Elba, that Buonaparte, with his guards, should embark for the continent. Sir Niel was at Leghorn when he received this intelligence, and had left the Partridge sloop of war to cruize round Elba. It was naturally concluded that Italy was the object of Napoleon, to join with his brother-in-law Murat, who was at that time, fatally for himself, raising his banner.

## ESCAPES FROM ELBA

On the 25th of February [1815,] the Partridge having come to Leghorn, and fetched off Sir Niel Campbell, the appearance, as the vessel approached Porto Ferrajo on her return, of the national guard on the batteries, instead of the crested grenadiers of the Imperial guard, at once apprized the British resident of what had happened. When he landed, he found the mother and sister of Buonaparte in a well-assumed agony of anxiety about the

fate of their Emperor, of whom they affected to know nothing, except that he had steered towards the coast of Barbary. They appeared extremely desirous to detain Sir Niel Campbell on shore. Resisting their entreaties, and repelling the more pressing arguments of the governor, who seemed somewhat disposed to use force to prevent him from re-embarking, the British envoy regained his vessel, and set sail in pursuit of the adventurer. But it was too late; the Partridge only obtained a distant sight of the flotilla, after Buonaparte and his forces had landed.

The changes which had taken place in France, and had encouraged the present most daring action, form the subject of the next chapter.

# CHAPTER LXXXIII

Retrospect – Restoration of the Bourbons displeasing to the Soldiery, but satisfactory to the People – Terms favourable to France granted by the Allies – Discontent about the manner of conceding the Charter – Other grounds of dissatisfaction – Apprehensions lest the Church and Crown Lands should be resumed – Resuscitation of the Jacobin faction – Increased Dissatisfaction in the Army – The Claims of the Emigrants mooted in the Chamber of Delegates – Maréchal Macdonald's Proposal – Financial Difficulties – Restriction on the Press – Reflections on this subject.

We must now look back to the re-establishment of the Bourbons upon the throne in 1814, an event which took place under circumstances so uncommon as to excite extravagant expectations of national felicity; expectations, which, like a premature and profuse display of blossom, diminished the chance of the fruit ripening, and exasperated the disappointment of over sanguine hopes. For a certain time all had been gay and rose-coloured. The French possess more than other nations the art of enjoying the present, without looking back with regret on the past, or forward to the future with unfavourable anticipations. Louis XVIII., respectable for his literary acquirements, and the practice of domestic virtues, amiable also from a mixture of

*bonhommie*, and a talent for saying witty things, was received in the capital of his kingdom with acclamations, in which the soldiers alone did not cordially join. They indeed appeared with gloomy, sullen, and discontented looks. The late imperial, now royal guard, seemed, from the dark ferocity of their aspect, to consider themselves rather as the captives who were led in triumph, than the soldiers who partook of it.

But the higher and middling classes in general, excepting those who were direct losers by the dethronement of Napoleon, hailed with sincere satisfaction the prospect of peace, tranquillity, and freedom from vexatious exactions. If they had not, as they could hardly be supposed to have, any personal zeal for the representatives of a family so long strangers to France, it was fondly hoped the absence of this might be supplied by the unwonted prospect of ease and security which their accession promised. The allied monarchs, on their part, did every thing to favour the Bourbon family, and relaxed most of the harsh and unpalatable conditions which they had annexed to their proposed treaty with Buonaparte; as if to allow the legitimate heir the credit with his people of having at once saved their honour, and obtained for them the most advantageous terms.

The French readily caught at these indulgences, and, with the aptitude they possess of accommodating their feelings to the moment, for a time seemed to intimate that they were sensible of the full advantage of the change, and were desirous to make as much of it as they possibly could. There is a story of a French

soldier in former times, who, having insulted his general in a fit of intoxication, was brought before him next morning, and interrogated, whether he was the person who had committed the offence. The accused replied *he* was not, for that the impudent rascal had gone away before four in the morning – at which hour the culprit had awaked in a state of sobriety. The French people, like the arch rogue in question, drew distinctions between their present and former selves, and seemed very willing to deny their identity. They were no longer, they said, either the Republican French, who had committed so many atrocities in their own country, or the Imperial French, who had made such devastation in other nations; and God forbid that the sins of either should be visited upon the present regenerate race of royalist Frenchmen, loyal to their native princes, and faithful to their allies, who desired only to enjoy peace abroad and tranquillity at home.

These professions, which were probably serious for the time, backed by the natural anxiety of the monarch to make, through his interest with the allied powers, the best terms he could for his country, were received as current without strict examination. It seemed that Buonaparte on his retirement to Elba, had carried away with him all the offences of the French people, like the scapegoat, which the Levitical law directed to be driven into the wilderness, loaded with the sins of the children of Israel. There was, in all the proceedings of the allied powers, not only moderation, but a studied delicacy, observed towards the feelings of the French, which almost savoured of romantic generosity.

They seemed as desirous to disguise their conquest, as the Parisians were to conceal their defeat. The treasures of art, those spoils of foreign countries, which justice loudly demanded should be restored to their true owners, were confirmed to the French nation, in order to gratify the vanity of the metropolis. By a boon yet more fatal, announced to the public in one of those moments of romantic, and more than questionable generosity, which we have alluded to, the whole French prisoners of war in the mass, and without inquiry concerning their principles, or the part they were likely to take in future internal divisions, were at once restored to the bosom of their country. This was in fact treating the French nation as a heedless nurse does a spoiled child, when she puts into its hands the knife which it cries for. The fatal consequences of this improvident indulgence appeared early in the subsequent year.

## THE RESTORATION

The Senate of Napoleon, when they called the Bourbons to the throne, had not done so without making stipulations on the part of the nation, and also upon their own. For the first purpose they framed a decree, under which they "called to the throne Louis Stanislaus Xavier, brother of the last King," but upon condition of his accepting a constitution of their framing. This assumed right of dictating a constitution, and naming a king for the nation, was accompanied by another provision, declaring the Senate

hereditary, and confirming to themselves, and their heirs for ever, the rank, honours, and emoluments, which in Napoleon's time they only enjoyed for life.

The King refused to acknowledge the right of the Senate, either to dictate the terms on which he should ascend a throne, his own by hereditary descent, and to which he had never forfeited his claim; or to engross, as their own exclusive property, the endowments provided to their order by Buonaparte. He, therefore, assumed the crown as the lineal and true representative of him by whom it was last worn; and issued his own constitutional charter as a concession which the spirit of the times demanded, and which he had himself no desire to withhold.

The objections to this mode of proceeding were, practically speaking, of no consequence. It signified nothing to the people of France, whether the constitution was proposed to the King by the national representatives, or by the King to them, so that it contained, in an irrevocable form, a full ratification of the national liberties. But for the King to have acknowledged himself the creature of the Senate's election would have been at once to recognise every ephemeral tyranny which had started up and fretted its part on the revolutionary stage; and to have sanctioned all subsequent attempts at innovation, since they who make kings and authorities must have the inherent right to dethrone and annul them. It should not be forgotten how the British nation acted on the great occasions of the Restoration and Revolution; recognising, at either crisis, the right of blood

to succeed to the crown, whether vacant by the murder of Charles I., or the abdication of James II. In principle, too, it may be observed, that in all modern European nations, the king is nominally the source both of law and justice; and that statutes are promulgated, and sentences executed in his name, without inferring that he has the despotic right either to make the one, or to alter the other. Although, therefore, the constitution of France emanated in the usual form of a royal charter, the King was no more empowered to recall or innovate its provisions, than King John to abrogate those of the English Magna Charta. Monsieur, the King's brother, had promised in his name, upon his solemn entrance to Paris, that Louis would recognise the basis of the constitution prepared by the Senate. This pledge was fully redeemed by the charter, and wise men would have been more anxious to secure the benefits which it bestowed, than scrupulously to cavil on the mode in which they had been conferred.

In fact, Louis had adopted not only the form most consonant to ancient usage, but that which he thought most likely to satisfy both the royalists and the revolutionary party. He ascended the throne as his natural right; and, having done so, he willingly granted to the people, in an irrevocable form, the substantial principles of a free constitution. But both parties were rather displeased at what they considered as lost, than gratified at what they gained by this arrangement. The royalists regarded the constitution, with its concessions, as a voluntary abandonment of

the royal prerogative; while the revolutionary party exclaimed, that the receiving the charter from the King as an act of his will was in itself a badge of servitude; and that the same royal prerogative which had granted these privileges, might, if recognised, be supposed to reserve the power of diminishing or resuming them at pleasure. And thus it is, that folly, party-spirit, pride, and passion, can misrepresent the best measures, and so far poison the public mind, that the very granting the object of their desires shall be made the subject of new complaints.

## MINISTRY OF LOUIS XVIII

The formation of the ministry gave rise to more serious grounds of apprehension and censure. The various offices of administration were, upon the restoration, left in possession of persons selected from those who had been named by the Provisional Government. All the members of the Provisional State Council were called to be royal ministers of the State. Many of these, though possessed of reputed talents, were men hackneyed in the changes of the Revolution; and were not, and could not be, intrusted with the King's confidence beyond the bounds of the province which each administered.

Talleyrand, minister for foreign affairs, whose talents and experience might have given him claim to the situation of prime minister, was unpopular from his political versatility; and it was judged, after a time, most expedient to send him

to the Congress at Vienna, that his diplomatic skill might be employed in arranging the exterior relations of France with the other powers of Europe. Yet the absence of this consummate statesman was of great prejudice to the King's affairs. His having preserved life, distinction, and frequently power, during so many revolutionary changes, proved, according to the phrase of the old Earl of Pembroke, that "he was born of the willow, not of the oak." But it was the opinion of the wisest men in France, that it was not fair, considering the times in which he lived, to speak of his attachment to, or defection from, individuals; but to consider the general conduct and maxims which he recommended relative to the interests of France. It has been truly said, that, after the first errors and ebullitions of republican zeal, if he were measured by this standard, he must be judged favourably. The councils which he gave to Napoleon were all calculated, it was said, for the good of the nation, and so were the measures which he recommended to the King. Much of this is really true; yet, when we think of the political consistency of the Prince of Beneventum, we cannot help recollecting the personal virtue of a female follower of the camp, which consisted in strict fidelity to the grenadier company.

Dupont was promoted to the situation of minister at war, owing, perhaps, to the persecution he had undergone from Buonaparte, in consequence of his surrender at Baylen to the Spaniards. Soult was afterwards called to this important office; how recommended, it would be vain to inquire. When Napoleon

heard of his appointment from the English resident, he observed that it would be a wise and good one, if no *patriotic* party should show itself in France; but, if such should arise, he intimated plainly that there would be no room for the Bourbons to rest faith upon Soult's adherence to their cause; and so it proved.

To add still farther to the inconveniences of this state of administration, Louis XVIII. had a favourite, although he had no prime minister. Count Blacas d'Aulps, minister of the household, an ancient and confidential attendant on the royal person during his exile, was understood to be the channel through which the King's wishes were communicated to the other ministers; and his protection was supposed to afford the surest access to the favours of the crown.

Without doing his master the service of a premier, or holding either the power or the responsibility of that high situation, De Blacas had the full share of odium usually attached to it. The royalists, who pressed on him for grants which were in the departments of other ministers, resented his declining to interfere in their favour, as if, having satisfied his own ambition, he had become indifferent to the interest of those with whom he had been a joint sufferer during the emigration. The opposite party, on the other hand, represented Count Blacas as an absolute minister, an emigrant himself, and the patron of emigrants; a royalist of the highest class, and an enemy, of course, to all the constitutional stipulations in favour of liberty. Thus far it is certain, that the unpopularity of M. de Blacas, with all ranks

and parties in the state, had the worst possible influence on the King's affairs; and as his credit was ascribed to a blind as well as an obstinate attachment on the part of Louis, the monarch was of course involved in the unpopularity of the minister of the household.

## TERMS OF THE TREATY

The terms of the peace, as we have already hinted, had been studiously calculated to recommend it to the feelings of the French people. France was, indeed, stripped of that extended sway which rendered her dangerous to the independence of other European nations, and reduced, generally speaking, to the boundaries which she occupied on the 1st of January 1792. Still the bargain was not harshly driven. Several small additions were left with her on the side of Germany and the Netherlands, and on that of Savoy she had the considerable towns of Chamberri, Annecy, Avignon, with the Venaisson and Mont Belliard, included in her territories.[73] But these concessions availed little; and looking upon what they had lost, many of the French people, after the recollections had subsided of their escape from a dreadful war, were naturally, however unreasonably, disposed to murmur against the reduction of their territories, and to insist that Belgium, at least, should have remained with them. This

[73] See Treaty of Paris, Art. III. Parl. Debates, vol. xxviii., p. 178.

opinion was encouraged and pressed by the Buonapartists, who considered the cession of that country with the more evil eye, because it was understood to have been a point urged by England.

Yet if England played a proud, it was also a generous part. She had nothing to stipulate, nothing of which to demand restitution, for she had sustained no territorial loss during the whole period of hostilities. The war, which had nearly ruined most other nations, had put Britain in possession of all the colonies of France, and left the latter country neither a ship nor a port in the East or West Indies; and, to sum the whole, it was not in the power of united Europe to take from England by force any one of the conquests which she had thus made. The question therefore, only was, what Britain was voluntarily to cede to an enemy who could give her no equivalent, excepting the pledge to adopt better principles, and to act no longer as the disturber of Europe. The cessions were such in number and amount, as to show that England was far above the mean and selfish purpose of seeking a colonial monopoly, or desiring to destroy the possibility of commercial rivalry. All was restored to France, excepting only Tobago and the Mauritius.

These sacrifices, made in the spirit of peace and moderation, were not made in vain. They secured to Britain the gratitude and respect of other states, and, giving to her councils that character of justice and impartiality which constitutes the best national strength, they placed her in a situation of more influence and eminence in the civilized world than the uncontrolled possession of all the cotton-fields and sugar-islands of the east and west

could ever have raised her to. Still, with respect to France in particular, the peace was not recommended by the eminence to which it had raised England. The rivalry, so long termed national, and which had been so carefully fostered by every state paper or political statement which Buonaparte had permitted to be published, rankled even in generous and honourable minds; and so prejudiced are the views of passion, that by mistaking each other's national feelings, there were many Frenchmen induced to believe that the superiority attained by Great Britain was to a certain degree an insult and degradation to France.

Every thing, indeed, which ought to have soothed and gratified the French people, was at last, by irritated feelings and artful misrepresentation, converted into a subject of complaint and grievance.

The government of Napoleon had been as completely despotic as it could be rendered in a civilized country like France, where public opinion forbade its being carried to barbaric extreme. On the contrary, in the charter, France was endowed with most of the elementary principles of a free and liberal constitution. The King had adopted, in all points of a general and national tendency, the principles proposed in the rejected constitutional act of the Senate.

The Chamber of Peers and Chamber of Deputies were the titles applied to the aristocratical and popular branches of the constitution, instead of the Senate and Legislative body. Their public duties were divided something like those of the Houses

of Peers and Commons in England. The independence of the judicial order was recognised, and the military were confirmed in their rank and revenues. The Chamber of Peers was to be nominated by the King, with power to his Majesty to create its members for life, or hereditary, at his pleasure. The income of the suppressed Senate was resumed, and vested in the crown, excepting confiscated property, which was restored to the lawful owners. The Catholic religion was declared to be that of the State, but all other Christian sects were to be protected. The King's authority was recognised as head of the army, and the power of making peace and war was vested in him exclusively. The liberty of the press was established, but under certain restraints. The conscription was abolished – the responsibility of ministers recognised; and it may be said, in general, that a constitution was traced out, good so far as it went, and susceptible of receiving the farther improvements which time and experience might recommend. The charter[74] was presented to the Legislative Body by the King in person, [June 4,] with a speech, which announced, that the principles which it recognised were such as had been adopted in the will of his unfortunate brother, Louis XVI.[75]

Yet, though this charter contained a free surrender of great part of the royal rights which the old race of Bourbons had enjoyed, as well as of all the arbitrary power which Napoleon had usurped, we have seen that it was unacceptable to an active and

[74] See Annual Register, vol. lvi., p. 420.

[75] See *ante*, vol. i., p. 255.

influential party in the state, who disdained to accept security for property and freedom under the ancient forms of a feudal charter, and contended that it ought to have emanated directly from the will of the Sovereign People. We have no hesitation in saying, that this was as reasonable as the conduct of a spoiled child, who refuses what is *given* to him, because he is not suffered to *take* it; or the wisdom of an hungry man, who should quarrel with his dinner, because he does not admire the shape of the dish in which it is served up.

This is the common-sense view of the subject. If the constitution contained the necessary guarantees of political freedom and security of life and property; if it was to be looked to as the permanent settlement and bulwark of the liberties of France, and considered as a final and decided arrangement, liable indeed to be improved by the joint consent of the sovereign, and the legal representatives of the subject, but not to be destroyed by any or all of these authorities, it was a matter of utter unimportance, whether the system was constructed in the form of a charter granted by the King, or that of conditions dictated to him by the subject. But if there was to be a retrospect to the ephemeral existence of all the French constitutions hitherto, excepting that under which Buonaparte had enthralled the people, then perhaps the question might be entertained, whether the feudal or the revolutionary form was most likely to be innovated; or, in other words, whether the conditions attached to the plan of government now adopted, was

most likely to be innovated upon by the King, or by the body who represented the people.

Assuming the fatal doctrine, that the party in whose name the conditions of the constitution are expressed, is entitled to suspend, alter, or recall them, sound policy dictated, that the apparent power of granting should be ascribed to the party least able and willing to recall or innovate upon the grant which he had made. In this view of the case, it might be reckoned upon that the King, unsupported, unless by the Royalists, who were few in number, unpopular from circumstances, and for the present divested, excepting nominally, of the great instrument of achieving despotic power, the undisputed command, namely, of the army, would be naturally unwilling to risk the continuance of his authority by any attempt to innovate upon those conditions, which he had by his own charter assured to the people. On the contrary, conditions formed and decreed by the Senate of Buonaparte, might on the popular party's resuming the ascendency, be altered or recalled by the chambers with the same levity and fickleness which the people of France, or at least those acting as their representatives, had so often displayed. To give permanence to the constitution, therefore, it was best it should emanate from the party most interested in preserving it, and least able to infringe it; and that undoubtedly, as France stood at the time, was the sovereign. In Great Britain, the constitution is accounted more secure, because the King is the source of law, of honour, and of all ministerial and executive power; whilst he

is responsible to the nation through his ministers, for the manner in which that power is exercised. An arrangement of a different kind would expose the branches of the legislature to a discordant struggle, which ought never to be contemplated as possible.

The zealous liberalists of France were induced, however, to mutiny against the name under which their free constitution was assigned them, and to call back Buonaparte, who had abolished the very semblance of freedom, rather than to accept at the hands of a peaceful monarch, the degree of liberty which they themselves had acquired. The advantages which they gained will appear in the sequel.

Thus setting out with varying and contradictory opinions of the nature and origin of the new constitution, the parties in the state regarded it rather as a fortress to be attacked and defended, than as a temple in which all men were called to worship.

## PARTIES IN FRANCE

The French of this period might be divided into three distinct and active parties – Royalists; Liberals of every shade, down to Republicans; and Buonapartists. And it becomes our duty to say a few words concerning each of these.

The Royalists, while they added little real strength to the King by their numbers, attracted much jealous observation from their high birth and equally high pretensions; embroiled his affairs by their imprudent zeal; embittered his peace by their just and

natural complaints; and drew suspicion on his government at every effort which he made to serve and relieve them. They consisted chiefly of the emigrant nobles and clergy.

The former class were greatly reduced in number by war and exile; insomuch, that to the House of Peers, consisting of one hundred and seventy, and upwards, the ancient nobles of France supplied only thirty. The rest were the fortunate maréchals and generals, whom the wars of the Revolution had raised to rank and wealth; and the statesmen, many of whom had attained the same station by less honourable means of elevation. The old noblesse, after their youth had been exhausted, their fortunes destroyed, and their spirits broken, while following through foreign countries the adverse fortunes of the exiled Bourbons, beheld the restoration, indeed, of the monarchy, but were themselves recalled to France only to see their estates occupied, and their hereditary offices around the person of the monarch filled, by the fortunate children of the Revolution. Like the disappointed English cavaliers, they might well complain that though none had wished more earnestly for the return of the legitimate prince, yet none had shared so little in the benefits attending it. By a natural, and yet a perverse mode of reasoning, the very injuries which the nobility had sustained, rendered them the objects of suspicion to the other ranks and parties of the state. They had been the companions of the King's exile, were connected with him by the ties of friendship, and had near access to his person by the right of blood. Could it be in nature, it was

asked, that Louis could see their sufferings without attempting to relieve them; and how could he do so in the present state of France, unless at the expense of those who occupied or aspired to civil and military preferment, or of those who had acquired during the Revolution the national domains which those nobles once possessed? Yet the alarm was founded rather on suspicion than on facts. Of the preferment of emigrants in the army, we shall speak hereafter; but in the civil departments of the state, few of the old noblesse obtained office. To take a single example, in the course of eleven months there were thirty-seven prefects nominated to the departments, and the list did not comprehend a single one of those emigrants who returned to France with Louis; and but very few of those whose exile had terminated more early. The nobles felt this exclusion from royal favour, and expressed their complaints, which some, yet more imprudently, mingled with threatening hints, that their day of triumph might yet arrive. This language, as well as the air of exclusive dignity and distance which they affected, as if, the distinction of their birth being all that they had left to them, they were determined to enforce the most punctilious deference to that, was carefully remarked and recorded against the King.

The noblesse were supposed to receive particular encouragement from the princes of the blood, while, upon the whole, they were rather discouraged than brought forward or distinguished by Louis, who, as many of them spared not to say, was disposed to act upon the ungenerous maxim of courting

his enemies, and neglecting those who could not upon principle become any thing save his friends. They did not, perhaps, make sufficient allowance for the great difficulties which the King incurred in governing France at so critical a period.

## THE CLERGY

The state of the Clergy is next to be considered. They were, generally speaking, sincerely attached to the King; and had they been in possession of their revenues, and of their natural influence upon the public mind, their attachment would have been of the utmost consequence. But without this influence, and without the wealth, or at least the independence, on which it partly rests, they were as useless, politically speaking, as a key which does not fit the lock to which it is applied. This state of things, unfortunate in many respects, flowed from a maxim adopted during the Revolution, and followed by Buonaparte, who had his reasons for fearing the influence of the clergy. "We will not put down the ecclesiastical establishment by force; we will starve it to death." Accordingly, all grants and bequests to the Church had been limited and qualified by so many conditions and restrictions, as to intercept that mode of acquisition so fruitful in a Catholic country; while, on the other hand, the salary allowed by the State to each officiating curate was only five hundred livres (£26, 16s. 8d.) yearly. No doubt each community were permitted to subscribe what they pleased in addition to this

miserable pittance; but in France, when the number of those who care for no religion at all, and of those whose zeal will not lead them the length of paying for it, is deduced, the remainder will afford but a small list of subscribers. The consequence was, that at the period of the restoration, many parishes were, and had been for years, without any public worship. Ignorance had increased in an incalculable degree. "We are informed," was the communication from Buonaparte to one of his prefects, "that dangerous books are distributed in your department." – "Were the roads sown with them," was the answer returned by the prefect, "your Majesty need not fear their influence; we have not a man who would or could read them." – When we add to this the relaxed state of public morals, the pains taken in the beginning of the Revolution to eradicate the sentiments of religion, and render its professors ridiculous, and the prevalence of the military character, so conspicuous through France, and so unfavourable to devotion; and when it is further remembered that all the wealth of the Church had fallen into the hands of the laity, which were fast clenched to retain it, and trembling at the same time lest it should be wrested from them – the reader may, from all these causes, form some notion of the low ebb of religion and of the Church in France.

The disposition of the King and Royal Family to restore the formal observances of the Romish Church, as well as to provide the suitable means of educating in future those designed for the ministry, and other religious institutions, excited among the

Parisians a feeling of hatred and contempt. It must be owned, also, that though the abstract motive was excellent, there was little wisdom in attempting to bring back the nation to all those mummeries of Popish ceremonial, which, long before the Revolution, only subsisted through inveterate custom, having lost all influence on the public mind.

This general feeling was increased by particular events. Alarming tumults took place, on the subject of enforcing a rule unworthy of Christianity and civilisation, by which theatrical performers are declared in a constant state of excommunication. The rites of sepulture being refused to Mademoiselle Raucour, an actress, but a person of decent character and morals, occasioned a species of insurrection, which compelled from the government an order for interring her with the usual forms.[76]

The enforcing of the more regular observation of the Sabbath, an order warranted alike by religion and good morals, gave also great offence to the inhabitants of the capital. The solemn obsequies performed for the death of Louis XVI. and his unfortunate queen, when their remains were transferred from their hasty grave to the royal mausoleum at Saint Denis, a fraternal action, and connected with the forms of the Catholic Church – was also construed to the King's prejudice, as if, by the honour paid to these poor relics, he had intended to mark his hatred of the Revolution, and his recollection of the injuries he

[76] Savary, tom. iv., p. 235.

had sustained from it.[77] Some honours and attention bestowed on the few surviving chiefs of La Vendée, were equally the subject of misrepresentation. In short, whatever Louis XVIII. did, which had the least appearance of gratifying those who had lost all for his sake, was accounted an act of treason against freedom and the principles of the Revolution.

None of the circumstances we have noticed had, however, so much effect upon the public feeling as the fear which prevailed, that Louis, in his veneration for religion and its members, might be led to form some scheme of resuming the Church lands, which, having been confiscated by the decrees of the National Assembly, were now occupied by a host of proprietors, who watched, with vigilant jealousy, incipient measures, which they feared might end in resumption of their property. Imprudent priests added to this distrust and jealousy, by denunciations against those who held Church lands, and by refusing to grant them absolution unless they made restitution or compensation for them. This distrust spread far wider than among the actual proprietors of national domains. For if these were threatened with resumption of the property they had acquired under authority of the existing government for the time, it was most probable that the divine right of the clergy to a tithe of the produce of the earth, might next have been brought forward – a claim involving the interest of every landholder and farmer in France to a degree almost incalculable.

[77] Annual Register, vol. lvi., p. 51.

It is plain, from what we have stated, that the Royalist party, whether lay or clerical, were so little in a condition to be effectually serviceable to the King in the event of a struggle, that while their adherence and their sufferings claimed his attachment and gratitude, every mark which he afforded them of those feelings was calculated to render his government suspected and unpopular.

## THE JACOBINS

Whilst the Royalists rather sapped and encumbered than supported the throne to which they adhered, their errors were carefully pointed out, circulated, and exaggerated, by the Jacobin, or as they called themselves, the Patriotic party. This faction, small in numbers, but formidable from their audacity, their union, and the dreadful recollection of their former power and principles, consisted of ex-generals, whose laurels had faded with the Republic; ex-ministers and functionaries, whose appointments and influence had not survived the downfall of the Directory; men of letters, who hoped again to rule the state by means of proclamations and journals; and philosophers, to whose vanity or enthusiasm abstract principles of unattainable liberty, and undesirable equality, were dearer than all the oceans of blood, and extent of guilt and misery, which they had already cost, and were likely again to occasion. It cannot be denied, that, in the discussion of the original rights of humanity,

and constitutions of society, several of this party showed distinguished talent, and that their labours were calculated to keep up a general love of liberty, and to promote inquiry into the principles upon which it is founded. Unfortunately, however, their theoretical labours in framing constitutions diverted their attention from the essential points of government, to its mere external form, and led them, for example, to prefer a republic, where every species of violence was practised by the little dictator of the day, to a limited monarchy, under which life, person, and property, were protected. The chiefs of this party were men of that presumptuous and undoubting class, who, after having failed repeatedly in political experiments, were as ready as ever again to undertake them, with the same unhesitating and self-deceptive confidence of success. They were never satisfied even with what they themselves had done; for as there is no end of aiming at an ideal perfection in any human establishment, they proceeded with alterations on their own work, as if what Butler says of religion had been true in politics, and that a form of government

> "was intended
> For nothing else but to be mended."

Danger did not appal the sages of this school. Many of them had been familiar with, and hardened to the perils of the most desperate revolutionary intrigues, by their familiar acquaintance

with the springs which set each in motion, and were ready to recommence their desperate labours with as little forethought as belongs to the labourers in a powder-mill, which has exploded ten times during their remembrance, and destroyed the greater number of their comrades. In the character of these self-entitled philosophers and busy agitators, vanity as well as egotism were leading principles. The one quality persuaded them, that they might be able, by dint of management, to avert danger from themselves; and the other rendered them indifferent respecting the safety of others.

During the government of Buonaparte, this Jacobinical party was repressed by a strong hand. He knew, by experience of every sort, their restless, intriguing, and dangerous disposition. They also knew and feared his strength, and his unscrupulous use of it. The return of the Bourbons called them into life, like the sun which thaws the frozen adder; but it was only to show how they hated the beams which revived them. The Bourbon dynasty, with all the remembrances it combined, seemed to this faction the very opposite to their favourite Revolution; and they studied with malignant assiduity the degree of liberty afforded by the national charter, not in order to defend or to enjoy it, but to discover how it might be made the vantage-ground for overthrowing both the throne and the constitution.

Carnot and Fouché, formidable names, and revolutionists from their youth upward, were the ostensible leaders of this active party, and most of the surviving revolutionists rallied

under their standards. These agitators had preserved some influence over the lees of the people, and were sure to find the means of augmenting it in the moment of popular commotion. The rabble of a great town is democratical and revolutionary by nature; for their vanity is captivated with such phrases as the sovereignty of the people, their sense of poverty and licentious fury tempted by occasion for uproar, and they regard the restraints of laws and good order as their constant and natural enemies. It is upon this envenomed and corrupted mass of evil passions that the experimental philosophers of the Revolution have always exercised their chemical skill. Of late, however, the intercourse between the philosophers of the Revolution and this class of apt and docile scholars had been considerably interrupted. Buonaparte, as we have hinted, restrained with a strong hand the teachers of the Revolutionary school; while, by the eclat of his victories, his largesses, and his expensive undertakings, in which many workmen were employed, he debauched from them great part of their popular disciples, who may be said, with the inconsequence and mutability belonging to their habits, principles, and temper, to have turned imperialists, without losing their natural aptitude to become Jacobins again on the next tempting opportunity.

## BUONAPARTISTS – THE ARMY

The party of Imperialists or Buonapartists, if we lay the

army out of view, was small and unimportant. The public functionaries, whom the King had displaced from the situations of emolument which they held under the Emperor – courtiers, prefects, commissioners, clerks, and commissaries – whose present means and future hopes were cut off, were of course disobliged and discontented men, who looked with a languishing eye towards the island of Elba. The immediate family connexions, favourites, and ministers of the late Emperor, confident in the wealth which most of them had acquired, and resenting the insignificance to which they were reduced by the restoration of the Bourbons, lent to this party the activity which money, and the habit of political intrigue, can at all times communicate. But the real and tremendous strength of the Buonapartists lay in the attachment of the existing army to its abdicated general. This was the more formidable, as the circumstances of the times, and the prevailing military character of the French nation, had raised the soldiers from their proper and natural character of servants of the state, into a distinct deliberative body, having interests of their own, which were in their nature incompatible with those of the commonwealth; since the very profession of arms implies an aptitude to a state of war, which, to all other ranks in the state, the army itself excepted, may indeed be a necessary and unavoidable evil, but never can be a real advantage.

The King could not be accused of neglecting to cultivate the affections, soothe the prejudices, and gratify the wishes of

the army. The fact is, that the unprecedented difficulties of his situation forced him to study how to manage by flattery, and by the most imprudent indulgences and favours, the only part of his subjects, who, according to the rules of all well-governed states, ought to be subjected to absolute authority. Every effort was made to gratify the feelings of the troops, and the utmost exertions were made to remount, re-establish, and re-clothe them. Their ranks were augmented by upwards of 150,000 prisoners of war, whose minds were in general actuated by the desire of avenging the dishonour and hardship of their defeat and captivity, and whose presence greatly increased the discontent as well as the strength of the French army.

While the King cultivated the affections of the common soldiers with very imperfect success, he was more fortunate in attaching to himself the maréchals, whom he treated with the utmost respect and kindness. They were gratified by his attentions, and, having most of them some recent reason to complain of Napoleon, it is possible, that had they possessed absolute, or even very extensive interest with the army, that disturbance in the state of the nation which ensued, could not possibly have taken place. But while Napoleon had preserved towards the maréchals the distance at which a sovereign keeps subjects, he was often familiar with the inferior officers and soldiers, and took care to keep himself in their eye, and occupy their attention personally. He desired that his generals should resemble the hilt of the sword, which may be changed at pleasure,

while the army was the blade itself, and retained the same temper, notwithstanding such partial alteration. Thus, the direct and personal interest of the Emperor superseded, in the soldier's bosom, all attachment to his lieutenants.

## THE ARMY – STATE OF PARTIES

It would be wasting time to show reasons, why the French army should have been attached to Napoleon. They could not be supposed to forget the long career of success which they had pursued under his banner, the pensions granted in foreign countries which were now retrenched, and the licensed plunder of their Emperor's unceasing campaigns. At present, they conceived the King proposed to reduce their numbers so soon as he could with safety, and imagined their very existence was about to be at stake.

Nor was it only the selfish interests of the army which rendered them discontented. The sense of honour, as it was called, or rather the vanity of military ascendency and national aggrandisement, had been inspired by Buonaparte into all classes of his subjects, though they were chiefly cherished by his companions in arms. According to their opinion, the glory of France had risen with Buonaparte, and sunk with him for ever; not, as they fondly contended, through the superior force of the enemy, but by the treachery of Marmont, and the other generals whom Napoleon trusted. This sentiment passed from the ranks

of the soldiers into other classes of society, all of which are in France deeply susceptible of what is represented to them as national glory; and it was again echoed back to the soldiers from fields, from workshops, from manufactories. All began to agree, that they had received the Bourbons from the hands of foreign conquerors; and that the King's reign had only commenced, because France had been conquered, and Paris surrendered. They remembered that the allies had declared the restoration of the ancient family was combined with the restriction of France within the ancient limits; and that, accordingly, the first act of Monsieur, as lieutenant of the kingdom, had been to order the surrender of upwards of fifty fortresses beyond the frontiers, which Buonaparte, it was supposed, would have rendered the means of re-acquiring the conquests, of which fortune or treachery had for a time bereft him. The meanest follower of the camp affected to feel his share in the national disgrace of losing provinces, to which France had no title save that of military usurpation. The hope that the government would at least endeavour to reconquer Belgium, so convenient for France, and which, as they contended, fell within her natural boundaries, served for a time to combat these feelings; but when it was perceived plainly that the government of France neither could nor would engage in external war, for this or any other object, the discontent of the army became universal, and they might be pronounced ripe for any desperate enterprise.

Among the soldiers, the late Imperial Guards were

distinguished for their sullen enmity to the new order of things, and deemed themselves insulted at the guard of the King's person being committed to a body of household troops, selected as approved loyalists. The army were also much disgusted, that the decorations of the Legion of Honour had been distributed with a profusion, which seemed intended to diminish its value. But the course of promotion was the deepest source of discontent. The princes of the blood-royal had been early declared colonels-general by the King; and the army soon discovered, or supposed they discovered, that under their auspices the superior ranks of the army were likely to be filled by the emigrant nobility, whose military service was considered as having been continued, while they were in attendance upon the King during his exile. The most indecent competition was thus excited between those whose claims were founded on their devoted attachment to the House of Bourbon, and those who had borne arms against that family, but still in the service of France. The truth is, that the derangement of the finances, and the jealousy of the ministers, each of whom claimed the exclusive patronage of his own department, left the King no means so ready for discharging his debts of gratitude, and affording the means of subsistence to his ancient friends and adherents, as by providing for them in the army. The measure, though perhaps unavoidable, was in many respects undesirable. Old men, past the age of service, or young men who had never known it, were, in virtue of these claims, placed in situations, to which the actual warriors

conceived they had bought a title by their laurels and their scars. The appearance of the superannuated emigrants, who were thus promoted to situations ill-suited to age and infirmity, raised the ridicule and contempt of Buonaparte's soldiers, while the patrician haughtiness, and youthful presumption, of the younger nobles, excited their indignation. The agents and friends of Buonaparte suffered not these passions to cool. "There is a plot of the royalists against you," was incessantly repeated to the regiments upon which these new officers were imposed. "The Bourbons cannot think themselves safe while those who shared the triumphs of Napoleon have either honour or existence. Your ranks are subjected to the command of dotards, who have never drawn a sword in battle, or who have served only in the emigrant bands of Condé, or among the insurgent Chouans and Vendéans. What security have you against being disbanded on a day's notice? And if the obligations of the government to you bind them, as it would seem, so slightly, will you consider yours to them as of a stricter description?" Such insinuations, and such reasoning, inflamed the prejudices of the army. Disaffection spread generally through their ranks; and, long before the bold attempt of Napoleon, his former soldiery were almost universally prepared to aid him in the recovery of his power.

The state of active political parties in France, we have thus described; but, as is usual, the mass of the population were somewhat indifferent to their principles, unless in moments of excitation. Parties in a state are to the people at large what the

winds are to the ocean. That which predominates for the time, rolls the tide in its own direction; the next day it is hushed, and the waves are under a different influence. The people of France at large were averse to the Republicans or Jacobins. They retained too awful an impression of the horrors of the tyranny exercised by these political fanatics, to regard them otherwise than with terror. They were as little Buonapartists; because they dreaded the restless temper of him who gave name to this faction, and saw that while he was at the head of the French government, the state of war must be perpetual. They could not be termed Royalists, for they comprehended many with whom the name of Bourbon had lost its charms; and a very large proportion of the country had their fortune and prosperity so intimately connected with the Revolution, that they were not disposed to afford any countenance to the re-establishment of the monarchy on its ancient footing.

Upon the whole, this class of Frenchmen who may be called moderates, or constitutionalists, and who contained the great bulk of the men of property, substance, and education, hoped well of the King's government. His good sense, humanity, love of justice, moderation, and other valuable qualities, recommended him to their esteem, and they thought his restoration might be considered as the guarantee of a lasting peace with the other nations of Europe. But they dreaded and deprecated that counter revolutionary *reaction*, as the established phrase was, which was regarded as the object of the princes of the blood, the nobility,

and the clergy. The property of many of the constitutionalists was vested in national domains, and they watched with doubt and fear every step which the emigrant nobility and clergy seemed disposed to take for recovery of their former rights.

On this subject the moderate party were sensitively jealous, and the proceedings which took place in the Chamber of Deputies threw striking light on the state of the public mind. We must, therefore, turn the reader's attention in that direction.

A petty riot, concerning precedence, had arisen in a church called Durnac, between the seigneur of the parish, and the mayor of the commune. The mayor brought the affair before the Chamber of Deputies by a violent petition, in which he generalized his complaint against the whole body of emigrants, whom he accused of desiring to place themselves above the constituted authorities, and to treat France as a conquered country. The Chamber, 20th November, 1814, treated the language of the petition as calumnious, and the squabble as unworthy of their notice. But the debate called forth expressions which intimated a suspicion that there existed a dark and secret system, which tended to sow the seeds of discord and anarchy among the citizens, and to resuscitate pretensions incompatible with the laws. "It was," said the member[78] who made this statement, "important to impress every class of Frenchmen with the great idea, that there was no safety for France, for the King, for every member of society, but in the maintenance of those

[78] M. Dumolard. See Moniteur, Nov. 24.

constitutional principles on which were founded the laws for protecting the whole."

## EMIGRANT-CLAIMS

The claims of the emigrants for restoration of their forfeited property, were, abstractedly, as just and indubitable as that of the King to the throne. But the political considerations in which they were involved, rendered any general attempt to enforce those claims the sure signal of civil war; a civil war almost certain to end in a second expatriation, both of the royal family and their followers. In this dilemma, government seems to have looked anxiously for some means of compromise which might afford relief to the emigrants, without innovating on that article of the charter which ratified the sale of national domains. M. Ferrand brought forward in the Chamber of Delegates, a motion [Dec. 3] for the restoration of such estates of emigrants as yet remained unsold. But this involved a question respecting the rights of the much more numerous class whose property had been seized upon by the state, and disposed of to third parties, to whom it was guaranteed by the charter. Since these gentlemen could not be restored *ex jure*, to their estates, as was proposed towards their more fortunate brethren, they had at least a title to the price which had been surrogated in place of the property, of which price the nation had still possession.

These proposals called forward M. Durbach, who charged

Ferrand with the fatal purpose of opening the door on the vast subject of national domains. "Already," continued the orator, "the two extremities of the kingdom have resounded with the words of the minister, as with the claps which precede the thunderbolt. The effect which they have produced has been so rapid and so general, that all civil transactions have been at once suspended. A general distrust and excessive fear have caused a stagnation, the effects of which even the royal treasury has felt. The proprietors of national property can no longer sell or mortgage their estates. They are suddenly reduced to poverty in the very bosom of wealth. Whence arises this calamity? The cause of it is the declaration of the minister, that the property they possess does not legally belong to them. For this is, in fact, the consequence of his assertion, that 'the law recognises in the emigrants a right to property which always existed.'"

The celebrated Maréchal Macdonald, a friend at once of monarchy and freedom, of France and the Bourbons, undertook to bring forward a plan for satisfying the emigrants, as far as the condition of the nation permitted; and giving, at the same time, some indemnity for the pensions assigned by Buonaparte to his veteran soldiers, which, during his reign, had been paid from countries beyond the verge of France, until after the retreat from Moscow, when they ceased to be paid at all. The maréchal's statement of the extent of the sale of the national domains, shows how formidable the task of undoing that extensive transference of property must necessarily have been; the number of persons

directly or indirectly interested in the question of their security, amounting to nine or ten millions. "Against this Colossus," continued the maréchal, "whose height the eye cannot measure, some impotent efforts would affect to direct themselves; but the wisdom of the King has foreseen this danger, even for the sake of those imprudent persons who might have exposed themselves to it." He proceeded, in a very eloquent strain, to eulogize the conduct of the emigrants, to express respect for their persons, compassion for their misfortunes, honour for their fidelity, and proceeded to observe, that the existence of these old proprietors, as having claims on the estates which had been acquired by others, placed them in a situation which ought not to exist. He therefore proposed that the nation should satisfy the claims of these unfortunate gentlemen, if not in full, at least upon such terms of composition as had been applied to other national obligations. Upon this footing, he calculated that an annuity of twelve millions of livres yearly, would pay off the claims of the various emigrants of all descriptions. He next drew a picture of the distressed veteran soldiers; pensioners of the state who had been reduced to distress by the discontinuance of their pensions, bought with their blood in a thousand battles. Three millions more of livres he computed as necessary to discharge this sacred obligation.[79]

There was wisdom, manliness, and generosity in the plan

[79] Moniteur, Dec. 7 and 10; Montgaillard, tom. viii., p. 84; Annual Register, vol. lvi., p. 63.

of Maréchal Macdonald; and, could it have been carried into decisive execution, it would have greatly appeased the fears and jealousies of the proprietors of national domains, and shown an impartiality betwixt the claims of the emigrants and those of the army, which ought to have conciliated both. Unhappily, funds were awanting, and the royal government, so far from being able to incur a new expense of fifteen millions yearly, was not in a condition to discharge the various demands upon them, without continuing the oppressive tax of *Les droits réunis*.

It is, indeed, on the subject of finance and taxation, that almost all revolutions among civilized nations have been found to hinge; and there is scarce any judging how long actual oppression may be endured, so long as it spares the purse of individuals, or how early a heavy tax, even for the most necessary objects, will excite insurrection. Without the heavy taxation of the Spaniards, the Dutch would scarcely have rebelled against them; it was imposts which fired the blood of the Swiss against the Austrians; without the stamp-act the American Revolution might have been long postponed; and but for the disorder of the French finances, Louis XVI. need never have summoned together the National Assembly. France was now again agitated by one of those fever fits, which arise from the sensitiveness of the subject's purse.

## FRENCH FINANCE

A report on the state of the public finances, by the Abbé

de Montesquieu, had given a singular instance of Buonaparte's deceptive policy. Annual expositions of national receipt and expenditure had been periodically published since he assumed the reins of government, which were, to outward appearance, unchallengeably accurate; and as they seemed to balance each other, afforded the fair prospect that, the revenues of the state being realized, the expenses could not fall into arrear. But in reality, a number of extraordinary expenses were withheld from the view of the public, while, on the other hand, the produce of the taxes was over-estimated. Thus the two budgets of 1812, and 1813, upon close examination, exhibited a deficit of upwards of 312 millions of livres,[80] or thirteen millions sterling. Buonaparte was not ignorant of this fact, but concealed it from the eyes of the nation, in hopes of replacing it, as in his more successful days, by foreign tribute, and, in the meantime, supplied himself by the anticipation of other funds; as an unfaithful book-keeper makes up a plausible balance to meet the eye of his master, and covers his peculations by his dexterity in the use of ciphers. Upon the whole, the debts of France appeared to have increased in the course of thirteen years to the extent of 1,645,469,000 francs, or more than sixty-eight millions and a half of sterling money.

These financial involvements accorded ill with the accomplishment of an unfortunate and hasty promise of Monsieur,[81] that the severe and pressing taxes called *les droits*

[80] Moniteur, July 13; Montgaillard, tom. viii., p. 52.

[81] "No conqueror, no war, no conscription, no consolidated taxes!" —*Proclamation*

*réunis* should be abolished, which had been made when he first entered France, and while, betwixt hope and despair, he essayed every inducement for the purpose of drawing adherents to the royal cause. On the other hand, the King, upon ascending the throne, had engaged himself, with perhaps too much latitude, to pay all the engagements which the state had contracted under the preceding government. To redeem both these pledges was impossible, for without continuing this very obnoxious and oppressive tax, the crown could not have the means of discharging the national debt. A plan was in vain proposed by Jalabert to replace this oppressive excise by a duty on wines; the motion was referred to a committee of the Chamber of Representatives, but the substitution seems to have been found impossible. Louis naturally made the promise of his brother give way to his own more deliberate engagement. But it is not the less true, that by continuing to levy *les droits réunis*, many, not otherwise disinclined to the royal government than as it affected their purses, were enabled to charge the King with breach of faith towards his subjects, and would listen to no defence upon a topic on which few people are disposed to hear reason against their own interest.

## THE PRESS

There remained yet another subject of alarm and dread,

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*on entering France.*

to excite the minds not only of those who were desirous of revolution, or, according to the Roman phrase, *cupidi novarum rerum*; but of others, who, devotedly attached to the welfare of France, desired to see her enjoy, under the sway of a legitimate monarch, the exercise of national liberty. They had the misfortune to see that liberty attacked in the point where it is most sensitive, namely, by imposing restraints upon the public press.

Buonaparte had made it part of his system to keep this powerful engine in his own iron hand, well aware that his system of despotism could not have subsisted for six months, if his actions had been exposed to the censure of the public, and his statements to contradiction and to argument. The Bourbons having unloosed the chain by which the liberty of the press was confined, the spirit of literary and political controversy rushed out with such demoniacal violence, as astonished and terrified those who had released it from confinement. The quantity of furious abuse poured out against the Bourbons, might have authorised the authors to use the words of Caliban —

> "You taught me language, and my profit on't
> Is – I know how to curse."[82]

Eager to repress the spirit which displayed itself so

[82] Tempest, act i., scene ii.

unequivocally, a motion was made on the 4th of July, 1814,[83] for establishing a censorship upon pamphlets under a certain length, and placing all journals and newspapers under the direction of government.

This important subject was discussed with great manliness and talent in the Assembly; but it is one of the many political maxims which the British receive as theorems, that, without absolute freedom of the public press (to be exercised always on the peril of such as misuse it,) there can neither be enlightened patriotism nor liberal discussion; and that, although the forms of a free constitution may be preserved where this liberty is restricted, they will soon fail to have the necessary beneficial effects in protecting the rights of the community and the safety of individuals. The liberty of the press affords a channel through which the injured may challenge his oppressor at the bar of the nation; it is the means by which public men may, in case of misconduct, be arraigned before their own and succeeding ages; it is the only mode in which bold and undisguised truth can press its way into the cabinets of monarchs; and it is the privilege, by means of which he, who vainly lifts his voice against the corruptions or prejudices of his own time, may leave his counsels upon record as a legacy to impartial posterity. The cruelty which would deafen the ear and extinguish the sight of an individual, resembles, in some similar degree, his guilt, who, by restricting the freedom of the press, would reduce a nation to the deafness

[83] Moniteur, July 6; Annual Register, vol. lxvi., p. 56.

of prejudice, and the blindness of ignorance. The downfall of this species of freedom, as it is the first symptom of the decay of national liberty, has been in all ages followed by its total destruction, and it may be justly pronounced that they cannot exist separately; or, as the elegiac poet has said of his hero and the country to which he belonged —

"Ille tibi superesse negat; tu non potes illi."

We must own, at the same time, that as no good comes to us unmixed with evil, the unlimited freedom of the press is attended with obvious inconveniencies, which, when a nation is in a certain state of excitation, render the exercise of it peculiarly dangerous. This is especially the case when a people, as then in France, are suddenly released from a state of bondage, and disposed, "like youthful colts broke loose," to make the most extravagant use of their liberty. With minds unprepared for discussion; with that degree of political misinformation which has done this age more dire mischief than absolute ignorance itself could have effected; subject to be influenced by the dashing pamphleteer, who soothes their prevailing passions, as the orations of their popular demagogues soothed those of the Athenians – it has been the opinion of many statesmen, that to withhold from such a nation the freedom of the press, is a measure justifiable alike by reason and necessity. "We proportion," say these reasoners, "liberty to the power of enjoying it. The considerate and the peaceful we

suffer to walk at liberty, and armed, if their occasions require it; but we restrain the child, we withhold weapons from the ruffian, and we fetter the maniac. Why, therefore," they ask, "should a nation, when in a state of fever, be supplied, without restriction, with the indulgences which must necessarily increase the disorder?" Our answer is ready – that, granting the abuse of the liberty of the press to exist in the most fearful latitude (and we need not look to France for examples,) the advantages derived from it are so inestimable, that, to deprive us of them, would be as if an architect should shut up the windows which supply light and air to a mansion, because a certain proportion of cold, and perhaps of rain, may force their way in at the aperture. Besides, we acknowledge ourselves peculiarly jealous of the sentiments of the members of every government on this delicate subject. Their situation renders them doubtful friends to a privilege, through which alone they can be rendered amenable to the public for the abuse of their power, and through which also they often see their just and temperate exercise of authority maligned and misconstrued. To princes, also, the license of the press is, for many reasons distasteful. To put it under regulation, seems easy and desirable, and the hardship on the community not greater (in their account) than the enforcing of decent respect and subordination – of the sort of etiquette, in short, which is established in all courts, and which forbids the saving, under any pretext, what may be rude or disagreeable to a sovereign, or even unpleasing to be heard. Under these circumstances, and in the

present state of France, men rather regretted than wondered that the ministers of Louis XVIII. were disposed to place restrictions on the freedom of the press, or that they effected their purpose of placing the light of nations under a censorial bushel.

# Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.